

Narrative, Level H, Proficient for End of 5th Grade and Beginning of Sixth Grade

The Battle Cry of Freedom

(Published book; revised and edited with little teacher support. Typed by student.)

Perry

The boy's young green eyes shone in the light as he gave the beat of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." He thought about how his mother begged him not to leave when he joined the Pennsylvania Volunteers. Soon his thoughts withered away, the alert was spread, the Reb's were in sight. The 110th Pennsylvania Infantry's job was to split Stuart and Lee's army in two by going directly in center cutting off all communications from Lee to Stuart, and vice versa. The drummer boy glanced at the Stars and Stripes flying high; below the flag was his great friend, John.

"Jed, Jed, pay attention; we've been playing 'Da Batter Cry of Freedom' for two minutes now." The crackling, almost terrified, voice of John came from the beloved flag of The USA. Jed's reaction was direct change of song from the beat of "When Johnny Come Marching Home" to the rhythm of "The Battle Cry of Freedom." Soon the troops set camp about a mile out of Chancellorville.

Late at night Jed—15 years old—with the drum, John—17—with the Stars and stripes, and Hank in his early twenties with the 110 regimental flag set up a tent near the other flag bearers and drummer boys. Jed tried not to think about the battle.

"How long you been away from home, Hank?" Jed was trying not to start a conversation on the upcoming battle, but he said this in a terrified manner.

The answer was though about for awhile. Sitting there almost pale face was not the Hank Kennedy the two boys knew, not even the one Hank knew. "Too long, how about you two?"

"One month, two months I don't know. There is one thing I know, that th...this is my first battle," John replied. Being about to puke jed passed out at the thought of a bayonet sticking him in the stomach.

At the first sign of sun the three boys where up and not sure if they were ready for the most traumatizing event of their lives, and for some their last....

As the boys approached the great wave of gray, the first shots were fired. Men fell injured but not yet ready to enter Kingdom Come. As they closed in on the Reb's they played the song "The Army of the Free.*" As the Army of the Potomac marched on towards railroads that they were to destroy Jed noticed not all the men were on horses, some were on foot because their horses died from a gunshot wound. They had long rifles like the men his army, with a bayonet on top.

When the railroad was destroyed, they tried to hold the cavalry away from Chancellorville. More and more of the cavaliers were forced to walk and fight on foot. Once a bullet barely missed Jed's drum.

Battle Cry of Freedom

As hours went by many men fell. They had passed a man with a bayonet on his rifle. He used the bayonet to stab the wounded men of the Potomac.

The man struck a soldier in the side as he was passing. As quickly as the injured man fell, the “bayonet man” died. As they marched along, they saw more “bayonet men.”

In confusion, one struck Hank in the stomach. As the man drew his gun back for another blow, Jed unstrapped his drum and jumped on Hank only to be stabbed in the back. Blood gushed out of Jed’s back, leaving both of the helpless to die....

*This song is about a battle similar to Chancellerville.

Sample Scoring

Battle Cry of Freedom (Narrative, H)

Ideas/Content:

1. Engages readers with authoritative background knowledge of the topic gained from extensive reading about the Civil War
2. Has an emerging theme about war: young men (and women) show bravado going into the service at war time; then experience fear or dread when the reality of war is realized; and finally they regain their bravery when the battle is at hand.
3. Develops characters with details as the story unfolds

Structure/Organization:

1. Good story structure, is able to develop one event in particular in the middle of the story, but is missing a strong climax and resolution

Voice/Point of View:

1. Shows descriptions and emotions through writer’s personal style and voice
2. Writes effectively in 3rd person while maintaining 1st person in dialogue
3. Could be more specific when using “they”

Word Choice/Description:

1. Uses dialogue and description to attempt to show the audience rather than tell some details
2. Uses precise academic terms appropriate for the topic
3. Includes colorful language (including a metaphor) to communicate clearly
4. Uses appropriate transitional words, phrases and clauses to show cohesion throughout the piece and to indicate time shifts

Sentence Fluency/Structure:

1. Uses a variety (structure, style, and length) of sentences, but does not always punctuate correctly
2. Sentences have rhythm that allows readers to become more engaged

Please Note: When scoring a paper, begin with the middle column, the Proficient level for the month and grade level. As you look at the bullets for Ideas and Content (for example), if the paper seems to fit the description in the Continuum, then decide if it is Proficient at 1 (minimally developed), 2 (adequately developed) or 3 (thoroughly developed). If you find yourself debating over two levels, choose the lower level.

Read the bullets holistically. It is impossible for any instrument to match bullet by bullet for each paper a student might write. If the Proficient column is more advanced, move to the left to the Basic or even Below Basic levels for Ideas and Content. If the Proficient level isn't adequate, then move to the right to the Advanced or Advanced+ levels.

We have only scored 4-5 features as a demonstration. You will likely choose to score different features on different papers according the genre, purpose for writing, or the draft (1st, continuing or final).