Grade 6
Third Prompt
Response to Literature
Writing a Character Analysis

English/Language Arts Content Standards:
1.0 Writing Strategies
2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)
2.4 Write responses to literature:
   a. Develop an interpretation exhibiting careful reading, understanding, and insight.
   b. Organize the interpretation around several clear ideas, premises, or images.
   c. Develop and justify the interpretation through sustained use of examples and textual evidence.

Writing Situation
As we read, we form ideas and opinions about the characters in a story. Read the accompanying passage from Barrio Boy by Ernesto Galarza. He and his mother have recently arrived in the United States from Mexico and have come to register Ernesto for school. Just before the part you are going to read, they have met the principal, Miss Hopley, in her office. Make notes about the main character as you read. (Allow an opportunity for discussion.)

Directions for Writing
Write about the main character in the passage. Give insight into what young Ernesto might have been thinking about and how he might have felt about the school, his teacher, and himself. Compare or contrast Ernesto’s experience or feelings to your own. Use descriptive words and phrases from the text to support your thoughts. Remember to organize paragraphs with topic sentences and supportive detail sentences.

Writing and Convention Standards
For this task, students will write about a character from the passage read that:
   a. develops an interpretation of the character that shows careful reading.
   b. uses precise descriptive phrases giving a clear picture of the character.
   c. includes necessary details that justify interpretations.
   d. is organized around more than one clear idea, premise, or image.
   e. demonstrates grade-level appropriate sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Resources:
Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, p. 148
Write Source 2000: Lesson Plans and Assessments, pp. 46 - 49
Write Source 2000, pp. 123, 176, 180, 190, 343
Write Source 2000 Program Guide, pp. 185, 231
Grade 6  
Third Prompt Rubric  
Response to Literature  
Writing a Character Analysis

| 4 | - Fully addresses the prompt.  
- Is clearly organized in a logical sequence that develops an interpretation exhibiting careful reading, understanding, and insight.  
- Is organized around more than one clear idea, premise, or image.  
- Is a multi-paragraph composition with an introduction, supporting details that use well-chosen examples and evidence from the text to develop and justify the interpretation of the character, and a concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details and links to the purpose of the composition.  
- Contains effective transitions and conjunctions to connect and unify the important ideas.  
- Has complete, coherent sentences that use a variety of patterns that include compound and complex sentences, using the active voice.  
- Has effectiveness and variety of word choice.  
- Contains expressive language with descriptive phrases to give a clear picture of the character.  
- Has grade-level appropriate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; contains few, if any, errors that do not interfere with understanding the writing.  
- Has fluid, legible handwriting. |
|---|---|
| 3 | - Responds to the prompt.  
- Is organized in a logical sequence that demonstrates an understanding of a literary work.  
- Is organized around more than one clear idea, premise, or image.  
- Is a multi-paragraph composition with an introduction, some details that use well-chosen examples and evidence from the text to develop and justify the interpretation of the character, and a conclusion.  
- Contains effective transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas.  
- Has mainly complete sentences that use more than one pattern that include compound and complex sentences and may use the active voice.  
- Has some variety in word choice.  
- Has some expressive language with descriptive phrases to give a clear picture of the character.  
- Has mainly grade-level appropriate spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation; contains some errors that do not interfere with understanding the writing.  
- Has legible handwriting. |
| 2 | • Attempts to respond to the prompt.  
• May lack organization.  
• May be organized around one idea, premise, or image.  
• May lack proper paragraphing and/or details and examples from the text to attempt to develop and justify the interpretation of the character.  
• May contain few transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas.  
• May have incomplete or incoherent sentences that may use only one pattern; the active voice is not present.  
• May have little or no variety in word choice.  
• May give some picture of the character.  
• May contain many errors in spelling, grammar, capitalization, and/or punctuation; that may interfere with understanding the writing.  
• Has handwriting that is difficult to read. |
| 1 | • May not respond to the prompt. (May be off topic.)  
• Lacks organization.  
• May not be organized around any idea, premise, or image.  
• Lacks paragraphs and/or does not include details or examples from the text.  
• Contains no transitions and/or conjunctions to connect ideas.  
• Has mainly incomplete or incoherent sentences.  
• Contains mainly basic sight words with no descriptive language.  
• May not give a picture of the character.  
• Contains frequent and numerous errors in spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation that may interfere with the understanding of the writing.  
• Handwriting may be mostly illegible. |
| BP | • Blank Paper |
Grade 6
Third Prompt – Student Page
Response to Literature
Writing a Character Analysis

Writing Situation
As we read, we form ideas and opinions about the characters in a story. Read the accompanying passage from *Barrio Boy* by Ernesto Galarza. He and his mother have recently arrived in the United States from Mexico and have come to register Ernesto for school. Just before the part you are going to read, they have met the principal, Miss Hopley, in her office. Make notes about the main character as you read.

Directions for Writing
Write about the main character in the passage. Give insight into what young Ernesto might have been thinking about and how he might have felt about the school, his teacher, and himself. Compare or contrast Ernesto’s experience or feelings to your own. Use descriptive words and phrases from the text to support your thoughts. Remember to organize paragraphs with topic sentences and supportive detail sentences.

Writing and Convention Standards
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Grade 6
Third Prompt
Barrio Boy
by Ernesto Galarza

She strode to a door in the far corner of the office, opened it and called a name. A boy of about ten years appeared in the doorway. He sat down at one end of the table. He was brown like us, a plump kid with shiny black hair combed straight back, neat, cool and faintly obnoxious.

Miss Hopley joined us with a large book and some papers in her hand. She, too, sat down and the questions and answers began by way of our interpreter. My name was Ernesto. My mother's name was Henriquez. My birth certificate was in San Blas. Here was my last report card from the Escuela Municipal Numero 3 para Varones of Mazatlan, and so forth. Miss Hopley put things down in the book and my mother signed a card.

As long as the questions continued, Doña Henriquez could stay and I was secure. Now that they were over, Miss Hopley saw her to the door, dismissed our interpreter and without further ado took me by the hand and strode down the hall to Miss Ryan's first grade.

Miss Ryan took me to a seat at the front of the room, into which I shrank— the better to survey her. She was, to skinny, somewhat rusty me, of a withering height when she patrolled the class. And when I least expected it, there she was, crouching by my desk, her blond radiant face level with mine, her voice patiently maneuvering me over the awful idiocies of the English language.

During the next few weeks Miss Ryan overcame my fears of tall, energetic teachers as she bent over my desk to help me with a word in the pre-primer. Step by step, she loosened me and my classmates from the safe anchorage of the desks for recitations at the blackboard and consultations at her desk. Frequently she burst into happy announcements to the whole class. "Ito can read a sentence," and small Japanese Ito, squint-eyed and shy, slowly read aloud while the class listened in wonder: "Come, Skipper, come. Come and run." The Korean, Portuguese, Italian and Polish first graders had similar moments of glory, no less shining than mine the day I conquered "butterfly," which I had been
Grade 6
Third Prompt
Barrio Boy continued

persistently pronouncing in standard Spanish as boo-ter-flee. "Children," Miss Ryan called for attention. "Ernesto has learned to pronounce butterfly". And I proved it with a perfect imitation of Miss Ryan. From that celebrated success, I was soon able to match Ito's progress as a sentence reader with "Come, butterfly, come fly with me."

Like Ito and several other first graders who did not know English, I received private lessons from Miss Ryan in the closet, a narrow hall off the classroom with a door at each end. Next to one of these doors Miss Ryan placed a large chair for herself and a small one for me. Keeping an eye on the class through the open door she read with me about sheep in the meadow and a frightened chicken going to see the king, coaching me out of my phonetic rut in words like pasture, bow-wow-wow, hey and pretty, which to my Mexican ear and eye had so many unnecessary sounds and letters. She made me watch her lips and then close my eyes as she repeated words I found hard to read. When we came to know each other better, I tried interrupting to tell Miss Ryan how we said it in Spanish. It didn't work. She only said "oh" and went on with pasture, bow-wow-wow, and pretty. It was as if in that closet we were both discovering together the secrets of the English language and grieving together over the tragedies of Bo-Peep. The main reason I was graduated with honors from the first grade was that I had fallen in love with Miss Ryan. Her radiant, no-nonsense character made us either afraid not to love her or love her so we would not be afraid, I am not sure which. It was not only that we sensed she was with it, but also that she was with us.

Like the first grade, the rest of the Lincoln School was a sampling of the lower part of town where many races made their home. My pals in the second grade were Kazushi, whose parents spoke only Japanese; Matti, a skinny Italian boy; and Manuel, a fat Portuguese who would never get into a fight but wrestled you to the ground and just sat on you. Our assortment of nationalities included Koreans, Yugoslavs, Poles, Irish and home-grown Americans.

Rubric Score Point: 4 anchor

Characteristics that make the paper an anchor 4:

a. Uses effective transitions.

b. Uses expressive language with descriptive phrases to create a clear picture.

c. Very few errors in conventions.

d. Uses evidence from the text to support his/her opinion.

e. The writer’s voice is an integral part of the paper.

f. Lacks complex sentences.

Additional instructional steps for the writer’s growth would include:

a. Modeling how to develop complex sentences (i.e., neither, nor).

b. Instructing the student on the rules for using quotation marks and then modeling how to apply those rules when writing.

Teacher Notes:
Have you ever been the new person? Where you the only one who spoke your language? Well, there was this one kid who was a new kid to the States and he nor his mother knew any English. They came from San Bls, Mexico. Ernesto was the kid's name. He was a plump kid with shiny black hair combed straight back, neat, cool, and faintly aloof. He was 10 years old when he arrived at the States. Though he didn't know English, it grew on to him very quickly.

Ernesto was scared and nervous on his first day of school. Ernesto was part of a group of kids called ESL, which stood for English as a second language. He seems to like school. It doesn't really seem, but he sure liked his teacher. Miss Ryan. He said she would take him into a room and help him pronounce words like pasture, low, wow, wow, and pretty. He also said he thinks English is
Tupid.

During the course of the year he started to feel better about himself, school, and his friends. One day Miss Ryan called out and said Ernesto has learned how to pronounce butterfly. He graduated with honors. Ernesto said the only reason he graduated with honors is because he fell in love with Miss Ryan.

Ernesto and I have something in common; we both have had experiences when we were the only once at a place that were different at my old school I used to be the only caucasian in my class all of the other kids were Hispanic, Asian, and African American. I felt left out everybody would make fun of me and beat me up. Ernesto had a different language.

He didn't know English when he came to America but he picked up on it pretty fast. Ernesto was a brave child who came from another
country and be proud to his classmates he was ready to take on English just like it did when he grew up he will be a pretty good candidate for a first rank job. Now all he has to do is go out there and prove it.
Rubric Score Point:   4 low

Characteristics that make the paper a low 4:

a. Fully addresses prompt.

b. Contains an excellent lead.

c. Includes a clear thesis statement.

d. Summarizes important ideas.

e. Lacks effective transitions to connect ideas.

f. Contains many errors in comma usage.

g. Needs evidence from the text to support the thesis.

Additional instructional steps for the writer's growth would include:

a. Instructing the student in the use of a comma following a dependent clause.

b. Teaching the student how to use quotes from a story to support his/her thesis.

c. Modeling for the student how to use transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas and create variety of sentence structure.

Teacher Notes:
The Barrio Boy

As we read, we form ideas and opinions about the characters in a story. At times, I can relate to Ernesto a lot.

Ernesto was a boy from Mexico and came to the United States. When he came to his school he felt very nervous and not smart at all. He didn't know a word of English and it made him feel small compared to others. While his mother was there, he felt some what safe. When she left he felt very insecure. But he knew it Miss Hubble was taking him to Miss Ryan's first grade class. One million thoughts were going through his head then. Like being embarrassed about being a 10 year old boy in a first grade class and would he fit in or not. The fear of tall energetic teachers were set aside for Miss Ryan. At first he didn't quite like her but later he fell in love. Overall going to a new school was a frightening experience for Ernesto.

I have had experiences like this. It was all the time. When I was first coming to middle school it was very hard. I was thinking if I would look smart.
will fit in. I thought that I would fail in everything. Also I would make a fool of myself. But I didn’t and the first day was fine and that whole week went ok. Until I was fine with it and didn’t have a problem. Unlike Ernesto, I was able to make friends faster than him. It turned out ok to this day still.

All in all the Barrio Boys was a great story and I enjoyed it set all turned out ok with Ernesto and I because we both made friends and it wasn’t as hard as we thought.
Rubric Score Point: 3 high

Characteristics that make the paper a high 3:

a. Strong organization in paragraphs, demonstrating a clear understanding of the text.

b. Excellent introduction, body, and conclusion.

c. Uses description language to create a clear picture.

d. Has well-chosen details and evidence from story to support ideas.

e. Is deficient in the use of verbs and their tenses.

f. Mechanics impede the voice and ideas of the writer making this a 3 rather than a 4.

Additional instructional steps for the writer’s growth would include:

a. Instructing the student on correct verb usage.

b. Exposing the student to DOL everyday in order to practice using conventions correctly.

Teacher Notes:
Moving is very hard for a lot of people. The things that make it feel peculiar is you might have different customs than the people surrounding you. Once you walk into a door that you have never set feet in it is probably one of the neatest things you can do.

Ernesto was probably feeling really nervous. He was a Spanish kid who probably felt out of place and embarrassed because there was kids who were familiar to the school. He probably didn’t know that there was other kids who come from different backgrounds.

When Ernesto went to his seat he prayed, “I shrank for those reasons. He might have panicked when his teacher checked on him because he didn’t know her and didn’t know what she thought of him.

I would feel similar to Ernesto because it is my first day and didn’t know what to expect of it. I would also go to my seat and shrink because I didn’t know anybody had different backgrounds and speak a different language.

If I had someone to tell what I was saying, I would feel uncomfortable because I can’t say it myself.

The way I would feel different would probably be I wouldn’t really feel nervous when the teacher checks on me because probably everybody feels the same way to and don’t really know all of
people. Once I found out that there is also kids with different backgrounds, I would be more comfortable and try to communicate with them so I could make the best of it like my old school.

In conclusion, when you move, I think you should try as hard as you can to make friends and enjoy all the people surrounding you, no matter what their religion is or where they came from.
District Writing Sample Scoring Rationale
Third Prompt, Grade 6
Response to Literature
Writing a Character Analysis

Rubric Score Point: 3 anchor

Characteristics that make the paper an anchor 3:

a. Includes well-chosen examples and evidence from the text culminating in a strong conclusion.

b. Contains effective transitions.

c. Organized in a logical sequence that leads to an effective understanding of the story.

d. Contains simple word choice and lacks effective descriptive language.

e. Uses only one or two sentence patterns.

f. Contains an active voice.

Additional instructional steps for the writer’s growth would include:

a. Modeling how to develop complex sentence structure.

b. Modeling how to improve word choice variety.

c. Exposing the student to quality literature that highlights interesting vocabulary.

Teacher Notes:
Ernesto is a boy who just arrived from Mexico and doesn't know English. I think Ernesto is nervous because he acts really shy in class. Ernesto does not have any friends because he just arrived and feels very lonely. Ernesto is nervous and scared and that is why he acts shy and like he doesn't know how to speak.

I think that Ernesto feels bad about himself because he doesn't know the English language. By the way, he acts you can't tell he doesn't like school, that he would rather move to another one. I know that he loves her mother because he speaks about her in a beautiful way.

When Ernesto spends more time in school, he starts to like it. You can tell because he learned how to say butterfly. He feels good because now he is starting to make new friends. I think that he likes his teacher a little for teaching him English.
Ernesto got here and went to a school. He didn't speak English. When I got here I didn't speak English either. We both felt shy and left out. He found friends after a while, but I found friends right away because they spoke my language.

At first Ernesto was nervous and scared, but now he is not. Now that he has friends and knows a little English, everything will be easier for him. Now he will be a great student in school.
District Writing Sample Scoring Rationale
Third Prompt, Grade 6
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Rubric Score Point: 3 low

Characteristics that make the paper a low 3:

a. Contains some variety in word choice.
b. Has grade-level appropriate grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.
c. Responds appropriately to the prompt.
d. Contains a unique lead that almost hooks the reader.
e. Lacks effective transitions.
f. Lacks examples and evidence to support thesis.

Additional instructional steps for the writer's growth would include:

a. Showing the student how to cite information from the text to support his/her thesis.
b. Modeling for the students how to use transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas and create a variety of sentence structures.

Teacher Notes:
Ernesto is a 10 year old Mexican boy. He is from Mexico, but in the U.S. He is here because he now is going to a bilingual class here. His principal is Mrs. Hopley and his teacher is Miss Ryan. That is just the beginning.

You know he is a 10 year old boy from the state of Mexico. He has shiny black hair that is combed back. He has brown skin like most Mexicans and probably feeling weird about going to a different school.

At the beginning, I think he didn't like Miss Ryan. Ernesto was afraid in the class like the first time I came to Stierm. Also, like me, he grew comfortable after a while, especially with Miss Ryan. Ernesto was sort of obnoxious. He also thought he was neat, cool, or slick. He is kind of like me, only in some ways, though.

At the end, I came to the conclusion he was a nice kid. I would like to be his friend. I also think he made judgements too quickly and should have wasted to make them. Besides, the Mexican part similarity, on a scale from one to ten, I give it a six. I think we would be friends, but I guess I'll have to meet him first.
Rubric Score Point: 2 high

Characteristics that make the paper a high 2:

a. Contains many errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation that sometimes interferes with understanding the writer.

b. Uses only one or two sentence patterns.

c. Contains proper paragraphing.

d. Supports his/her opinion by making connections with his/her own experiences.

e. Lacks use of transitions.

f. Lacks details from the text.

Additional instructional steps for the writer’s growth would include:

a. Modeling how to develop complex sentences.

b. Modeling for the student how to use transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas and create a variety of sentence structures.

c. Teaching the student how to use quotes from a text to support his/her thesis.

Teacher Notes:
This is a story about a boy named Ernesto. He came to the United States for the first time. Ernesto and his mom, Henniqueta, came from Nacatzan, Mexico. Ernesto's mom went to register him to Lincoln School in the United States. Ernesto felt happy in his new school, but he still felt butterflies in his stomach. When I first came to College Heights I felt the same way. Ernesto felt on his first day of school.

When Ernesto met his teacher, he was afraid. He was glad because when he saw her he felt in love with her. Miss Ryan was so nice to Ernesto. She helped him to write, read, and talk a little better in English. Ernesto was happy because he learned how to say butterfly. When I saw my teacher in 6th grade I was happy too, because just by looking at him I knew I was going to learn a lot.

I think he felt really proud about himself. I think that because you could tell in his feelings when you read the story. I was really proud about myself too because of Mr. McCall and Mr. Walker I wouldn't
been third top student.

The End
Rubric Score Point:  2 anchor

Characteristics that make the paper an anchor 2:

a. Has very few errors in mechanics.

b. Strong organization is present.

c. Attempts to respond to the prompt but fails to relate the story to self.

d. Contains little variety of word choice.

e. Includes few transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas.

Additional instructional steps for the writer’s growth would include:

a. Instructing the student on how to follow the directions of the prompt.

b. Modeling for the student how to use transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas and create a variety of sentence structures.

c. Modeling how to improve word choice variety.
Ernesto is a kid that just moved into town and is new to school. He is scared because he does not know if he'll like his teacher. He is nervous because he thinks nobody will like him. I know that's how I felt on the first day of school.

Ernesto is interested in what his teacher is teaching because he doesn't speak a lot of English. He thinks the English language is tough because he can't speak it at all.

When Ernesto first got into class, he thought he would not like his teacher now he doesn't like her, he loves her. Ernest felt proud of the way he talked, he didn't care what anyone else said and now he feels better.
District Writing Sample Scoring Rationale
Third Prompt, Grade 6
Response to Literature
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Rubric Score Point: 2 low

Characteristics that make the paper a low 2:

a. Has grade-level appropriate spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.
b. Handwriting is easy to read.
c. Attempts to respond to the prompt.
d. Contains few transitions.
e. Has little or no sentence variety.
f. Lacks proper paragraphing.

Additional instructional steps for the writer's growth would include:

a. Instructing the student on the elements and structure of a paragraph and then demonstrating how to include proper paragraphing in his/her writing.
b. Teaching the student how to use quotes from a text to support his/her thesis.

Teacher Notes:
Response to Literature

Ernesto was nervous because he already used his other school and maybe he already had friends and he would have to meet new friends. Ernesto was probably thinking about his old school, friends, and teacher. Ernesto liked his teacher after a while he was beginning to like the fact that he was going to a new school.

I remember when I first came to Longfellow I was really nervous so nervous I couldn't keep still when my mom was taking me to school. My leg kept shaking. I was really shaky but then when I got to school and met the principal and met my fifth grade teacher Miss Tutton then I forgot all about my other school, my fourth grade teacher, and my friends but...
the first two days I cried a little bit because I missed my old school, my friends, and my teacher. So I would cry but after a while I liked my school and my teacher but the only thing was nobody liked me. Also we had to wear uniforms and I don't like that because you can't wear jeans and that was my experience of Longfellow.
Rubric Score Point: 1 high

Characteristics that make the paper a high 1:

a. Lacks paragraphs and does not include details from text.

b. Contains mainly sight words with no descriptive details.

c. Does not develop a clear picture of the character.

d. Attempts to write in an active voice in relating to Ernesto’s feelings.

Additional instructional steps for the writer’s growth would include:

a. Modeling how to write a topic sentence with supporting details.

b. Instructing a student on how to write plurals and possessive forms of words.

Teacher Notes:
The main character is Ernesto.

If I was Ernesto and I had to go to a new school I would not be scared. Because I won't have any friends or I won't see my mom and I will have a new teacher. And I would miss all of my old friends and my old teachers. So if I do move to a different school I won't have any friends and I will be scared.

The End.
Rubric Score Point: 1 anchor

Characteristics that make the paper an anchor 1:

a. Contains complete sentences.
b. Writer does identify with the character.
c. Lacks paragraphs.
d. Doesn’t develop the character.
e. Doesn’t include details or examples from text.
f. Contains basic sight vocabulary.

Additional instructional steps for the writer’s growth would include:

a. Demonstrating for the student how to develop a paragraph.
b. Instructing the student on the rules for using a period and then modeling how to apply those rules when writing to avoid run-on sentences.
c. Exposing the student to quality literature that highlights interesting vocabulary.

Teacher Notes:
The main character is Ernesto Galvan. He moved to the United States from Mexico. He might have felt embarrassed and scared when he moved to his new school because I know I felt embarrassed and scared when I first went to school but then I felt welcome.