One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.
## Scoring Guide

### Score & Description

#### Excellent
- Tells a well-developed story with relevant descriptive details across the response.
- Events are well connected and tie the story together with transitions across the response.
- Sustains varied sentence structure and exhibits specific word choices.
- Exhibits control over sentence boundaries; errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics do not interfere with understanding.

#### Skillful
- Tells a clear story with some development, including some relevant descriptive details.
- Events are connected in much of the response; may lack some transitions.
- Exhibits some variety in sentence structure and exhibits some specific word choices.
- Generally exhibits control over sentence boundaries; errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics do not interfere with understanding.

#### Sufficient
- Tells a clear story with little development; has few details.
- Events are generally related; may contain brief digressions or inconsistencies.
- Generally has simple sentences and simple word choice; may exhibit uneven control over sentence boundaries.
- Has sentences that consist mostly of complete, clear, distinct thoughts; errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics generally do not interfere with understanding.

#### Uneven
- May be characterized by one or more of the following:
  - Attempts to tell a story, but tells only part of a story, gives a plan for a story, or is list-like.
  - Lacks a clear progression of events; elements may not fit together or be in sequence.
  - Exhibits uneven control over sentence boundaries and may have some inaccurate word choices.
  - Errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics sometimes interfere with understanding.

#### Insufficient
May be characterized by one or more of the following:

- Attempts a response, but is no more than a fragment or the beginning of a story OR is very repetitive.
- Is very disorganized OR too brief to detect organization.
- Exhibits little control over sentence boundaries and sentence formation; word choice is inaccurate in much of the response.
- Characterized by misspellings, missing words, incorrect word order; errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics are severe enough to make understanding very difficult in much of the response.

Unsatisfactory
May be characterized by one or more of the following:

- Attempts a response but may only paraphrase the prompt or be extremely brief.
- Exhibits no control over organization.
- Exhibits no control over sentence formation; word choice is inaccurate across the response.
- Characterized by misspellings, missing words, incorrect word order; errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics severely impede understanding across the response.

Excellent - Student Response

1 One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.
"Wow, a castle!" said John. He had no clue of how it got here or where it came from. He walked inside and found that it was rather damp. He wandered around until finally he saw someone. This person didn't look normal. He was dressed in royalty with a purple cape and a crown of jewels. Then the person spoke out. "There you are. You're supposed to be training right now." John had no clue what the person was talking about. Suddenly he thought of something. Was this the king of the castle? He finally got the nerve to ask a question. He asked, "Who are you?" He answered, "I'm the king. Who are you?" John was shocked. Then the king told him to get on his armor. John thought and thought. Then he knew what he was talking about. He thought he was a knight. John thought again. If he was to be a knight, then he'd see his family again. Then he thought of his older sister, Jennifer. He decided to be a knight. After about 2 months, he finally was knighted. He fought many dragons and men. He finally died but is still a legend today.

The End

By: Unknown

Scorer Comments:
In this paper, rated "Excellent," the writer uses dialogue effectively, develops characters, and provides a coherent plot. The student shows good control of language for a fourth grader and
includes vivid details to illustrate the appearance of the characters -- "He was dressed in royalty with a purple cape and a crown of jewels."

1 One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.
The child who discovered the castle.

Once there was a little girl who had leaned out of her bedroom window. Her name was Teshana. She was only 5 years old. Teshana spotted a castle right in front of her house. So she decided to explore. She went to the front of the castle and a chain wood door opened. It sounded like it needed oil on the hinges. Teshana stepped her tiny feet in. She looked straight ahead and saw a velvet red throne on the ground. It had 3 steps that led to a marble deck. There were 2 tall chairs and in them were a king and queen. The king and queen were golden, ornate, crowns with lots of diamonds and jewels. They both wore purple velvet caps that went all the way around them. Teshana was amazed. She was staring straight in the eyes of a real king and queen. The king and queen had not a son or daughter. The king and queen were whispering back and forth. Should we keep her? said one. Sure, said the other. We shall adopt her by tomorrow. Teshana heard them. She was ours. She stayed in the castle over night. In the morning, she was adopted. And the little family lived happily ever after.
of storytelling. It begins with a title, and develops a detailed narrative that is enhanced by specific and vivid details; we are told that the “chain wood door...sounded like it needed oil on the hinges.” In almost every way, this story is compelling, illustrative of a genuinely “excellent” response.

**Skillful - Student Response**

1. One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.

First he see a dark room filled with object some big some small from short smoke tell, as he is reaching for the light switch something go on his hand and turn it on for him. As it turns on the boy sees a woman so beautiful she captures his eye. The look so much alike. They walk through the castle telling each other stories about past history. Then they show each other pictures from their life. The girl says she had adopt last brother from long ago. She says the looks like this kind showed them the picture. The boy said she had a picture of life that of himself then the girl realizes the boy in the picture is her long lost brother.

**Scorer Comments:**

In this “Skillful” response, the student develops a detailed plot and characters. Though the ending is concise, the student ties up the plot with the surprise revelation “Then the girl realizes the boy in..."
the picture is her long Lost Brother.” Some of the transitions are rather sudden, and the student provides less description and has less firm control of language than the “excellent” papers. The story, however, is developed with some details and connects events clearly.

1. One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.

He knocks on the door. Then a big dragon opens the door and says in a deep voice, “What do you want?” Then the child says, “I am Chris and I want to know why you have a castle in my backyard.” Then all of the sudden the boy is picked up by the dragon and is put in a dungeon. And it was made of sticks. Then a king came in the room and said, “You can’t get out of here because it is made of sticks and I can’t even get out and I am only 9.” Then he leaves the room and Chris remembers that he has to go to John’s birthday party today at one o’clock. I told John I would be there and he is my best friend said Chris. Then Chris also remembers that his parents were gone to work and gave him the bush clippers so he could do some yard work. They were in his pocket. He got them out and then saw a red flame came at their door.
This "Skillful" response begins rather abruptly, but continues to develop a story with a plot and some thoughtful complications. The writer uses dialogue and details such as a dragon "made of sticks" to enhance the story. The response is a bit more truncated and uneven than papers receiving an "excellent" rating (the king makes a very brief appearance!), but overall it is a nicely developed story that is well organized and detailed.

**Sufficient - Student Response**

1 One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.

---

One day a 12 year old boy
woke up and found a beautiful castle
with a purple, pink and blue, gray and
clearer rainbow. He decided to get up. Then
he got dressed and went to see what
was in the castle. He knocked on the
door and someone answered to be knocked again. Still no answer.

Then the boy went in. It
was pretty dark inside not like the
outside of the color. He looked around
and saw that there must be someone
living here. It was dark, he could see
that it was still in the castle.

He went up stairs to a room
and opened it and there he saw
the ugly monster. And behind him,
was a pretty princess. He was in love.

---

Scorer Comments:
In this "Sufficient" response, the student provides a clear but bare plot. He or she includes the vivid details of the colors of the rainbow in the first sentence -- "a purple, pink, red, blue, orange and yellow rainbow" -- but uses detail sparingly beyond that. The story is clearly developed, despite the lack of a conclusion. The student uses simple, but clear and correct, sentence structure and vocabulary.

1 One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it.

NAEP released item, grade 4
Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.

Scorer Comments:
This "Sufficient" response displays a nice use of dialogue and some interesting development such as the singing that appears to originate in a few locations. It seems to overreach itself in some ways, however; the singing is never fully explained, and the reason that the cook and child bake the cake is also left up in the air. The writer generally has good control over sentence boundaries, although toward the end of the story the sentences become a bit confused and abrupt.

Uneven - Student Response

One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.
One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.
One morning, a child looks out the window and sees that a huge castle has appeared overnight. She runs to the castle and inside she meets a giant. The giant lets her in. He asked her her name. He was married to a potter giant.

NAEP released item, grade 4
Scorer Comments:
This paper begins to tell a dramatic story in the second paragraph. But the relationship to the first paragraph is somewhat unclear, making the response disjointed. More development and better structuring of events would have lifted this paper above the "Insufficient" category.

Unsatisfactory - Student Response
1 One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared.

No further explanation.

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.

Scorer Comments:
This one-sentence response, though a possible introduction to a story, does not progress beyond that, and so was rated "Unsatisfactory." To some extent, the response paraphrases the prompt.

1 One morning a child looks out the window and discovers that a huge castle has appeared overnight. The child rushes outside to the castle and hears strange sounds coming from it. Someone is living in the castle!

The castle door creaks open. The child goes in.

Write a story about who the child meets and what happens inside the castle.

Scorer Comments:
This response provides a little bit of action beyond what was given in the prompt, but does not develop into a story.

NAEP released item, grade 4
1998 National Performance Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Percentage of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneven</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skillful</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
- These results are for public and nonpublic school students.
- Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

**Purpose for Writing:** Narrative Writing
Purpose for Writing

_Narrative Writing_

Narrative writing involves the production of stories or personal essays. Practice with these forms helps writers to develop an ear for language. Also, informative and persuasive writing can benefit from many of the strategies used in narrative writing. For example, there must be an effective ordering of events when relating an incident as part of a report.

Sometimes narrative writing contributes to an awareness of the world as the writer creates, manipulates, and interprets reality. Such writing -- whether fact or fiction, personal essay, or creative narrative -- requires close observation of people, objects, and places. Further, this type of writing fosters creativity, imagination, and speculation by allowing the writer to express thoughts and then stand back, as a more detached observer might, and grasp more fully what is being felt and why. Thus, narrative writing offers a special opportunity to analyze and understand emotions and actions.