

AFTER THREE YEARS AT SCHOOL

ILLUSTRATING THE WRITING STANDARD

Compost worms

The task exemplifies the writing demands of the English curriculum working towards level 2.

The context for this piece of writing is a cross-curricular study of recycling. The class has been given a worm farm during a visit from their local council recycling manager, has read "Worm Wise" (School Journal, Part 1 Number 2, 2002) as a shared reading text, and has made their own worm farms.

The task is to develop instructions for making a worm farm. The teacher has supported the students before the writing by revising the purpose and structure of procedural writing

and has reminded the students about making the written instructions clear and precise for the reader. The students are now writing independently.

This is the student's first draft. Features of the writing that demonstrate the standard are described below.

The following example illustrates the sorts of writing that teachers can expect of students who are meeting the standard. To meet the standard, students draw on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for writing described in the Literacy Learning Progressions for students at this level.

This piece of writing shows a clear response to the task. The student has included relevant content and created an effective set of instructions for making a worm farm.

The student uses appropriate structural features (title, subheadings, labelled illustrations, and logically sequenced steps).

The student uses punctuation appropriately, including a dash to connect ideas in step 6.

The student shows an awareness of the purpose and the audience through his use of imperative verbs at the start of each step, by addressing the reader directly ("Make sure you add"), and by including a warning at step 6 ("not meat ...").

The student uses subject-specific vocabulary ("compost", "worms", "container", "shredded newspaper").

The student spells most words correctly and proofreads his work, marking it up with red pencil.

The student uses a variety of sentence structures and connectives to join ideas ("with", "to", "and").

The student uses precise, descriptive language to clarify the procedure. For example, precise verbs ("Sprinkle", "Drip", "dampen", "Make sure"); prepositions ("in", "under", "over") and a prepositional phrase ("with a hole in the bottom"); adjectives ("big", "shredded", "dairy", "new", "strong"); qualifiers ("about", "some", "a little bit", "often"); and an example ("Something strong like carpet").

