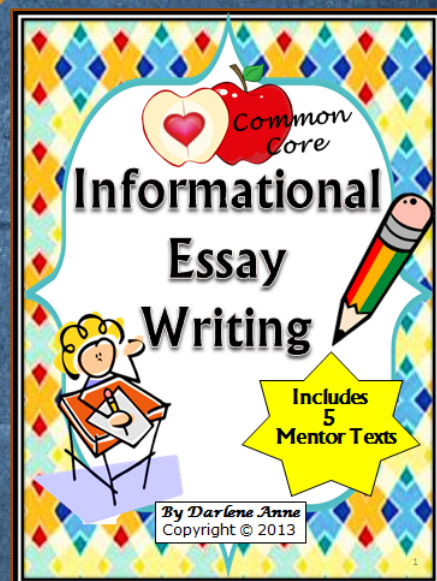
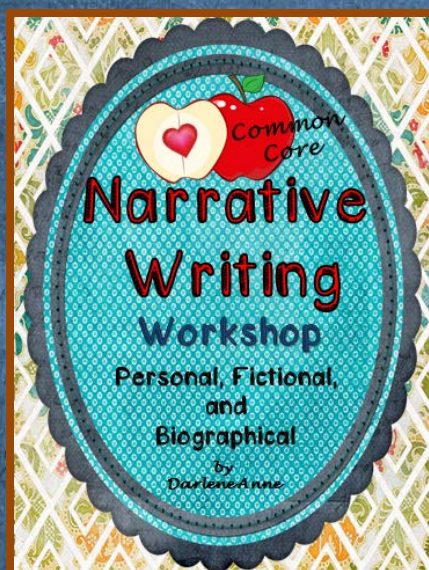
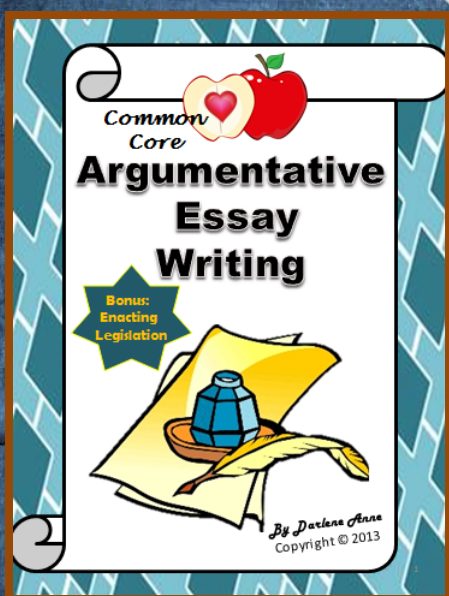
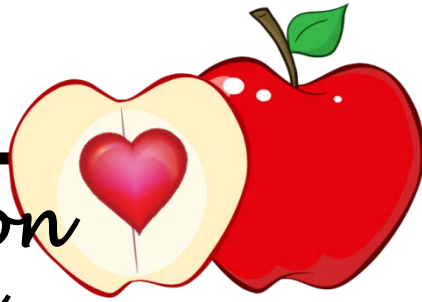


Complete Common Core Writing Bundle Grades 6-8

Argumentative, Narrative,
and Informational
Writing



by
Darlene Anne



Common
Core

Argumentative Essay Writing

**Bonus:
Enacting
Legislation**



By Darlene Anne
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How to Write an Argumentative Essay

This unit is flexible and can be used in many ways. I have designed it to be used in order; however, you may find that certain parts can be switched around or omitted. It all depends on the ability levels of the students using the unit.

It aligns with the following Common Core Writing and Language Standards:

- W.6.1; W.6.1a-e; W.6.7; W.6.9; W.6.10
- W.7.1; W.7.1a-e; W.7.7; W.7.9; W.7.10
- W.8.1; W.8.1a-e; W.8.7; W.8.9; W.8.10
- W.9-10.1; W.9-10.1a-e; W.9-10.9; W.9-10.10

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Bonus

How to Use this Unit

- This unit is easy to use. I've designed it the way I would use it in my class. You may have other ideas.
- You might introduce the unit by starting with a few mentor texts, but the essay example on page 10 also serves as a mentor text. You can then ask students what they notice about the purpose, evidence, and organization of the essay.
- Then I would introduce the terminology sheet on page 4. And then I would just go in order through the unit.
- When you are ready to assign a topic, you can give students a specific topic, or you can give them the list on page 18. You can even have them find their own by using the questions on pages 12 & 13.
- Mini lessons on punctuating quotes, reliable research sources, and paraphrasing might be helpful, depending on your students' needs.
- I hope you and your students enjoy much success using this unit!
- **Bonus:** I've included several pages on using the essays to enact legislation. The essays can easily become letters to government officials. We've had success with the letters (a senator was so impressed that he came to visit!) So I thought I'd share. If you use this section and have similar results I'd love to know!

Thank you!
Darlene

Argumentative Essay Terminology

What is argumentative writing?

Argumentative writing is writing in which a writer makes a claim about a topic and then supports it with logic and evidence. Learning how to write an effective argument is key to learning critical thinking skills and is an important part of “school” writing and real life.

How does it differ from persuasive writing?

Persuasive writing also involves making a claim. However, the supporting details are based on feeling and emotions.

Argumentative Writing Terminology

Term	Definition
argument	Making a claim and supporting it using logic.
persuasion	Making a claim and supporting it using feelings and emotions.
claim	The point that you are trying to get your readers to accept.
evidence	Facts that support your claim.
bridge/warrant	Statement that explains how the evidence supports and connects to the claim.
counter-argument/concession	Challenging the argument by addressing the position of someone who may not agree with the argument.
turn-back	Demonstrating why the counter-argument is wrong.
audience	Who will be affected by the topic? Who will read the essay?

Organizing the Argument Essay

For an argument essay to be effective, you must organize your ideas, provide solid supporting evidence, and present the information clearly. Let's take a look at how that's done.

An argument essay is usually at least 5 paragraphs. It requires an introductory paragraph, at least 3 body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.

Introduction

The first paragraph is where you will hook the reader and state your claim. The claim is the thesis statement.



Body Paragraph #1

This paragraph includes first reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence such as facts, examples, and data.



Body Paragraph #2

This paragraph includes the second reason that your claim is valid. Support it with evidence, such as facts, examples, and data.



Body Paragraph #3

The paragraph should introduce an opposing claim, which is the counter-argument or concession. It also contains the turn-back, which takes the reader back to your claim and position.



Conclusion

The last paragraph restates the thesis statement and summarizes the main idea of the argument. It also contains a strong concluding statement.

Writing the Introductory Paragraph

The **introduction** to your essay has three parts and purposes.

- 1)Lead:** The lead “hooks” readers and encourages them to keep reading. Try one of the following:

Lead	Example
Quote (by a famous person)	President Obama once said, “ During the summer, students are losing a lot of what they learn. A longer school year makes sense.”
Unusual Detail	According to historians, American farm children once attended school from December to March and mid-May to August.
Statistic or Fact	Experts say that during the summer, students lose approximately 22 percent of what they learned during the school year.
Strong Statement	Students must attend school; a shorter school year is comparable to child neglect.
Question	Are most Americans satisfied that compared to their peers in Europe and Asia, American students score lower on achievement tests?
Anecdote	There was a time when summer vacation meant endless lazy days, sitting on the porch, watching the bees pollinate the flowers.

- 2)Introduce the issue:** Briefly explain the issue and the controversy surrounding the argument. Give background information.

Ex. Much to the public’s dismay, summer vacations are in jeopardy in America, as the Secretary of Education pushes forward with a movement to extend the school year.

- 3)State your claim:** This is the **thesis statement**. It is a promise to the reader that the essay will address the argument and prove the claim. Use one of these key words to form the thesis:

***Reasons *Benefits *Advantages or Disadvantages**

Ex. There are definite advantages associated with switching to a year round school schedule in the United States.

Writing the Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs #1&2: Support the thesis statement/claim.

- 1) Start with a **topic sentence** that includes a **reason** people should be convinced by the argument.

Ex. In order for students to improve academically, and avoid “summer slide,” American students should attend school year round.

- 2) Then include specific **evidence** to support the **thesis statement** (the claim). Use **facts, examples and statistics** to back up the claim.

Ex. For example, Balsz, a district in Arizona, saw reading test scores go up from 51 percent to 65 percent after extending the school year by 20 days.

- 3) Follow each piece of evidence with a **bridge** to explain how the evidence supports the claim.

Ex. This significant increase proves that students benefit by having more time in school.

- 4) Close with a **concluding sentence**.

Ex. It is possible to improve student test scores by requiring more days in school.

Text-reference and transition words and phrases to use in the body paragraphs:

First,
For example,
Furthermore,
Therefore,
According to

Also,
Above all,
Additionally,
Consequently,
For instance,

Finally,
Particularly,
Specifically,
Due to

Writing the Counter Argument Body Paragraph

Body paragraph #3: Writing the opposing argument.

- 1) The opposing argument, also called the **counter argument or concession**, proves that you fully understand the topic, and that you are fair minded.

Transition words and phrases to use in the counter argument:

It might seem that
Of course,
Certainly

It's true that
One might object
At first glance,

Admittedly,
While
Some people claim

- 2) The **turn back** is a return to the original argument. Be sure to refute the opposing claim.

Transition words and phrases to use in the turn back:

Yet,
Still

Despite
Except

However,
Conversely,

Nevertheless,
Even so,

Ex. Some critics of year round school say that the real results of studies that seem to show score increases in year round schools are inconclusive , and it is difficult to pinpoint the real reason for the increases. However, there is no doubt that students in Europe, where there is year round school, outperform American students on achievement tests.

Writing the Concluding Paragraph

The **concluding** paragraph is important, as it must close the issue by showing the topic has been covered thoroughly. It should also provide an idea as to how people should be warned about the topic, or how they can benefit from the position argued.

1) Begin by restating the thesis statement or claim.

Ex. Year round school is the answer to the economic and educational problems in the United States.

2) Then, present one or two sentences that summarize the reasons and evidence.

Ex. A year round schedule will prevent students from losing the hard earned knowledge gained during the school year.

3) Finally, provide a benefit that will result from complying with or heeding the argument. Or provide a call to action to move the audience into wanting to make a change.

Ex. The nation's future depends upon having intelligent citizens. Schools must be year round in order to graduate such citizens.

General Tips

Do	Do Not
Use strong, convincing language.	Weaken your argument by using "I believe" or "I think."
Use reliable websites for research.	Make up "facts" or statistics.
Use 2-3 facts, examples, and/or statistics per body paragraph.	Rely on personal experiences.
Be respectful of those who disagree with your position.	Insult those who disagree.

Argument Essay Example

Directions: Read this argument essay that was written by a student. Label the following parts in the right-hand margin:

- Hook
- Thesis Statement/Claim
- 1 Example of Evidence
- 1 Bridge
- Counter-Argument
- Turn Back

Should Metal Bats be Banned in Youth Baseball?

On March 11, 2010, a high school pitcher in California was facing a player using a metal bat, when he was hit in the temple by a line drive travelling 100 mph. His skull was crushed, and he spent weeks in a coma. Fortunately, after surgery and months of rehabilitation, he survived. The accident brought to the forefront an issue that has been a safety concern ever since the 1970s when metal bats began being used instead of wooden bats. Metal bats are dangerous and should be banned by youth sport leagues for several reasons.

Baseballs hit with metal bats travel at a higher rate of speed than those hit with wooden bats. Researcher J.J. Crisco studied aluminum bats and found that they produced a “trampoline” effect, which means the baseball springs off of the bat at a high rate of speed. This happens so fast that pitchers and infielders don’t have time to react, which places them in danger. *The New York Times* reported that baseballs hit with metal bats travel almost 20 mph faster than baseballs hit with wooden bats. This is a huge difference to a player trying to make a play on a line drive in time. Consequently, the high rate of speed makes using a metal bat dangerous.

In addition, there have been many instances of players getting hurt by baseballs hit with metal bats. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, between 1991 and 2001, 18 players were killed by batted balls, and only two involved wooden bats. This proves that wood bats are safer than metal. Also, *The New York Times* reports that several lawsuits have been won by parents who sue metal bat makers after their child has been hurt. After being presented with evidence about the dangers of aluminum bats, judges and juries agree they are responsible for injuries. Therefore, the high rate of injuries proves that metal bats are unsafe.

Some people claim that wooden bats are too expensive to supply to youth leagues, because they are not as long lasting. This is true. Even so, a higher cost should not matter when safety is concerned.

Metal bats endanger the lives of young baseball players. First, they make the baseball travel at a high rate of speed, making it difficult to catch. Secondly, they have resulted in many injuries. Banning metal bats is necessary in order to save the lives of young players.

Argument Essay Example

Directions: Read this argument essay that was written by a student. Label the following parts in the right-hand margin:

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| ▪ Hook | ▪ Thesis Statement/Claim | ▪ 1 Piece of Evidence |
| ▪ 1 Bridge | ▪ Counter-Argument | ▪ Turn Back |

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hook

thesis/
claim

evidence

bridge

counter-
argument

turn
back

Choosing a Topic

Choosing a topic can be difficult. When you begin considering a topic, remember that it is the topic that is important, not the claim. Your position on the claim can come later, after you do some research. So begin thinking about possible issues by answering the following questions.

I. Current Controversial Topics: People sometimes have strong feelings about topics currently in the news.

a) Have you ever argued with someone about a controversial topic? If so, which one?

b) Have you recently read or heard about something in the news that you either strongly agreed or disagreed with? If so, which one?

c. Which school related issue do you feel strongly about?

Now choose a topic from the answers you wrote above. Write the topic and the controversy below.

Topic: _____

Controversy: _____

II. Your Interests: Another approach is to think of a subject you already know a lot about, or think of a subject in which you are already interested.

a) Is there anything controversial about something you've learned in school, or a sport or hobby you're interested in?

b) List some of your favorite hobbies and activities.

- c) Is there anything unfair involving one of the your hobbies or activities?

- d) Are there any laws that seem unfair or controversial about one of your interests?

Now choose a topic from the answers you wrote above. Write your interest and the controversy below.

Interest:_____

Controversy: _____

III. Something You Want to Learn About: Another way to find a topic is to research something you’ve wanted to know more about, but never had the time to pursue.

- a) What are you curious to learn about?

- b) Are there any controversies involving that topic of interest?

Now choose a topic you are curious about from the answers you wrote above. Write your interest and the controversy below.

Interest:_____

Controversy: _____

Important to Remember!

Once you have chosen your topic, be open-minded and flexible about your claim. You may have a position in mind already, but that may change after you begin your research. That is fine. You must gather facts in order to have a valid opinion.

Topic Proposal Form

Directions: Fill out the following information in order to get approval from the teacher. If your position changes during the course of your research, fill out the bottom of the sheet and resubmit for approval.

Name: _____

Topic: _____

Argument: _____

Claim: _____

Why are you interested in this topic?

Your Signature: _____

Teacher's Signature: _____

Comments: _____

Position Switch

Explain your new position and why you changed your mind.

Reapproval: _____

Gathering Evidence through Research

Source: _____
Title: _____
Evidence/Information: _____

Source: _____
Title: _____
Evidence/Information: _____

Source: _____
Title: _____
Evidence/Information: _____

Source: _____
Title: _____
Evidence/Information: _____

Organization and Planning

Introduction

Hook: _____

Background Information: _____

Claim: _____

Body Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence- Reason:

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Conclusion: _____

Organization and Planning

Body Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence- Reason:

Evidence: _____

Bridge: _____

Evidence: _____

Bridge:

Conclusion: _____

Organization and Planning

Body Paragraph #3

Counter Argument/Concession: _____

Turn Back: _____

Conclusion

Restate Claim/ Thesis Statement: _____

Summarize the evidence: _____

Final Statement: _____

Possible Topics for an Argumentative Essay

- Mandatory curfews for teens
- School uniforms
- Year round schools
- Technology dependence
- Cellphones in schools
- Animal testing
- Cheating in schools
- Cyberbullying
- Salaries of professional athletes and actors
- Testing in schools
- Longer school day
- Banning homework
- Government health care
- Mandatory preschool
- Book banning



Argumentative Writing Student Checklist

Criteria	Absolutely	Mostly	Partially	Not Really
Introduction ➤ Have you provided an interesting hook?				
➤ Have you given background information?				
➤ Have you stated a claim in the thesis statement?				
Body Paragraphs ➤ Have you used statistics or facts to provide evidence?				
➤ Have you explained by using a bridge?				
➤ Have you included a concession and a turn back?				
Conclusion ➤ Have you restated the claim, summarized, and ended strongly?				
Organization & Style ➤ Have you organized the response and used transitions?				
➤ Have you written for your audience?				
Mechanics: ➤ Have you reviewed for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors?				

Argumentative Essay Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear, interesting introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates grade level understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction of topic is unclear. ➤ Demonstrates limited understanding of topic and claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction does not address task. ➤ Demonstrates little understanding of topic and claim.
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facts are well-chosen and support argument. ➤ Evidence is fully explained by use of a bridge. ➤ Concession and turn back are convincing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facts are relevant to argument. ➤ Evidence is explained by use of a bridge. ➤ Concession and turn back are included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partial use of evidence. ➤ Use of evidence that may not be accurate ➤ Concession and turn back are incomplete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No evidence is provided, or evidence is irrelevant. ➤ Concession and turn back are missing or irrelevant.
Organization, Clarity, and Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Skillful organization and use of transitions enhance meaning. ➤ Includes style, sophisticated vocabulary, and voice. ➤ Interesting concluding statement that clearly stems from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear organization and use of transitions. ➤ Includes style and grade-level vocabulary. ➤ Concluding statement relates to topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partially organized, with little use of transitions. ➤ Some attempt at style, with basic vocabulary. ➤ Some attempt is made to conclude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Little attempt at organization. ➤ No use of transitions. ➤ Lacks style. ➤ Conclusion is missing or irrelevant.
Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is clear evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised and edited. ➤ There are few errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is some evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ There are some errors, but they do not interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is little evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors hinder understanding.

Argument Writing Rubric Scoring Guide

16	100
15	94
14	88
13	81
12	75
11	69
10	63
9	56
8	50
7	44
6	38
5	31
4	25

Taking a Stand on an Issue

In social studies, you have studied the legislative process of how a bill becomes a law. In English, you have written argumentative essays on controversial topics. We are going to begin combining everything you've learned.

Question:

How can ordinary citizens participate in the legislation process?

Answer:

Enacting legislation begins with one person and one idea. The person must feel strongly enough about an issue to write a letter to the appropriate government official. This letter must include a well supported argument that is based on facts and specific evidence. If the letter is well-written and contains compelling evidence, the government official may act on it.

Letter to the Government Official

You will use the information from the argumentative essay to write a letter to the government official who would best represent the legislation topic. The purpose of your letter is to let the official know how you feel about the issue and to urge him/her to become involved in legislation concerning the issue. Use the attached form to draft the letter.

You will notice that when you write the letter, you are permitted to refer to yourself by writing, "I think..." and "I feel..." This is because the letter is more personal, and it is important to identify yourself. However, you will notice that the writing is still formal in tone.

Typing Requirements:

- Business letter format
- Single spacing
- Size 12 font
- Skip two lines between letter parts
- Indent each paragraph, and skip one line between paragraphs.
- Skip four lines between the closing and your typed name. Hand-sign your name in the empty space.

555 Street Road
Fake City, ND 11111
April 1, 2013

The Honorable John Doe
555 Government Road
Office Building 20515
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Doe:

My name is Ima Goode Citizen, and I am a seventh grade student at The Best Middle School. During a unit on enacting legislation, I became interested in the issue of year-round schooling. This policy would require students to attend school for 12 months, with short vacations that occur at varying intervals. I believe that year-round schooling should be prohibited. Therefore, I urge you to vote against legislation that would mandate year round schooling. The educational benefits do not outweigh the high costs involved, and summer vacation is critical to a child's learning and development.

One reason I feel this way is because year-round schooling is expensive, yet does not lead to significant academic improvement. According to *The Daily News*, operating costs are high due to air conditioning, maintenance and staffing. However, the costs rarely lead to educational improvement or increased test scores. In Jefferson County, Colorado, there was actually a decline in test scores. The district was then forced to spend 93 million dollars to go back to a traditional calendar. One school district in Prince William County, Virginia returned to a traditional calendar after nine years with a year-round schedule. According to Dr. Mary Weybright, Supervisor of Programs in Prince William County, "There were not enough advantages to outweigh the disadvantages." Operating costs make year-round schooling an expensive undertaking. If these investments do not lead to improvements in student learning, they are not cost effective.

Another reason year-round schooling should be prohibited is because summer activities are critical to a child's learning and development. According to Dr. Leo Wisebonder, psychologist for the Los Angeles Unified School Program, "Children learn many things outside of school. It's a different type of learning, which simply is not tested." Children in year- round school programs would be missing out on opportunities to discover talents and interests that are not taught in schools. They will be unable to attend camp programs. Teenagers will be unable to learn through summer employment opportunities, due to the ongoing demands of school. Summer activities enhance a child's overall growth.

I understand this is a controversial topic. On one hand, there are people who believe that year-round schooling would reduce summer learning loss. On the other hand, students would have an opportunity to learn about a topic that is not necessarily related to school. Critics of year round school are not taking into account all of the opportunities young people will be missing out on.

I believe that year-round schooling should be prohibited. Again, I urge you to vote against legislation that would mandate year round schooling.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ima Goode Citizen

School Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Today's Date

Name of Recipient
Street Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear _____:

My name is _____, and I am a _____ grade student at
your school. During a unit on enacting legislation, I became
interested in the issue of *state the topic*. I believe
state your claim: thesis statement

Therefore I urge you to vote for legislation that *supports or prevents topic*
because *reason #1 and reason #2*.

One reason I feel this way is *explain reason #1*.

Give support with research. Paraphrase the research and conclude the paragraph.

Another reason I feel this way is *explain reason #2*.

Give support with research. Paraphrase the research and conclude the paragraph.

I understand this is a controversial topic. Some people believe _____
state the counter argument.

However, I believe that _____
restate your opinion using different words

Therefore I urge you to _____
supports or prevents topic

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
hand sign your name

Type Your Name

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Informational Essay Writing

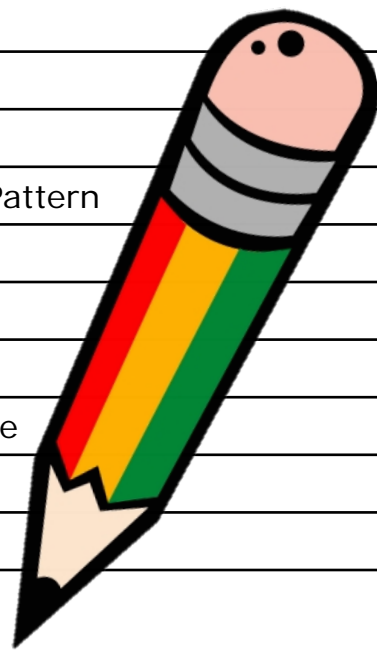


Includes
5
Mentor Texts

By Darlene Anne
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Informational Essay Writing

How to Use this Unit Common Core Standards

This unit is flexible and can be used in many ways. I have designed it to be used in order; however, you may find that certain parts can be switched around or omitted. It all depends on the ability levels of the students using the unit, as well as the time you want to spend completing the unit.

It aligns with the following Common Core Standards:

- RI.6.5; RI.6.6; W.6.2; W.6.2a-f; W.6.8; W.6.10
- RI.7.5; RI.7.6; W.7.2; W.7.2a-f; W.7.8; W.7.10
- RI.8.5; RI.8.6; W.8.2; W.8.2a-f; W.8.8; W.8.10

How to Use this Unit

- If you would like to use this unit as a Writer's Workshop unit, you can begin by using the idea starters (page 4). These can be assigned as writer's notebook quick-writes during the week before you begin the unit. They will give students seed ideas to choose from later on. If you decide not to complete the idea starters, the topic idea sheet on page 26 will assist students in choosing a topic. Page 41 also has additional topics.
- Page 5 is designed to show students why informational writing is so important.
- Page 7 is an outline for students, explaining exactly what will be expected of them during this unit of study.
- Pages 8-22 require students to read informational essays, and answer questions about structure and purpose. These mentor texts can be completed individually, or they can be completed by small groups.
- Page 23 provides definitions and organizational patterns for each type of informational essay.
- Page 24 requires students to choose an organizational pattern for informational topics. This is especially helpful for struggling students who need some extra steps to understand the task.
- Page 26 is used to help students choose a topic and an organization pattern. This would be a good time to conference with students, discussing their choice and the structure they've chosen for their essay.
- Page 27 is necessary for students who must complete some research to complete the essay.
- Pages 28-37 includes a step-by-step approach to writing the introduction, conclusion and the body of each type of informational essay. A page of suggested transitions is included.
- The student checklist on page 38 will help students know what to look for as they revise.
- Finally, page 40 includes an easy rubric for scoring the essay.

Idea Starters

These prompts can serve as seed ideas for the informational essay students will write later in the unit. They will work well as quick-writes in students' journals or writer's notebooks. Try to assign at least one of each type, so that students have a variety of choices. Alternately, you can allow students to choose one prompt from each type.

Descriptive Prompts:

- ❖ Which rules are absolutely necessary in school, and why are they necessary?
- ❖ What is the most interesting career you can imagine having, and why is it so interesting?
- ❖ Describe what makes a good teacher and why those qualities are important.

Sequence Prompts:

- ❖ What are the steps a person must follow to find a good rescue dog from a shelter?
- ❖ An older relative wants to play your favorite video game, but has never played video games before. How can you explain how to play?
- ❖ A friend has invited you to go camping. What must you do in order to get ready for the trip?

Compare and Contrast Prompts:

- ❖ Which makes a better pet, a cat or a dog? Explain.
- ❖ How are tornadoes and hurricanes similar and different?
- ❖ How are the activities middle school students participate in during the summer different from the activities they participate in during the winter?

Problem and Solution Prompts:

- ❖ Is cheating a problem in school? What can be done about it?
- ❖ What can be done to stop internet bullying?
- ❖ A new student has moved into town and will be attending your school. What advice would you give him/her about making friends and getting to know the school?

Cause and Effect Prompts:

- ❖ What are the causes of childhood obesity?
- ❖ What effect can a damaging storm have on a community?
- ❖ What effect can learning to read have on a young person?

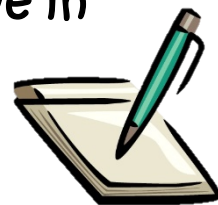
We Write Every Day!

Brainstorm: What kind of writing do you do every day? Make a list of the writing you do on a typical school day, from morning until evening.



Brainstorm: What kind of writing do you think your parents and other adults do every day? Make a list of all of the writing you think they do.

What purpose do all of these writing examples have in common?



They are all examples of _____

An informational essay _____

It can also be called an _____

We Write Every Day!

Brainstorm: What kind of writing do you do every day? Make a list of the writing you do on a typical school day, from morning until evening.

- name and date
- homework assignments in planner
- answer questions from textbooks
- essays
- notes from board
- notes from listening
- instructions
- text messages
- and more



Brainstorm: What kind of writing do you think your parents and other adults do every day? Make a list of all of the writing you think they do.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| • shopping lists | • letters and notes |
| • reports for work | • Twitter messages |
| • "to do" lists | • fill out forms |
| • emails | • sign name |
| • text messages | • and more |

What purpose do all of these writing examples have in common?

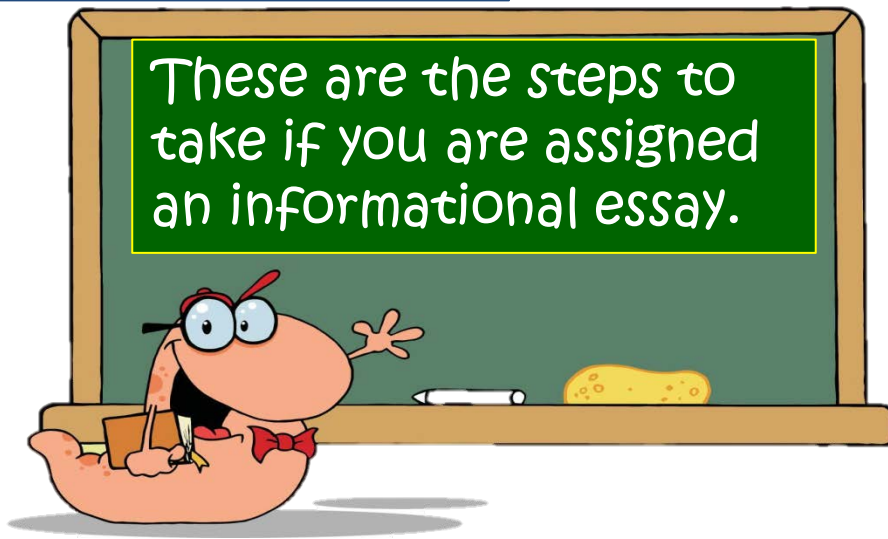
- They explain.
- They provide information.



They are all examples of informational text.

An informational essay uses facts to inform, explain, or describe a topic.

It can also be called an expository essay.



1. Read examples of informational essays. Answer questions about each one.
2. Choose a topic and a purpose.
3. Decide which structure will be best to explain the topic.
4. Collect information.
5. Use the graphic organizers to plan the essay.
6. Maintain a formal style.
7. Begin the essay with an introduction that includes a hook and a thesis statement.
8. Develop the essay with facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.
9. Use transition words to connect information.
10. Conclude the essay.
11. Revise the essay using the student checklist.
12. Edit.
13. Share and enjoy!!

Directions: Read *The Life Cycle of A Butterfly* and answer the questions that follow.

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly

by J. Harrell

"Happiness is a butterfly," wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne. Most people would agree that it is wonderful watching a caterpillar turn into a beautiful butterfly. To grow into an adult, a butterfly goes through four stages, called metamorphosis.

The first stage of a butterfly's life cycle is the egg. The egg is very small and round or oval. It has a hard outer shell to protect the tiny larva inside. It is lined with wax so that the egg doesn't dry out. Butterfly eggs are usually laid on a leaves.

The second stage of a butterfly's life cycle is the caterpillar. The caterpillar is the larval stage of the life cycle. After the egg hatches, the tiny caterpillar's job is to eat. It starts by eating the leaf it was born on. The caterpillar begins to grow rapidly, getting ready for the next stage.

The third stage in the butterfly's life cycle is the pupa, or chrysalis. While in this stage, the caterpillar hangs from a branch. The caterpillar's skeleton is on the outside; this is called an exoskeleton. Inside the exoskeleton, the caterpillar is undergoing a change called metamorphosis. During this stage, the caterpillar pupa is turning into a butterfly. When all of the changes have occurred, the pupa is ready for the final stage of the butterfly's life cycle.

Finally, the butterfly's life cycle enters the fourth and final stage. It is now a butterfly. As soon as it comes out of the chrysalis, the butterfly flaps its wings to get blood flowing into them. They then learn to fly. As soon as they can fly, they search for a mate so that the life cycle of a new butterfly can begin.

A butterfly's metamorphosis involves four stages. The butterfly starts out as an egg, hatches as a caterpillar, turns into a chrysalis, and finally emerges as a butterfly. It is amazing to consider the long process this creature goes through before it becomes a beautiful butterfly.



The Life Cycle of a Butterfly by J. Harrell

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?
- _____
- _____
2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.
- _____
- _____
3. Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.
- _____
- _____
4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.
- _____
- _____
5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay?_____
6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?
- _____
- _____
7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.
- _____
- _____
8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?
- _____
- _____
9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?
- _____
- _____
10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?
- _____
- _____

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly by J. Harrell

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay?

The selection explains the process (or metamorphosis) of a butterfly.

3. Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay?

The first sentence is a quote.

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

The thesis is the third sentence.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 4

6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?

The butterfly's life cycle has 4 stages.

7. How are the body paragraphs organized? This is called **structure**.

It is organized in sequential order.

8. Which **key words or transition words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

first, second, third, and finally

9. What type of information does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

It includes facts, specific details, and definitions.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes, and ends with a strong statement.

Directions: Read *Everyone Learns Differently* and answer the questions that follow.

Everyone Learns Differently

by A. Curran

How would you like to spend less time studying for tests, but get better grades? Some experts say that this is possible, simply by knowing how your brain learns new information. Research has shown there are three types of learners: those who learn by seeing information (visual learners), those who learn by hearing information (auditory learners), and those who learn by doing (tactile learners). Identifying how you learn best is the key to successful studying.

Many people learn by seeing information. Visual learners learn by reading information written in handouts or books. They also learn from graphs, charts, and pictures. For this reason, visual learners should study by taking notes, making outlines, and using highlighters to make text stand out. These tricks will help visual learners succeed.

Another way people learn is by hearing information. This is auditory learning. These learners learn and remember information when they hear it aloud. Since they learn through hearing, it is helpful for them to study by using a tape recorder to record their notes. They should even repeat facts with their eyes closed. Since auditory learners learn by listening, these tips will lead to successful studying.

The third type of learner learns by "doing." They are called "tactile" learners. Tactile learners learn best by touching or experiencing things. They remember best by experiencing "hands-on" learning, or by writing things down. In order to study effectively, tactile learners can use flashcards or flipbooks. They may also need frequent breaks to get up and walk around. Because tactile learners learn by doing, they will be successful students by adding writing or movement.

People learn differently. Time spent studying can be more useful if the studying takes into account each individual's learning style. When students learn whether they are visual, auditory, or tactile learners, they will know how to make the best use of study time. Isn't it wonderful to know that simple changes to your study habits can lead to greater success?



Everyone Learns Differently by A. Curran

- What is the **topic** of the essay?

- What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

- Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.

- Which sentence(s) in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

- How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay?_____
- Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?

- How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

- Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

- What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

- What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

Everyone Learns Differently by A. Curran

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

Learning Styles

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

The purpose is to describe the three ways people learn.

3. Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.

It begins with a question.

4. Which sentence(s) in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

The last two sentences form the thesis statement.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 3

6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?

There are three learning styles.

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

Each paragraph describes one learning style.

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

"Many," "another," "the third type."

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

Facts, specific details, and definitions.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes, and ends the way it started, with a question.

Directions: Read *Moving into the Middle* and answer the questions that follow.

Moving into the Middle
by Thomas Richard

Students going to middle school for the first time are sometimes terrified of the transition. That fear comes from the fact that they don't know what to expect. Of course, there are differences between elementary school and middle school; however, there are similarities as well.

Middle and elementary schools have many similarities. For example, students in both schools have the same school calendar. In addition, the school day is the same length. Furthermore, students in middle and elementary schools study the four core subjects: math, science, language arts, and social studies. Students can also expect to have homework, quizzes, tests, and projects to complete. Middle and elementary schools have a lot in common.

There are also some differences between middle and elementary schools. First, students in middle school travel to different classes during the school day. A bell rings to alert student when it's time to move to a different class. Second, students usually have a hallway locker to store their books and supplies. A third difference is that students in middle school usually have extra classes, such as a foreign language class. These differences make middle school different from elementary school.

Although middle school is different from elementary school, not everything is different. Some aspects of middle school will seem familiar to new students. Knowing what to expect is helpful, and should make students feel less nervous about their new school.



Moving into the Middle by Thomas Richard

- What is the **topic** of the essay?

- What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

- Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.

- Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

- How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay?_____
- Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?

- How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

- Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

- What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

- What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

***Moving into the Middle* by Thomas Richard**

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

Middle school versus elementary school

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

The purpose is to compare and contrast middle school and elementary school.

2. Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.

It begins with a strong statement.

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

The last sentence.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 2

6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?

One paragraph compares and the other contrasts.

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

The similarities are stated first. Then the differences are stated.

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

"Things in common" and "There are some differences."

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

Facts, specific details, and examples.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes the information, and ends with a strong statement.

Directions: Read **Cell Phones in School** and answer the questions that follow.

Cell Phones in School

by Gwyneth Avery

Recently, over 500 high school students in Israel were surveyed about their cell phone use in class. Over 95% admitted that they used their phones during class to send text messages and log onto Facebook. Most of these students said that their teachers were unaware of the cell phone use. Using a cell phone in class is a problem, because if students are using a cell phone, then they are not paying attention. However, there are a couple of possible solutions to the problem of cell phone use in school.

One solution to this problem is to allow students to use cell phones for educational activities. Teachers can ask students to search for information on a specific topic. Or they can require students to take an online poll or survey. Teachers can even allow students to use an online notebook to keep track of homework assignments. By using the phones for specific reasons, students will be less likely to use it to text friends.

Another possible solution is to ban phones and have harsh punishments for students who use them during class. Students can be suspended for breaking the cell phone rules, or their phone could be confiscated. Any student found using a phone can then be required to deposit the phone in an office at the beginning of every day. They can only pick the phone up at the end of the day.

Although student cell phone use is a problem in many schools, there are solutions available. Teachers can allow students to use cell phones for educational activities. Or strict punishments can be given if students are found using cell phones. Cell phones are not going to go away. Luckily, they don't have to be a problem in school.



Cell Phones in School by Gwyneth Avery

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?
- _____
- _____
2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.
- _____
- _____
3. Look at the **first two sentences**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.
- _____
- _____
4. Which sentence(s) in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.
- _____
- _____
5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay?_____
6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?
- _____
- _____
7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.
- _____
- _____
8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?
- _____
- _____
9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?
- _____
- _____
10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?
- _____
- _____

Cell Phones in School by Gwyneth Avery

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

The essay is about cell phone use in schools.

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

Cell phones use in schools is a problem, but there are solutions.

3. Look at the **first two sentences**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.

The writer starts with a statistic.

4. Which sentence(s) in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

The last two sentences form the thesis statement.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 2

6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?

The writer has included two possible solutions to the problem.

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

The body paragraphs are organized one solution at a time.

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

"One solution," and "Another solution."

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

Specific ideas, details, and examples are used.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes the main points, and ends with a statement.

Directions: Read **The Reasons for Poor Test Grades** and answer the questions that follow.

The Reasons for Poor Test Grades

by B. Browne

Billy decided to study for Monday's math test on Sunday night. He sat comfortably in his bed and read his notes several times. The next day, he felt confident walking into his math class for the test. However, about midway through the test, he felt a sinking feeling. He could not answer many of the questions, and he knew he had failed the test. When he met with the teacher to talk about it, she asked him "how" he had studied. Then she told him that his poor grade was the effect of his poor study habits, and she explained exactly what caused the "F."

The first habit that caused Billy's "F" was the fact that he waited until Sunday night to study. The teacher announced the test one week prior to the test. Billy should have started studying on the first day he knew about the upcoming test. By studying a little every night, Billy would have spent more time on the material, instead of cramming the studying into one session. This would have increased his chance of remembering the material.

The second habit that caused the poor grade was studying in bed. Billy's teacher told him that studying in bed could make a person too sleepy to concentrate. Students should study at a desk or table, with their back straight to stay alert. Billy admitted that he did almost fall asleep while studying that night.

The third habit that caused Billy to fail was his method of studying. Simply reading the notes is not enough. Billy should have written notes or flashcards to memorize the material. Then he should have had a friend or adult make up practice questions for him to answer. There are even practice test sources online. This would have led to better understanding of the material.

Billy's teacher helped him understand that his poor test grade was caused by poor study habits. Waiting until the last minute to study, studying in bed, and reading over the notes were the reasons for Billy's poor grade. However, with a few simple study changes, Billy's test grades can definitely improve.



The Reasons for Poor Test Grades by B. Browne

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?
- _____
- _____
2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.
- _____
- _____
3. Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.
- _____
- _____
4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.
- _____
- _____
5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay?_____
6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?
- _____
- _____
7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.
- _____
- _____
8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?
- _____
- _____
9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?
- _____
- _____
10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?
- _____
- _____

The Reasons for Poor Test Grades by B. Browne

1. What is the **topic** of the essay?

Test grades and study habits.

2. What is the **purpose** of the essay? This is the **main idea**.

The purpose is to explain that poor grades are caused by poor study habits.

3. Look at the **first sentence**. How has the writer decided to begin this essay? This is the **hook**.

It begins with an anecdote.

4. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what the essay is going to be about? This is the **thesis statement**.

The last sentence is the thesis statement.

5. How many **body paragraphs** are in this essay? 3

6. Why has the writer decided to include this number of body paragraphs?

There are three poor study habits that cause poor grades.

7. How are the body paragraphs **organized**? This is called **structure**.

The most important cause is listed first.

8. Which **key words** tell you that the text is organized in this way?

"The first habit," "The second habit," and "The third habit."

9. What **type of information** does the writer use to **develop** each body paragraph?

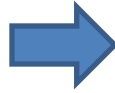
The ideas are developed using specific details and examples.

10. What is the purpose of the **concluding paragraph**?

It restates the thesis, summarizes the information, and ends with a strong statement.

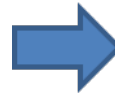
Organizational Patterns: Informational essays are organized in the way that best presents the topic.

Sequence



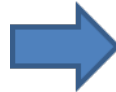
The author explains a process or event in sequential or chronological order.

Description



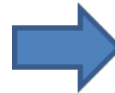
The author defines or describes a topic by including characteristics and examples.

Compare and Contrast



The author explains how things are alike and different.

Problem and Solution

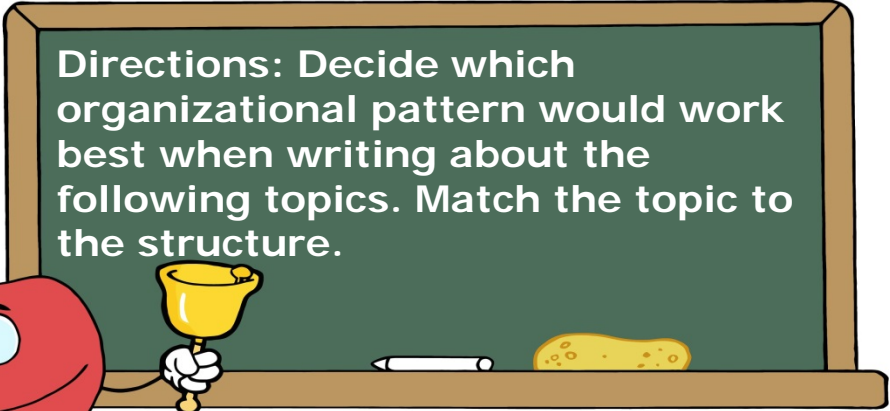
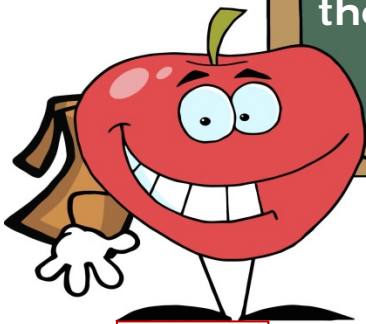


The author presents a problem and offers solutions for it. This can also be called question and answer.

Cause and Effect



The author explains the causes of an event or situation and the effects that result.



Topic

Organization

The Life of Christopher Columbus

Compare/
Contrast

Why do tornados occur and what damage can they do?

Sequence

Dog care versus cat care

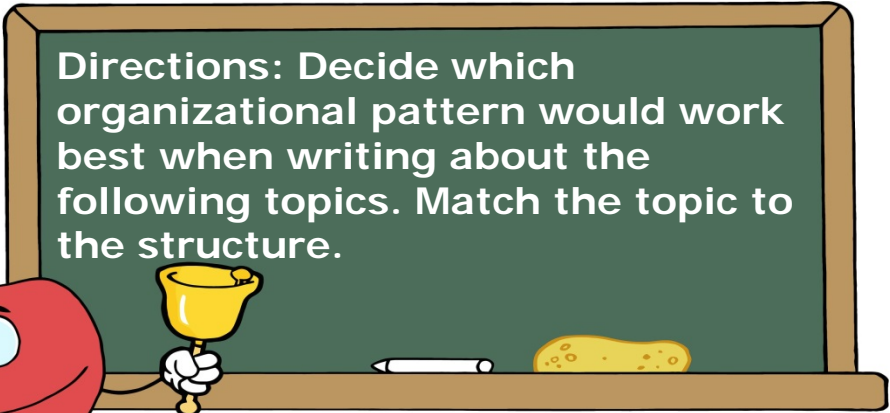
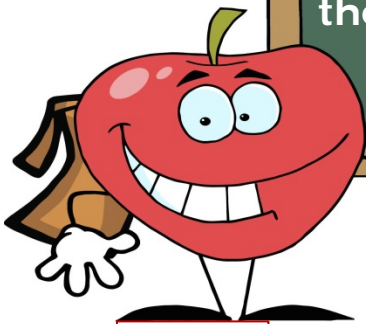
Description

Pollution and the things we can do to prevent it

Problem
and
Solution

Circus clowns

Cause and
Effect



Topic

Organization

The Life of Christopher Columbus

Why do tornados occur and what damage can they do?

Dog care versus cat care

Pollution and the things we can do to prevent it

Circus clowns

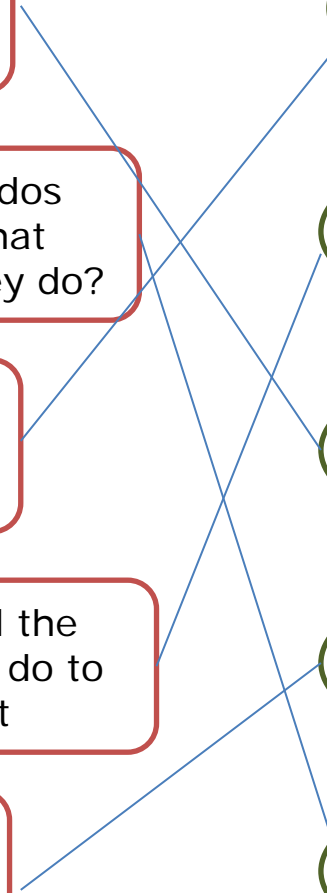
Compare/Contrast

Problem and Solution

Sequence

Description

Cause and Effect



What am I
interested in?

What have I
always wanted
to learn about?

Once you have chosen a general topic, ask yourself these questions. The answer will help lead you to the structure of your essay.

Can I compare the topic to something else? What?	
Is the topic an effect of something else, or does it cause something to happen? Explain	
Should I explain the topic in sequential order?	
Is the topic part of a problem or part of a solution ?	
Would the topic be best explained using descriptive examples?	

Source: _____
Title: _____
Information: _____

Source: _____
Title: _____
Information: _____

Source: _____
Title: _____
Information: _____

Source: _____
Title: _____
Information: _____

The **introduction** to your essay has three parts and purposes.

Sentence 1: Lead: The lead “hooks” readers and encourages them to keep reading. Try one of the following:

Lead/Hook	Example
Quote (by a famous person)	“Happiness is a butterfly,” wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne.
Statistic or Fact	Recently, over 500 high school students in Israel were surveyed about their cell phone use in class.
Strong Statement	Students going to middle school for the first time are sometimes terrified about the transition.
Question	How would you like to spend less time studying for tests, but get better grades?
Anecdote	Billy decided to study for Monday’s math test on Sunday night. He sat comfortably in his bed and read his notes several times.

Sentence 2: Introduce the topic: Briefly explain the topic. Give background information.

Example: Most people would agree that it is wonderful watching a caterpillar turn into a beautiful butterfly.

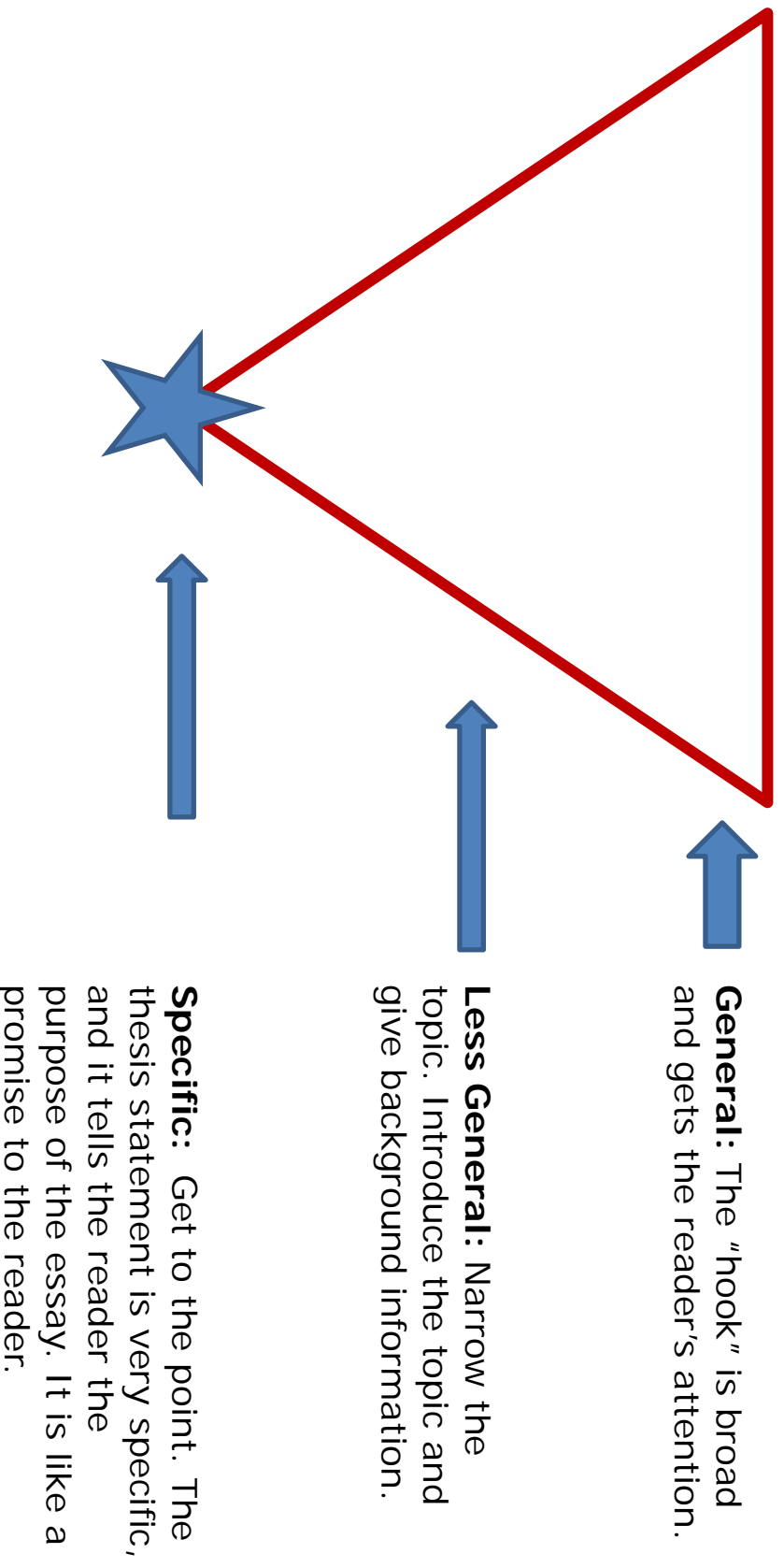
Sentence 3: State exactly what the essay is about: This is the **thesis statement**. It is a promise to the reader that the essay will address the topic. **(Never begin by writing “This essay is about...”)**

Example: To grow into an adult, a butterfly goes through four stages, called metamorphosis.

*Note: The sentences should be in this order, but each part can be more than one sentence. For example, you can write a two sentence “hook.”

Write the Introduction

The introductory paragraph should be shaped like an inverted pyramid.



Write the Body Paragraphs of a Sequencing Essay

- Include the events or steps in a process.
- Support it with facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples in chronological order.

Step
or
Event
1

Step
or
Event
2

Step
or
Event
3

Write the Body Paragraphs of a Problem/Solution Essay

- Include the problem in the introductory paragraph.
- The body paragraphs state the solutions.
- Support the solutions with facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.

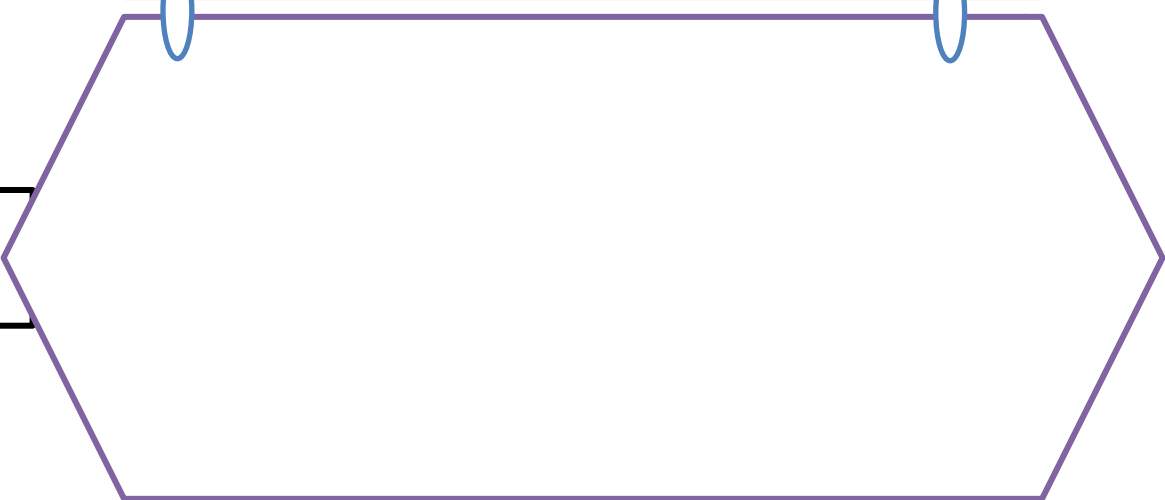
**Solution
1**



**Solution
2**

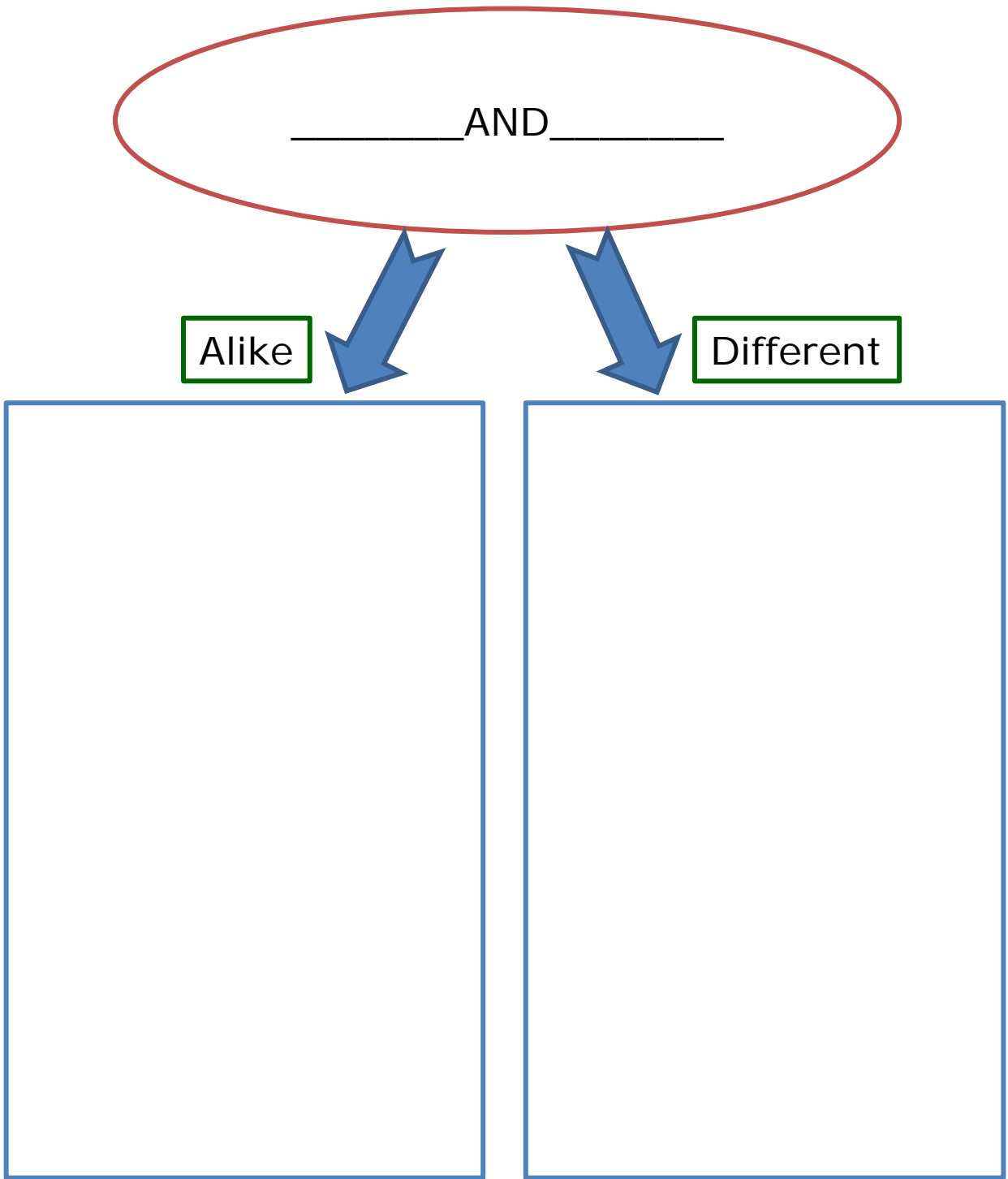


**Solution
3**



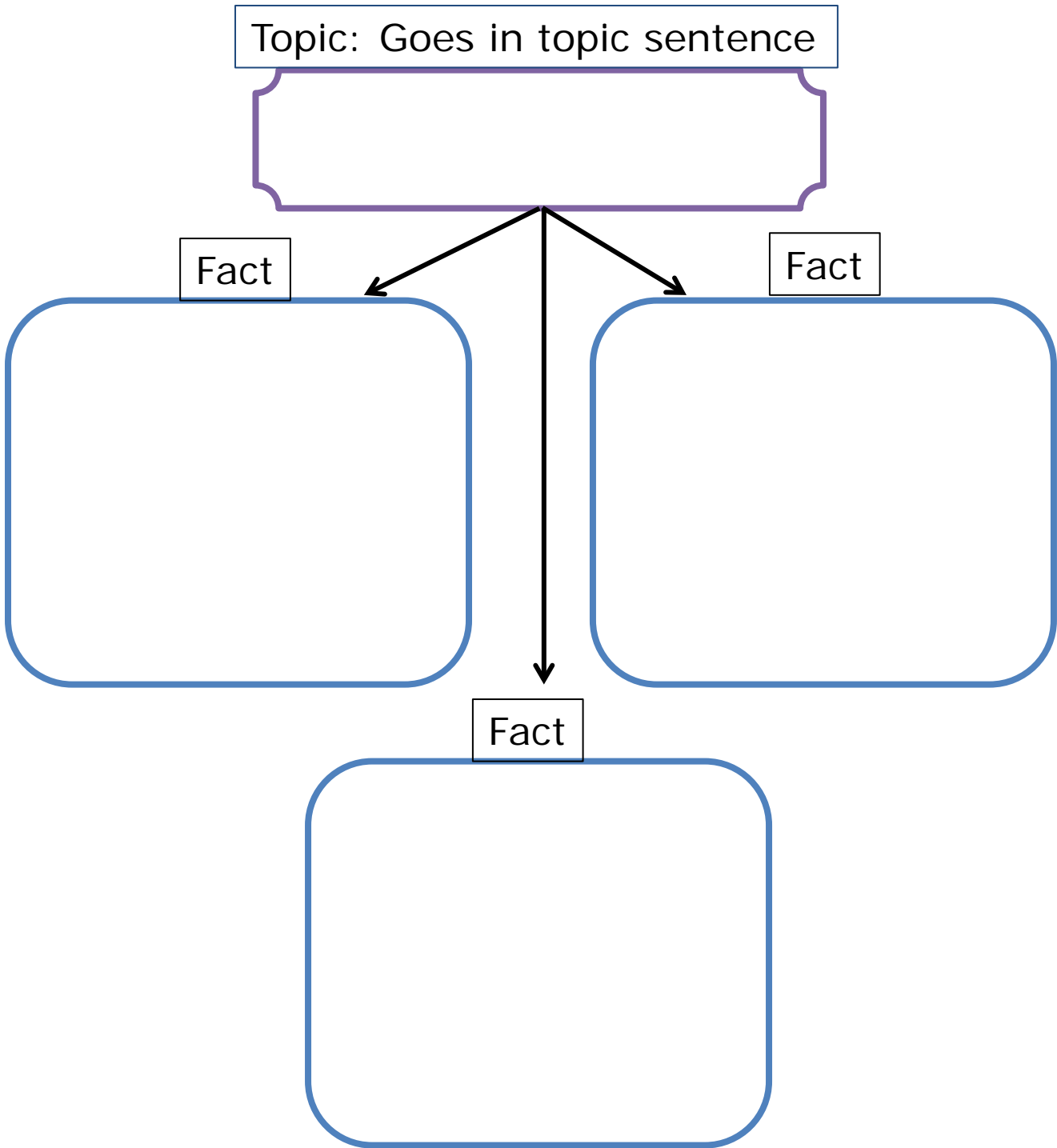
Write the Body Paragraphs of a Compare/Contrast Essay

- Write one paragraph to compare and one to contrast.
- Include facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.



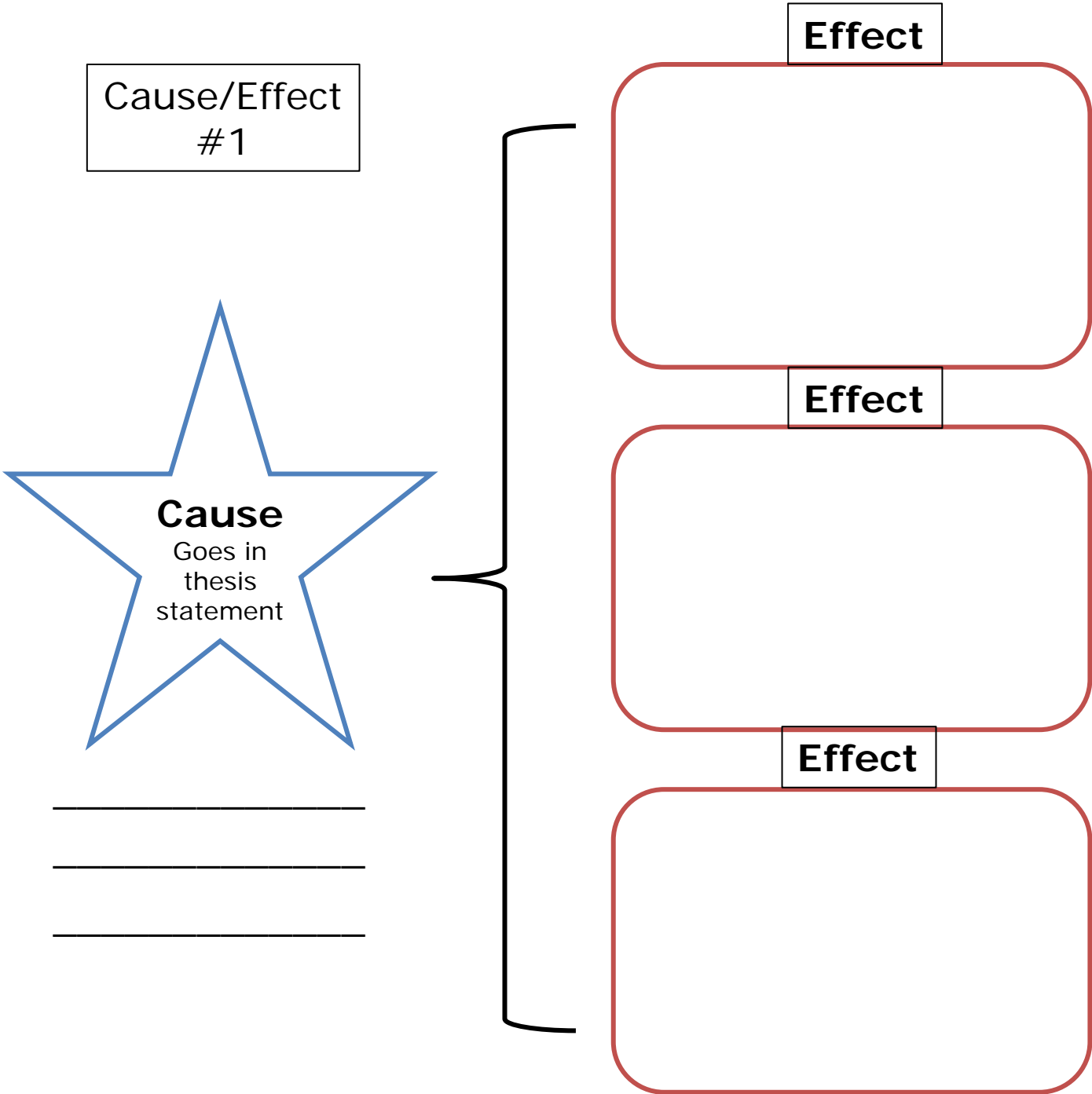
Write the Body Paragraphs of a Descriptive Essay

- Decide how many subtopics (paragraphs) are required to explain the topic.
- Include facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.



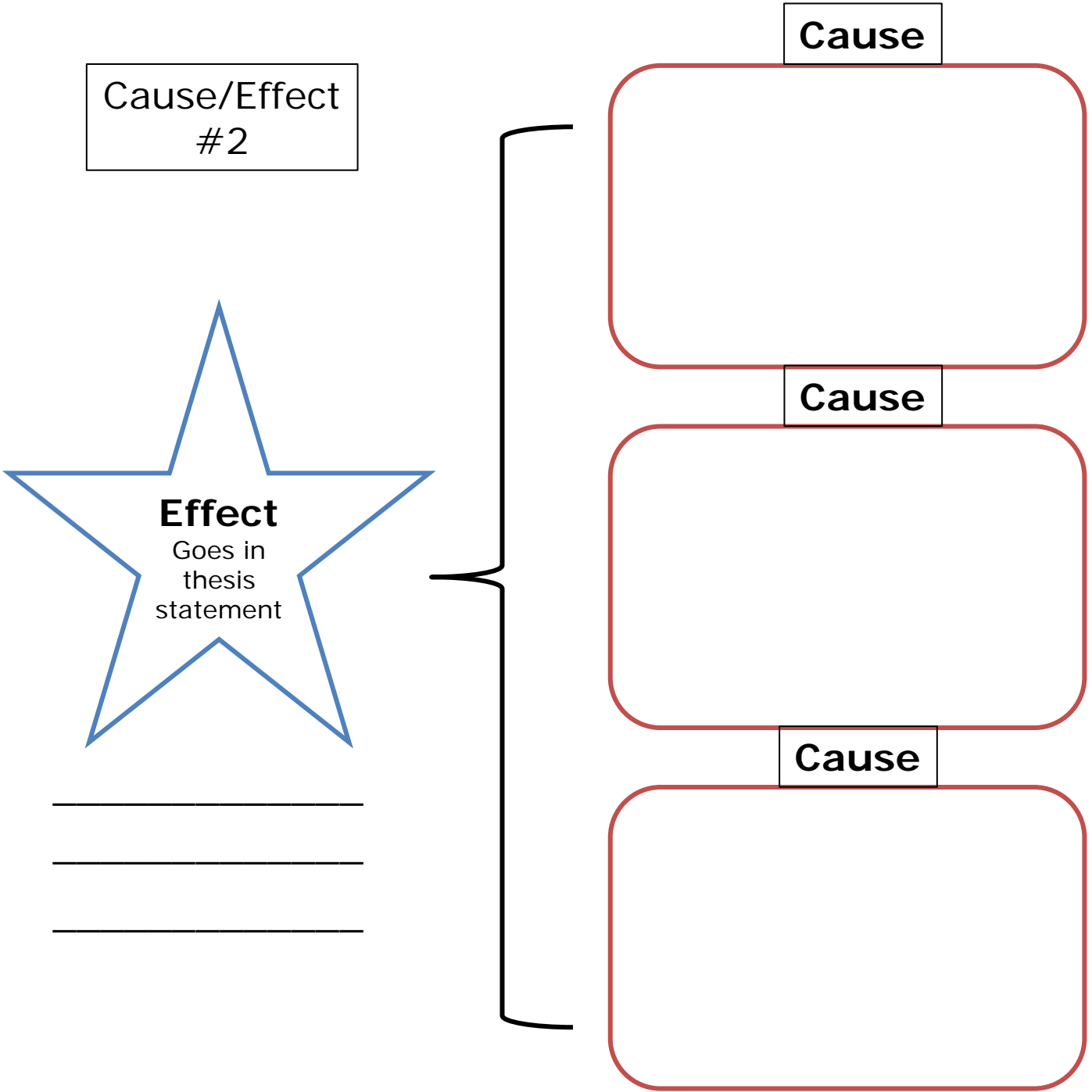
Write the Body Paragraphs of a Cause and Effect Essay

- There are two possible ways to write this:
 - 1) The thesis statement can state a cause and the body paragraphs can be the effects.
 - 2) Or the thesis statement can state an effect and the body paragraphs can state the causes.
- Include facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.



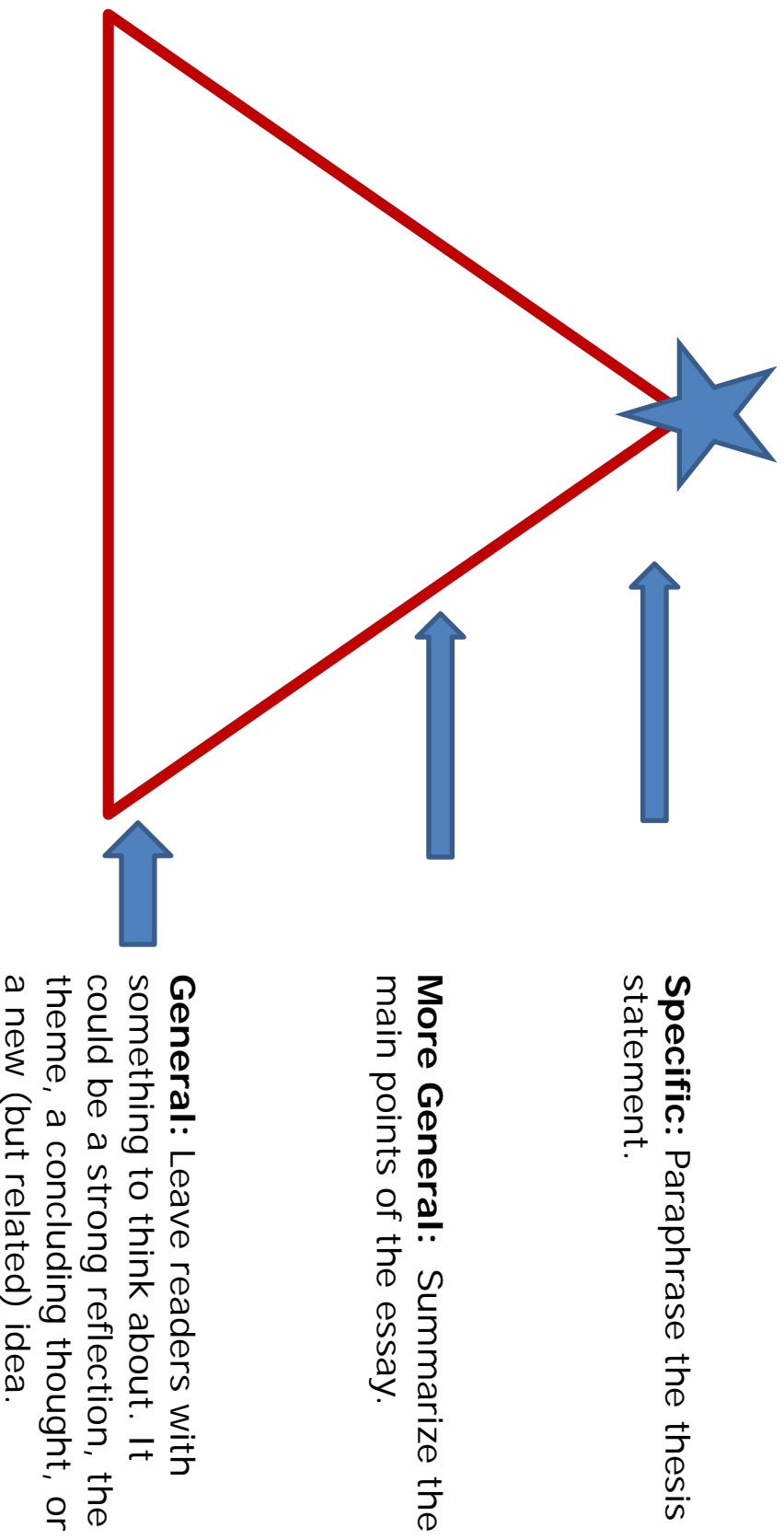
Write the Body Paragraphs of a Cause and Effect Essay

- There are two possible ways to write this:
 - 1) The thesis statement can state a cause and the body paragraphs can be the effects.
 - 2) Or the thesis statement can state an effect and the body paragraphs can state the causes.
- Include facts, definitions, concrete details, information, and examples.



Write the Conclusion

The concluding paragraph should be shaped like a pyramid.



Transition Words And Phrases

Transition words and phrases are an important part of good essay writing. They bring ideas together.

Think of the essay as a collection of individual sentences. Putting them in order isn't enough until you use some tape. Transitions are like the tape that keeps the pieces together and helps the essay have structure.

This is a partial list of transition words that are grouped to help you write each type of informational essay. Keep in mind that you can use them interchangeably.

Sequence

also	since
first	before
second	after
next	during
later	furthermore
in addition	finally

Compare and Contrast

similarly	in common
likewise	in the same way
yet	after all
but	however
however	though
on the contrary	in contrast
nonetheless	on the other hand

Problem and Solution

because	as a result
consequently	for this reason
therefore	then
above all	since
as long as	while

Cause and Effect

because	as a result
consequently	then
therefore	when
whenever	since
as long as	while

Descriptive

above	besides
across	near
over	when
under	in front of
to illustrate	like

Informational Writing: Student Checklist

Criteria	Absolutely	Mostly	Partially	Not Really
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you provided an interesting hook? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you given background information? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you included a thesis statement? 				
Body Paragraphs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you included topic sentences? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you developed the essay by using facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you included concluding sentences? 				
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you restated the thesis, summarized, and ended strongly? 				
Organization & Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you organized the response and used transitions? 				
Mechanics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you reviewed for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors? 				

Informational Essay Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear, interesting introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates understanding of topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear introduction of topic. ➤ Demonstrates grade level understanding of topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction of topic is unclear. ➤ Demonstrates limited understanding of topic . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction does not address task. ➤ Demonstrates little understanding of topic .
Development of Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thorough development of topic by use of facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of topic by use of facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partial development of topic . ➤ Facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples may be incomplete or partially correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Little development of topic. ➤ Facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples are missing or incorrect.
Organization, Clarity, and Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Skillful organization and use of transitions enhance meaning. ➤ Includes style, sophisticated vocabulary, and voice. ➤ Interesting concluding statement that clearly stems from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear organization and use of transitions. ➤ Includes style and grade-level vocabulary. ➤ Concluding statement relates to topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partially organized, with little use of transitions. ➤ Some attempt at style, with basic vocabulary. ➤ Some attempt is made to conclude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Little attempt at organization. ➤ No use of transitions. ➤ Lacks style. ➤ Conclusion is missing or irrelevant.
Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is clear evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised and edited. ➤ There are few errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is some evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ There are some errors, but they do not interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is little evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors hinder understanding.



Informational Essay Rubric Scoring Guide

<u>Total</u>	<u>Grade</u>
16	100
15	94
14	88
13	81
12	75
11	69
10	63
9	56
8	50
7	44
6	38
5	31
4	25

Informational Essay Ideas

Description

- Language classes available in middle schools
- Best dogs for families
- Good luck symbols
- Popular children's shows

Sequence

- The life of Thomas Edison
- How bees produce honey
- How to train a puppy
- How to learn a musical instrument

Compare/Contrast

- Wii tennis or real tennis
- E-books or paper books
- *The Lightning Thief* movie or book
- Pet dog or pet cat

Problem/Solution

- Childhood obesity
- Pollution
- Testing in schools
- Cheating in schools
- Internet bullying

Cause/Effect

- Effects of laughter
- Effects of exercise
- Fast food and obesity
- Causes of injuries in middle school sports

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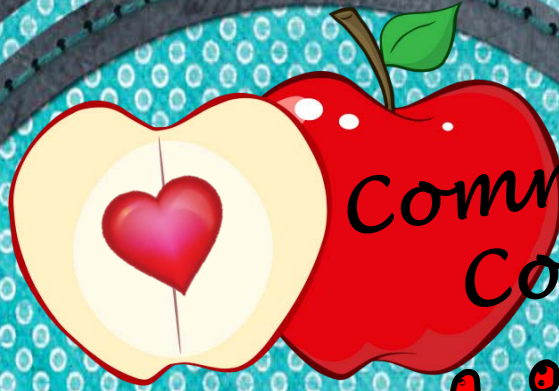
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Common
Core

Narrative Writing Workshop

Personal, Fictional,
and
Biographical

by
Darlene Anne

Narrative Writing Workshop

Personal, Biographical, and Fictional

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Narrative Writing Workshop

Personal, Biographical, and Fictional

About this Unit

Narrative Writing Workshop was written to specifically address the Common Core State Standards for narrative writing in grades 6-8.

W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive, and well-structured events sequences.

W.6.3a-e; W.7.3a-e; W.8.3a-e

The unit can be used in order, however you may find that certain classes or students, have specific needs, while others don't. For example, I will sometimes complete the mini-lesson on writing dialogue with a small group of students in one class, but with all of the students in another class. And you can change the order of the mini-lessons, as well. Sometimes I will give out the page on point of view **before** we read the mentor texts, so we can discuss point of view before we read. The mini-lesson order is not written in stone.

Mentor Text Alternatives

Three mentor texts are included, however, there are many other wonderful narratives you can substitute or add. Picture books are a wonderful source of mentor texts. I adore picture books, but I only have a 40 minute block of time with my students, so it is not always possible to use them as mentor texts.

Mentor Texts and Gathering Ideas

After going over the **narrative definition** and **requirement sheets**, I would spend three days on the **mentor texts**, beginning each day by reading a text, and then moving on to the **prewriting** for that type of narrative. This will give each student an abundance of seed ideas to get started.

Prewriting

For differentiation purposes, I have included three **plot map choices**.

Mini-lessons

Except for the dialogue lesson, each **mini-lesson** should take about 10-15 minutes. As for the **dialogue** section, I find it really helpful to have students figure out the rules for themselves (p.26), but you can skip directly to the rules on p.27.

Conferencing with Students

I often had a hard time recordkeeping. But I found a great tip on Pinterest about using mailing labels and a clipboard. As I go around the room I jot down students' initials and make notes on the labels, and then I just stick them onto my master chart. It's faster and easier than fumbling for index cards or squeezing information in on a spreadsheet.

Revising

Students finish their drafts at a different pace. But by the time we get to the **mini-lessons on voice, sensory details, and concrete language**, most of the students are in the revision stages, so this works out well. The revision checklist will help students know what to look for, and the suggestions directly relate to the rubric.

Rubric

I'm all for flexibility and ease when I'm scoring. If a student is "between" a 3 and a 4 in any one area, they can be given a score in the middle of the grading scale. So even though the scores go in 6 point increments, students can earn those "in-between" scores.

Publishing

For our publication party, I set up five tables in the room. Then I place a set of four or five stories at each table. The students then rotate from table to table, reading the stories along the way. When they've finished a story, they must write a specific, positive comment on the feedback sheet (p.38). Students love it, because they get to read almost every story. And they get immediate positive feedback from their peers.

Please contact me with any questions, comments, or suggestions. I am always looking for ways to improve material, and when I make changes, you are entitled to the new downloads! After all, teachers work best when we work together!

Thank you and enjoy!
Darlene Anne

TpT: [Darlene Anne](#) email: darleneanne27@yahoo.com

***Narrative Writing* is writing that tells a story.**
There are 3 main types of narratives:

- **Personal: When a writer shares a true story from his or her own life.**



I was two years old when I decided that spaghetti and meatballs were much more fun to play with than to eat.



- **Biographical: When a writer shares a true story from another person's life.**

Grandma always said that Grandpa loved his first car, his yellow mutt, his country, his son, and his wife, in exactly that order.



- **Fictional: When a writer tells an invented story. Short stories and novels are fictional narratives.**



After three years, two months, and eight days of travel, the space module finally reached its destination. The weary crew, long tired of one another's company, seriously wished for an alien greeting party.

Narrative Requirements

Setting: where and when the narrative takes place



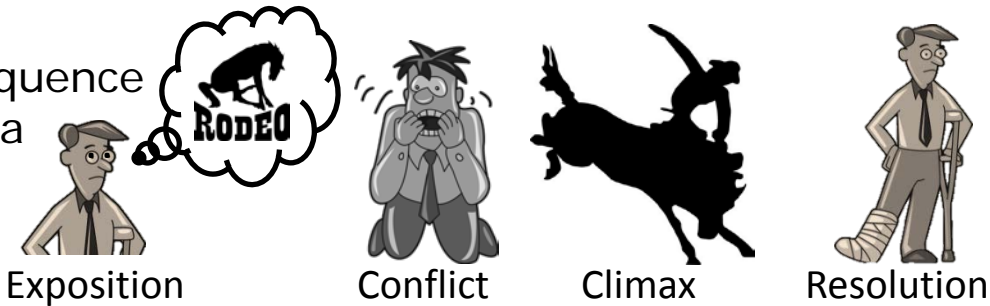
Characters: the people, animals, or creatures involved in the story

Protagonist: the character facing the problem

Antagonist: the character or force causing the problem



Plot: the sequence of events in a narrative



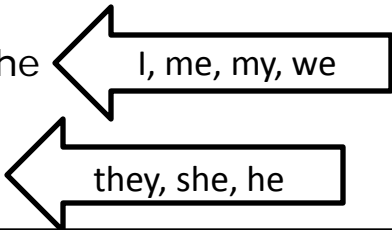
Conflict: the problem or struggle the protagonist(s) deal with



Point of View: the perspective from which a narrative is told

1st person: in a personal narrative, **you** tell the story. In fiction, a character tells the story

3rd person: an unseen narrator that is not a character in the story



Dialogue: the words the characters speak



My magic is so powerful that I can slow my heart down until it stops! But only once.

"Fun" Phobia

by Tom Curran

For a full week every summer, I would awaken each night from a deep sleep, sweaty and scared. Dark circles would ring my eyes from lack of sleep. It was only during the summer that I was I plagued by dark nightmares. All because of an intense fear of... rollercoasters.

This phobia didn't interfere with my everyday tasks; it's not like there is a roller coaster on every corner. But every summer, when my family and I took our annual trip to Six Flags, it was the same song and dance. I would find myself sitting on a hot bench with my mother, while my older brothers gleefully ran from one coaster to the next.

A few times I bravely got on the coaster line, but then my mind would freeze at the thought of being stuck hundreds of feet in the air with nowhere to go...but down. And I would have to get off the line to go sit on my bench of shame.

I became the butt of my brothers' jokes. They'd say things like, "Why don't you just head over to KFC, because all you are is a big chicken!"

"Leave your little brother alone," my mother would say. She may have thought she was coming to my rescue, but it just added to my embarrassment.

Finally, one summer I just became sick and tired of the fear that was ruining my trip to the park. I decided that the best way to get over this fear was by going on the fastest and biggest roller coaster at the park. I thought that if I preoccupied myself by wearing my iPod while I waited on line, I would be too distracted to be scared. As I waited on line, Aerosmith blasting through the ear buds, I tried really hard to focus on the music. It was time to face my fears and show my brothers

(and myself) that I could do it.

Before I knew it, I was sitting next to my brother. As the roller coaster began to go up, I was absolutely terrified. I had made a huge mistake! But as the roller coaster shot down the track... I realized it was awesome! Flying at speeds like that was nothing I had ever experienced. After it was over I didn't couldn't even remember what I was worried about to begin with! I already couldn't wait to go on again.

Not only did going on the roller coaster help me face my fears and gain the respect of my brothers, but it also gave me a new hobby that I loved. Oh, and I'm certainly sleeping better too.



Personal Narrative

Gathering ideas for your personal narrative will be easier than you think. After all, the subject you know most about is you! In fact, you are the leading expert!

Begin by thinking about events that are hard to forget or are important, even in a small way. Your narrative doesn't have to be about a major life changing event. Sometimes the best stories are about experiences that begin and end quickly.

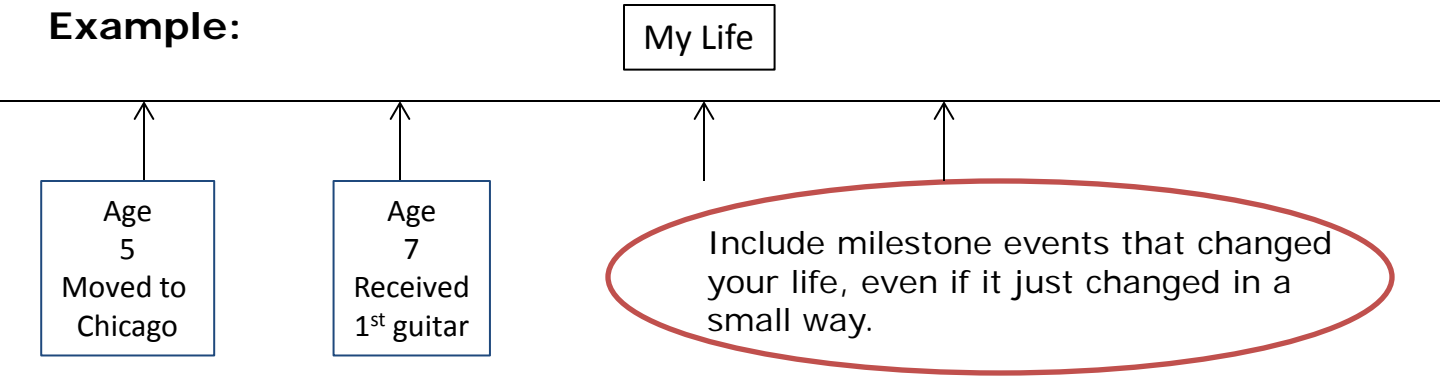
Or use one of the prompts below. Try several, then choose your favorite, and make a quick list of the important facts related to the idea. Once you are satisfied with your brainstorming you can fill out a plot map.

<div><div>The scariest thing that ever happened to me was</div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div>I'll never forget the time</div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div>I learned an important lesson when</div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
<div><div>I was so embarrassed when</div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div>The funniest thing that ever happened to me was</div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div>People might be surprised to know</div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

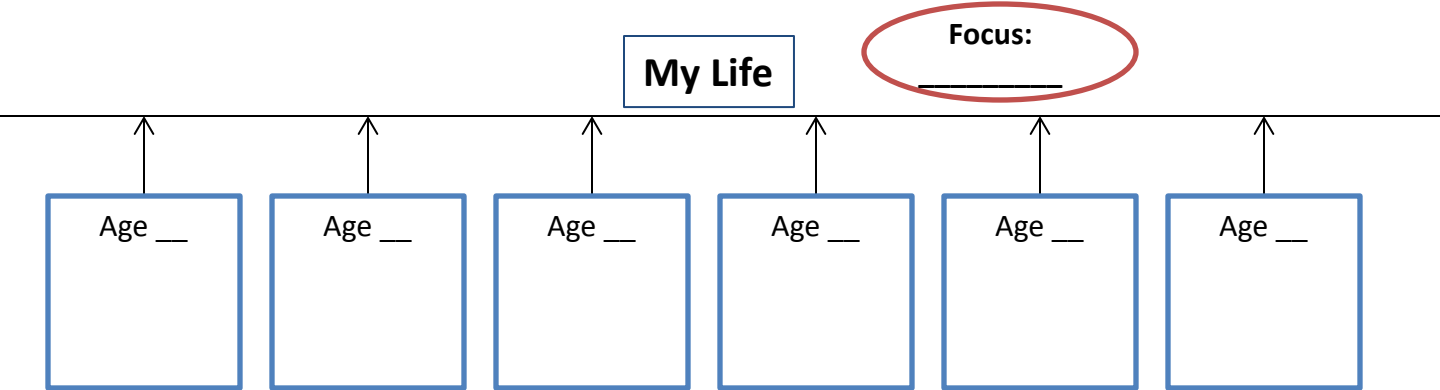
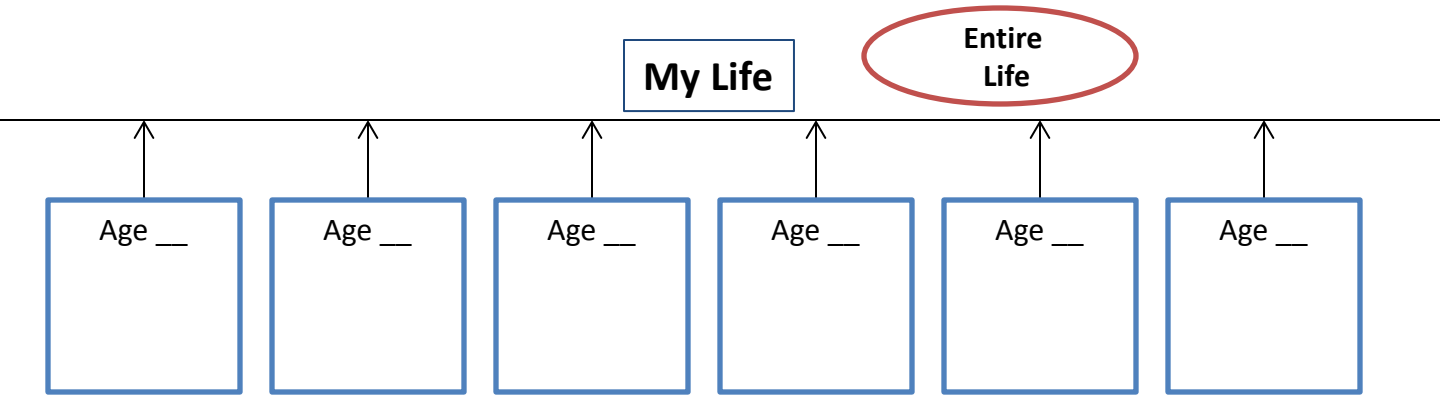
Personal Narrative

Another way to generate ideas for your personal narrative is to make a life-map. You can write about your entire life, or you can focus on one aspect of your life, such as trips or soccer.

Example:



Directions: Try filling out a life-map of your own.



Big Hal and the Metallic Roof

by D. Curran

Grandpa always shook his head and chuckled while telling the story of the time his father, Big Hal, nearly caused a plane to land on the roof of their house. Grandpa's tale became legendary among our family and friends. It proved, Grandpa said, that Big Hal was the cheapest, craftiest, and most stubborn man in Sullivan County.

It started one September when Grandpa Hal told Grandma Gertie that he had purchased a big old house up on a mountain up north. Grandma Gertie, being well aware of her husband's parsimonious ways, was immediately suspicious.

Big Hal reassured her by explaining how the purchase would benefit them. They would be able to move out of their small rental, and Hal would have a quiet place to pursue his writing career. Additionally, he would be able to use his spare time fixing the house up for resale. Gertie was eager to move out of their cramped rental, even if they did have to move into a fixer-upper.

So they packed up three children under the age of seven, two furry friends, and two fish named Salt and Pepper. The whole family moved out to the house on the mountaintop. It was not in terrible shape, except for one problem. The place was so old that it had never been equipped with modern heating and insulation. The only heat came from some drafty fireplaces. As winter neared, every week in the house meant its occupants had to add another layer of clothing. Grandpa remembers wearing fuzzy mittens while he did his homework, making it a little difficult to hold a pencil properly.

Grandma Gertie was not pleased with the chill. She worried the children would get sick, and she feared that it would only get colder as the winter progressed. But Big Hal insisted that the children would become stronger. "Gertie," he said, "this cold mountain air is good for the lungs. It'll toughen these city kids up."

"It's so cold, we might as well be living in a barn," Gertie said. "Our little rental is looking better all the time."

It wasn't until the night the fishtank water froze, sending poor little Salt and Pepper to a ice cube grave, that Gertie put her foot down and demanded Hal do something about the cold. When he went off to the hardware store, Gertie was sure he was going to come back with some kind of heater. He came home with something all right. Paint. Silver metallic paint. Enough to paint the entire roof.

Big Hal reasoned that the silver color would attract enough sunlight to heat the house. Instead it attracted all of the folks in the neighborhood. They watched in amazement as Big Hal turned his roof into a giant cookie tray. The neighborhood children, watching this spectacle, started calling out, "Hey Tinman, where's Dorothy?" The adults nearby chuckled.

"Go ahead and laugh," Big Hal shouted. "Because I will have the last laugh when you get your next delivery of heating oil, and you have to pay a king's ransom for it while I get my heat for free!"

If that wasn't bad enough, several days later the roof attracted a different type of attention. This time it was from the people who ran the local airport. Apparently, Big Hal's metallic roof was distracting to pilots. In fact, one fledgling pilot had become so

flustered by the sparkling sight, that he made a beeline right for it during a flying lesson. It took all the control the instructor possessed to bring the plane back up in the air to safety.

This was all Grandma Gertie had to hear. "Hal," she asserted, "I know you're trying to save money, but I will not have our children be victims of a plane crash while they are sleeping *in their own beds!* Either the roof goes, or we go. *Tinman.*"

Big Hal couldn't argue with that logic. He hurried off to the hardware store again. This time he came back with gallons of thick black tar paint, along with five space heaters.

One day, after telling me and my brother the metallic roof story, Grandpa added some new information. He said that when he was a kid, the metallic roof incident led to the neighborhood kids giving him the nickname "T.J."

"Why T.J.?" we asked. "Your name is Hal, after your father, isn't it Grandpa?"

"The nickname ,T.J., is after my father," Grandpa said. "T.J. stands for Tinman Junior."



Biographical Narrative

Idea gathering for your biographical narrative will take you into the lives of others. Usually, people write about someone who is close to them.

Start by thinking about the stories that your family members and friends enjoy telling. Also think about experiences you have shared with people and lessons you have learned from them.

You can use one of the prompts below, or you can use another idea. Once you know which story you would like to tell, make a list of important ideas related to the story. Then fill out a planning page.

The most heroic person I know is

On holidays, we always tell the story about

Someone I know faced a difficult problem when

My best friend once

I was amazed to hear that my
(choose a family member or friend and finish the sentence)

I love to hear the story about

Death Comes to Baghdad

-a retelling of an ancient Sufi parable

A wealthy merchant in Baghdad sent his young servant to the marketplace to purchase provisions. Shortly later, the servant returned looking panic-stricken.

"Master!" he cried. "You must lend me your best horse immediately, so that I may flee to Damascus and thereby escape my fate."

"What has happened?" asked the merchant.

"I went to the marketplace and I saw Death standing there among the stallholders!" exclaimed the servant. "First, he made a hostile gesture at me, and then he started walking toward me! I beg you, please, lend me your best horse so that I may flee to Damascus and escape."

The merchant, being a kind and generous man, did exactly as his servant asked. He bid the terrified young man well and watched as the servant fled toward Damascus.

Then the merchant's curiosity got the best of him, and he walked down to the marketplace to investigate the servant's story. It was there that he witnessed a curious sight. Death was indeed standing in the crowd.

The merchant approached Death, intent upon questioning the hooded figure. "Why did you make a hostile gesture at my servant?" asked the merchant.

"I made no gesture of hostility," replied Death. "I was simply very surprised to see him, for I have an appointment with him tonight... in Damascus."



Fictional Narrative

Prewriting for a fictional narrative involves a lot of creativity! Have fun brainstorming for ideas and planning the conflict, setting, characters, and events. There are many ways to come up with clever ideas. Try this one!

What if....?

1) Think of topics: random people, events, or objects.

Ex. teacher birthday party painting of an island

2) Now think about each idea, one at a time. And ask yourself a “What if” question related to it. You can’t be wrong. Just brainstorm as many related “What if” ideas as you can. When you find an idea that you like, circle it and expand it until you have an idea you like.

Ex. Painting of an Island



- What if... people were stranded there?
- What if... the island suddenly disappeared from the painting?
- What if... anyone who touches the painting disappears?



What if... they get transported to the island?



What if... they can’t get off?



What if... ???????????????



3) Sometimes, you can think of ideas just by looking around the room and thinking “What if...?” You can then keep generating ideas or expanding on existing ideas.

Have fun and be creative! Anything goes when you write fiction!

What if?

Topics: _____

What if... _____

What if... _____

What if... _____

What if... _____

What if... _____

What if... _____

Choose 1 idea and take it further.

What if... _____

What if... _____

What if... _____

What if... _____

Are you happy with one of the ideas? Fill out a plot map and go with it!

“Writing fiction feels like an adventurous act, nudging aside reality a word at a time.”

— James Van Pelt, author

Introduction:

Establish the setting, background information, and characters.

Plot Events:

Introduce the conflict, and organize the events that tell the story.

Conclusion:

Provide a resolution to the conflict.

Title:

Author:

Introduction

Event 1

Event 2

Event 3

Conclusion



Narrative Planning: Plot Map

Name _____

Title:

Author:

Setting:

Main
Character(s):

Other
Character(s):

Conflict:

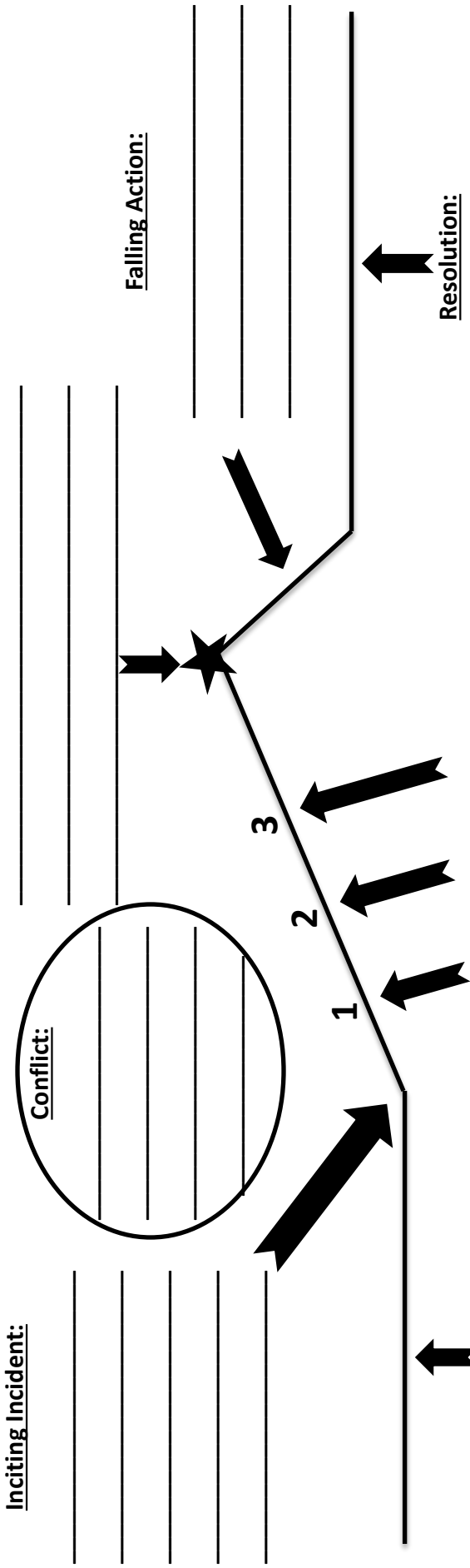
Rising Action:
Event 1:

Event 2:

Event 3:

Climax:

Resolution:



Setting: _____

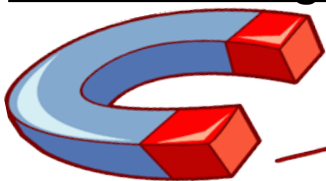
Rising Action: _____
Three plot events leading to the climax:
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Theme: _____

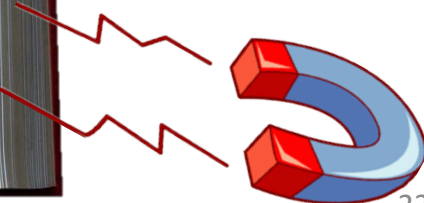
Protagonist : _____ vs. Antagonist: _____



Magnetic Ways to Start a Story

Dynamic Dialogue	"Mom, the teacher told me to write an essay on the dog, but he won't stay still," said Joey.
Setting Sketch	Jill pressed her head against the back window of the car, watching the snow fall softly on the countryside.
Character → Action	<u>Billy crawled</u> through the cave... <u>Jessie danced</u> as though...
Simile or Metaphor	The puppy's fur was as soft as silk.
Strong Feelings	My heart raced as I slowly walked into the testing center.
Character Sketch	I watched Granny wrangle the steer through the gate faster than cowboys twice her size and half her age.
Flashback	If only I had known that a colony of bees had made a cozy home in the tree I was climbing.
Question	Was it possible for Lydia to be a runaway bride for the second time?
Onomatopoeia	Whoosh! It only took one gust of wind to blow the clean white sheets off the clothesline and into the mud.

Draw
Readers
In!



Point of View

Narratives require a **point of view**, which is the perspective from which a story is told.

- ❖ **1st Person:** A character is telling the story. First person pronouns like *I*, *me*, and *my* are used.
- ❖ **3rd Person Limited:** This narrator is not a character in the story. The narrator can share what one character is thinking or feeling by using third person pronouns like *she* and *he*.
- ❖ **3rd Person Omniscient:** (Omniscient means all-knowing.) This narrator is not a character in the story. The narrator knows what many characters are thinking and feeling. Third person pronouns are used.

Tips

- A personal narrative describes events that have happened to you. Therefore, you should use a 1st person narrator.
- Fictional or biographical narratives can be written using 1st or 3rd person narrators.
- Sometimes it is interesting to experiment by trying different points of view. See the example below.

Alissa was assigned a narrative, and she decided to write about the first time she saw her dog, Marley. Alissa wrote the one on the left from her own point of view. Then she wrote the one on the right from Marley's point of view. Which one do you prefer? Why?



I got Marley on my seventh birthday. My parents handed me a big box with a red bow. The lid had little holes in it, and curiously, the box seemed to be moving! I eagerly opened it to find the cutest, most cuddly puppy!

I'll never forget the day I met my girl, Alissa. She squealed when she saw me, and that made me squirm out of her arms. But then she scratched me behind the ears, just the way I like, and I knew she was the girl for me. I licked her hands to thank her, and they were yummy, just like the food Alissa calls chicken nuggets. I was a lucky dog all right.





Creating Characters

Good writers create characters that seem believable. Whether your characters are real people, are based on real people, or are totally fictitious, characters have to seem real.

Characters have to be rich with character traits in order to seem real. Answer the following questions to get to know your character.



Where is the person from? _____

What might be this person's worst fear? _____

What is this person's favorite movie? _____

What is this person's dream for the future? _____

How would this person's friends describe him/her? _____

Which character traits are you giving the character?

Once they know the character well, writers use these methods of characterization to reveal the character's traits in a narrative:

Let's learn about Billy.

❖ **Direct description**

Billy was a shy boy who rarely spoke up in class.

❖ **The character's own dialogue and actions**

Billy put his head down as he said, "I don't feel comfortable trying out for the school play."

❖ **Other people's thoughts and feelings**

The teacher knew that no matter how perfect Billy seemed for the part, he was much too shy to try out for the play.

Tip: Even if you are writing about a real person, a little exaggeration never hurts!

Using Transition Words



Transition words and phrases are like bridges that connect the story elements. They help move the plot sequence smoothly, they show setting and time shifts, and they emphasize important plot details.

Show **Location**:

around	near	south of	north of	beneath
by	throughout	east of	against	close to
beyond	between	west of	alongside	toward
inside	along	among	outside	over

Show **Time** and **Sequence**:

at the beginning	at the end	yesterday	the next day
in the morning	in the afternoon	in the evening	later
in the past	in the future	the earliest	recently
at first	first	second	after
immediately	afterward	finally	when
before	during	after	meanwhile

Show **Emphasis** and **Importance**:

the best	for this reason	especially
the most important	surprisingly	truly
the least important	equally important	suddenly

Writing Dialogue

Dialogue is a character's exact spoken words. A **speaker tag** identifies the speaker and tells how the character is speaking.

1 "Class, who remembers the chemical formula for water?"
2 asked the teacher.
3 Michael raised his hand and said, "Pick me! I know it!"
4 "Michael," said the teacher, "please share the formula
5 with the class."
6 "I sure will," responded Michael. "It is HIJKLMNO."
7 "Michael, that is not funny," said the teacher.
8 Michael shrugged his shoulders and answered, "But just
9 yesterday you said it's H to O."

1. What do you notice about the paragraphing that is used?
2. What do you notice about the punctuation and capitalization in lines 1-2?
3. What do you notice about the punctuation and capitalization in line 3?
4. What do you notice about lines 4-5?
5. How is line 6 different from lines 4 -5?
6. How are lines 1-2 different from line 7?

Rules for Writing Dialogue

Dialogue is a character’s exact spoken words. A **speaker tag** identifies the speaker and tells how the character is speaking.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

"Class, who remembers the chemical formula for water?"
asked the teacher.
Michael raised his hand and said, "Pick me! I know it!"
"Michael," said the teacher, "please share the formula
with the class."
"I sure will," responded Michael. "It is HIJKLMNO."
"Michael, that is not funny," said the teacher.
Michael shrugged his shoulders and answered, "But just
yesterday you said it's H to O."



Rule	Example
❖ Begin a new paragraph with every new speaker.	entire passage
❖ Always begin a quote with a capital letter.	entire passage
❖ Quotation marks go before and after dialogue.	entire passage
❖ Punctuation goes inside the closing quotes.	entire passage
❖ Use a comma after the speaker tag if it is before the dialogue.	lines 3 & 8
❖ Use a comma after the dialogue if it comes before the speaker tag,	line 7
❖ unless, the dialogue is a question or an exclamation	lines 1-2
❖ If the speaker tag interrupts a line of dialogue, use commas to separate it. Do not use a capital after the speaker tag.	lines 4-5
❖ If the speaker tag interrupts two sentences, use a period after the speaker tag. Start the new line with a capital.	line 6

The Importance of Dialogue

Dialogue serves many purposes in a narrative.

Purpose of Dialogue	Example
▪ establish the setting	“Gertie,” he said, “this cold mountain air is good for the lungs. It’ll toughen these city kids up.” from <i>Big Hal and the Metallic Roof</i>
▪ show characterization	“Why did you make a hostile gesture at my servant?” asked the merchant. from <i>Death Comes to Baghdad</i>
▪ foreshadow events	“Master!” he cried. “You must lend me your best horse immediately, so that I may flee to Damascus and thereby escape my fate.” from <i>Death Comes to Baghdad</i>
▪ advance the action	“...Either the roof goes, or we go, Tinman.” from <i>Big Hal and the Metallic Roof</i>

Dialogue Tips

- ☐ Dialogue must sound believable.
- ☐ Dialogue does not have to be grammatically correct; it must sound natural.

Directions: Write dialogue to go with the pictures below. Make it serve one of the purposes above and make it sound believable. Be sure to punctuate it properly!



You Must Make Paragraphs!

Paragraphs are important. Without paragraphing, the text looks imposing and overwhelming, like a

giant wall of words! Yikes!



When a paragraph ends, the reader has a chance to pause and reflect. Additionally, the beginning of the new paragraph signals to the reader that a change is taking place.

Start a new paragraph when....

- a new character enters the scene
- a new person begins to speak
- the topic changes
- the setting changes
- a new event occurs
- time moves forward or backward
- dramatic effect is needed for emphasis

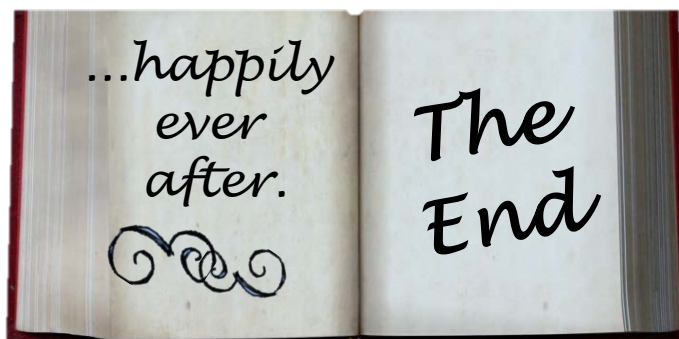


Dynamic Ways to Conclude a Story

An Action	I walked away, confident that I would continue learning about my own strengths.
Dialogue	"The nickname, T.J., <i>is</i> after my father," Grandpa said. "T.J. stands for Tinman Junior."
Reflection (Conveys Feelings)	The score showed they lost the game, but in his heart, Robert knew they had won something better.
Irony (The Unexpected Twist)	"I have an appointment with him tonight...in Damascus."
Full Circle (Back to the Beginning)	Oh, and I'm certainly sleeping better, too.

Tips

- Provide a plot resolution that flows naturally from the events.
- Think about the feelings, thoughts, or questions that you want to leave with the readers.
- Try not to rely on a cliché, such as, "He woke up to discover it was all a dream."
- Remember that endings can be happy or sad.



Voice

Voice is the quality in writing that makes it clear a real live person is behind the words on the page. It is the writer’s unique personality and feelings coming through. It is what makes a narrative interesting.

Read the following passage.

My grandfather liked to tell us about the time his father almost caused a bad accident. It was a good story. It showed how my great grandfather hated to spend money and was stubborn.

Does the paragraph sound vaguely familiar? It’s the first paragraph from the narrative *Big Hal and the Metallic Roof*. Would you be interested in reading more of the narrative if it were written in this manner? Explain.

You can make your own narrative more interesting by adding a sense of voice. To do that, consider the following questions:

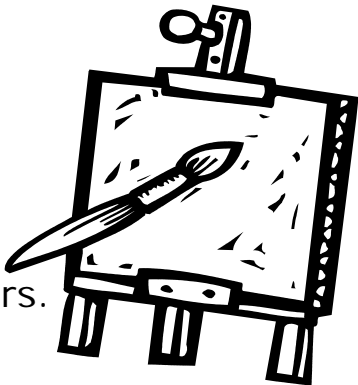
- 1) Does my writing show personality or expression?

2) Does my writing sound original?

3) Have I shared feelings and emotions?

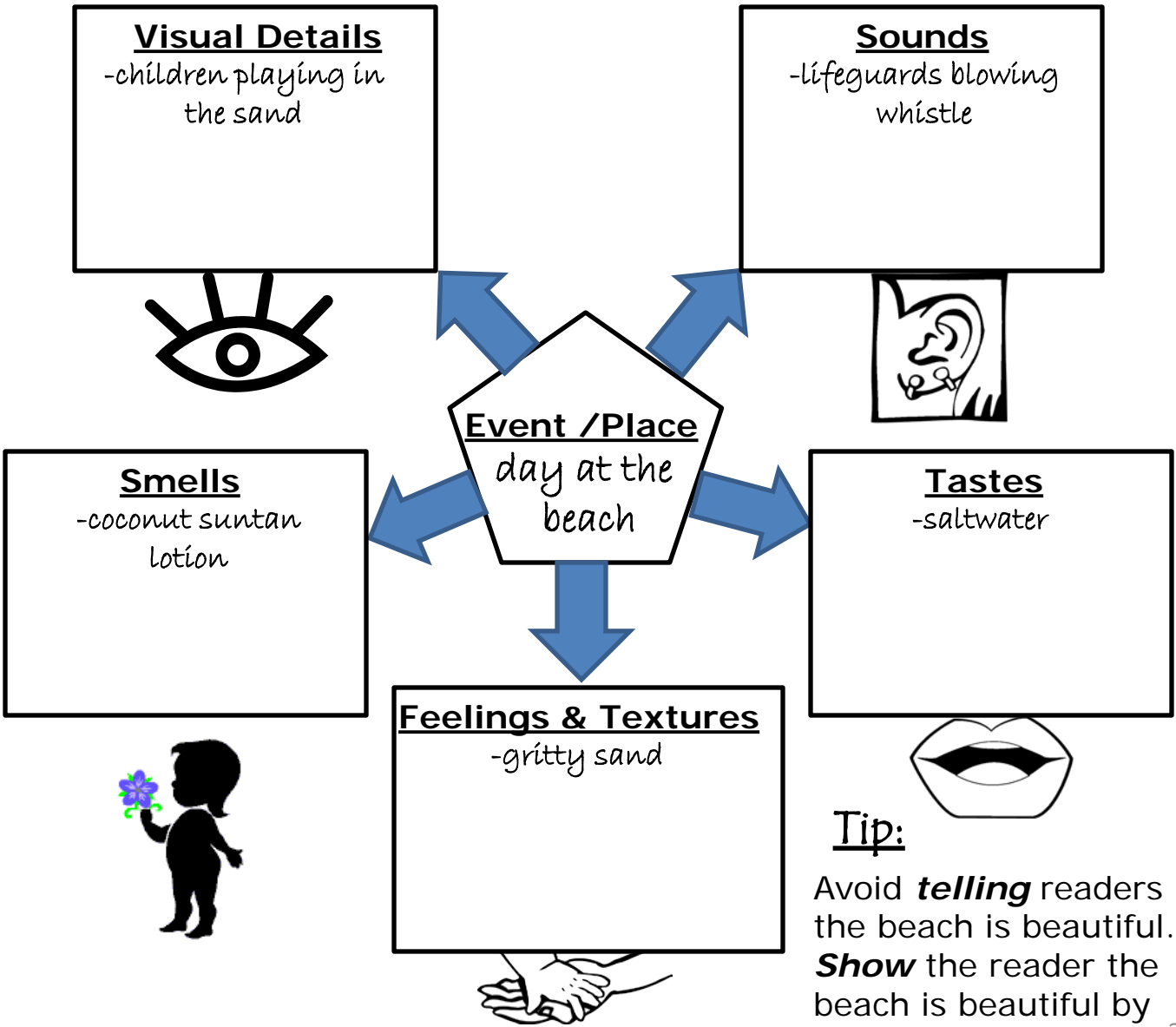
4) Do my words come to life, so the reader can visualize the story?
- If you have answered “yes” to three out of four of the questions, your writing probably has voice!

Use Sensory
Details to Describe



Writers are like artists, except instead of using paint on canvas, writers “paint” pictures with language. They use details related to the five senses to appeal to readers. Vivid sensory details create imagery that makes the narrative come to life.

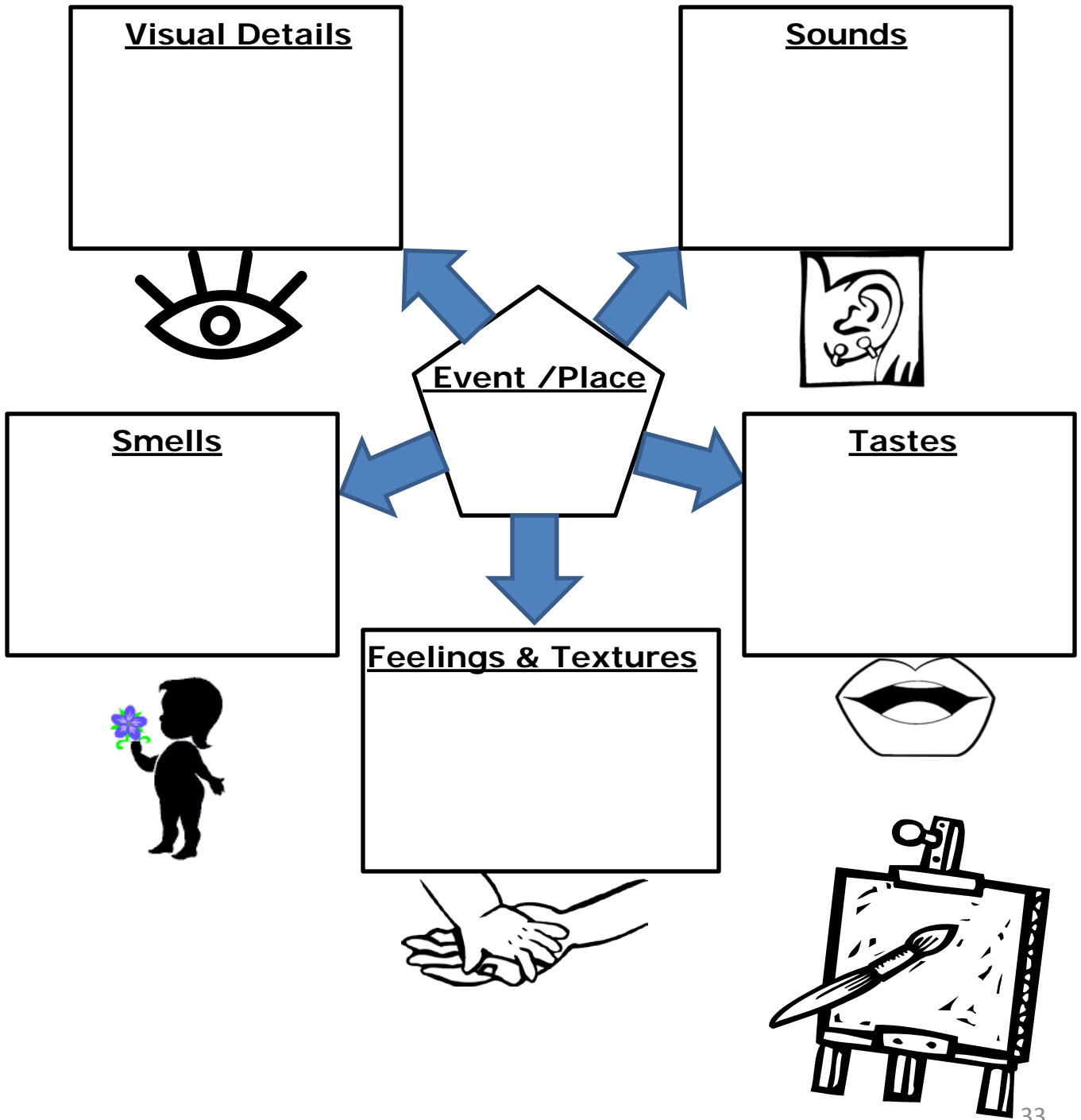
Directions: Read the topic below, and complete the sensory detail chart to appeal to the sense of **sight**, **smell**, **taste**, **sound**, and **touch**. Add two details to each box.



Tip:
Avoid **telling** readers the beach is beautiful. **Show** the reader the beach is beautiful by using **vivid details**.

Use Sensory
Details to Describe

Engage readers and bring your narrative to life! Go through your draft and decide how many sensory details you can add. Your narrative will be sensational!





**Use Concrete Terms
and Vivid Verbs**

Writers must communicate ideas clearly. One way to do that is to use specific, concrete nouns and verbs.

❖ **Replace general nouns and verbs with specific nouns and verbs.**

- **General:** The cafeteria floor was *filled with garbage*.
- ✓ **Specific:** The cafeteria floor was **littered with plastic forks, half-eaten sandwiches, empty potato chip bags, and water bottles**.

- **General:** The store *had many kinds of bicycles for sale*.
- ✓ **Specific:** The store **sold mountain bikes, racing bikes, motorized bikes, and BMX bikes in every color of the rainbow**.

❖ **Replace the general nouns and verbs in boldface, with specific nouns and verbs.**

- **General:** The students **liked** the new teacher for two **reasons**.
- ✓ **Specific:** _____

- **General:** Many **flowers were** in the garden.
- ✓ **Specific:** _____

Tantalizing Titles

Imagine this scenario:

One sunny afternoon you spend several hours baking a cake. You go shopping for the finest ingredients: organic eggs, rich dark chocolate, and thick cream. You take your time mixing and pouring. You bake it until it is the perfect golden color. Is it finished yet?



Delicious looking?
Ready to eat?

No?
What's missing?



How about some icing, like this?
Now that's more like it, isn't it?

The icing makes the cake look delicious, which attracts you. It makes you wonder how the cake will taste.

Well, the title of your narrative is like the icing on the cake. It draws the reader in and makes the reader wonder what the story will be like.

A well-chosen title should do the following:

- ☐ catch a reader's attention.
- ☐ have a nice rhythm
- ☐ hint at the content, while leaving some mystery

Which of the mentor text titles do you like best? Why?

Think of several possible titles for your narrative. You can choose the one you like the best, or you can ask a classmate for help choosing.

Narrative Writing: Student Revision Checklist

Criteria	Absolutely	Mostly	Partially	Not Really
➤ Have you engaged the reader by including a magnetic opening?				
➤ Have you established an interesting point of view and characters?				
➤ Have you given background information through the exposition?				
➤ Have you used sensory language and descriptive details?				
➤ Have you used concrete language?				
➤ Have you developed a conflict that leads to a climax?				
➤ Have you used transitions to organize the sequence of events?				
➤ Have you used dialogue and description to develop characters and events?				
➤ Are all of the conversations and events important?				
➤ Have you included a resolution that flows naturally from the events?				
➤ Have you reviewed for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors?				

Narrative Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Plot Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Skillfully introduces a narrative viewpoint and interesting, characters ➤ Organizes a logical sequence of events, including a conflict and climax ➤ Conclusion flows naturally and/or reflects on the experiences or events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduces a narrative viewpoint and characters ➤ Organizes a sequence of events including a conflict and climax ➤ Conclusion follows events and may reflect on events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Narrative viewpoint is attempted; characters are partially developed ➤ Sequence of events may be choppy or missing a plot element ➤ Conclusion does not flow naturally from plot events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Narrative viewpoint is unclear ➤ Characters and plot are not developed ➤ Little attempt at sequencing events; sequencing may be disjointed
Narrative Techniques and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thorough use of narrative techniques, such as dialogue and descriptions, to develop events and characters ➤ Skillful use of transition words and phrases to convey sequence and signal shifts in time and setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some use of narrative techniques, such as dialogue and descriptions, to develop events and characters ➤ Some use of transition words and phrases to convey sequence and signal shifts in time and setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Little use of narrative techniques, such as dialogue and descriptions, to develop events and characters ➤ More transition words and phrases are needed to convey sequence and signal shifts in time and setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No use of narrative techniques, such as dialogue and descriptions, to develop events and characters ➤ Transition words and phrases are needed
Clarity and Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thorough use of concrete words and phrases, descriptive details, and sensory language ➤ Includes style, sophisticated vocabulary, and voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some use of concrete words and phrases, descriptive details, and sensory language ➤ Includes style and grade-level vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Minimal use of concrete words and phrases, descriptive details, and sensory language ➤ Some attempt at style, with basic vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Concrete words and phrases, descriptive details, and sensory language are needed ➤ More attention is needed to develop style, vocabulary, and voice
Mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is clear evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised and edited. ➤ There are few errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is some evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ There are some errors, but they do not interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is little evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors interfere with understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no evidence that the response has been reviewed, revised, and edited. ➤ Frequent errors hinder understanding.



Publication Celebration!

Title

Author

Be positive, specific, and explain!



Name: _____

What I like about the narrative: _____

Name: _____

What I like about the narrative: _____

Name: _____

What I like about the narrative: _____

Name: _____

What I like about the narrative: _____

Name: _____

What I like about the narrative: _____

Narrative Writing

Rubric Scoring Guide

<u>Total</u>	<u>Grade</u>
16	100
15	94
14	88
13	81
12	75
11	69
10	63
9	56
8	50
7	44
6	38
5	31
4	25

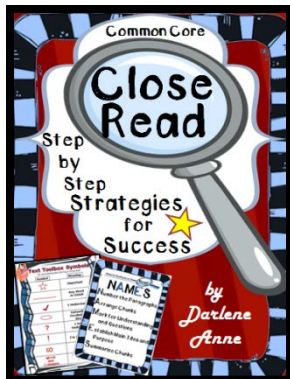
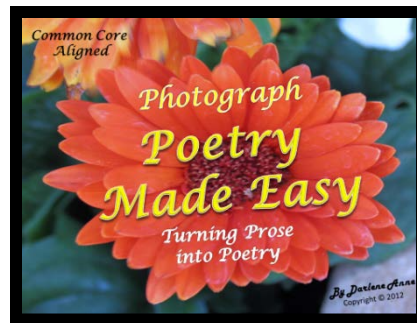
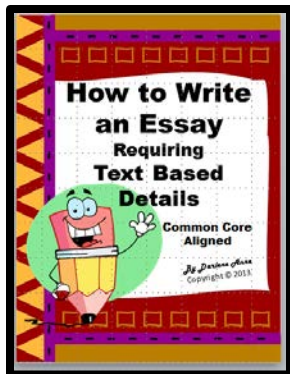
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*Thank you and enjoy!
Darlene Anne*