

## Grade 4 Narrative

### Art Class Snapshots

Only two weeks until summer vacation! Carl and Sam couldn't wait until they could spend their days riding bikes and skateboards, playing outside with their neighborhood friends, swimming at the lake, and sleeping late. It was going to be a great summer!

The last two weeks of school were usually a time of celebrating. Each year a talent show was held on the last day. Carl and Sam planned to do a comedy routine with jokes they had been practicing. After the talent show, everyone would eat lunch outside. Grilled burgers and hot dogs would be provided for students, teachers, and staff.

This year Carl and Sam's art teacher, Ms. Gibbons, assigned a unique final project to present on the last day of school.

"I would like all of you to think about the end of the school year in a new way. I will give each group of five students a camera to share for a week. During that time, I want each member of the group to photograph events that happen during the day. Photos can be taken at school, at home, or any other place that is part of your day. Each member of the group will use the photographs to make a collage that describes his or her day," explained Ms. Gibbons.

Carl looked around the room to see others' reactions to the project. He thought the art project sounded extremely fun. He was looking forward to walking through the day with a camera.

"When can we start?" Carl asked Ms. Gibbons.

"Right now!" replied Ms. Gibbons as she distributed the cameras.

On the walk home from school, Carl and Sam discussed the art project. The two boys lived next door to each other. They were in the same art group, and they were sharing the camera with three other students. They both agreed the project was awesome.

"I have several pictures from school today," said Sam.

"I am going to take some at home, but let's take some now!" exclaimed Carl.

Carl focused the camera and took a picture of some sidewalk ants. Sam used the camera to capture a picture of the mighty oak giving him shade.

Carl had never thought about all the little things he did each day. He had never noticed the details that surrounded him. In the morning just as he awoke, a ray of sunshine came through his curtain and shone on the floor. Birds were eating the red berries that grew in the hedge. Carl saw so many hiding places in his backyard, and when he sat quietly with his camera poised,

he could take a different picture from each place. Carl's turn ended, and he reluctantly gave the camera to another group member.

After one week, Ms. Gibbons taught the students how to review their photos, print them, cut them, and display them. The process took a few days to complete, but at last the projects were ready. Carl stood back to observe his collage, and then he circulated around the room to study his peers' completed projects.

No words were used in the collages, yet so much was being said. Carl was amazed at the differences among the pictures.

"We all go to the same school and live in the same town, but we have unique experiences every day," he said.

"That is a wonderful observation, Carl! That is exactly what I was hoping each of you would come to understand," said Ms. Gibbons.

## Grade 4 Informational

### Wolves Talk

Can you imagine one wolf telling another wolf what it thinks? Are you picturing an angry wolf growling? Are you imagining a happy wolf wagging its tail? When one wolf threatens another, it does growl, and a wolf that wants to play wags its tail. But there's more to "wolf talk" than that.

Wolves live in family groups called "packs." A pack has two leaders, a mother and father. It also contains some of the leaders' pups (puppies), and often several aunts or uncles. Together the wolves hunt for food by following the tracks of deer, moose and rabbits. They also work together to raise the pups. One of the aunts may watch the pups while the parents and other adults go off to hunt. To work together, wolves need to share simple ideas, which means they need to "talk."

#### YIPS, YAPS AND TAILS

Wolves "talk" much the same way that you talk to your friends. Whereas you use words, wolves talk with barks, whines and growls. With a simple whine, a wolf says, "I'm your friend." With a bark, it says, "What's that? I don't like it and I'm scared." A growl is the way one wolf warns another wolf that it is angry.

Sometimes sounds just aren't enough. Both people and wolves add body language to express more clearly what they are thinking or feeling. Imagine someone asking you, "Are you serious?" If the person is laughing and smiling, then you know that he or she thinks what you said is funny. If the person is scowling with hands on hips, he or she doesn't like what you just said and might even be angry.

When a wolf barks, it tells other wolves it is worried, but not exactly how worried it is. This information comes from body language, such as the position of its ears or tail. If the wolf's ears are sideways (drawing 1), this shows that the wolf is worried but not very afraid. This is similar to the message sent by a stiff tail held level with the ground (drawing 2). That means, "I might bite." If the barking wolf has its ears laid back (drawing 3) or its tail tucked, it may have spotted serious trouble or even danger.

Tails, ears and barks work well when the wolves can see each other. But how can wolves still talk when they can't see each other?

#### OUT OF SIGHT

Wolves that cannot see each other send messages over distances of up to ten miles by howling. Each wolf in a pack has its own howl. When a wolf howls, its voice may drop in pitch or rise in pitch. The rise or drop may be smooth or it may flutter from step to step. What does a

howl mean?

Wolves howl for many reasons. The first is to call the pack together, much as one of your parents may call you in for dinner. A pack leader may start this kind of group howl by barking a few times to get the attention of other wolves in its pack. Then it starts to howl. Soon the whole pack is gathered together and all are howling. If one wolf starts to howl on the same note as another, the first wolf will slide to another note so that each wolf howls a different note in this family song.

A single wolf may also howl if it is lost and cannot find its pack. When wolves hunt, they don't always stay together. A few animals may circle ahead of where a deer is while other wolves stay behind it. One wolf may become separated from the pack and think it is running toward its family when it is really running farther and farther away. When it realizes it is lost, a wolf will let loose a shorter howl than it uses when howling in a group. It is asking for help, calling out "Where are you all?" When the pack hears this call, it will howl back. "Here we are." Then the animals can rejoin each other.

Just as a single wolf may howl for different reasons, so may a pack. Packs often gather and howl together before they set off to hunt. Because this kind of group howl takes place before a hunt, many scientists think it is a call to find food. "I'm hungry! When are we going to eat?"

Howling serves yet another purpose. When one pack howls as a group, this lets other wolves know the pack is there. This means that a pack trying to move into a new area with better hunting will know that other wolves already live there. "This is our home. The hunting here is ours."

With their ears, the tilt of their tail, and a number of calls, wolves have developed ways to share information. Scientists are only beginning to understand how all of these codes work together. While they are busy studying, though, wolves just keep "talking."