

Writing in Role Level 4, Sample 1

Dear Villagers,

I cannot leave this village at this time, and I hope I never will. I've lived here for many years all by myself, lonely and afraid. In the last few months though, there has been a change. I have found a way to live my life to the fullest. I live each day to see the children come out to the woods and play. I have witnessed so many wonderful things and experienced so many new and exciting emotions that I find it hard to believe you would try and take them away from me. I am in complete shock at your actions towards me, even though I have done nothing to deserve this treatment. I intended to do no harm and I still intend to do no harm. I can only wish you will change your mind. I wish for peace among the villagers and I only hope that you will understand why I can't leave.

I have lived here all my life. The last few years have been the worst though. All of my relatives have died. I became very lonely, and anxious for friends and companions. I've felt the pain and sorrow of a cold, dark, long night all by myself with the only hope being that maybe the village children will come out and play in the woods the next morning. I've been working up courage to expose my true self, the harmless one, but it seems as though you have seen me before I have had the chance to. I wish only for the chance to prove to you that I'm a friendly monster, who wishes for your friendship and also to be thought of as a helpful neighbour. I wish only to be accepted even if its just being able to stay here in the woods. The only time I would show myself would be to help defend you if you asked me. It would be nice to be able see you and watch you, and then I wouldn't be so lonely.

If you can't understand where I'm coming from, lock yourself in a black, cold, dark room and lie on the cold, damp floor with no one else around you while bats swoop around your head, knowing that outside waiting for you are people waiting to kill you.

Think how you would feel if you knew that if you were to make it out alive, you would be hurt and ridiculed for no reason at all. Imagine the despair of trying to overcome your shyness and to finally be ready to present yourself in a way that you hoped would be accepted, when you come walking through the woods and you find your death notice. They are forcing you to leave and they haven't even given you a chance. It's either leave or die. Next to this notice is a small message of love and of friendship, wishing for you to stay but also warning you that you should flee as fast as you can, as far away as you can, as soon as possible. Just think. Someone this close cares about you and you have to leave them. After all this time alone you would have a friend, only to find them telling you to leave before you get to meet them. Your only chance at having a friend, gone. Where are you to go? This has always been your home. You don't even know where you might sleep the next night. You don't know if there will be enough food to last you much longer.

Imagine the pain as you walk away. Imagine the heaviness in your heart as you leave the only place that there was any hope.... Imagine....

Then bring yourself back to that black, cold, dark room while the bats swoop above your head as you lie on the cold, damp floor all alone and think about how you would feel... Think...

I will not leave tonight, but I promise you, if you still believe it better if I leave, please leave another note and I will leave as soon as I can. Please don't bring your guns. I don't want to be the cause of your children being exposed to the horrible results of shooting. I do not wish for you to get violent. I hate violence, but I will also let you know that if I do leave I will not go far. I will still come around and watch you every so often, because I care. Even if you don't care about me ... I care...I have feelings too. I'm just like you on the inside and that's all that counts...
The heart.

Yours sincerely,
The (friendly) Monster

Teacher's Notes

Theory (Knowledge/Understanding)

- The student demonstrates a high degree of understanding of the fictional circumstances of the drama (e.g., the plot is clearly and effectively presented; the writing is highly realistic and the characters presented are believable – “I live each day to see the children come out to the woods to play”; there is a highly developed sense of justice, suggesting a peaceful resolution to the conflict – “I only wish for a chance to prove to you that I am a friendly monster”, “If you can't understand ...”).

Thinking/Inquiry

- The student demonstrates a high degree of empathy when writing from the creature's perspective (e.g., conveys a distinctive perspective and an impression of the possible relationships between the creature and the villagers; shows a thoughtful involvement in the emotions of the story, which creates compassion for the characters on both sides of the conflict; creates a high level of sympathy through the use of evocative imagery – “lock yourself in a black ...”; and reflects a highly developed passion for compromise and respect – “I wish only for the chance to prove to you ...”).

Communication

- The student communicates the creature's thoughts, feelings, and attitudes with a high degree of effectiveness (e.g., communicates thought-provoking information and ideas in an interesting and effective fashion; communicates insights, deeply felt emotions, and clear, distinct attitudes – “I hate violence”; and makes effective use of language to create vivid images – “... cold, dark room ... bats swoop around ...”).

Creation (Application)

- The student explores the role with a high degree of concentration and focus when writing from the creature’s perspective.
- The student has focused on the details of the creature’s life, which brings depth and dimension to the role (e.g., “In the last few months though, there has been a change. I have found a way to live my life to the fullest. I live each day to see the children come out to the woods and play”).
- The student’s concentration on vivid imagery and an effective use of repetition brings the creature’s inner pain to life for the reader (e.g., “Imaging the pain as you walk away. Imaging the heaviness in your heart. ... Imagine. ...”).

Comments/Next Steps

- This student draws the reader into the creature’s experience, using vivid imagery.
- To improve, this student needs to complete a final edit and revision to ensure that the narrative is succinct, without losing the vivid imagery and strong emotional impact of the letter.

Writing in Role Level 4, Sample 2

Dear villagers,

I cannot leave this village. The notice I read has led me to believe that fears and myths about me have made you think I mean you harm. Please believe me when I tell you that it's exact opposite of that. Causing you harm or pain is something I would never even think of doing.

I have spent so many years alone, in isolation, as I am the last of my kind. Each day I watch your village, in fascination. I watch as everyone happily lives together, hoping that one day, I too can be part of the love that you share. But I watch only, knowing that I could never be a part of it.

I cannot leave this forest. This forest is my home, just as the village is your home. It is where I have found comfort even in my isolation. It is where I live, where I find my food, sleep, and where I can watch the villagers, yet still remain invisible and concealed. I watch the villagers, not to "stalk" them, but to learn, and fill the empty space in my life which is alone.

So please do not ask me to leave my home, for I cannot do that. I only ask that you take no drastic measures be taken, for they are not needed. I don't know how to make you believe that I pose no threat to you, and I can hope is that you believe what I have told you. That I am not a bloodthirsty creature intent on destroying your village, but as a creature with feelings, who only wants a friend. Perhaps I could meet your villagers, and show them that they truly have nothing to fear, and that exiling me from this forest is a cruel thing to do. Nature intended for all living things to live together in harmony, whether these living things are creatures living in forests, or human beings living in a village.

I will not hate you for your final decision, whatever it may be, but I will respect you more if you make the right one.

I remain respectfully,

"The Creature in the Forest"

Teacher's Notes

Theory (Knowledge/Understanding)

- The student demonstrates a high degree of understanding of the fictional circumstances of the drama (e.g., includes a highly credible plot structure; has appropriately internalized the conflict between the creature and the villagers; exhibits keen observations of the fictional world, which creates a high level of reality – "Each day I watch your village, in fascination").

Thinking/Inquiry

- The student demonstrates a high degree of empathy when writing from the creature's perspective. This masterful presentation of a "creature with feelings" looking for friendship and harmony contains a highly effective use of contrast that explores the boundaries of the creature's empathy.

Communication

- The student communicates the creature's thoughts, feelings, and attitudes with a high degree of effectiveness (e.g., "... found comfort even in my isolation") and presents a highly logical explanation of the creature's strategic position, heartfelt needs, and a desire for positive change (e.g., "Perhaps I could meet your villagers, and show them that they truly have nothing to fear").

Creation (Application)

- The student explores the role with a high degree of concentration and focus when writing from the creature's perspective.
- The student has concentrated on giving voice to the feelings of the character and conveying the creature's point of view with a careful choice of vocabulary and a respectful tone (e.g., "So please do not ask me to leave my home, for I cannot do that"; "Each day I watch your village, in fascination. I watch as everyone happily lives together, hoping that one day, I too can be part of the love that you share").

Comments/Next Steps

- This student has established the voice of the character through the rhythm and formal tone of the letter.
- To improve, this student needs to ensure that main ideas are emphasized without being repetitive and to revisit the last line to ensure that it communicates the intended message.