Personal Narrative

**Score 4 Benchmark Paper** The writer stays clearly focused on writing about a personal experience that follows the prompt. The narrative is told in a logical order with an interesting beginning, middle, and end. The writer has used the word *I* to tell about the personal experience. The writer has also used exact words and sensory details to tell who, what, when, and where (*wet sand; white, black, and brown seashells; splashing and swimming in the salty waves*). This helps to give the reader a clear picture of what happened. The writer varies the beginning of sentences (*Last summer, One sunny day, Every day, Kim and I*) so that the paper flows smoothly.

**Score 3 Benchmark Paper** The story is, for the most part, focused on the prompt. The writer includes a beginning, middle, and end, and the events flow in a logical order. The narrative includes some details about the surprise, but more elaboration about the surprise would make the story more interesting. Exact words are needed to replace some vague words (*nice fur, big nose*). The writer has varied sentence beginnings and types.

**Score 2 Benchmark Paper** The writer stays somewhat focused on the prompt, but the paper includes some unrelated details. The narrative is often confusing because of events out of sequence. For example, the tooth is put under the pillow before it is lost. Most of the paper has little supporting elaboration or detail. In the first sentence, there is no explanation of who *He* is. It may also be difficult to tell whether the writer is surprised by losing a tooth, finding a quarter, or both. More exact words are needed throughout. The writer begins almost every sentence with *I*. Sentences are repetitive, short, and choppy.
Score 1 Benchmark Paper The writer does not remain focused on the prompt. Although the writer begins with a sentence about being surprised by a friend, there is no further elaboration on this topic. The paper becomes a list of surprises with no supporting details. The narrative does not have a clear middle or end. Sentences are short and repetitive. The writer begins three consecutive sentences with the phrase I got.