

Autobiographical Incident Rubric
Grade 4

- 6 - The writer focuses on one incident and writes an engaging, well-told narrative. The opening captures the reader's attention through use of *action*, *dialogue*, or *description*. The middle of the paper is tightly focused on a single incident, and the conclusion provides both closure and significance. The writer locates the story in a particular setting and provides enough information to orient the reader to the action. The 6 paper sustains quality throughout. The writer's voice is shown through liveliness and originality. There should be evidence of humor, suspense, and/or drama. The writer uses a variety of narrative strategies:
- naming specific objects, places, and people
 - visual details (sizes, colors, shapes, textures, clothing, etc.)
 - other appropriate sensory (showing) details
 - use of dialogue (limited, not overly done)
 - sophisticated effective word choice

Additional characteristics of a 6 paper

- clear sentence sense and variety
 - few errors in conventions
 - correctly spelled high-frequency words; minor spelling errors in more challenging words
- 5 - The writer focuses on one incident and writes a solid, interesting narrative. While there is a clear opening, it may be less imaginative and engaging than a 6 paper. The middle of the paper is tightly focused, and the ending provides closure and significance. The writer locates the story in a particular setting and gives enough detail to orient the reader to the action. The five paper may not display even quality throughout.

The writer's voice is shown through use of humor, suspense and/or drama although these are less effectively employed than in a 6 paper. The writer attempts some narrative strategies. Some 5 writers will use showy rather than showing writing.

Additional characteristics of 5 paper:

- clear sentence sense and some sentence variety
 - few errors in conventions
 - correctly spelled high frequency words
- 4 - Although there may be minor digressions, the writer describes one incident and writes a capable narrative. There is a clear beginning, middle and ending although the quality of these three parts may be inconsistent. The writer may focus too much on the setting and/or character descriptions. The writer's voice is enthusiastic but may lack the sophistication of the 5 or 6 writer's. Fewer narrative strategies are used and the paper may rely more on "telling" than "showing."

Additional characteristics of a 4 paper:

- few varied sentences but maintains sentence control

- minor errors in conventions (grade appropriate) which do not interfere with communication
 - minor spelling errors (grade appropriate) or attempts only low-risk words
- 3 - The writer describes one incident but the narrative may be flat and unengaging. Some three writers will choose an incident which is too broad (bed to bed stories) to be effective. There is usually some attempt at a beginning and an ending, but some 3 papers may simply tell the incident and go no further. These papers maintain a comprehensible narrative thread but may sometimes lose focus. Descriptions of setting and/or character may be missing or dominate the narrative. There is often little evidence of real voice. The 3 paper generally relies exclusively on "telling" with little or no use of narrative strategies to elaborate details. Other papers simply list details.

Additional characteristics of a 3 paper:

- inconsistent sentencng **but still shows mostly correct sentence control**
 - errors in conventions and/or spelling which sometimes interfere with readability but do not sacrifice meaning
- 2 - The writer may fail to focus on a single incident or stray from the topic. The paper is usually brief and undeveloped. If longer, it may be unfocused and rambling. The 2 paper's organizational plan is inconsistent or lacking. The writer's voice may be flat and/or lack enthusiasm.

Additional characteristics of a 2 paper:

- simple sentence structure; many fragments and/or run-ons
 - limited word choice
 - frequent errors in conventions and/or spelling interfere with readability; 2 papers often require reader to interpret meaning of text
- 1 - There may be no discernible incident or, if specified, it may only be named and not described. Many 1 papers are incomprehensible. Others are so short that the writer's competency is impossible to judge.

Additional characteristics of a 1 paper:

- severe problems with sentence structure
- limited or incorrect word choice
- severe errors in conventions and/or spelling make the paper impossible to read