

# Grade 4 Writing Prompt

## SUMMARY WRITING

### Prompt:

- Read the following informational article.
- As you read, you may mark the article or make notes. Marks and notes will not be scored.
- After reading the article, write a summary of what you have read. You have 60 minutes to read, plan, write, and proofread.
- You may re-read or go back to the article at any time.

### Process:

1. Give the prompt to the students along with one sheet of blank paper and several sheets of lined paper.
2. Tell the students to use the blank paper to do their prewriting. This may include drawing, creating a graphic organizer, making a list of ideas, or making an outline. DO NOT provide them with a pre-printed graphic organizer.
3. Tell them that they will spend the first class period doing their pre-writing and first draft.
4. Collect the Day 1 writing at the end of the class period.

*The story is on the next page.*

## Frog or Toad

Some frogs and toads look very much alike. They are cousins in the animal family, but frogs and toads are not the same.

Frogs have round bodies, big heads, and no necks. Their eyes stick out from the tops of their heads. They also have big mouths and sticky tongues. Many types of frogs have teeth on their upper jaws.

Frog skin is smooth. It also feels wet, as if the frog has just stepped out of a shower. So about every ten days, when their skin becomes too tight, frogs shed their old skin. They have brand new skin underneath.

Frogs have short front legs and long back legs. Their back legs are also very strong. This allows them to move quickly by jumping long distances.

Most types of frogs need to live close to the water. Their bodies are made for living in water. During the day, you might find some frogs sitting near water. They never go very far away from it though.

Toads have stout bodies, big heads, and no necks. Their eyes sit on top of their heads, and they also have big mouths and sticky tongues. Toads do not have teeth.

Toads have skin that is bumpy and rough. It feels very dry. Toads also take off their old skin. However, they need new skin every three or four days.

Toads have short back legs. They take short hops to get from one place to another. Their back legs are for hopping instead of for jumping. It takes them quite awhile to get to where they want to be.

Most toads live on land. Some live many miles away from water. Others go into the water only to lay their eggs. Toads often hide during the day. They like to come out after dark, then go back to their hiding places in the daytime.

Frogs and toads may look the same, but they are different in many ways. No matter which you see, both frogs and toads are fun to watch.

## Day 2

1. Pass out the student checklist (below and on separate document).

### Writing Checklist: Summary

Self	Elements	✓
CONTENT	Include the main ideas of the article.	
	Include the important details related to the main ideas.	
	Use your own words (don't copy!).	
	Try using synonyms for key words to say the same thing.	
CONVENTIONS	Capital letters (beginning of sentence, names, dates etc.).	
	Spelling (Hint: reread backwards!).	
	Punctuation (.,!,?, " ", ', , )	
	Neatness (Skip lines, don't forget to indent, space between words.)	

2. Tell students to re-read their writing and revise to make sure they have used enough detail and that their writing is organized and uses interesting words.
3. After 10-20 minutes, ask students to begin editing their writing using the prompts on the checklist.
4. When students finish editing, give them a new sheet of lined paper and ask them to re-copy into a final draft.
5. Staple all sheets together after students complete this task.
6. Use the attached rubric for scoring.
7. Make sure to save anchor papers to compare with other teachers and use for teaching revision and editing next year.

**Standards Based**  
**Writing Samples Rubric**  
**FOURTH GRADE – Summary**

Performance Level	Writing Applications	Writing Strategies	Written & Oral Language Conventions
<b>4</b> <b>ADVANCED</b> <b>(Exceeds Grade Level Standard)</b>	Uses the strategies of level 3, plus other examples, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clearly identifies the main idea of the reading selection</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identifies the most significant details</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writes an effective concluding paragraph that summarizes the points</li> </ul>	Uses the strategies of level 3, plus other examples, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provides clear focus and a specific point of view</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Completes a draft, revision, and final version</li> </ul>	Uses the strategies of level 3, plus other examples, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses different sentence types and structures correctly and effectively</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has few or no errors in spelling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses capitalization and punctuation (including dialogue) correctly and effectively</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> <b>PROFICIENT</b> <b>(Meets Grade Level Standard)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identifies the main idea of the reading selection</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identifies the most significant details</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrases ideas, rather than copying directly from the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provides a focus and appropriate point of view</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilizes paragraphs that are clear and organized by the main idea</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Topic sentence is clear</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writes legibly with appropriate spacing, indentation, and margins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses complete and correct, simple and compound sentence structures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses quotation marks in dialogue appropriately</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has few errors in spelling and they do not distract the reader</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization, punctuation (including parentheses and apostrophes), and grammar with few mistakes</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> <b>BASIC</b> <b>(Approaches Grade Level Standard)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Generally identifies the main idea of the reading selection</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identifies some significant details</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> May copy some ideas directly from text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses a focus and general point of view</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writes legibly for the most part</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses only simple sentence structures for the most part</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has occasional errors in quotation marks in dialogue</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has mistakes in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, or grammar that are distracting</li> </ul>
<b>1</b> <b>BELOW BASIC</b> <b>(Below Grade Level Standard)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fails to identify the main idea of the reading selection</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses few or insignificant details</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Copies ideas directly from the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provides little focus and unclear point of view</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organizes writing poorly</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writes illegibly or uses incorrect spacing which impedes readability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses poor sentence structure</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and spelling incorrectly that impede understanding</li> </ul>

*Adapted from materials from the San Diego County Office of Education [www.sdcoe.net](http://www.sdcoe.net)*