

Writing Assessment and Evaluation Rubrics

Name Class Date

Above-average Writing Model

Writing Process in Action: Personal Writing (Unit 1, pages 28–31)

Assignment: Write a one-page article about a special day or event.

Beneath the Northern Lights

One night on a camping trip in Utah last summer, I saw the greatest light show in the universe. It was the Northern Lights. I didn't believe my eyes at first. I was walking back from the showers when my little sister raced toward me, pointing at the sky.

"Look up! Near the lake!" she said.

It looked like a white searchlight was beaming through the starry sky over the lake. I thought the light was probably from something in town.

"So what?" I said to my sister and walked toward our campsite. I was tired of playing with her every day. I wanted to read a book and go to sleep. But then I noticed that people were sitting outside of their tents, pointing up at the sky. The campgrounds were completely dark except for the campfires and a few flashlights. My parents sat outside of our tent, staring up at the sky, too. My sister and I sat down with them.

"Watch," my parents whispered.

"What's happening?" I asked.

My parents said they weren't sure. Meanwhile, the beam in the sky began to slowly spread wider over the lake. At the same time, the weird, wavy light traveled quickly upward and disappeared at a single point in the sky. I felt very small beneath that strange, huge sky. Watching it was both scary and exciting. The light show continued for another twenty minutes or so, but it seemed like hours. It gradually spread so far that it covered almost the entire sky.

The next morning, the ranger said that we'd seen the Northern Lights. He said you have to be in the right place at the right time to see them. The whole day I thought about what he had said. After we returned home, I decided to try to keep my mind and eyes more open. The Northern Lights taught me that there are always amazing, new things out there in the world to see. Watching the Northern Lights was one of the best nights of my life so far.

Summary: *The piece vividly presents a special experience. It makes the event clear to the reader by telling the context in which it occurred, by describing its stages in chronological order, and by including relevant details.*

This piece would probably receive a 4 if evaluated by the holistic scoring method. It might receive a 100 if evaluated by the analytic scoring method—35 points for Focus/Organization, 35 points for Elaboration/Support/Style, and 30 points for Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics.

Clearly introduces the special event

Uses transitional phrases to make the order of events clear

Includes vivid language and specific details to describe the event

States the author's thoughts and feelings about the event

Provides a clear ending statement