

Writing Assessment and Evaluation Rubrics

Name Class Date

Above-average Writing Model

Writing Process in Action: Descriptive Writing (Unit 3, pages 148–151)

Assignment: For a photography exhibition catalog, write a vivid one- to two-page description of a scenic photograph and convey its emotional impact.

The Eyes of the Ocean

The sea, a luminous gray, spills across the bottom of the picture. The brooding sky, like an echo of the sea, spreads itself across the top portion of the photograph. Between the two of them, a town huddles in shadow. The viewer finds herself unable to look away from the photograph. There seems to be some dark truth in it.

“Invisible Borders,” a color photograph by Mae Kelley, was taken from a boat about a mile off shore. The perspective captures a portion of the town that runs along the beach, but the buildings, silhouetted in the afternoon light, blend into a strange, dark mass. Only the windows of a few houses, reflecting the afternoon light, are visible to the observant eye, and the town looks small and forlorn, like a wrecked ship waiting to be saved.

In contrast, the viewer’s proximity to the ocean and the sky reveals breathtaking colors and shapes. A golden, whitish light pierces the grayish-teal sky as if it were thread weaving an intricate fabric. The sea flows into a liquid swirl of silvers, blues, and grays. This purposeful contrast between the dark, empty town and the rich, vibrant water and sky adds to the photograph’s unusual perspective, making it seem as if the viewer were looking at human civilization through the eyes of someone more sympathetic to nature than the average technology-minded human being. The work suggests how completely the majesty of nature can overshadow many human accomplishments. The result is a strange beauty that causes the viewer to ponder the way the natural and civilized worlds interact.

“Invisible Borders” is one of many beautiful, thought-provoking images of Massachusetts seascapes in this exhibition of Kelley’s work. Like the rest of the exhibition, the photograph invites us to contemplate ourselves within the larger natural world that surrounds us.

Summary: This essay uses vivid word choices to convey a strong emotional response to the photograph—feelings such as loneliness and awe—without directly stating the emotions. Additionally, the method of organization (by order of importance) effectively combines the writer’s emotional response to the photograph and the physical description of it.

This piece might receive a 4 if evaluated by the holistic scoring method. It might receive a 97 if evaluated by the analytic scoring method—33 points for Focus/Organization, 35 points for Elaboration/Support/Style, and 29 points for Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics.

Opening engages reader and suggests the photo’s impact.

Establishes vantage point; includes details to re-create photo and to convey emotions

Effectively uses transitions and vivid word choices

Maintains vantage point; presents a clear response to photo

Provides details about exhibition to add context to description