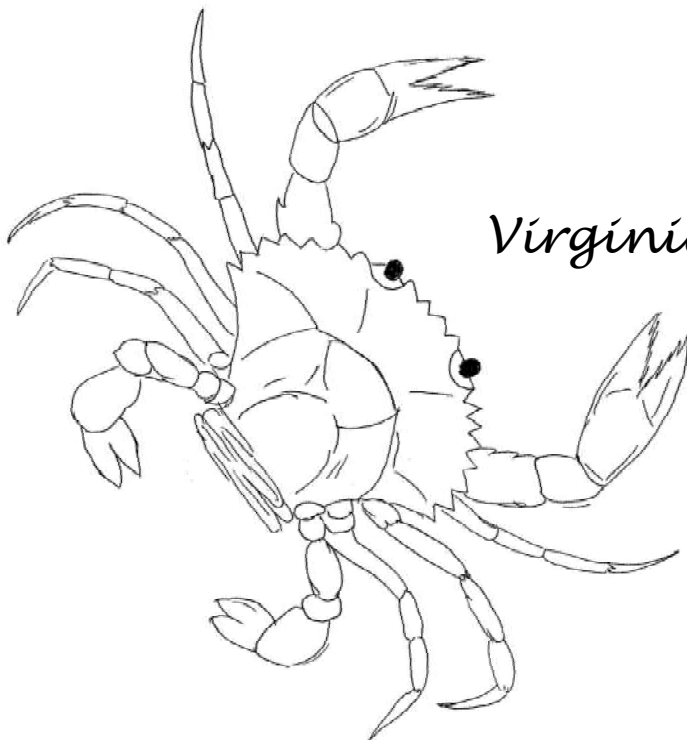


Writing:

A Sixth Grade Program



Virginia Pong

Also by Virginia Pong

Writing, The Final Step
Times and Time Again
Waiting for Waif, Educational Supplement

Children's Novels (as A.V. Pong)
Waiting for Waif
Overnight Delivery
Daily Driver

Writing: A Sixth Grade Program

Designed and written as a book to accompany the author's presentation of the described writing curriculum and teaching techniques.

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Dedication

To Kathy and Gerard, my team teachers, who gave me the opportunity to develop this writing program...because writing was the very last thing they wanted to teach,

To Margee who encouraged me to put it in print,

And to all the sixth grade students who became the testing ground for the material found herein.



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Forward

To the Second Printing

Twenty years have come and gone since the first printing of *Writing: A Sixth Grade Program*, but writing is still writing and the ability to express oneself in clear and concise written language still remains a necessary skill whether at home, at school, at work, or in the community.

During the last two decades technology, texting, and social media have influenced the writing of even the best. Word processing programs turn out beautiful work with corrections and changes made in only minutes. Grammar becomes casual and abbreviations abound. Duplication and communication is almost instant. Photographs and videos, whether by camera, cell phone, or wrist watch, are everywhere. The question comes then, as to what adaptations are necessary and appropriate for today's classroom writing. The ultimate answer is up to you but here are some thoughts for your consideration.

Individual student contributions throughout the teaching and development of a writing assignment encourage thought and achievement in other students. Rarely will a class be without several answers or suggestions as it is led through a writing process. Keeping a class at the same stage of writing increases student understanding and growth yet does not limit individual expression.

It would seem safe to say that all students do have access to paper and pencil/pen. This is the simplest way to work this writing program. Word processing does integrate well with final copy (which is usually done or at least finished at home), however students are often slow at data input, get discouraged easily, and make mistakes they do not make in copying by hand.

Computer technology today makes individual student anthologies of their writing during the school year or a classroom anthology of the best of each student's work easily possible. A real paperback book(s) can now be set up by student or teacher and printed on demand at a minimal cost for as few as only one or two copies. (See *Writing, the Final Step* for details.) Having one's writing selected and printed in a "real" book does wonders for a child's opinion of himself and his work. Photographs can be included and artwork scanned for inclusion. Parents and students may want more than one copy!

The use of word processing programs for classroom writing depends on student accessibility to computer equipment, student understanding of how to use the software, student keyboarding skills and speed, the socio-economic status of the school/class, the position of the school/district on computer use, and last but not least, the preference of the teacher. Most teachers today are required to have some working knowledge of word processing programs. Although some high schools now issue a lap top for every incoming ninth grader, few sixth grade classrooms have a full time computer available for every student and a once a week visit to a computer lab may not prove sufficient for this program.

Whatever the decision for the inclusion of word processing software, the final result remains the same: teaching the student to produce a clear and concise written document. Without this basis, even the fanciest finished copy is of little avail.

One last thought. Enjoy working and interacting with the students. Their contributions are interesting and original and you never know which student may turn in a brilliant piece of work.

Introduction

Writing is the most difficult of the four language processes of understanding, speaking, reading and writing. It is also the most formal and the least forgiving of mistakes. In an age of computers and cell phones, technicians and businessmen in the work force continue to emphasize to me the importance of learning clear and concise writing. High school and college students have shared with me their teachers' expectations regarding the writing ability of incoming students and ask how they are supposed to know how to write when they were never taught these needed skills.

This writing program developed as I worked with hundreds of sixth-grade students to improve their writing skills. They tended to make a number of similar errors as they wrote. Reality set in one day when I explained to a GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) student that her sentence was incomplete because it had no predicate. Her immediate response was, "What's a predicate?"

Obviously, in order for the students to understand and correct their mistakes, we needed to establish a common language with which to discuss their writing. Thus began the introduction of a year long strand of basic grammar.

These writing assignments center around two major areas. Students will always need skills in academic writing as they continue their education in any variety of subject areas; hence, such assignments as the comparison, character analysis and essay. A variety of poetry assignments emphasizing certain basic concepts provide a lighter touch, a change of pace and often demonstrate a surprising sensitivity and eloquence in a student.

One cannot expect that all students will emerge as brilliant and gifted writers. That is not the intention of this coursework. However, the students will gain a basic ability to organize and set forth their thoughts in formal written language. Most students were in the wide range of "average"; but at times a student would travel well beyond the basic and inspire the rest of the class. Others had to work diligently for a hard earned "C" on their compositions. While a few, like horses, may be led to water but refuse to

drink, there were not many from whom we were unable to extract a reasonable level of written work.

Taught correctly for maximum student understanding and production, this program will fill a standard school year of forty-five minute instructional periods. Some classes will progress at a slower rate and thus not be able to cover all the material, while others will have time for additional assignments or a little dawdling along the way. This curriculum will pay off as the students move toward becoming independent in their writing assignments, not only in these specific writing assignments but in the application of them in other subject areas as well.

This not an easy program to teach because it is not based on a text book and worksheets. Instead, it requires a great amount of active instruction, student-teacher interaction and teacher “up time.” It will not be effective if just handed to the students. The success of this program depends on your ability and desire as a teacher to sensitively instruct, guide and respond to your students as they progress slowly through each of the learning processes and assignments. Students need constant repetition, sharing, listening and restructuring as they move from one sentence to another and from one paragraph to another. The ability to think on your feet as you listen to your students’ oral sharing of their ideas and sentences enables you to use their strengths as examples and their weaknesses as positive instructional tools.

If you are home schooling your children, you will not have the advantage of input from other students. You will, however, have a much greater opportunity for interaction with an individual student and extended assignments especially in an area of particular interest. You will find the content herein to be a useful framework from which to help your child develop his or her writing skills. You are also in a position to take time for creative and attractive forms of final presentation for their work.

Be encouraged and take heart. Students do improve their writing as the year progresses. One of their first realizations of the year is that they will use a lot of paper. A little later they begin to understand that they have to think in order to write well. Assignments are continually revisited through the content areas with quality continuing only at the level which you require. Keep your standards high. As the students become more proficient,

some will be able to take a certain amount of freedom with their independent or content area responses. It is then that you may begin to see that unexpected spark of light and creativity, sometimes from the least expected of your students.

Over time you will become more comfortable with this program and it will become easier to continually interweave the grammar, the assignments, and content area subjects as you move through the school year.

I wish you and your students the best of success in writing.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Virginia". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V".

Virginia Pong

Feel free to email me at: office@IntrixInc.com

Instructional Notes

The success of this writing program depends on you, the teacher. It requires a great amount of interaction with the students as they write. It takes confidence and practice to be able to take a sentence or two read aloud by a student and turn it into a mini instructional lesson with the involvement of the entire class.

A strand of basic grammar continues throughout the school year in short instructional or review periods on two to five days a week, depending on the material. Follow each new concept with a short quiz on the new material, but always make it comprehensive by including all material covered to date. The grammar presented here is designed to build basic skills and provide a common ground for communication between student and teacher in order to improve student writing. It is not meant to be, not is it, a comprehensive treatment of the subject. With today's internet you can find extensive explanations in most any area.

Some writing assignments such as the Take Five and Comparison specifically require the correct use of certain concepts. Constant review is needed to keep the student's memory operative and up to date for application to their work.

Grammar baseball is always enjoyed by the class and frequently ends with a tie score because the game is structured so as to reduce incorrect answers to a minimum. Even so, the students always took great delight in the game. Keep the game relatively short. You may want to use only a part of the class period. The basic rules of the game are:

1. Two teams usually selected by the teacher by obviously random methods such as rows or clothing color. Sometimes a team captain can be given one or two choices of team members before assignment of the rest is made
2. Three bases (desks) are established around the class with batter up in the front. No running to bases. No stealing bases. Home runs can be allowable (depending on you) if the student requests as he comes up to bat and before his question. Allowing a home run

option means an especially hard question, so make sure you are prepared.

3. Only one question per batter. Only a few seconds to answer. They may, if they do not know, quickly ask one and only one team member to whisper the answer to them and then give it as their own. The rendering of the “crab” on the cover of this book depicts the squeaky plastic toy I used to signify to the batter that time was out. The students had mixed feelings about the toy but always, they laughed.
4. Questions. Keep all the questions on 3” x 5” cards. Shuffle them and be obvious about always taking the top card.
5. Team in the field. They sit at their desks and are allowed to review their Student Reference Pages included in this book. It is surprising how often one who is the field will try to help the batter by giving him the answer.
6. Three outs, less if the students get too good, and the teams change.

As you introduce a particular writing assignment, take time, a lot of time, to work through the prewrites, the outline or chart, and the drafts. The average class cannot grasp what is expected of them if this is not done. Be assured this time will pay off later on. Each student must be accountable for his own learning, therefore require that each student write his own copy of what is put on the board or on the overhead.

It can take a week to move a class from prewrite through draft on some of the first assignments. For the first writing of any assignment, select a topic of which all the students have knowledge and can thus participate. If you are working with a novel, select one the class has just finished. The second writing topic must still remain one of common knowledge. Move slowly and the students will begin to see where they are going. Depending on the students’ overall ability, the third and fourth writings become more independent; however, they still need to be guided through the entire process during class instruction.

Since most writing is done during class time, little homework is assigned. Writing done at home is usually of poor quality and does not

follow what was taught in class, if in fact it is done at all. Collect each writing in draft form with prewrites attached. This prevents loss of work, keeps students accountable and up to date on their work, and provides you with a record of work completed which is useful for parent reports and conferences. When all drafts have been completed, which is usually three to five, return them all to the students. Ask them to select the best one using the criteria you have given them. They are then to edit and prepare a final copy for grading. This substantially reduces the amount of grading on your part and allows the students a certain freedom in selecting their best work. Some choose quickly while others agonize over their choice.

“Share and steal” and peer editing need to be structured, varied and done in very short periods of time. Students need specific directions in order to know why they are reading and what they are looking for: general feedback, picking the best, constructive criticism, content, organization or mechanics. They can only read successfully for one or two areas at a time.

When the students turn in their final work they place their final copy on the top, draft(s) underneath and prewrites on the bottom. There are times in grading and discussion when it is quite useful to have this supporting work.

Before you return graded writing, read the best student examples of work and discuss what is good about each one. Sometimes only a beginning or a conclusion is worth reading. Do not give out names of authors and read “blank” for any identifying information. Students must understand that while they may, if they wish, identify themselves as author, they do not have the right to point and identify another student. They should know that, unless told differently, their writing is open for limited sharing of this type. Read-arounds are short periods of time in which students read the writing from as many different students as they can and then sign their name at the end of the assignment. They can be fun, but the techniques and ground rules must be taught.

The holistic scoring rubric enclosed provides a simple basis for grading papers that both students and parents find easy to understand. Today, a number of districts have developed their own extensive grading scale for elementary level and middle school writing to which you may need

to adhere. At the original writing of this book, there was no district rubric for elementary grade level writing.

In grading papers, a quick read through of the one hundred plus papers enables a rough grading division into four piles: A, B, C, and D. (The only failing papers were those either not turned in or vastly incomplete.) In the second reading, most papers were graded with only a few left needing more consideration. I usually found no more than one to five and occasionally no A papers. There was a varying number of B papers, a lot of C papers, and some D papers which were not difficult to pick out. Do not be afraid to hold to your grading standard. The number of B papers can be expected to increase throughout the year. You will be able to teach students to write good solid B papers, but A papers require a spark or insight that is difficult to teach. Should the opportunity arise to volunteer to be a “reader” for grading writing proficiency examination papers, it is well worth the time and effort. There is nothing like two or three days of reading and scoring papers, especially those at or near your teaching grade level, to give you a broad overview of student writing. It will also help you as you prepare your students for writing proficiency examinations.

As a teacher you can expect to be questioned by parents regarding student writing grades, especially if you maintain any level of a quality standard. The simplest way to deal with this is to keep a notebook of outstanding student work, of A’s and sometimes B’s. Request that the parent come into the classroom and read several of these papers before you discuss the student work in question. It will save you and the parent a lot of time and explanation.

A class with overall low writing skills will spend most of its time working and strengthening basic writing. A class having a comprehensive background will move more quickly and therefore have time to illustrate and package final copies in a variety of creative ways (See *Writing, the Final Step*). It will also have time to work on more difficult assignments. Home schooling shines in this area. Colored pencils are always a favorite with students for illustrations, but a few sometimes prefer the more brilliant color array of the fine point Sharpie pens (which if used at school can sometimes mark in the wrong places). Not all students perceive themselves as artists. They don’t have to. A demonstration or two of simplistic drawing of stick

men, houses, and cars will get them started. Note that the two student illustrations in this book are essentially simple yet more than satisfactory.

Once a particular type of writing assignments is learned, the students need to revisit it regularly in content area assignments. Expect to have to give guidance again.

The following Overview of the Year lists each assignment covered and the main concepts and skills needed. Most of the writing assignments included herein have three parts:

1. Student outline
2. Assignment notes
3. Student writing sample

(All writing samples are taken from actual student writing.)

These parts are grouped together by assignment for ease in reference and teaching. A student reference section ready for duplication is included in the last section of this book. It is also available online at www.IntrixInc.com the education section. Encourage your students to make daily use of a three ring binder with a set of tabbed dividers, one for each subject. *Writing: A Student Reference* is ready for duplication and is designed to be handed out page by page as you cover the material and to take up residence in the writing section of the student's notebook for the entire year.

This writing program, like any other, is not set in stone and must be personalized by you to make it truly effective. Feel free to add, delete, or otherwise modify the content of this program to better serve your grade level curriculum and students. A larger font makes for easier reading. Keep a watchful eye for special assignment opportunities and for the exceptional "regular" written assignments that will come your way. As you near the end of the delightful Greek myths, you may wish to show the video *Jason and the Argonauts*. The students always enjoy it and you get a well earned respite from "on-your-feet" teaching.

Simple Holistic Scoring Rubric

Sixth Grade

Criteria	A	B	C	D
Impression	Read and forget you are grading	Better than most but not outstanding	OK	Poor
Central Idea	Well-developed around it	Well-told but plain	Yes	Poor
Details	Developed and relevant	Descriptive	Some, but few	Barely there or none
Sentence Structure	Complete, varied, complex	Complete, some variety	Simple	Poor
Errors	Few, if any	Occasional	Some, several	Too many
Vocabulary	Exciting	Developing	Ordinary	Limited
Organization and Paragraphs	Well placed	Yes	Hopefully	Lacking
Implication	Events, feelings, significance	Beginning	None	None
Originality of Thought, Creativity	Beyond basic scope	Starting	Basic	None

Overview of the Year

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Writing Assignment</u>
Beginnings	School Prompt
The sentence	Acrostic
Conclusion Connecting words Venn diagram Titles	Comparison
Noun, verb, adjective	Take Five
Character traits Physical traits	Character Analysis
Noun, verb, adjective Opposites	Take Seven
Content area	Essay
Parts of a letter	Friendly Letter
Dialogue Interjections Narrative Point of view Pattern Parts of a story	Fairy Tale Rewrite
Phrasing Rhythm	Color Poem
Sentence combining	Critique

Skill

Metaphor
Simile
Personification

Implication

Relationships
Fact

Review

Content knowledge

Selection of supporting evidence

Rhythm
Rhyme
Stressed syllables

Writing Assignment

Figures of Speech

Writing Prompt
District Proficiency

Analogy

Greek Myths

Expanded Acrostic

Persuasive Essay (Opinion)

Limerick

School Prompt Revisited

Memories

Autograph Book

Writing Format

Draft

Skip lines

One side only

Pencil

Printing or cursive

White lined paper

Changes or corrections expected

No slang

Spelling

Final Copy

Skip lines

One side only

Pencil

Cursive only

White lined paper

Neat work
No contractions

No slang

Correct spelling
Correct mechanics

Turn in assignment with one staple in the upper left corner in the following order:

final copy	on top
draft(s)	
prewrite(s)	on bottom

(Student Page 1)

Grammar Goals

I. DEFINE

Question In a complete sentence, what is a noun?

Answer A noun is a word that names a person, place, thing or idea.

II. IDENTIFY

Question Write (or circle) the nouns in the following sentence.

Answer Shane and Bradley ran quickly down the street.
Shane, Bradley, street

III. CREATE

Question Write a singular common noun

Answer Desk, chair, feather

Question Using three or more words, write only the predicate part of a sentence.

Answer jumped over the bench.

(Student Page 2)

Grammar Reference

THE SENTENCE

The **subject part** of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about.

Example: The big black dog ran across the street.

A **simple subject** has only *one* noun as the subject.

Example: The beautiful white bird

A **compound subject** has *two or more* nouns as the subject.

Example: A green snake and a black lizard

The **predicate part** of a sentence tells what the subject does.

Example: The big black dog ran across the street.

A **simple predicate** has only *one* verb.

Example: jumped over the fence.

A **compound predicate** has *two or more* verbs.

Example: jumped over the fence and ran across the field.

(Student Page 3)

NOUNS

A **noun** is a word that names a person, place, thing or idea.

Example: Mrs. Jones, home, disk, honesty

A **common noun** is a noun that names any person, place, thing, or idea.

Example: lady, home, desk, honesty

A **proper noun** is a noun that names a particular person, place, thing, or idea.

Proper nouns name people, days of the week, months of the year, holidays, titles, cities, states, continents, oceans, lakes, rivers, mountains

A **singular noun** is a noun that names only *one* of its kind.

Example: city, desk, pencil

A **plural noun** is a noun that names *two or more* of its kind.

Example: cities, desks, pencils

POSSESSIVE NOUNS

A **possessive noun** is a noun to which something belongs. In *most* cases the following rules apply.

To show ownership for a **singular** noun

Write the singular noun correctly

Add an apostrophe

Add an "s"

Example: The girl's hair is curly.

Example: The child's shirt is red.

To show ownership for a **plural** noun

Write the plural noun correctly

Add an apostrophe

Add an "s" only if there is no "s" already at the end of the plural noun

Example: All of the boys' jackets are wet.

Example: The men's shirts are blue.

(Student Page 4)

PRONOUNS

A **pronoun** is a word that takes the place of a noun.

A **possessive pronoun** shows ownership.

Example: Susan's book = her book

Example: The girls' house = their house

A **subject pronoun** is used as the subject of a sentence.

Example: Jane ran = She ran

Example: Jim and George left = They left

An **object pronoun** receives the action or item.

Example: Jack hit the ball. = Jack hit it.

Example: Rebecca hit the ball to Sarah. = Rebecca hit the ball to her.

ADJECTIVES

An **adjective** is a word that describes a noun.

Example: red apple, beautiful girl

Adjectives tell color, taste, looks, texture, quality, condition, number

Example: green, sour, pretty, crunchy, nice, excellent, five

(Student Page 5)

VERBS

A **verb** is a word that shows *action*.

Example: run, write, think, throw

Verb tense is the time or *when* the action happens.

Future tense is action that has not yet happened.

Example: He will be going.

Example: They are going to sing tomorrow.

Present tense is action that is happening now.

Example: He is running. He runs fast.

Example: They are singing. They sing well.

Past tense is action that has already happened.

Example: He was sleeping. He slept.

Example: They were laughing. They laughed.

APPOSITIVE

An **appositive**

renames the noun it follows

is set off by commas

can be left out of the sentence

Example: Roger, the boy next door, is my friend.

(Roger is my friend.)

Example: Susan read the story to Joan, her little sister.

(Susan read the story to Joan.)

Example: Jason, the boy who was destined to be king, wanted to be an explorer.

(Jason wanted to be an explorer.)

ARTICLES

An **article** signals that a noun is coming. They are **a**, **an**, **the**.

Example: a red book, an apple, the classroom (Student Page 6)

CLAUSES

A **clause** is a group of words with a subject and a predicate.

An **independent clause** is a clause that can stand alone and make a complete sentence.

Example: The students stayed in at recess.

A **dependent clause** is a clause that cannot stand alone and does not make a complete sentence by itself. Words that start a dependent clause are: after, although, as, as soon as, because, before, even, since, unless, until, while, if, when.

Example: because it was raining

A **dependent** clause must have an **independent** clause to make a complete sentence.

Example: The students stayed in at recess because it was raining.

or Because it was raining, the students stayed in at recess.

Note: This is the correct way to start a sentence with the word “because.”

DIALOGUE

Dialogue is conversation. It is the words actually spoken. When writing dialogue

use **quotation marks** around the words spoken

start a **new paragraph** each time someone else speaks

Example:

“Where are you going?” asked Mother.

Bradley answered, “Outside to play.”

“Wait a minute,” his mother called. “You need to do your homework first.”

“It’s okay, Mom. I already did it.”

(Student Page 7)

ADVERBS

An **adverb** adds to the verb. It tells how the action is done.

Example: The boy ran quickly.

Example: The girl ran fast.

Adverbs often end in -ly, but watch out! Look at the meaning of the following sentences.

Example: The man works hard.

Example: The man hardly works.

A word of caution:

Well is an adverb

Example: The girl speaks well.

Good is an adjective

Example: The boy is a good speaker.

PREPOSITIONS

A **preposition** is a connecting word that shows how a noun is related to the sentence. Some common prepositions are above, against, among, around, before, behind, below, beside, down, from, inside, near, off, under, up...

A **prepositional phrase** is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun (the object of the preposition).

Example: The boy ran around the tree.

Example: The dog chased the cat across the lawn and up the tree.

(Student page 8)

Beginnings and Endings

School Prompt

Assignment Notes

Grade Level Prompt

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

Give this assignment during class time on the first day of school with no other help or instructions.

Staple the original writing (draft written the first day of school) and the final copy in the front of a writing folder (one for each student) after the students have finished their rewrites and written their final copy. This will be a good reference for you, the students and the parents throughout the school year.

Beginnings

Use the above writing to teach alternatives ways to start instead of using “If I could go anywhere...”

Commonly chosen places are Hawaii, rain forests, jungles, and Africa. Write a first sentence using an exclamation. Then add the rest of the paragraph making any needed changes.

Repeat with a question, then other beginnings.

Students select their best for final copy.

Revisit the prompt at the end of the year. You may decide to give students a freedom of choice such as a long poem, story, dialogue, essay...

Endings

See notes on comparison

In the Beginning

Student Samples

Have you ever thrown a ball in the air and wondered why it came back down? Well, what brings the ball down is gravity. If you look up gravity in the dictionary...

Mr. Webster defines gravity as, “the mass of a...

Computers run almost everything in the world. They can tell weather...

What structural shape do you think is the strongest? The...

Did you know that a rolled up index card can support 200 pounds? The cylindrical shape formed...

Structures, structures, nothing but structures! There is a structure in everything, even in a grain of sugar. The strongest shape...

Peter Potts! Boy does he have adventures. Peter Potts is a character in a book called...

Mandie! She is the main character in eighteen books all titled *Mandie* written by...

Crashing through the water I struggle, trying to free myself of the cursed net.

“This place is cool,” I said. “Can we go swimming now?” We had just gotten to the...

At the End

Student Samples

...Would I like to trade places with Sam? Maybe, but I like to be around people and Sam lives in the mountains. But, I would like to have all his gadgets and tree house.

...I don't see how we could live without computers.

...I know gravity is useful and necessary, but sometimes I wish I could just fly without anything holding me up, nothing carrying me and no strings attached.

[domestication of animals and plants] ...If this process had not taken place we would probably still be hunting for our dinner.

... I have always taken my eyesight for granted. It seems so simple. I look at an object and see it, but the process is so much more complicated than I could have imagined. I am very thankful for my eyesight.

[changes in a culture] ... I hope that all of the changes will be good ones.

... If I were Kimba, I would have used my power in a more useful way. But like Kimba, I too, often make wrong decisions which lead me into trouble.

Acrostic

Student Samples

Words
 Phrases
 Sentences . . . or Paragraphs

Bryan

Rough

Yells

Animated

Notorious

Boy in every way

Really great in sports

Yodels beautifully

Always fun

Never in trouble

Bryan likes girls.

Really, you will find him a great friend.

Yes, you will like him.

After school he plays soccer.

Noontime recess is his favorite.

Acrostic
Student Sample, Paragraph

Bryan, that's me. I like to go out and play sports all day. Responsibility shows at home when I take care of my little brothers. Yet, they often give me a lot of trouble. A lot of their friends always come over to our house. Nothing ever really happens when they are there.

Carelessly, my little brothers always break my things that are in my room. It's irritating when they play around a lot and bug me. Rudely sometimes, I send them to their rooms and they get mad. Frank, one of my little brother's friends, is always a pain when I watch him. Either I get to stay home after school and watch them or I go to the YMCA after school. Obnoxiously, my little brothers fight all the time. Nothing else is more fun that watching my little brothers!

Comparisons

- I. Introduction
 - A. First character—identify
 - B. Second character—identify

- II. Similarities: list each similarity
Sections I and II may be combined into one paragraph

- III. Differences
Under each difference identified, always list each character in the same order.
 - A. Animals
 - 1. Jessica loves them.
 - 2. Sue Ellen is terrified.
 - B. Lake
 - 1. Jessica...
 - 2. Sue Ellen...

When you write your sentences, use a variety of connecting words such as: and, but, although, even though, while, however, on the other hand...

- IV. Conclusion

Possible areas for comparison

Situation

Character traits

Education

Family background

(Student Page 10)

Comparison

Assignment Notes

Teach connecting words such as and, but, while, although, even though, whereas, and on the other hand. Write and rewrite sentences so that the students understand that some may go either at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence, while other go in only one place.

For first instruction use a book or story excerpt that is common to all students.

Use a Venn diagram

Introduction

Identify each of the two characters

Similarities

List each thing that both characters share

Differences

List each difference, with each character always in the same order

A. Animals

1. Mady loves them
2. Sue Ellen is terrified

Use a different connecting word in each sentence

Although Mady loves all the animals, Sue Ellen is terrified of meeting any of them.

Conclusion

See "At the End"

Good conclusions are difficult and need thought

Students will need examples and help

Other assignments

Two adults of their acquaintance

Two books

A character in a book and the student

Two friends

A book and a movie

Comparison

Student Sample

I just finished another Baby Sitters' Club book written by Ann M. Martin. My favorite character is Claudia. I am Veronica Lestrin and I am eleven years old. I am a lot like Claudia Kishi. For example, I love art as much as Claudia. We both like all kinds of art: drawing, painting, you name it. Our personalities are similar, too. Both of us are cheerful and generous to our friends. Also, we both love candy! Claudia has a stash of candy hidden all over her room—in her closet, her dresser drawers and even under her bed. I wish I could do that.

But, since we are not clones, we have our differences. Claudia is Japanese-American with long black hair and dark brown eyes, whereas I am American and have brown hair and blue eyes. Although Claudia is always out babysitting or with her friends, I am always reading, playing Nintendo and kicking my soccer ball around. Claudia does not like sports very much and only reads Nancy Drew mysteries; however, I read all kinds of books. Claudia is the coolest, wildest dresser at her school while I dress normally. She is very outgoing. I on the other hand, am very shy.

Even though Claudia is really popular and cool, I would not want to change places with her. I cannot imagine not wanting to read. Claudia lives in Connecticut where it gets really cold. Also, I would not want to give up my good friends.

“Take Five”

Five lines of verse with nine words associated with one noun.

noun
adjective adjective
verb verb verb
two word phrase
noun

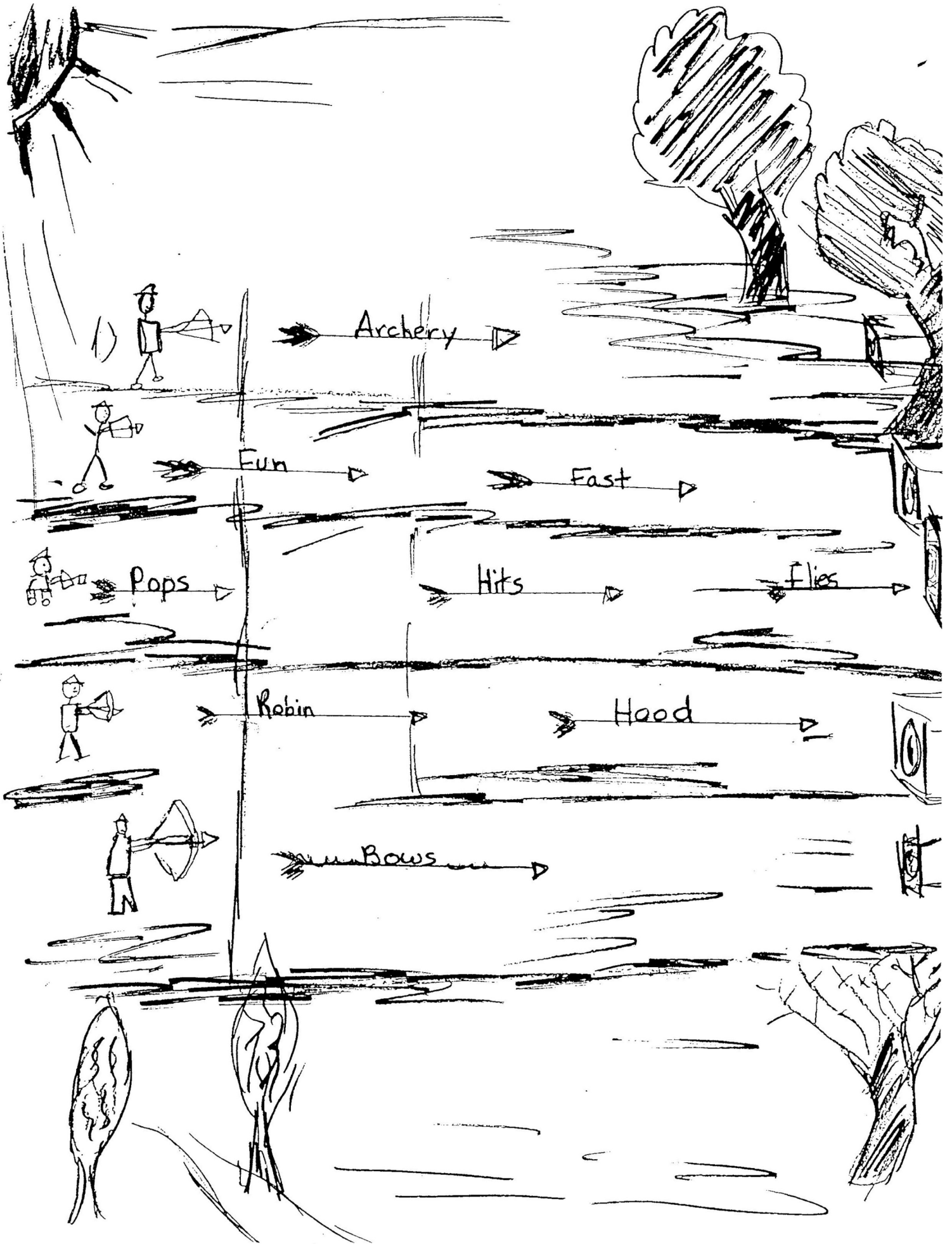
“Take Seven”

Seven lines of verse with eight words
associated with each of two opposite nouns.

noun
adjective adjective
verb verb verb
noun noun — *noun noun*
verb verb verb
adjective adjective
noun

Note: “Take Seven” nouns at the beginning and *end* must be opposites.

(Student Page 11)



Archery

Fun

Fast

Pops

Hits

Flies

Robin

Hood

Bows

Take Five

Assignment Notes

Requires knowledge of noun, verb and adjective

No root word may be repeated

All spelling correct

All verbs in same tense and form

Runs, jumps, plays

Running, jumping, playing

Ran, jumped, played

Words appropriately chosen with care

Introduce students to the thesaurus for

“I knew that word, I just couldn’t think of it.”

Playing is a C word, cavorting is an A word

Subjects

Book character

Animal

Adult friend or relative

Cartoon character

Previous teacher

Friend of own age

Final copy on plain paper with full page integrated illustration to make a showy display or place them in a three ring notebook in plastic sheet protectors.

Colored pencils make the nicest illustrations but they may not reproduce well.

Revisit this concept in content areas and in tests on novels to illustrate the change a character experiences from the beginning to the end of the book.

Take Seven

Assignment Notes

Same rules as the Take Five

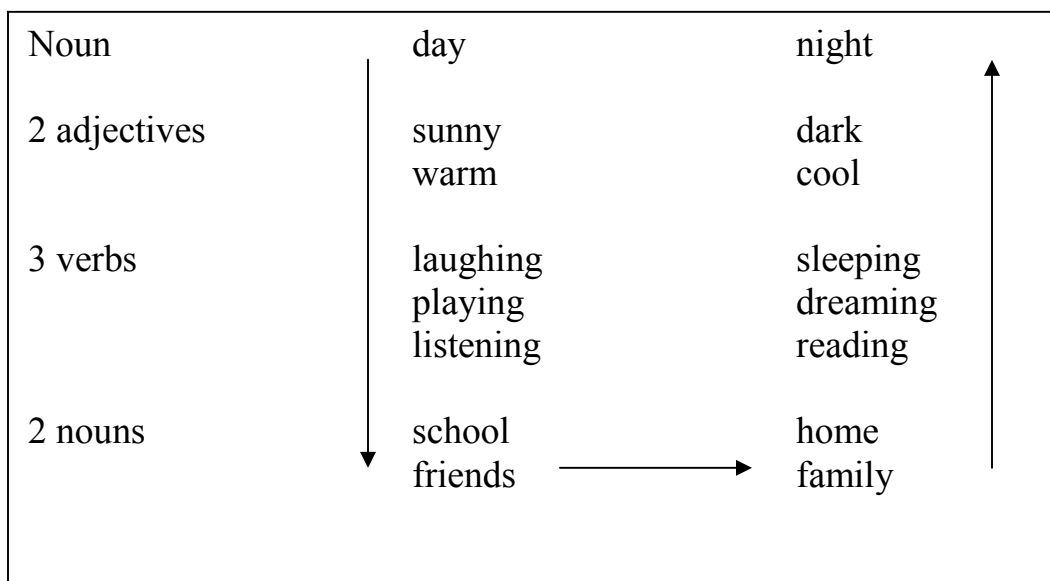
Different from Take Five

Two opposite nouns: the first and the last

Two word phrase becomes two nouns that associate with, rather than describe the first noun

Students list pairs of opposite nouns—watch their selection. You want giant and midget, not tall and short (adjectives).

Use the following chart to help organize their words.



Following the arrows helps students to transition to the diamond format.

For the illustrated final copy, some students will be able to integrate the nouns into a thematic picture. Others may divide the page in half.

For those who believe they cannot draw, it is more the concept rather than their artistic ability.

Take Seven's make an interesting notebook or display.



Teacher

inspirational scholar

instructs rectifies inscribes

books papers youth backpack

learns listens studies

active eager

Student

Character Analysis

- I. Introduction
 - A. Identify
 - B. Briefly describe

- II. Identify a character trait
 - A. Supporting example #1
 - B. Supporting example #2

- III. Identify a second character trait
 - A. Supporting example #1
 - B. Supporting example #2

- VI. Identify a third character trait
 - A. Supporting example #1
 - B. Supporting example #2

- V. Conclusion

(Student Page 12)

Character Analysis

Assignment Notes

Change the order of the character analysis and comparison in the *Overview of the Year* to meet your content area curriculum.

To help students understand the difference, list as a class

Physical traits

Character traits—there are many

Revisit ways to start a paragraph

Begin paragraph two, three and four in different ways

Discuss and give examples of thoughtful conclusions (see “At the End”)

Subjects

Character in the novel the class is reading

Significant adult

Friend

Television or movie personality

Cartoon character

Revisit through your reading curriculum

Character Analysis

Student Sample

A long time ago when people still lived in caves, there was a young boy named Kimba. He is one of the main characters in Thomas Millstead's book, *The Cave of the Moving Shadows*.

Kimba was a brave young boy who was not afraid to disobey his elders, especially Utrek, an old sorcerer who had the same power as Kimba. Kimba always wanted to hunt with the older men even if his own life might be at risk.

Kimba was confused with his everyday life. Was it all because of his power? Why did he have the power? Why did he have to be a sorcerer and not a hunter? He did not know why the huge wild dog did not come back and eat him.

Sometimes Kimba was stubborn and hard headed. He did not believe and listen to Utrek no matter how important it was. He always did things his own way which often got him into trouble.

If I were Kimba, I would have used my power in a more useful way, but like Kimba, I too often make wrong decisions which lead me into trouble.

Character Analysis

Student Sample

My mom, what would I do without her? My mom's name is Sarah Alvarez. She is my real mom and I have lived with her for the whole ten years of my life. I see her every day of my life. I don't see how I could not.

My favorite character trait she has is that she is athletic. My mom plays soccer with an all woman soccer league. She is extremely fast. She also runs on the high school track. Only on my good day I wish I could keep up with her.

Another characteristic she possesses is that she is intelligent. I can prove to you that this is true because she helps not only me with my homework, but my brother with his homework and he is in high school.

My last, but not least, favorite character trait of my mom is that she is caring. My mother is always asking what happened at school and what I learned. Whenever something happens to me, perhaps when I got my lip bit off, she would do anything she could to help me. She loves me so much she cried because she felt pain for me in her.

If she died tomorrow, I would be very depressed and I would die inside. I could not live without her.

Mom, the best thing that ever happened to me.

Essay

Expository or Persuasive Writing

- I. Statement
- II. First supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- III. Second supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- IV. Third supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- V. Additional supporting information
Optional, depending on topic
- VI. Conclusion

(Student Page 13)

Expository Essay

Assignment Notes

Expository essays and persuasive essays have a similar structure.

Introduction

Three or more supporting statements and explanation

Conclusion

Both are generally one paragraph at this level

The exception may be writers who have enough supporting content for separate paragraphs.

Factual information—expository writing

Opinion—persuasive writing

Sometimes the two can be very close

Always insist on a prewrite—outline, map or chart. It helps the student to clarify their thoughts.

Complete or at least start the prewrite as a class until you are confident the students can do so on their own.

Requires knowledge of material to be covered

Interweave into the content area throughout the school year

Rewrite with new beginnings and creative endings

On test essays, insist that each essay be written on a separate paper. It will make grading easier if you read all the essays at one time.

Expository Essay

Student Sample

Archaeologists are people who study artifacts, ruins, fossils and bones from the past. They use several methods to figure out the age of an object such as radiocarbon dating, absolute dating and relative dating. Radiocarbon dating will give you the age of a once-living object by measuring how much carbon is in it. For a non-living object you have to use relative dating which is finding out whether it is older or newer than another object. Absolute dating determines how old an object is by looking it up in recorded history. Even stratigraphy may not be accurate because of earthquakes and people of the past digging up the ground and messing up its natural order.

Although archaeologists have different methods of dating artifacts, their own experiences and interpretations may cause them to come to different conclusions. For example, a drawing on a cave wall of a horse could have little spear-like lines around it. Some may think they are spears while others may think that they are wheat or another plant. As you can see, an archaeologist's job is very tricky.

Friendly Letter

(Street)

(City, state, zip code)

- I. Date
Remember the comma
- II. Greeting
Remember the comma
- III. Body or paragraph
- IV. Closing
Remember only one capital letter
Remember comma
- V. Signature

Checkpoints:

Placement of parts of letter

Correct margins

Three commas

Address optional

(Student Page 14)

Friendly Letter

Assignment Notes

Five parts correctly placed on the paper

Watch the margins and commas

Return address of street, city, state and zip are optional unless the letter is addressed to a company

List five teachers, adults, products... and select one

“Write to” suggestions

Santa for themselves

First grade students who have written letters to Santa

(We play Santa Claus. Reading the first grade Santa letters sends the students “off the walls.” If you do this, be sure you read every letter for appropriate content before taking them to the first grade teacher.)

Rules for playing Santa are:

Thank or acknowledge student for writing

Promise nothing except in generalities

Tell them to check with parents if appropriate

As teacher you will have a number of questions to answer

Always be nice

Wish them well and be encouraging

Previous teacher

Thank you letter after Christmas

Parent—you may wish to require a parent signature of receipt on this

A product manufacturer

A relative or friend who lives out of town

Friendly Letter

Student Sample

January 18, 1995

Dear Ms. Pong,

I know I am new but people will get used to me. I know I am different but so is everyone else. I haven't really done anything yet because at my other school they didn't teach me anything. Please don't take me for stupid because I'm really not. You know I am trying my best so please don't flunk me. I really like you. Let's keep this to ourselves.

Sincerely,

Jennifer

Author's Note: This is an unedited real letter from a real student although the name has been changed.

Fairy Tale Rewrite

Assignment Notes

The Three Billy Goats Gruff

Point of view	The goats	The troll
I. Setting		
Place	once upon a time	under the bridge
Situation	hungry	family home
Protagonist	goats	troll
II. Development		
Antagonist	troll	goats
III. Conflict		
First event	small goat crosses	first goat crosses
Second event	medium goat crosses	second goat crosses
Third event	large goat comes	third goat comes
IV. Climax	troll gets knocked off	troll knocked off and?
V. Resolution	happily ever after	troll's commentary

Fairy Tale Rewrite

Assignment Notes

Dialogue practice

Start as a class

Use two names of class volunteers for dialogue

Use an overhead to show placement on paper

Starters

“I didn’t have time to do my homework,” said Joe.

“Where are you going?” called Mom as I headed out the door.

“Mom, can I...?”

List words to replace said and asked

Assign dialogue homework for four days.

Give a required first line except for the last assignment

Four or more paragraphs of dialogue required

Half of content must be narration

Read aloud *The Three Little Pigs*. Ask students to listen for differences in the written or video versions they have heard.

Rewrite in a pattern story

Updated or once upon a time

Happily ever after

Animals, people or imaginary beings

Three protagonists, one antagonist

Read *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*

Rewrite in pattern

Read the *True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by A. Wolf. Note that the protagonist and antagonist change.

Rewrite the goats from the troll’s point of view

Read and rewrite *Rumpelstiltskin*

Allow class time for writing. These take time to do well.

Illustrated books can make excellent displays.

Fairy Tale Rewrite

Student Sample

The Real Story of The Three Billy Goats Gruff as told by The Troll

Hey, you! Yeah you! Come here! You have heard of *The Three Billy Goats*, right? Well, you haven't heard my side. I am the troll who lived under the bridge and here is *my* story.

One warm sunny spring day, I decided to stay up on top of the bridge because who wants to be in the shade on a day like that? Well, I was standing there minding my own business when something went tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap. It was the first of those billy goats.

As polite as I am I said, "Hi. Isn't it a nice day?"

"No!" he answered with a growl.

"Beg your pardon?" I asked.

"You heard me," and he tapped off.

I want you to know that I was more than a little shocked, but I went back to the beautiful scenery minding my own business again. The sun was shining and the trees were swaying in the breeze. The birds were singing while the frogs croaked from their lily pads at the edge of the river. Then, there a thud, thud, thud, thud, thud, thud. It was the second of those billy goats.

As polite as I am I said, "Hi. Isn't it a beautiful day?"

He just grunted before he yelled, "No!"

"Beg you pardon?" I asked.

“You heard me!” and he thudded off.

What was with these goats? I was getting discouraged by now, but once again I went back to my own business of staring at the scenery. The sun and the trees were still beautiful and I could hear the birds and the frogs. Then came the thump, thump, thump, thump, thump, thump of the third and the biggest of those billy goats.

As polite as I am I said, “Hi. Isn’t it a beautiful day?”

He was the biggest billy goat I had ever seen. He looked at me and I looked at him. Then in a very deep voice he screamed at me, “Nooooo!”

So I asked politely, “Beg you pardon?”

He answered with a snap, “You heard me. Want to make something of it?”

“Not really.”

“Well, too bad because I do,” and he put his head down and charged. With his rough hooves and strong horns he shoved me right off the bridge for no reason at all. How *rude!* I thought that was just plain mean.

Well, here I am far off down the river. Anyone have a dollar for the bus?

Color Poem

Assignment Notes

Black is the color
Of...
That...

Or: Black is...
Black is...
Black is...
That...

Or: Black is the...
That...
...
...

Six verses for one color
or: six verses on one object.

Final copy on plain paper appropriately illustrated.

Color Poem

Assignment Notes

After teaching these in the classroom, one teacher commented to me that color poems can make any student look good.

List ten or more colors

One word name only

No *light* or *dark* in color names

List fifteen or more items that are inherently black

tires, asphalt, night, witches

“black” mood

Introduce and work with

Black is the color...

or Black is (are) the...

Assign six verses

Rhyming is not necessary

One color a day

White, red, green, blue are the easiest

Student adds one color of their own choice

Mark their own best verse to

Share aloud

Share with three other students

Final copy: one color on plain paper with appropriate integrated illustration

Selective and creative packaging can produce award winning selections,
individual or group.

Color Poem

Student Samples

White is the color
Of clouds so puffy
That drift through the air
Looking soft and fluffy.

White is the color
Of Grandma's soft hair
That's up in a bun
With strands here and there.

White is the color
Of soft powdery snow
That glistens in the sun
And has a bright glow.

White is the color
Of the stars in the sky
That sparkle and twinkle
So beautifully in your eye.

White is the color
Of all colors combined
For they are mixed
And intertwined.

Color Poem

Student Sample

White is the color
Of new fallen snow
That makes me shiver
And sometimes glow.

Holding it in my hands
Looking around
Oh, how grand
Watching it melt away.

It is so soft
But yet so cold
How I can hold it
I do not know.

Toes and fingers
Wet to the bone
Wandering around
Wanting to go home.

Every night
I dream of that place
Where the world is so peaceful
And I want to go.

Color Poem

Student Sample - Extension

Color's Song

Purple are hearts
Raging,
Pacing,
Jealous hearts.
They want you
Or something else,
But you just ignore
And go on with your life.

White are the doves
Fluttering in the sky
Filled with His grace
Representing
Love,
And peace,
And harmony.

Red is the heart
You get from a friend.
Big hearts and little hearts
What does it matter
For they come from within.

Red are sweet roses
Beautiful and loveable.
They melt you on Valentine's
But repay them you must.

Critique

I. Introduction

A. Book title

*Movie title, rating

B. Book author

*Director, producer, company

II. Theme

C. Type (what kind)

D. Content, message or purpose

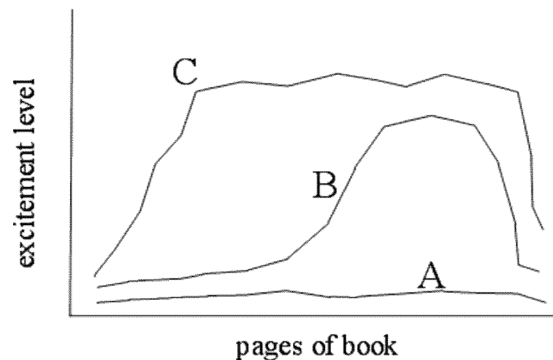
III. Storyline.

A = boring

B = exciting toward end

C = exciting all the way

Unexpected or surprising events?



IV. Development of characters

V. Reading difficulty

*Difficulty in following plot

*Video and special effects

VI. Conclusion

* = movie

(Student Page 15)

Critique

Assignment Notes

Books

Discuss role and importance of professional critics

First book: start with a class book that most of the students liked

Work through the format sentence by sentence

Second book: use a book that many students liked

Third book: any required reading book

Fourth book: individual choice that the student liked

Fifth book: individual choice that the student did not like

Sharing

Find three students who agree with your opinion

Find two students who disagree with your opinion

Final copy

Students get *extremely* vehement about who likes which book

Movies or videos

First: use one the class has seen

Second: individual choice that the student liked

Third: individual choice that student did not like

Have the students write five or six reviews

A final copy is optional

Students get so wrapped up in writing about the movies, they forget about
final copy and grades

Critique

Student Sample

Gary Paulsen is the author of an exciting book called Hatchet. He wrote this book so that readers, both children and adults, could read, enjoy and be grateful for what they have. Brian Robeson, a fourteen year old boy, took a trip to his dad's house in Canada on a private airplane. When the pilot suffered a heart attack Brian had to survive in the wilderness for fifty-four days with nothing but a hatchet. This book was one of the best books I have ever read. It is well written and described. It makes you feel as if you are in the story. It is easy to read and understand. I would definitely recommend this book to someone else.

Figures of Speech

Assignment Notes

Metaphor, Simile

Figures of speech add interest and color to a student's writing. In both the metaphor and simile one thing is likened to another different thing; however the first is implied while the second is explicit. "Like" and "as" are generally hallmarks of a simile and reflect an impression, whereas a metaphor is more of an equivalency or substitution.

At the sixth grade level, the concept and ability to incorporate the technique is more important than differentiating between the two. These are difficult for the students and they will need a lot of work as a class in order to begin to feel comfortable with these.

Name the object

Road (chalk, pencil, cloud, eraser)

Ask what it resembles

Rope, string, chain, cassette tape, thread, ribbon, snake, power lines, snail

Ask why it is similar

Shape, long and narrow; leaves a trail

Ask what does it do?

Winds, curves, dips, rises, zigzags, ends, widens, narrows, breaks, cracks, buckles, stretches

Write examples as a class

The road winds its way through the valley like a snake slithering through tall grass.

Like a snake, the road winds its way through the hills.

The road snaked its way through the hills.

Do at least two more examples together

Independently, students write one or two on their own

A full page illustration attractively presents a sentence.

Examples

A road is like a dream meandering on and on.

The road faded away behind him like the clouds disappearing when the night creeps up.

Like a vision, the road goes on and on.

A road stretches toward the horizon like a thread embroidering its picture upon the fabric.

A road stretches ahead like a tall tree that never stops growing.

The artist's brush squiggles across the paper like a snail leaving his trail in the early morning dew.

A pencil leaves its trail across the paper like a rainbow in the sky after the rain.

Personification

Gives life or personality to an object

The vacuum cleaner grows as it...

Example: It roars and it rumbles while spinning around (washing machine)

Make it speak

Use quotation marks

Example: they say, "Put me on!" when my eyes... (eyeglasses)

Word Game or Puzzle

What is it?

Require: at least one "like" or "as"

"It" must speak (desired but not required)

Do examples as a class

Do one on their own

Don't expect perfect rhythm

Students do better with these

They enjoy sharing their work

Figures of Speech

Student Samples

“Wake up, wake up!”

It says in an almost monotonous tone
As its sheets of bright light fall on your face.
It chases away the fright
Of the everlasting night
And its overwhelming heat
Makes you feel so elite.

(sun)

With your hair flung back
And the wind in your eyes
You feel as if you could almost fly.
It is not a bike,
But a pair of leather shoes
That have become more advanced
So they're hard to use.
They're made for competition
Or just plain fun,
But most of all make sure
You take them off when you're done.

(roller skates)

It is a game of investing,
Like a bank account or selecting.
It is not all as real
But it may appeal.
For some it's strategy
For others it's luck,
And the money that is used
Is about as valuable as a rubber duck.

(Monopoly)

It is a main part
Of an almost war on the field
And is valued like gold
Or a thanksgiving meal.
It gets passes and tossed
To player after player
Like a pinball machine
With many different layers,
But the person with the ball
Is the one that you favor.

(football)

They say, "Put me on!"
When your eyes need a rest
Or when you are trying
To focus them on tests.
They're like telescopes that help
You see far away.

(eyeglasses)

It roars and it rumbles.
I can imagine it spinning around
Like a wheel of a car or a blender
But it treats it so much more tender.
It cleans and it rinses,
But not always that well.
It can make a big mess
Or an awful soapy smell.
Now I know where my money is.
It's not on the ground
But in my pocket
Which is going around and around.

(washing machine)

Writing Proficiency

(Autobiographical Incident)

- I. Introduction
 - A. Opening statement
 - B. What happened
- II. Emotions
Your feelings as the story unfolds
- III. Significance
 - A. Why this event was important
 - B. Why you remember this event so well
- IV. Conclusion

Good writing includes:

Strong beginning

Thoughtful, surprising or emotional ending

Implication rather than direct telling

Integration of feelings and importance throughout writing

When written for writing proficiency, the event does not need to be true, but in must be believable.

(Student Page 16)

Writing Proficiency

Assignment Notes

Implication

Read a paragraph or short selection that implies how a person is feeling about something.

List feelings and thoughts of someone who is hot, tired and perhaps having just finished the “turkey trot” (a running race).

Write a paragraph with a beginning and an end

Describe feelings

Describe thoughts

Tell situation

Do not write “I was tired.”

You may need to read the sample to help them get started.

Other paragraphs

Nervous

Angry

Hungry

Writing Proficiency Practice

Prompts usually have the same requirements as listed on Student Page 16.
(what happened, feelings and thoughts, significance)

Suggested, often used prompts

A time when you tried hard and surprised yourself by succeeding

The first time you did something

A significant adult in your life

Good intentions, you meant well but it didn’t turn out well

A time when you helped someone

These do not necessarily have to be true but they must sound as if they really happened.

Read well written ones

Final copy their best one for grading

Finish all assignments before your district writing proficiency testing

Writing Proficiency

Student Sample

Implication—Hunger

It wasn't even close to lunch time at school, but I couldn't wait another forty-five minutes. My mind wouldn't stay on my work. I knew I should have had more than just a glass of milk for breakfast, but it would have made me late for school. My stomach was growling so loudly that surely everyone around me could hear it. Oh, my stomach hurt so badly. What did I have in my lunch today? Probably the usual—tuna sandwich, grapes, potato chips and a strawberry box drink. I could just imagine a big Thanksgiving feast, turkey, cranberry salad, corn, mashed potatoes with gravy running down the sides, vegetables, corn bread and for desert, pumpkin pie.

Just then I looked around and everyone was gone. I looked at the clock. It was 12:45. The class had just left for lunch. Maybe if I hurried I could catch up with them. I grabbed my lunch and tore out of the classroom door.

Writing Proficiency
Student Sample
Implication—Anger

It was Saturday and my family was going to have a picnic in the park. We were getting ready to go when my little sister, for no reason, just hit me in the arm. It didn't hurt but she did it again and again. I told her to stop but she kept hitting me. I told her again to stop, then she just burst out laughing. I told her that if she didn't stop I would hit her back and that I could hit much harder than she could.

She didn't seem to care what I said and just kept on hitting me. I warned her one last time and when she laughed again, I smacked her on her right arm as hard as I could. She stopped laughing and then started bawling. I knew then I shouldn't have done that and realized that had I just told my parents, she would have been the one in trouble, not me.

Writing Proficiency
Student Sample
Implication

May 18, 1997

Dear Melissa,

How are you? I am fine. Since I am not able to call you, I am writing you this letter to tell you the news. My younger sister, Katelynn, is going to perform a floor routine for a gymnastics competition. She has been training every day at 2:15 at a Tumble Tots gym near by. She can't wait.

I remember when I was training for a gymnastics competition on the uneven bars. I had been practicing for almost a year. Then came the day of the competition and I was nervous. My grandparents had come from Orlando, Florida to watch me perform.

I got to the gymnasium wearing my leotard with the pattern of the American flag on it. As they called my name, my coach had just finished taping my wrists and ankles up so they would be stronger. I walked out in front of the uneven bars and took a long look at the crowd. I quickly chalked up my hands and went back in front of the bars. I could feel the crowd staring at me. My coach gave me a serious look and then lipped the words, "Go on!"

I performed my routine and stuck my landing wonderfully. I stood there with big grin on my face. I was happy, but more surprised that I had done so well. I could hardly believe that I had won the gold medal.

Now that it is my sister's turn, I feel as if I am going through the same pressure again. I am so nervous for her. Write me back soon and I'll tell you how things went.

Your friend,

Rebekah

P.S. Wish her luck!

Alphabet Analogy

Assignment Notes

Apple is to fruit

as peas are to vegetable.

Bark is to dog

As meow is to cat.

As a puzzle

Carson City is to _____

As Olympia is to Washington (Leave out either word)

- a. Maine
- b. New Hampshire
- c. Nevada
- d. Wyoming

The multiple choice is optional.

Have the students write the answer upside down at the bottom of the page before they turn them in.

Essay

(Expository or Persuasive Writing)

- J. Statement
- II. First supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- III. Second supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- IV. Third supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- V. Additional supporting information
Optional, depending on topic
- VI. Conclusion

(Student Page 13)

Persuasive Essay

Assignment Notes

The expository essays and persuasive essays have a similar structure.

Introduction

Three or more supporting statements and explanation

Conclusion

Both are generally one paragraph at this level

The exception may be writers who have enough supporting content for separate paragraphs.

Factual information—expository writing

Opinion—persuasive writing

Sometimes the two can be very close

Always insist on a prewrite—outline, map or chart. It helps the student to clarify their thoughts.

Complete or at least start the prewrite as a class until you are confident the students can do so on their own.

Requires knowledge of material to be covered

Interweave into the content area throughout the school year

Rewrite with new beginnings and creative endings

On test essays, insist that each essay be written on a separate paper. It will make grading easier if you read all the essays at one time.

Persuasive essay or opinion

Use topics of high interest to the students such as

- School lunches

- School uniforms

- High profile current events

Students must take a position on one side even if they do not personally agree with what they are writing.

Prewrite both sides as a class

Good supporting reasons are always the hardest part

Persuasive Essay

Select supporting statements with care

Introduce

- Tact

- Negotiation

- Advertising

- Propaganda

Have students list things they could talk their parents into—such as

- Allowance

- Going places

- Staying overnight

- Privileges

Example: One student used this assignment to successfully negotiate a contract with her parent—one year of no TV except as required by school or family in return for \$500. At the end of the school year, this young lady found great enjoyment in selecting her first pair of Birkenstock sandals. She and her mother both told me they had decided to renew the contract for another year.

Persuasive Essay

Student Sample

Hammurabi was a wise leader. He ruled Mesopotamia from 1729 B.C. to 1750 B.C. He sent governors, judges, tax collectors and military leaders to all of his lands. In this way he was able to keep tight control over his far flung cities and maintain a strong central government. Hammurabi was also a great military leader. He and his army conquered many lands including Assyria. He extended the Babylonian Empire with his well equipped army.

He created the Code of Hammurabi to bring justice to all people. This code was composed of 284 laws that were preserved on a stone slab. Even though not all of the people could read, the laws were posted for the public to see. His laws covered religion, irrigation, military service, trade, property, slavery, duties and marriage. Hammurabi is the king we best remember from this era.

Student Sample

If there is one think I cannot stand, it is American cheese. I hate American cheese! When I was little I gagged and threw up on a piece. It has no taste to me and it is too oily. I especially hate it melted. It has its same gross taste only it is gooier and runnier. Nobody can make me eat it. My opinion might change as I get older, but for right now...I hate American cheese.

Persuasive Essay

Student Sample

February 27, 1995

Dear Ms. Pong,

I think you should give me an “A” in history because I deserve it. I worked hard and I learned a lot about the people in the past. I did all my history homework. When it was history time I tried to focus mainly on history. As my friends have already told you, I get one hundred dollars for straight A’s. History is my only B. All A’s might also raise my self esteem and confidence in myself. In addition, if I get good grades, I will get better job opportunities so that I might get more money. Then I would pay more taxes and my tax money would help pay teachers’ salaries.

Sincerely,

Darrel

Note: This student’s history grade was 89.997%. (90% was an A.) He wrote this at my request after some of his friends mentioned his situation to me.

Greek Myths

Assignment Notes

Timing and student assignment options depend on when you get to Greece in your history curriculum, if in fact it is a part of your curriculum.

From a book of myths, read aloud one myth each day.

Students will write a response.

Give students a list of acceptable responses from the assignments that you have taught during the year such as:

- Take Five
- Take Seven
- Character Analysis
- Comparison
- Acrostic
- Expanded Acrostic
- Essay
- Opinion
- Persuasive Essay

Students may use each response only once until all are crossed off.

If there are still more myths they can revisit any assignment but only once more.

Students tend to choose the short and easy responses first.

After reading a myth, talk about some of the responses that best fit.

Requirements for final copy

One prose and one poem

Hand in all drafts

(You may wish to give minor credit for effort)

Writing their own myth takes considerable effort.

Jason and the Argonauts is an excellent and well-like G rated video.

Expanded Acrostic

Assignment Notes

The word: _____

Clue: Ancient man

1. a ___ t ___ o ___ s
2. d ___ e ___ t ___ r ___ u ___
3. i ___ i ___ u ___
4. x ___ i ___ c ___
5. a ___ m ___ t ___
6. n ___ h ___ o ___ o ___ i ___ t
7. e ___ n ___ e ___ t ___ a ___

Definitions or Clues

1. Careful
2. Seeking excitement or new activities
3. Aggressive or violent
4. No longer exists
5. A large animal of olden times
6. One who studies ancient man
7. Ancient man from a German valley

Limerick

1. _____* _____ _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)
2. _____* _____ _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)
3. _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)
4. _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)
5. _____* _____ _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)

* stressed syllable
 (____) optional syllable (be consistent)

Lines 1, 2 and 5 rhyme.
 Lines 3 and 4 rhyme.

- | | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| Line 1 | identifies the subject | There was a...
There once was a...
A lovely old... |
| Line 2 | describes the subject | Who...
That... |
| Lines 3-4 | tell what happened or how the subject got from line 2 to line 5. | |
| Line 5 | tells the outcome
may repeat part of line 1 or 2. | |

(Student page 17)

Limerick

Assignment Notes

Limericks are difficult at best.

Most sixth grade students do not have sufficient skills in either syllabication count or stress to write these correctly.

Try them if

You have an advanced class

You have a few students who might enjoy them

You can think on your feet and work through several class examples

Insist that the students

write out the pattern each time.

write one syllable on each blank of the five lines.

List rhyming words after writing line one.

Remember rhyme for lines three and four is different from the rhyme of lines one, two and five.

A certain amount of variation or slight cheating (changing or adaptation) of words is allowed.

Partners may be helpful.

Good luck!

Limerick

Student Samples

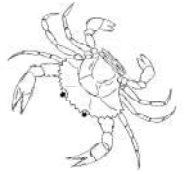
There once was doctor named Slime
Who found he could travel through time.
And so off he went
Twenty years he then spent
And all that was left was this rhyme.

There once was cat named Oscar
Who played a fun game called soccer.
He tripped over the ball
And went into a fall
That poor little cat we named Oscar.

I once knew a guy named Jack
All he wanted to do was talk back.
He got into the slammer
Hit himself with a hammer
That poor old fellow named Jack.

There once was a young girl from Mentone
Who constantly talked on the telephone.
She loved it so much
She would often miss lunch
'Cause she didn't like being alone.

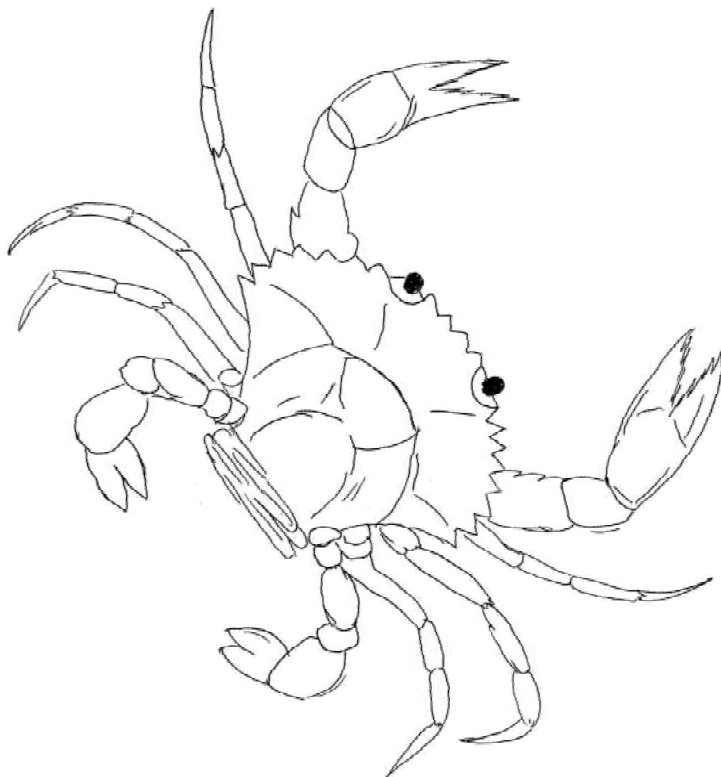
There once was a pale pink pig
Who wore a red and green wig.
He lost it some way
He was sad all the day
That poor little wonderful pig.



*Exceptional
Responses*

to

*Ordinary
Assignments*



Response to retelling the last five chapters of *Maroo of the Winter Caves*.

The Journey's End

The same view every day.
Nothing but frosty lands
Stretching before me.
Will this journey never end?
What other evil spirit
Will this mountain send?
I am cold and I am scared,
Yet another day is to be despaired.
Oh, Great Spirit!
Help me through my journey,
For I have strength, but it is fading.
I'm tired of the roaring blizzards
And the troubles they have brought to me.
I have lost a loved one
And now maybe two,
But I am brave and I will survive.
I will someday see my family.
I will be safe
And alive...at the journey's end.

Response to fifth grade prompt. “If you could go anywhere in the United States, where would you go and why.”

Oklahoma

Where do you want to go?
What do you want to see?
Oklahoma's the place
I want to be.
I want to climb
To the top of Pike's Peak
Where he was never
Able to go.
I want to seek the Black Mesa,
It is so very high.
If I don't see it
I will surely die.
Sequoia is the chief
Who invented the Cherokee alphabet.
He will be one person
I will never forget.
Oklahoma's nickname
Is “The Sooner State”.
My grandparents live there
And they both say it's great.
Well, I hope you know about Oklahoma
And oh, if you plan to go
Stay away from the buffalo
For that's where they roam.

Response to a student's choice to write a poem instead of serving detention for misbehavior.

My Sister

My sister stands up for me
When I do what I shouldn't
Even when she knows
She'll be in trouble with Mom.

Like a diary she's always there
To listen
To keep
My secrets locked up inside.

I know she can think but she's
 Always going here
 Always going there
 Running errands
 Going to work
 Taking me places
 Never stopping.
Does she ever have time to think?

My sister's independent,
Doing her own thing
And never listening
To the wrong people.

My sister ain't no fool,
She's cool.

Response to optional assignment—poems on feelings instead of color

Feelings

Who can express the feelings I feel?
Are they imaginary or are they real?
Do I think of them as I go along?
Do I think of them when I hear a song?
Do they come to me in my sleep?
Are they ones to throw away or ones I keep?
Are these feelings part of me?
I guess I'll have to wait and see.

In the Corner

Sitting in the corner
 Alone and afraid
Trying to hold onto hope
 For the life I've made.
It's so hard to smile
 While holding back tears.
But if you dig down deep
 Somewhere in your soul
You will find the strength
 To fill the empty hole.
It might take time
 Long hours of pain
But you have nothing to lose
 And everything to gain.

Response to a character analysis of a significant adult.

When I woke up I could tell it was going to be a great day. The sun was shining and the sky was clear blue. I was thinking of all the fun things I could do, until I remembered I had to go with my mom to Jennifer's wedding. I was dreading the trip to Big Bear because I would be cooped up in the car for the one hour ride. We were going to the wedding because Jennifer is the oldest daughter of my mom's best friend, Bettye.

As we drove up to the mountain, my mom began to tell me about her friendship with Betty. They met when they were my age, eleven. They had been loyal friends for thirty-three years. They also had the same sixth grade teacher, Mr. Anderson, and that's how their friendship began.

My mom and Bettye grew up near the beach. One summer when they were about twelve, they were spending the day at the beach and getting bored. They decided to walk on the nearby railroad tracks between Oceanside and Carlsbad. They came to a trestle and, being both foolish and brave, they started across. When they reached the middle they were sure they could hear a train coming. They looked down and saw a gunky, shallow lagoon fifty feet below. The other side seemed about a quarter mile away. Could they make it across, they wondered, or would they have to jump? They decided to run and my mom said she never ran faster in her life. Luckily, they made it to the other side. As they looked back, sure enough, a train was quickly coming towards them. Bettye and my mom got off the tracks and decided never to walk on them again.

I could not believe my mom had done such a dumb thing. Talk about dangerous! She always is telling me to be careful. I know that if I even thought of doing something like that she would kill me fore sure.

At the wedding I heard more stories about my mom's childhood. Bettye told me that they tried to skip school one day in sixth grade. They got caught by Mr. Anderson and had to go to the principal's office. They never tried to sip again.

It is hard to imagine my mom as a kid my age. I always think of my mom as, well, my mom. She helps me with things and always telling me how important a good education is. She makes sure I do my homework. She is there when I need her and sometimes even when I don't.

The drive home from the wedding did not seem as long as the way up. Even though I had not wanted to go, I enjoyed myself. The ceremony was beautiful and listening to stories about my mom's childhood was fun. It had been a good day after all.

Response to compare the solar system and the atom.

“Brrrrring! Brrrrring!” went the bell. Alex and Scott had been best friends since preschool. They had always been in the same class. Alex had loved science ever since he was little. Scott hated it.

Today they were starting a new project. Mr. Dalton announced, “Today we are going to learn about the atom and the solar system. Your project,” he continued, “will be to find a partner to study with, then to write two totally different essays on the differences and likenesses of the atom had the solar system. Also, they will be due Friday, this week.”

Scott muttered, “Oh boy, what fun.”

“What was that Mr. Dell?” asked Mr. Dalton.

“Nothing, Sir,” said Scott. After that, Alex thought he heard him say in a low voice, “Just a bit of sarcasm, Mr. Dolphin.”

The rest of the day passed. Alex said, “We’d better get started on our projects.”

“Oh yah, I wouldn’t want to miss this for the world,” replied Scott.

Alex and Scott went to the library for information. They found many interesting facts.

Alex asked, “Did you know that both the atom and the solar system have orbits, but that the atom has electrons spinning around the nucleus while the solar system has planets spinning around the sun?”

“No kidding,” commented Scott sarcastically.

“I’m not kidding,” Alex went on. “Also both of them have a center that is round, except the atom has a nucleus that is solid, while the solar system has a sun that is made of magma and is hot.”

“No way,” said Scott.

“Did you know that...Scott, pay attention and stop hitting your head on the table, you numbskull,” Alex said.

“I’m listening, I’m listening,” complained Scott. “Go on.”

“Since the solar system is so big, it takes up much more space than an atom. But the strange thing is that they are both smaller than something else,” continued Alex.

“Like what?” asked Scott.

“Well,” said Alex, “an atom is smaller than a molecule, while the solar system is smaller than the universe.”

“Cool,” exclaimed Scott. “Hey, look here. This book says they’re both still being studied, but we know more about the solar system than the atom.”

“I know,” said Alex, “Well, I guess we’d better get home and start on our essays.”

“Okay,” said Scott.

As they ran home they shouted, “Let’s do it!”

On Friday they turned in their essays. When Monday came both boys waited impatiently for their grades.

In science class Mr. Dalton announced, “I’m going to pass back your essays and I must say you all did very well.” When Alex got his test, he was ready to pop. He had gotten an A+. When Scott received his paper he was surprised because he usually got B’s and C’s, but this time he had gotten an A-. He was so proud, he was the happiest he had ever been the rest of the day! On Alex and Scott’s way home they talked and laughed about school and everything they could think of because they were so happy with their grades.

Response to write your own dialogue assignment in preparations for the fairy tale rewrite.

The House of Horrors

Working in the House of Horrors was going to be great. David was already having fun. Those wax figures looked so real that he expected one to scream out in agony at any moment. Some looked positively gruesome, in fact totally disgusting. He would not want to meet one... It gave him the creeps just looking at them.

“Hey David. After hours party tonight,” whispered Gena in a hushed tone as the last group of visitors was going through.

“Gena! What if we get caught?” gasped David.

“Relax, we won’t,” laughed Gena.

David couldn’t relax. “What about when Filler checks the building?” Filler was the custodian. A very old custodian at that.

“You know he doesn’t check that well. Anyway, he’s almost blind in one eye. Just hide behind one of the sets,” replied Gena confidently. Then she chuckled softly to herself.

David could think of nothing to say. Gena seemed so sure of herself. She was full of ideas and always seemed to have an answer for everything. He wasn’t really convinced. She seemed nice enough, yet he just couldn’t put his finger on it. Somehow she didn’t seem to be the kind to be nice to high school kids like him. But, he wanted to fit in with the rest of the tour guides. His first after hours party. It was going to be cool. He looked forward to it with anticipation. The House of Horrors had closed some time

ago. David wondered where everyone was. As he walked through the hushed building, he could feel the goose bumps rising on his skin. “I don’t think I like this, in fact, it’s really scary in here. They must have tricked me,” David thought out loud. Just then he heard the sound of running footsteps coming toward him. How could that be? He knew he had checked the entire building. Twice in fact, just to be sure. The footsteps came nearer as David stood rigid with fear. He felt himself breaking out into a cold sweat. He was terrified.

“I’ll get you, David!” The voice was deep and not as distant as he would have wished.

David couldn’t move.

“I’ll get you, David!” The voice was closer than before.

David bolted into action. All he knew was that he had to get out of there, the faster the better. He ran blindly through the darkened building. Nearing the exit, he hit the emergency bar on the door ready to crash through to the freedom on the other side. “Noooo!” he thought as the door bounced him backwards. “The night locks are on. There’s no way out without the key...”

The next morning dawned bright and sunny. Gena strolled by the wax figures checking to make sure no damage had been done by the many people who visited the House of Horrors. She paused by one in particular for a longer look as she thought to herself, “Gee, I don’t remember that figure. If I didn’t know better I’d say it looks just like David...”

Response to a target number between 400,000 and 600,000

I breathe

564,480

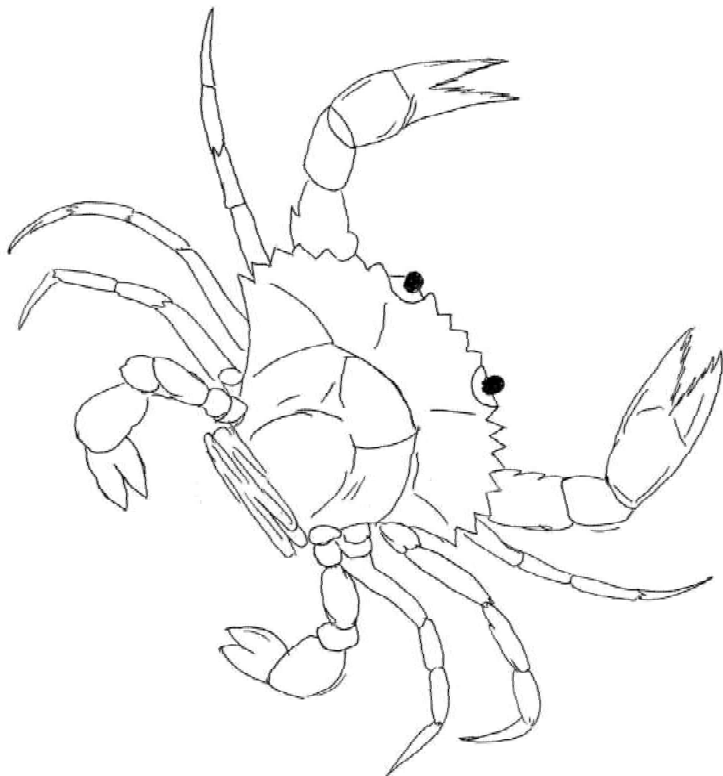
times per month.

First I counted my breaths per minute which came out to 14. I took 14 times 60 minutes in 1 hour. Then I multiplied that number times 24 because there are 24 hours in 1 day. I multiplied that answer times 7 days per week and then times 4 weeks in a month.



Writing:

A Student Reference



Writing Format

Draft	Final Copy
Skip lines	Skip lines
One side only	One side only
Pencil	Pencil
Printing or cursive	Cursive only
While lined paper	White lined paper
Changes or corrections expected	Neat work No contractions
No slang	No slang
Speeling	Correct spelling Correct mechanics

Turn in assignment with one staple in the upper left corner in the following order:

final copy	on top
draft(s)	
prewrite(s)	on bottom

Grammar Goals

I. DEFINE

Question In a complete sentence, what is a noun?

Answer A noun is a word that names a person, place, thing or idea.

II. IDENTIFY

Question Write (or circle) the nouns in the following sentence.

Answer Shane and Bradley ran quickly down the street.
Shane, Bradley, street

III. CREATE

Question Write a singular common noun

Answer Desk, chair, feather

Question Using three or more words, write only the predicate part of a sentence.

Grammar Reference

THE SENTENCE

The **subject part** of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about.

Example: The big black dog ran across the street.

A **simple subject** has only *one* noun as the subject.

Example: The beautiful white bird

A **compound subject** has *two or more* nouns as the subject.

Example: A green snake and a black lizard

The **predicate part** of a sentence tells what the subject does.

Example: The big black dog ran across the street.

A **simple predicate** has only *one* verb.

Example: jumped over the fence.

A **compound predicate** has *two or more* verbs.

Example: jumped over the fence and ran across the field.

NOUNS

A **noun** is a word that names a person, place, thing or idea.

Example: Mrs. Jones, home, disk, honesty

A **common noun** is a noun that names any person, place, thing, or idea.

Example: lady, home, desk, honesty

A **proper noun** is a noun that names a particular person, place, thing, or idea.

Proper nouns name people, days of the week, months of the year, holidays, titles, cities, states, continents, oceans, lakes, rivers, mountains

A **singular noun** is a noun that names only *one* of its kind.

Example: city, desk, pencil

A **plural noun** is a noun that names *two or more* of its kind.

Example: cities, desks, pencils

POSSESSIVE NOUNS

A **possessive noun** is a noun to which something belongs. In most cases the following rules apply.

To show ownership for a **singular** noun

Write the singular noun correctly

Add an apostrophe

Add an "s"

Example: The girl's hair is curly.

Example: The child's shirt is red.

To show ownership for a **plural** noun

Write the plural noun correctly

Add an apostrophe

Do not add an "s"

Example: All of the boys' jackets are wet.

Example: The men's shirts are blue.

PRONOUNS

A **pronoun** is a word that takes the place of a noun.

A **possessive pronoun** shows ownership.

Example: Susan's book = her book

Example: The girls' house = their house

A **subject pronoun** is used as the subject of a sentence.

Example: Jane ran = She ran

Example: Jim and George left = They left

An **object pronoun** receives the action or item.

Example: Jack hit the ball. = Jack hit it.

Example: Rebecca hit the ball to Sarah. = Rebecca hit the ball to her.

ADJECTIVES

An **adjective** is a word that describes a noun.

Example: red apple, beautiful girl

Adjectives tell color, taste, looks, texture, quality, condition, number

Example: green, sour, pretty, crunchy, smooth, excellent, five

VERBS

A **verb** is a word that shows *action*.

Example: run, write, think, throw

Verb tense is the time or *when* the action happens.

Future tense is action that has not yet happened.

Example: He will be going.

Example: They are going to sing tomorrow.

Present tense is action that is happening now.

Example: He is running. He runs fast.

Example: They are singing. They sing well.

Past tense is action that has already happened.

Example: He was sleeping. He slept.

Example: They were laughing. They laughed.

APPOSITIVE

An **appositive**

renames the noun it follows

is set off by commas

can be left out of the sentence

Example: Roger, the boy next door, is my friend.

(Roger is my friend.)

Example: Susan read the story to Joan, her little sister.

(Susan read the story to Joan.)

Example: Jason, the boy who was destined to be king, wanted to be an explorer.

(Jason wanted to be an explorer.)

ARTICLES

An **article** signals that a noun is coming. They are **a**, **an**, **the**.

Example: a red book, an apple, the classroom

CLAUSES

A **clause** is a group of words with a subject and a predicate.

An **independent clause** is a clause that can stand alone and make a complete sentence.

Example: The students stayed in at recess.

A **dependent clause** is a clause that cannot stand alone and does not make a complete sentence by itself. Words that start a dependent clause are: after, although, as, as soon as, because, before, even, since, unless, until, while, if, when.

Example: because it was raining

A **dependent** clause must have an **independent** clause to make a complete sentence.

Example: The students stayed in at recess because it was raining.
or Because it was raining, the students stayed in at recess.

DIALOGUE

Dialogue is conversation. It is the words actually spoken. When writing dialogue

use **quotation marks** around the words spoken
start a **new paragraph** each time someone else speaks

Example:

“Where are you going?” asked Mother.

Bradley answered, “Outside to play.”

“Wait a minute,” his mother called. “You need to do your homework first.”

“It’s okay, Mom. I already did it.”

ADVERBS

An **adverb** adds to the verb. It tells how the action is done.

Example: The boy ran quickly.

Example: The girl ran fast.

Adverbs often end in -ly, but watch out! Look at the meaning of the following sentences.

Example: The man works hard.

Example: The man hardly works.

A word of caution:

Well is an adverb

Example: The girl speaks well.

Good is an adjective

Example: The boy is a good speaker.

PREPOSITIONS

A **preposition** is a connecting word that shows how a noun is related to the sentence. Some common prepositions are above, against, among, around, before, behind, below, beside, down, from, inside, near, off, under, up...

A **prepositional phrase** is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun (the object of the preposition).

Example: The boy ran around the tree.

Example: The dog chased the cat across the lawn and up the tree.

Beginnings and Endings

Getting started *or* in the beginning
(*Lead or hook*)

Declarative sentence

Exclamation or startling statement

Question

Dialogue

Vivid description

Coming to a close *or* at the end
(*Conclusion*)

Opinion

Question or projection to the future

Relate to life, yours or the world

Comparison to...

Feeling or emotion

Other ideas...

Comparisons

- I. Introduction
 - A. First character—identify
 - B. Second character—identify

- II. Similarities: list each similarity
Sections I and II may be combined into one paragraph

- III. Differences
Under each difference identified, always list each character in the same order.
 - A. Animals
 - 1. Jessica loves them.
 - 2. Sue Ellen is terrified.
 - B. Lake
 - 1. Jessica...
 - 2. Sue Ellen...

When you write your sentences, use a variety of connecting words such as: and, but, although, even though, while, however, on the other hand...

- IV. Conclusion

Possible areas for comparison

Situation

Character traits

Education

Family background

“Take Five”

Five lines of verse with nine words associated with one noun.

noun
adjective adjective
verb verb verb
two word phrase
noun

“Take Seven”

Seven lines of verse with eight words
associated with each of two opposite nouns.

noun
adjective adjective
verb verb verb
noun noun — *noun noun*
verb verb verb
adjective adjective
noun

Note: “Take Seven” nouns at the beginning and *end* must be opposites.

Character Analysis

- I. Introduction
 - A. Identify
 - B. Briefly describe

- II. Identify a character trait
 - A. Supporting example #1
 - B. Supporting example #2

- III. Identify a second character trait
 - A. Supporting example #1
 - B. Supporting example #2

- VI. Identify a third character trait
 - A. Supporting example #1
 - B. Supporting example #2

- V. Conclusion

Essay

(Expository or Persuasive Writing)

- I. Statement
- II. First supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- III. Second supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- IV. Third supporting fact
Explanation or detail
- V. Additional supporting information
Optional, depending on topic
- VI. Conclusion

Friendly Letter

(Street)

(City, state, zip code)

- I. Date
Remember the comma
- II. Greeting
Remember the comma
- III. Body or paragraph
- IV. Closing
Remember only one capital letter
Remember comma
- V. Signature

Checkpoints:

- Placement of parts of letter
- Correct margins
- Three commas
- Address optional

Critique

I. Introduction

A. Book title

*Movie title, rating

B. Book author

*Director, producer, company

II. Theme

C. Type (what kind)

D. Content, message or purpose

III. Storyline.

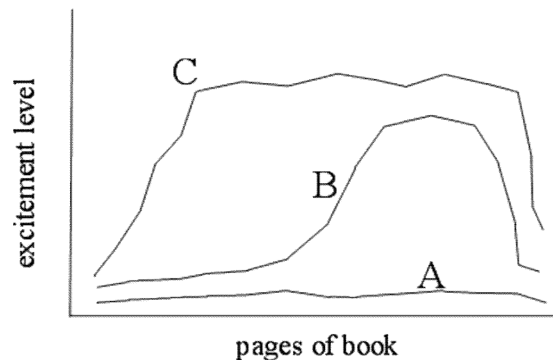
A = boring

B = exciting toward end

C = exciting all the way

Unexpected or

Surprising events?



IV. Development of characters

V. Reading difficulty

*Difficulty in following plot

*Video and special effects

VI. Conclusion

* = movie

Writing Proficiency

(Autobiographical Incident)

- I. Introduction
 - A. Opening statement
 - B. What happened
- II. Emotions
Your feelings as the story unfolds
- III. Significance
 - A. Why this even was important
 - B. Why you remember this event so well
- IV. Conclusion

Good writing includes:

Strong beginning

Thoughtful, surprising or emotional ending

Implication rather than direct telling

Integration of feelings and importance throughout writing

When written for writing proficiency, the event does not need to be true, but in must be believable.

Limerick

1. _____* _____ _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)

2. _____* _____ _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)

3. _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)

4. _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)

5. _____* _____ _____* _____ _____* _____ (____)

* stressed syllable
(____) optional syllable (be consistent)

Lines 1, 2 and 5 rhyme.

Lines 3 and 4 rhyme.

Line 1 identifies the subject

There was a...
There once was a...
A lovely old...

Line 2 describes the subject

Who...
That...

Lines 3-4 tell what happened or how the subject got from line 2 to line 5.

Line 5 tells the outcome
may repeat part of line 1 or 2.

About the Author



First generation American Virginia Pong was born to immigrant parents in the shadow of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. While her mother was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate from its ivied halls, her father fled war torn China of the early twentieth century with only a grade school education. With a brash boldness that would show up in his daughter, he talked himself into his first job as an electrical engineer at General Electrical, a tool designer in Detroit and finally as an engineer in aerospace. Raised the youngest of six children, two brothers and three English refugee cousins, Virginia learned to read and write before starting school. She is a graduate of Northwestern Michigan College, the University of Washington, and the University of California.

As a teacher in the vast California public school system, Virginia taught a wide range of students from all walks of life and ethnic backgrounds ranging from the not so gifted to the brilliant and all of those in between. Nominated by her former students she was twice included in Who's Who among America's Teachers. In addition to teaching third grade through graduate school, her background includes consultant with Harcourt Brace Jovanovich text books, social services, and human resources administration. Virginia has competed in the international challenging event of racewalking and set a national record in masters competition, taken national titles, and won team gold at the World Veterans' Games. As a USA Track and Field certified official and coach, every racewalking athlete with whom she worked won either a national title, a national record, or both.

Parent, grandparent and great grandparent, Virginia currently resides in southwestern Washington State where she is applying the same educational management and developmental disciplines to a small technology and media company with roots stretching back more than a few decades.

Also by Virginia Pong

Writing, The Final Step

Writing: The Final Step shows the reader how to take a handwritten or typed document and transform it into an attractive creative publication that makes everyone look good—whether it be student, teacher, parent, employee, or company.

The difference between a finished printed product and a handwritten text or standard typed manuscript cannot be overstated. The days of real carbon copies are long gone and electronic wizardry has removed the scissors, glue and tape from the term “cut and paste.” Now is the time to transform that written text into a truly finished work. Challenge yourself to use computer technology to create a flyer, booklet, or real paperback book that gives a meaningful purpose and validation to all your time and effort, a product of which to be proud—a publication ready for gift, distribution or sale.

Times and Time Again

During her years as a teacher in the California public school system, Virginia watched as students struggled with math homework made unnecessarily difficult by insufficient mastery of the basic facts in multiplication and division. To address this wide spread and growing problem, Virginia developed the *Times and Time Again* program based on her childhood timed practices with her siblings.

The flood of objection from the teaching community, schooled in more modern educational theory, was shrill and derogatory. They called it drill-and-kill. They said it was out of date and that it would never work because the students would hate it. However, *Times and Time Again* did work. *Times and Time Again* proved itself in greatly decreased homework time and a spectacular increase in accuracy. Not only did the students not hate it, but they complained when an occasional school wide schedule required skipping their “times facts” practice. Year after year every student, no matter what the beginning score, always made dramatic improvement in the *Times and Time Again* program.

Waiting for Waif, Educational Supplement

Waiting for Waif by A.V. Pong is both a delightfully simple and a deeply meaningful children’s novel. Read it for personal pleasure and entertainment, or use it as a basis for developing student skills in the language arts or encouraging investigation into other related subject areas.

Its companion book, *Waiting for Waif, Educational Supplement*, is filled with instructional material and suggestions to use along with a more in depth reading of *Waiting for Waif*. It includes vocabulary/spelling words and activities, chapter summaries, comprehension questions, testing methods, multiple choice questions, and numerous topics for extension into content area subjects as well as for discussion, research, writing prompt, written assignment, or report.

Children's Novels
(as A.V. Pong)

Waiting for Waif

At Milepost 79, a spoiled seven-year old boy tosses one of his toys out on the freeway. Bear and the two dolls, Elizabeth Anne and Jenny Marie, are not far behind. The distressed toys implore their busy Mistress Sarah to stop so they can rescue it, but at home the sympathetic toys discover their little refugee is full of ugly surprises.

Overnight Delivery

Distressed at the state of a neglected friend, rag dolls Elizabeth Anne and Jenny Marie decide a secret makeover is the solution. When Penny arrives with nothing but an old calico dress, Bear and the twin dolls begin a desperate search for a source of new clothing that takes them to a distant designer salon at the other side of the country, but their carefully planned operation comes unraveled when they tarry too long at the store leaving them stranded with no way to get back on time.

Daily Driver

Mrs. Itch steadfastly refuses to trade her treasured daily driver for a new car, even though it has quit running again, this time making her late to work. The toys' Mistress Sarah graciously offers her own car while she is out of town. Rag dolls Elizabeth Anne and Jenny Marie are quick to see an opportunity to help, but they will have to fix the car when no one else can. Will Bear be able to successfully guide the dolls in their efforts and if she does, how will they ever test drive the car?

~ Books are available at Virginia's website: www.IntrixInc.com ~