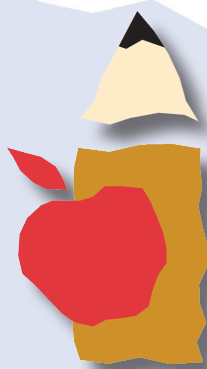


PREVIEW

Grade 4



Informational & Opinion Writing

Deconstructing Text,
Writing Essays, Reports,
Response to Text

Expanded Edition
Literacy Launch
Section Included



Updated & Expanded Edition by Dea Paoletta Auray

Empowering[®]
Writers

Write. Read. Succeed.



The upper elementary years are exciting. By this time, most students have acquired basic academic skills as well as a body of general knowledge that expands their world and broadens their point of view. The focus begins to shift from learning to read to one of reading to learn. As students develop into strong strategic readers, glean information and insight from a variety of texts, writing becomes a tool for further exploration, helping them clarify, differentiate, sort and express information and opinions about what they've learned. In other words, writing becomes, more and more, a vehicle for clear thinking. This solidifies the reading-writing connection. In addition, learning to become strong informational and opinion writers and writing in response to text requires students to read more closely, which improves reading comprehension.

In the lessons that follow, your students will learn to:

- Recognize and distinguish between genres (narrative, informational and opinion writing). They will be able to spot the subtle differences between informational and opinion writing.
- Annotate and analyze text to become strategic readers.
- Organize information in a logical manner so that their writing is easily understood and well paced.
- Develop broad yet distinct main ideas and main reasons.
- Generate a variety of rich supporting details.
- Conduct relevant research and enhance their writing with quotes, statistics, amazing facts, descriptive segments and anecdotes.
- Write compelling introductions with powerful leads and clear topic sentences.
- Creatively restate their main ideas and main reasons in conclusions that sum up the whole piece and end with decisive, memorable statements.
- Respond, in writing, to a variety of texts in order to demonstrate deep comprehension (including Short Constructed Response, Extended Constructed Response and Literary Analysis).

The activities provided here were developed for grade 4, as students acquire the writing skills they need to produce essays with multiple body paragraphs as well as effective introductions and conclusions.

Also included are a variety of more challenging activities that will guide more advanced students through the process of further developing and refining their writing skills. In each section you'll find a variety of lessons to meet the needs of the range of students in your class. Some lessons are largely teacher directed, others require greater independence on the part of the students. This allows you to differentiate to best meet the needs of all students.

In addition to the multitude of writing opportunities incorporated throughout this text, you will also find foundational lessons necessary to inform writing tasks. These critical thinking exercises (such as sorting details into main idea categories, recognizing fact from opinion, analysis of text, etc.) build the awareness level. Without this prior knowledge and experience students cannot be expected to effectively complete writing tasks.

Lastly, given the demands of the latest standards and testing trends, it is critical for students to generate their writing in both the traditional pen to paper mode and on a computer or other device. It is important to note that the latest research suggests that each modality stimulates the brain differently. Pen to paper is a slower, more multi-sensory process, which reinforces the assimilation of knowledge and skills in a wider variety of ways.



Introduction

What You'll Find in this Resource

This book was designed to provide everything you'll need to teach informational and opinion writing as well as response to text in Grade 4. It includes not only opportunities for writing informational and opinion texts, but more importantly, we've deconstructed effective writing into all of the foundational concepts and discrete skills students need in order to be successful. Doing so empowers students to be able to analyze and annotate texts and respond to these texts in writing.

Writing is a complex task. Simply discussing the attributes of powerful texts as a prerequisite to writing is not enough. **Students must learn, through explicit, objective-driven instruction, the salient features of the genre, author's purpose, and have a strong grasp of basic concepts that inform these understandings.** For example, before asking students to organize their writing by arranging like details into paragraphs, they must know how to sort and categorize, to use inductive and deductive reasoning. Before we suggest the use of more powerful vocabulary in their writing we need to have students use it comfortably in spoken language. They need scaffolding to grasp and apply these concepts to the writing task. Skipping any of the foundational skills only results in frustration.

This resource includes clear, objective-driven lessons that cover the all-important foundational concepts, and then build writing lessons on this firm base of understanding. Then, we begin teaching all of the specific skills that are the hallmarks of effective informational, opinion, and response to text writing.

This approach is extremely powerful for teachers and youngsters alike. Teachers begin to look at writing in more objective terms, in relation to specific skills taught. Students gain by having what can be an overwhelming process broken into manageable parts.

For ease of use, the book is divided into skill sections. Within each section you'll find a wide range of lessons – some very directed, others requiring more independence on the part of the student. These can be used at your discretion based on the needs of your students.

The Skill Sections are as follows:

Literacy Launch*

Section 1: Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas/Reasons

Section 2: Elaboration - Detail Generating Questions

Section 3: Research

Section 4: Introductions and Conclusions

Section 5: Authentic Writing Tasks

*This essential jumping-off point to writing instruction and reading comprehension is the prerequisite to understanding all genres of writing and reading purposes. For that reason, we suggest that whatever genre you begin teaching, all students are first introduced to the Literacy Launch. Then, regardless of what genre they are interacting with, whether in reading or writing, there will be a necessary fundamental understanding. *(Note: The Literacy Launch is presented in the same manner in both our Informational Writing Guide and Narrative Writing Guide. It only needs to be taught once and when concepts are mastered, teaching can move directly to Section 1. If for example, you begin with Informational writing, when you move to Narrative, the Literacy Launch instruction does not need to be repeated. Instead, move right to Section 1.)*

Additionally, the foundational skills learned during the Literacy Launch provide students with the tools needed to address text-dependent and constructed response tasks. Note that Response to Text (R) activities are interspersed throughout this Guide. To find specific skills, see the Response to Text Index, pp. 332-333.

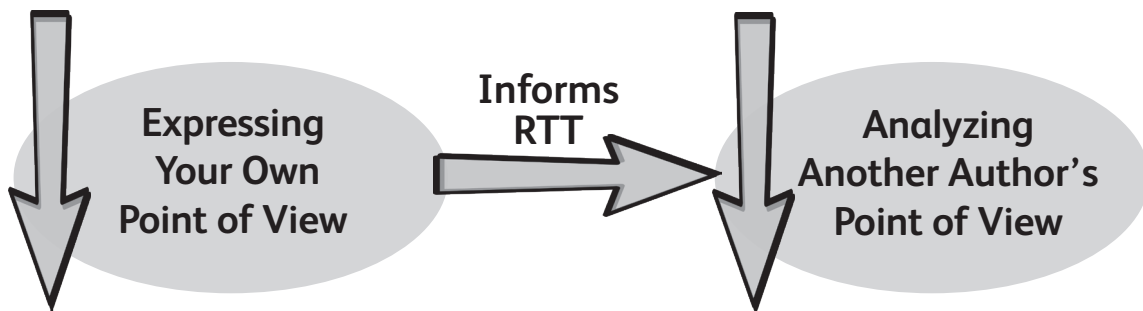
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GENERATIVE VS. RESPONSIVE WRITING

In the real world, and now, more and more often in school, writing can be either motivated largely by the writer's interests, imagination, and personal experience (**generative writing**) or it can be in response to a source text or number of texts (**responsive writing**). Both approaches have value and one should not be overlooked at the expense of the other. Writing assessments in many places have moved away from generative writing in favor of responsive writing. **Ex.** A student must read several texts on a topic and then respond to what they read in an evaluative way, demonstrating not only literal comprehension, but critical thinking and personal reflection in response to a question or task. They must back their ideas, conclusions, or positions by citing evidence in the text. *The challenge is that success in this type of task really is rooted in reading comprehension.* Students who are challenged readers have a distinct disadvantage that they don't experience in many generative writing tasks. For these reasons we have included both generative and responsive writing tasks throughout the book. See chart below and note how one genre of writing informs the other.

GENERATIVE VS. RESPONSIVE WRITING



- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crafting original work• Nurturing tomorrow's authors• Understanding Informational writing• Increasing deep comprehension• Creative, stylistic, critical thinking | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing to express reading• Simulating research• Academic writing• Defending conclusions• Pragmatic, deductive, inductive reasoning |
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Let's Compare Informational, Opinion, and Response to Text

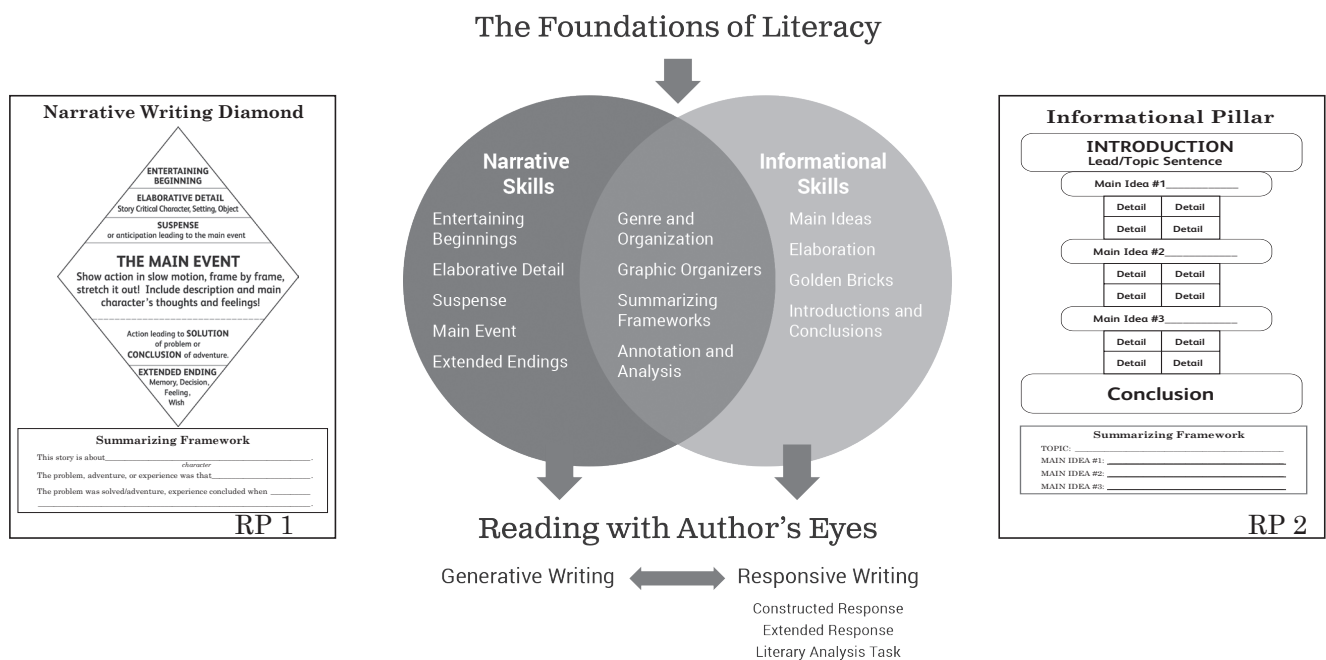
	INFORMATIONAL	OPINION	RESPONSE TO TEXT
Organization	Informational Pillar	Opinion Pillar	Informational Pillar
Purpose	To inform	To state a personal opinion	To demonstrate comprehension
Introduction	Lead/topic sentence	Lead/opinion statement	Summarize the source material Turn the Question into the Response
Body of Piece	Main ideas	Main reasons	Main ideas
Supporting Details	What does it "look" like? Why is that important? Did you give a specific example? Quotes, statistics, anecdotes, amazing facts, descriptive segments	What does it "look" like? Why is it important? Did you give a specific example? Quotes, statistics, anecdotes, amazing facts, descriptive segments, personal experience	Cite evidence: Quotes, statistics, amazing facts Paraphrase Compare/Contrast information Use evidence from all source material
Conclusion	Creatively restate each idea	Creatively restate each reason Restate the opinion	Reiterate topic and main ideas Synthesize information & draw conclusions Evaluate how information inspires or challenges

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Where do we begin?

The Literacy Launch is the starting point! Before students can write or even read strategically, they need to be clear about genre and purpose. The lessons in this section help students develop the foundational concepts they need for both reading and writing. They'll be exposed to multiple genres of writing during this time frame, in much the same way as they are exposed to many types of text over the course of a day in content areas. They'll learn to recognize and identify the key characteristics of each genre, the organizational structure and author's purpose. You may worry that the time spent on these foundational skills might be better spent writing, pencil to paper. However, these core lessons are essential if students are to write with intention, a clear sense of purpose, with examples of strong writing to guide them. Too often we press students directly into writing tasks that overwhelm them because they don't have a clear understanding of how text is organized, nor do they have the skills to apply to the task. This will come in time but begins on the awareness level of understanding what authors do.

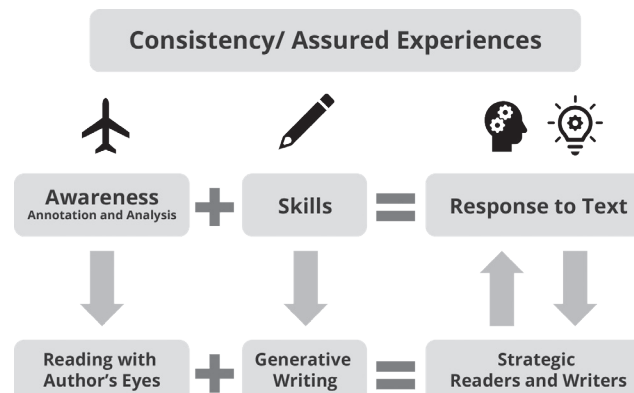
The Venn Diagram illustrates the Literacy Launch and the powerful writing-reading connection. The core of the diagram outlines the skills inherent in learning to recognize genre, organization, annotation and analysis, and the salient features of the various genres. By understanding how text is constructed, students can begin to read more strategically. We call this "Reading with Author's Eyes." Through the Literacy Launch, students are introduced to the graphic tools and summarizing frameworks first on the awareness level and then on the generative level. Students also learn to proactively interact with the text through the annotation and analysis process for each genre of writing and then apply that process to their independent reading. Each step in the foundational learning process creates a predictable approach to literacy that students can rely on and internalize.



(continued)

Teacher Background: The Literacy Launch

Once students have completed the foundational learning presented in the Literacy Launch, they can move seamlessly into narrative, informational, or opinion/argument writing. The discrete skills of each genre are broken down into manageable components and taught through the Empowering Writers methodology. This is presented in incremental steps that begin with the awareness level and then provides students with the capacity to generate and craft original writing, while also preparing them to respond in writing. The synergistic nature of the awareness level understanding, coupled with genre specific skill development allows students to respond to text and become strategic readers and writers. Once the Literacy Launch is completed, you'll move directly into skill development.



Defining Genre

Narrative Writing - Narrative writing is written to entertain an audience of others through storytelling. The author's focus is on a main character in a setting who has a problem to solve or an adventure or meaningful experience to share. The main character typically grows or changes in some way as the story develops.

Informational Writing - The purpose of informational writing is to inform an audience of others. The organization is linear, typified by an introduction, several body paragraphs that include a main idea with supporting details, and a conclusion. The tone of the informational piece is usually straightforward and the author works hard to present information in an organized, sequential fashion. The focus of informational writing is on a topic.

Opinion Writing - The purpose of opinion writing is to share a personal opinion. The successful opinion author uses information strategically, showcasing facts that support the opinion. With an organizational structure similar to informational writing, opinion writing focuses on an issue or position that can be looked at from multiple perspectives. To do this, students must be able to distinguish between fact and opinion.

Argument Writing - The purpose of argument writing is to organize and present a well-reasoned, logical argument demonstrating the writer's position, belief, or conclusion on an issue. The writer makes a claim and supports it with sound reasons and evidence. Additionally, the author must defend the claim using credible sources and address a counterargument. The organizational structure of argument writing mirrors informational writing with an introduction, several body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

Response to Text Writing - The purpose of this type of writing is to demonstrate deep comprehension of source material. There are two types of response to text - Short Constructed Response (SCR) and Extended Constructed Response (ECR). In SCR, the organizational structure is one paragraph with an introduction statement, several pieces of evidence that are either cited directly from the source text or paraphrased, and a conclusion statement. ECR is a multi-paragraph response to source text and takes the shape of informational writing with an introduction paragraph, several body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph. In both types of response writing, students must use the given source text(s) to support their answer to a question or task and provide their analysis.

LESSON 2

Objective

Students recognize and identify narrative, informational, opinion and response to text paragraphs in terms of author's purpose and salient features.

Procedure

1. Discuss genre with your students, using the definitions below.

Narrative: Purpose – to entertain (focus on a main character in a setting with a problem, adventure or interesting experience).

Informational: Purpose – to give information (focus on a TOPIC)

Opinion: Purpose – to share a personal opinion (focus on a point of view)

Response to Text: Purpose – to demonstrate deep comprehension as illustrated by evidence from the text.

Chart these definitions. You might want to use some of the fiction and nonfiction books in your classroom as examples.

2. Reproduce and distribute Narrative, Informational, or Opinion?, SP 1.

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Define genres.
- Read paragraphs and identify genre.

Student Page

Name: _____

NARRATIVE, INFORMATIONAL, OR OPINION?

Read the following paragraphs. Determine whether each paragraph is Narrative, Informational, or Opinion. Circle your response.

1. As I crept through the garden, I heard a cat hiss and felt the chill of an angry wind at my back. "You can do this," I told myself. My hands were shaking as I snapped the magical pumpkin from its vine. "Hold it right there," came an angry voice from the darkness. I started to run and the heavy pumpkin slipped from my grasp.

Narrative Informational Opinion

2. In my opinion, oatmeal is the most delicious and nutritious breakfast there is. It's warm and it fills you up better than cold cereal. It's amazing how many different ways you can serve it. Many people like to sprinkle their oatmeal with cinnamon and mix it with applesauce. Other people enjoy their hot cereal with brown sugar and sliced bananas. Served with fruit or just with milk and sugar, oatmeal is the world's best treat on a blustery winter morning. Don't you agree?

Narrative Informational Opinion

3. The rainforest has four levels. At the very top is the *emergent layer*, where the tallest trees tower above all the others and get most of the sunlight. Then the tops of all the other trees form the thick *canopy*. The branches of the trees in the canopy are usually covered with vines that provide camouflage for many rainforest birds. The next level is called the *under story* and it is a dark place where young trees as well as plants that need little light grow. The last level is the *forest floor*, which is even darker than the under story and covered with fallen branches, leaves, seeds and fruits.

Narrative Informational Opinion

SP 1

3. Project and read as you identify each paragraph as either Narrative, Informational or Opinion writing. If students need guidance, ask the following questions:

Is there a character in a setting?

Are you getting information, learning something about a person, place or thing?

Is the author stating and supporting a personal opinion?

Are other sources being cited?

4. Proceed similarly with Informational, Opinion, or Response to Text, SP 2.


Key:

Narrative, Informational or Opinion?, SP 1

1. Informational 2. Narrative 3. Opinion

Informational, Opinion, or Response to Text, SP 2

1. Informational 2. Response to Text 3. Opinion

 **Student Page**

Name: _____

INFORMATIONAL, OPINION, OR RESPONSE TO TEXT?

Read the following paragraphs. Determine whether each paragraph is Informational, Opinion, or Response to Text. Circle your response.

1. Building a house is a complicated process. First, a plot of land must be located on which a home can be built. An architect draws a plan that shows every nook and cranny of the proposed house, inside and out. The builder has to receive approvals from the town before beginning the build. The lot must be cleared so that large equipment can be brought in to dig the foundation and pour concrete. The house needs to be framed, walls built, and the roof raised. Electricians and plumbers must install wiring and pipes. Depending on the size of the house, the build could take six months to over a year.

Informational Opinion Response to Text

2. In the text titled Goldendoodles the author discusses the history of this hybrid "designer dog." We learn that this crossbreed was introduced in 1992 by breeding Golden Retrievers with Standard Poodles. The author explains that "the combination of the gentle disposition of the Golden with the intelligence of the Standard Poodle results in a highly desirable family pet." Due to the popularity of this breed, we learn, on page 2, about GANA – the Goldendoodle Association of North America, whose goal is to establish reliability in Goldendoodles' coats, type, health, and temperament.

Informational Opinion Response to Text

3. While there are exciting and entertaining outdoor activities during each season of the year, in my view, summer provides the very best opportunities to be active outside. There's nothing better than a swim in the lake or a plunge in the ocean during a day at the beach. I love every imaginable water sport, from swimming and diving to kayaking, boogie boarding, and paddle boarding. The warm sun on my shoulders and the refreshing splash of cool water makes a summer afternoon what I long for throughout all four seasons. Planning a picnic at the park, a hike in the woods, or a bike ride on a nature trail are best enjoyed during the summer. Winter sledding and skiing may be fun, but what can beat all of the opportunities available during June, July, and August, when school is mostly out, and the days are long?

Informational Opinion Response to Text

SP 2

LESSON 5

Objective

Students learn strategies for close reading that provide valuable information about organization that will later inform their writing.

Strategies include:

- skimming and scanning for an overview of the entire text
- recognizing the importance of headings, keywords, diagrams, illustrations
- writing a summary based on information provided (text conventions)

Important Vocabulary

title, topic, headings, bold-face print, italicized print, key words, diagram, photograph, illustration, caption

Procedure

1. Explain to the class that they will be reading a selection titled Bears and that they'll be learning some strategies for how to read more effectively.
2. Photocopy SP 8-9, distribute and project. *To build context and background begin by showing the students numerous online images of a variety of bears (or, for the following lesson, Scarecrows, SP 10-12) and discuss what, if any, prior knowledge they might have.* Read the piece aloud This will give them a sense of what the text is all about.

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Introduce students to text conventions.
- Modeling skimming, scanning.
- Point out how cues improve reading.
- Summarize the piece.

Student Page
Name: _____

Bears

It's hard to believe that these large, often ferocious relatives of the dog, raccoon, and panda are the inspiration for millions of cuddly soft stuffed toys! There are many kinds of bears, living in numerous places the world over. Their behavior and shared traits fascinate their human neighbors all around the globe.

Kinds of Bears and Where They Live

Many kinds of bears can be found in a wide variety of places, mostly in wild mountain, forest, and arctic areas. In fact, bears inhabit every continent except Africa, Antarctica, and Australia. The largest bear, the **Kodiak**, which weighs almost a ton is found in the wilderness and wide open grasslands of Alaska. The Kodiak is related to the **Grizzly**. Grizzly bears, with their dark fur edged in white, live in many areas of the United States and Canada. **Brown Bears**, which are smaller than the Kodiak and Grizzly, and the **North American Black Bear** (which isn't always black, but brown, white, gold, even bluish tinted) also live in the United States and Canada. The coast of the Arctic Ocean is home to the distinctive white **Polar Bear**, thriving in the snow and ice. Asia is where the slow-moving **Sloth Bear** is

found, with its short black fur and bib of light colored fur.

Common Traits

What do all bears have in common? Scientists group them into a family of creatures called **Ursidae**. All bears are classified as **caniforms** meaning "dog-like" creatures. They have long snouts and **non-retractable** claws, just as dogs do.



Grizzly bear (about 8 ft. long)

SP 8

Student Page

Of course, bears are larger than dogs. These large furry mammals have thick, weighty bodies and can stand on their hind legs. You can recognize bears by their rather squared off snouts, short rounded ears, and short stubby tails. Their feet are similar to human feet, complete with a heel and a sole. In fact, bears' hind feet also have five toes. Their long curved sharp claws are used to tear food and to move nimbly - they can even climb trees. Bears are **carnivores** meaning that they eat mostly meat. This is why they have numerous large teeth that can grind, crush, and tear meat. However, bears also eat vegetation.

Bear Behavior

Bear's behavior has always interested people. Some bears **hibernate**, retreating to their dens, doing without food, and entering a deep sleep state in which their **metabolism** (body function) slows down dramatically. These large animals, which may appear rather clumsy and slow, are actually very fast runners. A mother bear may charge at any threat to her cubs, human or animal. In order to fuel their hefty bodies bears must eat a lot. They've been known to raid campsites and cottages, **foraging** or digging through supplies and trash in order to find something edible. Bears also love honey and have no problem batting down a bee's nest, swiping at it with their claws, and scooping out gobs of thick, sweet, honey. Their thick fur makes it difficult for bees to sting them, although bears gladly endure stings in order to eat the bee larvae in the honey. These amazing creatures communicate through a complicated **marking system** in which they claw, gnaw, or chew at tree trunks as a means of warning other bears to stay clear of their territory.

In your world travels, if you ever find yourself in a National Park, or hiking in a nature preserve, keep your eyes open for a member of the Ursidae family. If you spot any type of bear, stay calm and move quietly away. These beautiful, yet sometimes menacing creatures, and the habitats they live in certainly deserve our respect.



SP 9

Strategic Reading - Informed Writing

7. Ask them to help you fill in the summarizing framework, based solely on the title and headings.

Chart:

<p>TOPIC: Bears</p> <p>Main Idea #1: Kinds of Bears and Where they Live</p> <p>Main Idea #2: Common Traits</p> <p>Main Idea #3: Bear Behavior</p>

Discuss the way that identifying the topic and headings can set a purpose for learning. As readers they already have a good idea what they'll be reading about, which aids in comprehension. Discuss how a summary such as this might be an excellent way for an author to begin. (Helps with organization and focus.)

8. Next, in each paragraph, have them locate all **bold-faced** or *italicized* words. Explain that these are key vocabulary words that might be new to the reader. These keywords are usually either preceded or followed by a definition to aid in understanding. Point out that these specially marked words indicate some of the important **details** in the piece.

(**Option:** For homework, have students create a key word vocabulary chart, listing each key - words followed by a definition they craft from the information provided in the text.)

9. Point out the **photograph** and its **caption**. Ask students why both are important.
10. Model how to use the information on the summarizing framework to write an extended summary using the following sentence starters coupled with Informative Verbs, RP 6.

Sentence Starters:

This text provides information about_____.

This informative piece _____.

In this text, the author _____.

The author reveals _____.

The reader discovers _____.

In this paragraph/piece _____.

It was clearly_____.

INFORMATIVE VERBS

recognize	understand
learn about	become aware of
discover	report upon
uncover	reveal
study	examine
observe	analyze
investigate	find out
focus on	emphasize
research	know
delve into	consider
determine	remember
explore	become familiar with
chronicle	become acquainted with
discussed	be on the lookout for
debated	heard about

RP 6

Student Page
Name: _____

Scarecrows, Yesterday and Today

Drive through your neighborhood in October, and chances are you'll see a straggly bunch of hay-stuffed scarecrows surrounded by pumpkins and haystacks, slumping across porches and hitched up on front lawns. But besides being a favorite part of autumn décor, scarecrows have served a long and useful role in the lives of people all over the world. Let's take a look at the history of scarecrows, the various kinds of scarecrows, and at the ways we celebrate scarecrows nowadays.



A scarecrow perched in a field.

The Need for Scarecrows

Thousands of years ago when people began to plant crops instead of hunting and gathering wild foods they realized they needed to protect their harvest from birds and animals. Anyone who has a garden knows that not only birds, but rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, even foxes and bears can venture in and in a single swoosh eat all of the food! At first people probably hid around their fields and jumped out to scare away any varmints that decided to dine there. In fact, in England and other places, people hired children to be **bird shooters**. Bird shooters or bird scapers had special wooden gadgets called **clappers** that they'd shake and smack together. The racket they made would scare the critters away. The problem was, people would get tired sitting by the field. They'd get distracted or fall asleep, allowing the hungry animals to have a feast. So, it became clear that another solution was necessary. They needed bird scapers who could frighten away birds and animals at all hours of the day and night. Soon the idea of fooling the crop stealers with **mannequins** or models of people made from wood and cloth.

Scarecrows around the World

You can find scarecrows just about anyplace people grow food! In ancient Egypt people planted wheat along the shore of the Nile River. Pump birds called

quail would fly in and eat the grain. Farmers began to place wooden stakes in the ground hung with nets that flapped in the wind. The movement would frighten some of the quails, but others persisted in eating the wheat. The Egyptian farmers would hide and scare the quails into the nets. Then they'd capture the quail and eat them for dinner. These ancient net contraptions were perhaps the first scarecrows. The Greeks fashioned wooden life-sized statues to look like their god of the gardens, **Priapus**, who

had a frightening angry appearance. They placed these Priapus statues in their vineyards to frighten off birds and animals. In Japan, farmers protected their rice fields by hanging old clothes and rags, rotting meat and fishbones to tall poles. The wind moved these around, frightening any would-be diners – and if the motion didn't discourage them the smell would! These smelly scarecrows were called **Kakashis**. In Italy during the Middle Ages, between the years 1154-1485, farmers placed animal skulls on the end

of a post to scare away critters. During this same time period German farmers crafted wooden witches to stand guard in their fields. When German immigrants came to the U.S. in the 1800's they made scarecrows they called **hootsamon** or the **hogyman**. These scarecrows were dressed very much like farmers, in overalls and an old coat or shirt, its head covered in a floppy hat, the body stuffed with hay, a red bandana tied around its neck. Clearly, these influenced our image of what scarecrows look like.


Guests come in Halloween costumes and are treated to games, face-painting, and story-telling. Of course, scarecrows are displayed and enjoyed by over 10,000 visitors who attend each year. The Annual Scarecrow Festival in West Kilbride, Scotland, featured a competition for the best hand-made scarecrow. Likewise, at the Scarecrow Festival in St. Charles, Illinois, spectators can see scores of unique and creative scarecrows, while enjoying music, dancing, and fun. These are just a few of the thousands of scarecrow celebrations people flock to throughout the autumn season.

This fall, as you walk through your neighborhood or take drive in the country, see if you can spot a scarecrow. Think about their long and interesting history, imagine their counterparts all over the world, and perhaps plan on a little fall fun by making a scarecrow of your own. Scarecrows have certainly been a source of creativity and necessity for thousands of years.

SP 10

Student Page

Scarecrow Names Around the World




America: Scarecrow	Japan: Kakashis
England: Hooymen	Malaysia: Orang-orang
Greece: Priapus	Philippines: Tao-tao
Italy: Spaventasseri	Scotland: Tattybolge

SP 11

Student Page


Fun with Scarecrows

Scarecrows seem to have captured the imaginations of people all over the world, as evidenced by the many scarecrow celebrations that take place. Arts and craftspersons, both professional and amateur, enjoy gathering old clothes, rags, and stuffing in order to make their own scarecrows, just for fun. Some find creative materials such as pumpkins and gourds for their heads, and use paint and other materials to create expressive faces. People display these in front of their houses in the autumn or use them as part of their Halloween displays. Scarecrows are the inspiration for fall festivals all over the world. Edmonton, Alberta, in Canada hosts a Scarecrow Festival every October.



SP 12

3. Model how to skim and scan the piece for text features using Common Informational Text Features, RP 5. Annotate it together, labeling the important parts using the procedure below. Use the Strategic Reading Guidelines, RP 38-39, to inform your discussion.

Common Informational Text Features 

Title/Topic	Usually names the topic
Table of contents	A list of main ideas, chapters, or sections at the front of the book
Index	Page numbers for locating specific information about the topic
Glossary	List of words from the text related to the topic, and their definitions
Headings	Names the main ideas or sections related to the topic. May correspond to the Table of Contents
Keywords: Bold faced words Italicized print	These highlighted words indicate important vocabulary about the topic. The author generally gives the definition within the text.
Photographs, illustrations, captions	Images to enhance the text along with a short description of the picture
Inset photos	Gives a close-up view of something about the topic showing specific detail
Labeled diagrams	Important information about the topic in a diagram, with labels to name parts, sections, or details
Charts, graphs, tables	Shows data about the topic
Maps	A representation of an area (land or sea) that is discussed in the text

Text features are the building blocks for text structure in informational writing, just as literary elements are the building blocks for narrative.

RP 5

4. First, circle the **title**. Ask them what the **title** reveals. (the **topic**) Remind them that the topic tells the reader what the entire piece will be about. **Model** this for students and have them do the same.
5. Next, for reference purposes, number each paragraph.
6. Point out and underline the **headings**. Explain that the headings allow you to quickly skim and scan the piece and get a sense of the **main ideas** of the piece.

I Want More – Analyzing and Annotating Opportunities for Informational Texts

Objective

Students learn to identify the salient features of informational and opinion writing and recognize the organizational structures of each without the benefit of headings, photographs, or diagrams.

Procedure

1. Explain to students that you'll be looking at two different pieces of writing about Siamese cats, each with a different purpose.
2. Distribute The Informational Pillar, RP 2, as well as The Opinion Pillar, RP 3. Review each pillar emphasizing the similarities and differences. Distribute Siamese Cats, SP 33, and The Unique and Beautiful Siamese, SP 34. A great way to help with comprehension is to build background by showing an appropriate online video that illustrates the topic. You can also gather vivid online images to inform their reading.

Informational Pillar

INTRODUCTION
Lead/Topic Sentence

Main Idea #1

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #2

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #3

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Conclusion

Summarizing Framework

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____

MAIN IDEA #3: _____

RP 2

Opinion Pillar

INTRODUCTION
Lead/Opinion Statement

Main Reason #1

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Reason #2

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Reason #3

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

CONCLUSION
Creative Restatements of Main Reasons

Summarizing Framework

TOPIC: _____

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____

MAIN REASON #3: _____

RP 3

Student Page

Name: _____

SIAMESE CATS

One of the oldest cat breeds in the world, the Siamese cat is a popular pet in the United States today. Let's learn more about the regal history, elegant appearance and unique needs of this charming breed.

Siamese cats were brought to America from Thailand back when it was called Siam. It is believed that the royal family of Siam kept these exotic felines as pets and that they were sometimes used to guard ancient temples. The breed arrived in America in 1878 when a Siamese cat was given as a gift to the wife of President Rutherford Hayes, who was a well-known cat lover. Mrs. Hayes said that the "mahogany-colored feline enjoyed making grand entrances" when she was entertaining at the White House. By the early 1900s, Siamese cats were exhibited in American cat shows.

These beautiful animals are known for their distinctive appearance. They move gracefully with their tails held high as though they know just how lovely they are. The royal cats of Siam have sparkling, bright blue eyes with a slight slant that adds to their exotic appearance. They have short, cream colored fur that darkens to a rich chocolate brown on their ears, face and toes. This elegant breed takes good care of its slim, muscular body so that it needs very little extra grooming. In some Siamese, the bright eyes are closely set and they can appear cross-eyed.

Unlike most cats, a Siamese is not an independent creature. They crave the company of their owners and will meow loudly and persistently to get it. If left alone too often, they are likely to get into mischief. I know of a Siamese who shredded a large quilt with its claws one lonely afternoon. All are capable of such destructive behavior, so be prepared to spend lots of time playing with your pet. Like a dog in a cat body, some even play fetch and most can be trained to walk on a leash.

With their interesting history and undeniable beauty, Siamese cats can be great companions to those who understand their unique needs. They are an excellent choice for people who have lots of time to devote to a pet.

SP 33

Student Page

Name: _____

THE UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL SIAMESE

There is no doubt that dogs, big or small, make wonderful pets. However, I believe cats are an equally good choice. My absolute favorite is the regal Siamese cat. After all, who wouldn't love a pet with an elegant beauty, a melodious voice and a loving nature?

Once you see the gorgeous blue eyes of a Siamese, you will surely agree that this is a majestic beautiful animal. Its short, silky fur is cream-colored with rich brown highlights around the face, toes and ears. I love the proud way they walk with their heads and tails held high and I also appreciate their good grooming habits. Shedding is never a problem with a Siamese and they always keep their fur very clean.

Siamese are not only lovely to look at, but they've got surprisingly expressive voices. These cats will yowl and meow to let you know when they need food or attention. It is amazing how effectively they communicate with their people. It is very hard to understand why some people find the vocalizations of Siamese shrill and annoying. Even at top volume, my cat's voice is nothing less than music to my ears!

With a Siamese, you will never be lonely. More than any other pet, these cats crave your company. I enjoy the way my Siamese cuddles up on my lap and looks at me with adoration in her eyes. Agile and energetic, they'll play with you for hours and you can even teach them to walk on a leash. But the absolute worst thing you can do is leave your Siamese at home alone too often. They will surely become restless and anxious which can result in all sorts of destructive behavior.

Do you appreciate exotic beauty? Can you tolerate a noisy pet? Do you have lots of time to devote to your cat? If you answered yes to these three questions, a Siamese is definitely the pet for you. Without a doubt, these big-mouthed beauties are just as loyal and loving to their owners as any dog.


SP 34

I Want More – Analyzing and Annotating Opportunities for Informational Texts

3. Project the text and ask them, at a glance, what’s different about this piece than the previous pieces they’ve analyzed. (This piece appears in basic paragraph form, not in columns, and is missing the main idea headings.) Explain that the job of the reader is to determine what each main idea might be, even without the headings.
4. Read the entire piece aloud to familiarize students with the content. Project the student copy of the piece. Explain that they will be annotating the text. Use the annotated teacher pages and guiding questions to inform your discussion, pp. 67-68. Demonstrate how to mark all of the designated parts of the writing. Have students annotate their papers, identifying and labeling all key elements by following your lead. (Help students notice that the first sentence of each body paragraph usually contains the main idea.)

Pay particular attention to the relationship between the main idea/reason and supporting details in each paragraph of the body of the piece. Ask the class if each detail supports the main idea/reason blurb in the margin - we call this the “mantra.”

Finally, answer the accompanying questions, SP 35 and SP 36. Repeat the process for the partner piece, pointing out the differences in genre and purpose. Use the annotated pages to guide your instruction.


Student Page 

Name: _____

SIAMESE CATS

1. This is an example of what kind of writing? Circle one:
Informational Opinion
2. Number each paragraph.
3. Circle the **introduction**.
4. Box the **conclusion**.
5. Circle the **title** and identify the **topic**.
6. Underline the **lead** in red.
7. Underline the **topic sentence** in blue.
8. Underline each **MAIN IDEA** sentence. Write a blurb (a word or two) in the margin next to the paragraph explaining what the entire paragraph is about.
9. Read this detail: *Owners will need to spend a great deal of time at home so their furry friends don't get depressed.*
Where does this detail belong? Paragraph # _____
10. What word referent for “cat” is used to describe the Siamese in the second paragraph? _____
11. Number the references to each main idea restated in the conclusion. Use paragraph numbers.
12. Fill in the summarizing framework/author’s prewriting plan:
TOPIC: _____
MAIN IDEA #1: _____
MAIN IDEA #2: _____
MAIN IDEA #3: _____

SP 35

Student Page 

Name: _____

THE UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL SIAMESE

1. This is an example of what kind of writing? Circle one:
Informational Opinion
2. Number each paragraph.
3. Circle the **introduction**.
4. Box the **conclusion**.
5. Circle the **title** and identify the **topic**.
6. Underline the **lead** in red.
7. Underline the **author’s position** in blue.
8. Underline each **MAIN REASON** sentence. Write a blurb (a word or two) in the margin next to the paragraph explaining what the entire paragraph is about.
9. Circle all of the **opinion language**.
10. Number the references to each main idea restated in the conclusion. Use paragraph numbers.
11. Fill in the summarizing framework/author’s prewriting plan:
TOPIC: _____
MAIN REASON #1: _____
MAIN REASON #2: _____
MAIN REASON #3: _____

SP 36

NOTE: Because the organizational frameworks of opinion and informational writing are so similar, your students might need extra practice in distinguishing between the two and that is the purpose of this activity.

Lesson 9: Introduction to Literary Analysis

LESSON 9

Objective

Students learn to identify the literary elements in a text and when responding orally or in writing to repeat key elements of a question in the beginning of their response. They will provide evidence from the text to support their answers.

****Important:** Before beginning, select a story they've read, annotated, and analyzed earlier that will serve as the source text for this lesson.

Procedure

1. Explain to students that one way to demonstrate what they've comprehended from reading a text is to answer questions about it, both verbally and in writing. The important thing is to respond in complete sentences. Tell them that an easy technique for this task is to repeat the important parts of the question as they begin their response. Project RP 11 and discuss how the diamond and literary elements are connected.
2. Distribute copies of Student Reference sheet Literary Elements, RP 10.

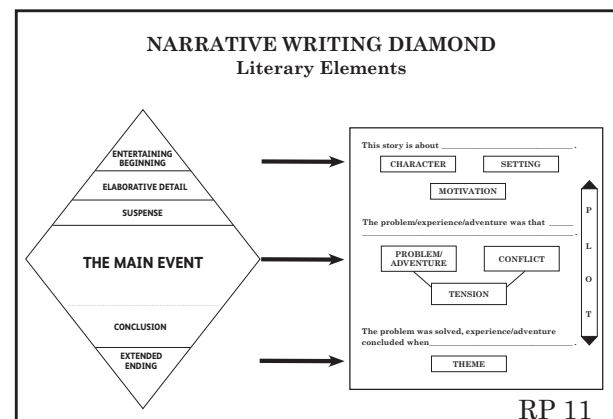
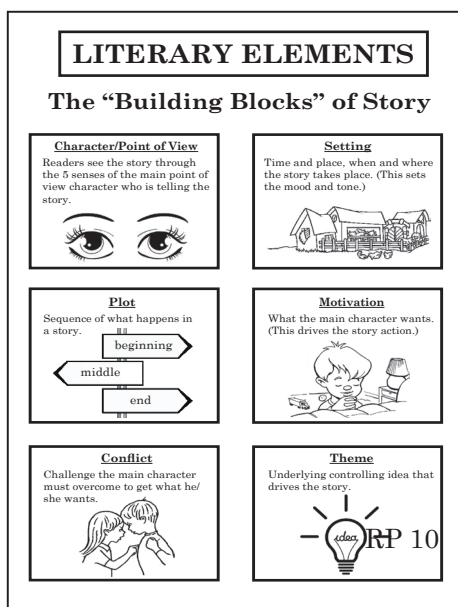
Chart the following literary elements on the board and discuss each one.

- Character
- Setting
- Problem/adventure (the main event of the story)
- Motivation (what the main character wants)
- Conflict (what stands in the main character's way)

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Select a story previously read and annotated.
- Review literary elements.
- Distribute Turning Questions into Responses.
- MODEL
- Students apply skill



Lesson 9: Introduction to Literary Analysis

Explain that these are called **literary elements** and that these are the basic building blocks of stories. Ask them to silently reread the story you selected and to see if they can pick out the literary elements listed. Discuss their findings. Have them underline, highlight or color-code the evidence from the text that supports their answer. Use RP 12 for finding evidence.

LITERARY ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

Locate evidence from the text to identify character, setting, motivation, plot, conflict and theme. Color code the evidence when you find it. Remember that in some stories there will be more than one piece of textual evidence.

Main point of view character: Who was the main character(s)? (red)
Setting: Where and when did the story take place? (blue)
Plot: What was the problem or adventure? (yellow)
Motivation: What did the main character(s) want? (green)
Conflict: What kept the main character(s) from getting what he/she/they wanted? (purple)
Theme: What was the big idea of the story? (orange)

Use this summary every time you read a story:

Summarizing Framework:
This story is about _____.
The problem/adventure/experience was _____.
The problem was solved, experience or adventure concluded when _____.
The theme of the story was _____.

Sentence Starters for Providing Evidence:

- The author shares _____.
- We see this as the main character _____.
- The text states, "_____".
- The reader realizes this when _____.
- The theme is clearly shown when _____.
- In paragraph _____, the author writes _____.
- "_____" writes the author to show _____.

RP 12

3. Distribute copies of Turning Questions into Responses, SP 51. Demonstrate how to use the key parts of the question to begin their response. Demonstrate verbally, then in writing. Move through each response to text question in the same way, having students frame their responses, first verbally, then in writing.

Student Page

Name _____

TURNING QUESTIONS INTO RESPONSES

An easy way to answer response to text questions is to turn the important parts of the question into the beginning of your response. Look at the questions below, followed by the beginning of a response. Using this technique ensures that your answers will be written in complete sentences. Your teacher will select a story for you to reread. Then, answer each of these questions about the story, by turning the question into the beginning of your response. The first two have been started for you.

1. Who was the **main point of view character**?
The main point of view character was _____.
2. What was the **setting**?
The setting was _____.
3. What was the **problem or adventure**?
_____.
4. What was the **main character's motivation**?
(What did the main character want?)
_____.
5. What caused the **conflict in the story**?
_____.

KICK IT UP A NOTCH!

To improve the writing, try varying the way each of above sentences begin. On another sheet of paper, or at the keyboard, REVISE the complete sentences you created by using the sentence starters below.

In this story _____
In the story titled (title here) _____
The author introduces us to _____, our main character.
We immediately meet (main character's name) _____, the hero of the story.
The story took place _____.
The story was set _____.
The protagonist, (main character's name) wanted _____
(Main character's name) was trying to _____.
The author created tension when _____ (conflict) _____.
The problem began when _____.

SP 51

Lesson 9: Introduction to Literary Analysis

4. Finally, (or on a subsequent day) point out that while the answers all appeared in complete sentences, the sentence variety was repetitive and redundant. MODEL how using the sentence starters can provide a series of more interesting responses. Have the students continue on their own. (GUIDED PRACTICE) Circulate as they work, offering encouragement and guidance.
5. Ask students to go back to the text and locate the specific evidence from the text that they underlined or highlighted. Model how to add this text evidence to support their answers.

OPTION: Have students write these revised sentences, one following the other in paragraph form. This is a good way to structure a constructed response. You may provide them with the following beginning sentence:

*I recently read the story*_____. Follow this with the sentences they wrote.

Here are some additional sentence starters that are useful for this purpose:

The reader discovers that_____.

The author reveals_____.

___ contributed to the story conflict.

In this story_____.

At the beginning it's clear that_____.

The plot centers around_____.

It isn't long before we discover_____.

Clearly, the theme was _____.

The author definitely shows _____.

We recognize_____.

(Character's name) was motivated by_____.

I believe that_____because_____.

The reader realizes_____.

As the story unfolds we learn that_____.

In the story, evidence suggests that_____.

Through the text we learn that_____.

From my point of view, _____.

We see this when_____.

NOTE: Use this technique every time students read as a simple way to practice responding to text.

Turn and Talk: Discuss with a partner why complete sentences in a response are important. Why would you use a sentence starter? Together, choose one literary element and answer the question using a book you've read independently. Remember to add sentence variety.



Pick, List and Choose

A Process for Thinking, Prewriting and Planning

LESSON 3

Objective

Students participate in a process of sorting and categorizing details into broad yet distinct main idea categories as a means of assimilating this thinking into the writing process.

Procedure

1. Pick a topic with which the class is familiar. It might be a subject or theme you've explored in class, a current event you are following or a unit you're working on in science or social studies. If you prefer, you could select more generic familiar themes such as a season, holiday or activity. (A list of possible topics appears at the end of this lesson plan.) For the purpose of demonstrating this lesson, we'll use the sample topic: Summer Vacation
2. Write the TOPIC on a piece of chart paper or on your white board. Ask the class to tell you everything they know (details) about this topic. Chart their responses in random order. Avoid grouping like details, as this pre-empts their task.

Example:

Summer Vacation

Swimming

Sunburn

Planting a garden

Pool parties

Cookouts

Water skiing

Baseball

Fireflies

Fresh corn on the cob

Archery

Going to the beach

Bee Stings

Humidity

Biking

Family vacations

Poison Ivy

Mowing the lawn

Hiking

Thunderstorms

Canoing

Flowers blooming

Sleeping in a tent

Arts & Crafts

Watermelon

Hot dogs

Tennis

Toasting marshmallows

Going to camp

Picking berries

Hot weather

Sailing

Ice cream cones

Longer days

Mosquitoes

Staying up late

Going fishing

Bonfires

Popsicles

Picnics

3. With colored magic markers, use student input to underline (color-code) details that "go together" or that can be categorized as belonging to a particular MAIN IDEA. Underline the linked details in the same color such as: If **outdoor activities** is identified at a MAIN IDEA, archery, pool parties, bonfires and hiking might be details. If **summer foods** are a MAIN IDEA, cook outs, ice cream cones, fresh corn on the cop, Popsicles, watermelon and hot dogs are details. If **summer annoyances** are a MAIN IDEA, bee stings, sunburn, poison ivy are appropriate details. If **summer weather** is a MAIN IDEA, it could be supported by such details as: thunderstorms, hot weather and humidity.

Call students' attention to how this process might generate not only details, but the main ideas themselves – for example, family vacations which could serve as a main idea supported by such details as visiting theme parks, staying at hotels, seeing historic sights. Going to camp could be a main idea with archery, bonfires, sleeping in a tent as some of the details.

Also, be sure to point out where main ideas might overlap: Going to Camp and Outdoor Activities are likely to do so. Outdoor Activities could also overlap with the possible main idea of Summer Sports. Direct students to choose one or the other!

(continued)

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class Activity

- Students brainstorm a list of details related to a topic for informational writing.
- Details are sorted and color-coded into main idea categories.
- Students create prewriting plans using those main ideas.

Pick, List and Choose



A Process for Thinking, Prewriting and Planning

Sample sets of MAIN IDEAS – prewriting plans based on PICK, LIST, CHOOSE:

Notice how combinations of MAIN IDEAS were chosen so as not to OVERLAP.

TOPIC: SUMMER
MAIN IDEA #1: Outdoor Activities
MAIN IDEA #2: Summer Foods
MAIN IDEA #3: Summer Annoyances

TOPIC: SUMMER
MAIN IDEA #1: Summer Weather
MAIN IDEA #2: Summer Sports
MAIN IDEA #3: Summer Foods

Why would the following combination of MAIN IDEAS **NOT** work?

TOPIC: SUMMER
MAIN IDEA #1: Outdoor Activities
MAIN IDEA #2: Summer Sports
MAIN IDEA #3: Hiking
MAIN IDEA #4: Summer Foods

TOPIC: SUMMER
MAIN IDEA #1: Summer Sports
MAIN IDEA #2: Cookouts
MAIN IDEA #3: Summer Foods
MAIN IDEA #4: Summer Weather

Example (1) would not work because outdoor activities and summer sports overlap. Hiking is not only an example of both an outdoor activity and a summer sport, but it would work better as a detail in the paragraph focusing on either one of those broad main ideas (one or the other – not both). Either Outdoor Activities or Summer Sports should be replaced with another main idea.

Example (2) would not work because Cookouts and Summer Foods overlap. After all, what’s served at a cookout but summer foods? This plan would work better if Summer Foods were developed as a main idea with cookouts as a supporting detail. An appropriately distinct main idea to replace cookouts might be Summer Annoyances.

PLEASE NOTE:

There is no need for students to go ahead and actually write the piece based on one of the successful prewriting plans generated as you introduce them to the PICK, LIST and CHOOSE process. Since the objective is for them to be able to think, sort, and categorize details, this whole class activity can be repeated on different topics to great advantage throughout the school year and across the curriculum. It works best with the whole class, as one idea sparks another, and the detail list will be richer and fuller, reflecting the diversity of general knowledge amongst your students.

We recommend implementing this procedure often, thus, providing numerous opportunities for students to hone these thinking skills. Below are some additional TOPICS that can be used for the whole class PICK, LIST and CHOOSE procedure. Of course, you will need to be sure your students have some existing knowledge of the topic in order to inspire the participation of the whole class. Any topic you are currently studying in science or social studies would be appropriate for this activity. You could also use it to review for a unit test on any topic in science or social studies.

Westward Expansion
Colonial America
Endangered Species
Climate Change

The Civil Rights Movement
Lunar Eclipses
Ancient Civilizations
Plant vs. Animal Cells

Ocean Currents
Solar Energy
Greek Mythology
Immigration/Emigration

Preparing to Write a Response to Text



LESSON 16

Objective

Students learn the purpose of and process for responding to text in writing. They identify the topic and main ideas in a prompt or assignment and begin to identify the salient features of an effective response in order to inform their own writing.

Procedure

1. Explain to students that they'll be learning a process for responding to a variety of texts in writing. Remind them that the purpose of this kind of writing is to demonstrate deep comprehension. Also explain that you'll be walking them through the steps they'll need to take and modeling the writing with them - something like a guided tour of the process. Use Steps for a Constructed Response, RP 30, as a step by step reference for this lesson.
2. Distribute copies of Bears, SP 8-9, that was read in the last unit. You'll also want to project this for the class. Using Common Informational Text Features, RP 5, walk students through the text, reviewing the text conventions and informational features: Title/Topic, Headings, Boldfaced, Italicized Key Words.
3. Project and distribute Preparing to Write a Response to Text, SP 88.

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class Activity

- Discuss responding to text in writing
- Use Strategic Reading Guidelines
- Work through and model Response to Text
- Summarize

Student Page

Name: _____

Bears

It's hard to believe that these large, often ferocious relatives of the dog, raccoon, and panda are the inspiration for millions of cuddly soft stuffed toys. There are many kinds of bears, living in numerous places the world over. Their behavior and shared traits fascinate their human neighbors all around the globe.

Kinds of Bears and Where They Live

Many kinds of bears can be found in a wide variety of places, mostly in wild mountains, forest, and arctic areas. In fact, bears inhabit every continent except Africa, Antarctica, and Australia. The largest bear, the **Kodiak**, which weighs almost a ton is found in the wilderness and wide open grasslands of Alaska. The Kodiak is related to the **Grizzly**. Grizzly bears, with their dark fur edged in white, live in many areas of the United States and Canada. **Brown Bears**, which are smaller than the Kodiak and Grizzly, and the **North American Black Bear** (which isn't always black, but brown, white, gold, even bluish tawny) also live in the United States and Canada. The coast of the Arctic Ocean is home to the distinctive white **Polar Bear**, thriving in the snow and ice. Asia is where the slow-moving **Sloth Bear** is found, with its short black fur and hump of light colored fur.

Common Traits

What do all bears have in common? Scientists group them into a family of creatures called **Ursidae**. All bears are classified as **carnivores** meaning "dog-like" creatures. They have long snouts and **non-retractable** claws, just as dogs do.



Grizzly bear (about 8 ft. long)

SP 8

Student Page

Name: _____

Of course, bears are larger than dogs. These large furry mammals have thick, weighty bodies and can stand on their hind legs. You can recognize bears by their rather squared off snouts, short rounded ears, and short stubby tails. Their feet are similar to human feet, complete with a heel and a sole. In fact, bear's hind feet also have five toes. Their long curved sharp claws are used to tear food and to move stumps - they can even climb trees. Bears are **carnivores** meaning that they eat mostly meat. This is why they have numerous large teeth that can grind, crush, and tear meat. However, bears also eat vegetation.

Bear Behavior

Bear's behavior has always interested people. Some bears **hibernate**, retreating to their dens, doing without food, and entering a deep sleep state in which their **metabolism** (body function) slows down dramatically. These large animals, which may appear rather clumsy and slow, are actually very fast runners. A mother bear may charge at any threat to her cubs, human or animal. In order to feel their hefty bodies bears must eat a lot. They've been known to raid campsites and corrugated, foraging or digging through supplies and trash in order to find something edible. Bears also love honey and have no problem hitting down a bee's nest, swiping at it with their claws, and scooping out globes of thick, sweet, honey. Their thick fur makes it difficult for bees to sting them, although bears gladly endure stings in order to eat the bee larvae in the honey. Those amazing creatures communicate through a complicated **marking system** in which they claw, growl, or climb at tree trunks as a means of warning other bears to stay clear of their territory.

In your world travels, if you ever find yourself in a National Park, or hiking in a nature preserve, keep your eyes open for a member of the Ursidae family. If you spot any type of bear, stay calm and move quietly away. These beautiful, sometimes menacing creatures, and the habitats they live in certainly deserve our respect.



SP 9

Student Page

Name: _____

PREPARING TO WRITE A RESPONSE TO TEXT

You've read the text titled Bears, SP 8-9. In response to this text, write an essay discussing two interesting bear behaviors. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.

1. Underline the given elements in this writing assignment.
2. What are the **variable elements** in this writing assignment? In other words, what decision do you need to make as the author?
3. Skim and scan the text and write a **summarizing framework** for this piece.

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____

MAIN IDEA #3: _____
4. In your summarizing framework, circle the **main idea** that will be most helpful in outlining your response. Locate and circle the **paragraph** in the text.
5. What text conventions can help guide your response?
6. After you've selected two interesting bear behaviors, highlight your examples in the text. Highlight the first interesting behavior in yellow, and the second interesting behavior in pink.
7. Write a **topic sentence** using the given elements that you underlined on your "topic."
8. Write a **main idea sentence** for each of bear behaviors that you selected.
9. Use **icing sentence** starters to reference evidence in the text.

In the text titled Bears we learn that _____

On SP 8, column 2, the author states that _____

The author describes the way that _____

Another example the author notes is _____

In the information provided about [bearing] we learn that _____

The author also discusses _____

Additionally, the text includes the fact that _____

This informational text also explains _____

SP 88

Steps for a Constructed Response

- Step 1: ANALYZE and ANNOTATE the text.
- Step 2: Fill in the SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK.
- Step 3: Analyze the prompt for GIVENS and VARIABLES.
- Step 4: Highlight the paragraph where you will find the information needed.
- Step 5: Underline the EVIDENCE from the text to support your thinking.
- Step 6: Create a PRE-WRITING PLAN for answering the question - summarizing framework.
- Step 7: Write a main idea sentence - Turn the task into the response.
- Step 8: Compose the body paragraph - paraphrase, sentence starters, cite evidence, word referents, flip the sentence subject, transitional words and phrases.
- Step 9: Write a conclusion statement - restate main idea sentence, use a definitive word or phrase.

RP 30

Common Informational Text Features

Title/Topic	Usually names the topic
Table of contents	A list of main ideas, chapters, or sections at the front of the book
Index	Page numbers for locating specific information about the topic
Glossary	List of words from the text related to the topic, and their definitions
Headings	Names the main ideas or sections related to the topic. May correspond to the Table of Contents
Keywords: Bold faced words Italicized print	These highlighted words indicate important vocabulary about the topic. The author generally gives the definition within the text.
Photographs, illustrations, captions	Images to enhance the text along with a short description of the picture
Inset photos	Gives a close-up view of something about the topic showing specific detail
Labeled diagrams	Important information about the topic in a diagram, with labels to name parts, sections, or details
Charts, graphs, tables	Shows data about the topic
Maps	A representation of an area (land or sea) that is discussed in the text

Text features are the building blocks for text structure in informational writing, just as literary elements are the building blocks for narrative.

RP 5



Preparing to Write a Response to Text

- Direct students' attention to Preparing to Write a Response to Text, SP 88, and explain that you'll be working through this as a class. Begin by reading and discussing the boxed assignment, top of the page. The previous lessons have laid a groundwork for the first two questions about identifying givens and variables. Remind students of that and engage them in a conversation to identify the given and variable elements.
- Address question 3 by writing a blank summarizing framework on the board and, based on the text, have the class direct you in filling it in.

Ex. TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1 _____

MAIN IDEA #2 _____

MAIN IDEA #3 _____

- Proceed in similar fashion through the remaining items on SP 88. Pay special attention to highlighting the examples in the text. This is perhaps the most critical skill for students to master. MODEL this using the text projected on the board. Elicit ideas from students and MODEL writing a TOPIC SENTENCE and MAIN IDEA SENTENCES. Chart these for students to see and read them aloud.
- Read through the citing sentence starters and point out how these can help make the writing smooth and fluent. (You may differentiate your instruction by having students who are ready use these to transfer their cited details into sentences, or engage the entire class.)
- Finally, project the Summarizing Framework & Exemplar, SP 89. Use the annotation to guide your conversation. Be sure to point out the TOPIC SENTENCE, MAIN IDEA SENTENCES, language used to cite examples in the text, the use of word referents used in place of the topic word "bears" and the conclusion paragraph. Mark in this annotation of the white board to help students identify these elements.
- Close the lesson by reminding students that their careful, close, strategic reading makes the writing easier, and that the discipline of writing in response to the text actually helps to better understand the information in the text.

Student Page

EXEMPLAR RESPONSE

Ex. SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK

TOPIC: Two Interesting Bear Behaviors

Main Idea #1: foraging

Main Idea #2: marking

BEARS

Bears exhibit many interesting behaviors. Two of the behaviors we learn about in the text titled BEARS are foraging and marking.

On SP 9, columns 2 and 3, the author describes how these large hungry mammals forage for food. We learn that bears are known for raiding campsites and cottages looking for whatever they can find to eat. The author also discusses the way that these carnivores have a sweet tooth when it comes to honey. In the text the author explains how a bear will bot down a bee's nest and swab out the honey with its claws. Additionally, the text includes the fact that a bear's thick fur helps protect these furry foragers from bee stings.

Bears are also known for behavior known as marking. On SP 8, column 3 we learn that these members of the Ursidae family will claw, gnaw, or chew at tree trunks. The author explains that this is a signal to other bears to "stay clear of their territory."

Certainly, if I ever visit a National Park or head out into the wilderness I'll keep an eye out for bear markings and will keep my gear locked up from these large foraging, territorial creatures.

SP 89



Annotated Page

PREPARING TO WRITE A RESPONSE TO TEXT

You've read the text titled Bears, SP 8-9. In response to this text, write an essay discussing two interesting bear behaviors. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.

1. Underline the **given elements** in this writing assignment. *at least 2 interesting bear behaviors*
2. What are the **variable elements** in this writing assignment - in other words, what decision do you need to make as the author? *which bear behaviors you will select*
3. **Skim and scan** the text and write a **summarizing framework** for this piece.

TOPIC: Bears

MAIN IDEA #1: kinds of bears and where they live

MAIN IDEA #2: common traits

MAIN IDEA #3: bear behavior

4. In your summarizing framework, circle the **main idea** that will be most helpful in crafting your response. Locate and circle the **paragraph** in the text. *bold-faced caption: Bear Behavior*
5. What text conventions can help guide your response? *Bold italicized key words within the bear behavior paragraph.*
6. After you've selected two interesting bear behaviors, **highlight** your examples in the text. Highlight the first interesting behavior in yellow, and the second interesting behavior in pink. *Answers will vary between hibernation, foraging, marking system.*
7. Write a **topic sentence** using the given elements that you underlined as your "topic." *Ex. bears exhibit many interesting behaviors.*
8. Write a **main idea sentence** for each of bear behaviors that you selected. *Ex. One fascinating behavior bears engage in is called foraging. Bears are also known for behavior known as marking.*
9. Use citing **sentence starters** to reference evidence in the text:

In the text titled Bears we learn that _____ .

On SP 9 column 2, the author states that _____ .

The author describes the way that _____ .

Another example the author notes is _____ .

In the information provided about foraging we learn that _____ .

The author also discusses _____ .

Additionally, the text includes the fact that _____ .

This informational text also explains _____ .



Using Detail-Generating Questions

LESSON 7 Objective

Students learn to apply the detail-generating questions independently. This requires them to recognize the weaknesses in the sample segment and to apply the detail-generating questions prescriptively. (Activity 1, includes the insertion of detail-generating questions for student use. Activities 2 and 3 require students to apply the questions independently.)

Procedure

1. Review Detail-Generating Questions, RP 20. Distribute How to Generate a Fully Elaborated Well-Supported Informational Paragraph, RP 25, and discuss. (Note: Golden Bricks have not been introduced yet.)

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Review detail-generating questions.
- MODEL revises detail sentences.
- Have students revise during GUIDED PRACTICE.

DETAIL-GENERATING QUESTIONS

WHAT DOES IT “LOOK” LIKE?

Sound like? Feel like?
Taste like? Smell like? Seem like?
You may need to research this!

WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT?

Why is that important to your main idea?
You may need to research this!

IS EACH DETAIL IN A SEPARATE SENTENCE?

Separate the Grocery List!

DID YOU GIVE A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE?

Avoid general language such as “stuff,” “things,” “nice,” etc.

RP 20

HOW TO GENERATE A FULLY ELABORATED, WELL-SUPPORTED INFORMATIONAL PARAGRAPH

AUTHORS INCLUDE:

- A BROAD YET DISTINCT MAIN IDEA SENTENCE
- A number of details related to your main idea
- The DETAIL-GENERATING QUESTIONS
“What Does it Look Like?” “Why is it Important?” “Did you give a specific example?” “Is each detail in a separate sentence?”
- GOOD WORD CHOICE
- SENTENCE VARIETY
- AT LEAST ONE POWERFUL GOLDEN BRICK DETAIL IN EACH PARAGRAPH
Quote • Statistic • Descriptive Segment • Anecdote • Amazing Fact

AUTHORS AVOID:

- Overly vague words and phrases such as: nice, fun, good, pretty, cool, awesome, great, big, interesting, stuff, things, and much more
- The “Grocery List”: (Do not list your details in a single sentence. Put each detail in a separate sentence. ex. Frogs eat beetles, moths, mosquitoes, small fish, and smaller frogs.)
- The “Broken Record”: (Do not begin each sentence with the same words. ex. There are... There are... There are...)
- Too Much “Telling”: (Instead of saying that something is terrific, SHOW your reader what terrific looks like through the use of an example or two.)

RP 25

2. Choose one of the Using Detail-Generating Questions activity sheets, SP 106-108, photocopy and project it for your students. Read the sample “before” paragraph aloud. Discuss the weaknesses.

Student Page

Name: _____

USING DETAIL-GENERATING QUESTIONS (1)

Read this paragraph about gardens. The author has simply listed a number of facts. The author did not SHOW us what the garden looked, sounded, and smelled like. On another page, revise the paragraph using the detail-generating questions below. You may use the sentence starters on the bottom of the page to correct the redundant sentence structure.

- What does it “look” like?
- Why is it important?
- Can you give a specific example?
- Is each detail in a separate sentence?

Many things grow in a garden. You can grow flowers like roses, sunflowers, and daffodils. You can grow vegetables like tomatoes, beans, corn, carrots, and much more.

Many things grow in a garden. You can grow flowers like roses, sunflowers, and daffodils. (Is each detail in a separate sentence? What does it look like? Why is it important?) You can grow vegetables like tomatoes, beans, corn, carrots, and much more. (Is each detail in a separate sentence? What does it look like? Why is it important?)

Sentence Starters

You can catch the scent of _____, are perfect for _____.

Some gardeners plant _____.

Colorful _____ can be grown, too.

SP 106

Student Page

Name: _____

USING DETAIL-GENERATING QUESTIONS (2)

Read the paragraph below from a how-to piece on the topic: Preparing Vegetable Soup. The author has simply listed a number of facts. None of the facts have been elaborated on in an effective way. On another page, revise the paragraph by applying the detail-generating questions. Also, be sure to include good sentence variety in your answer. Look for and correct redundant word choice.

Choosing the right ingredients is often the difference between vegetable soup that’s just so-so, or soup that’s scrumptious. Go to a good store. The grocery store has lots of vegetables on display. You’ll need to pick out really nice carrots, potatoes, celery, onions, and tomatoes. Then get a large can of white beans. Then get two large cans of vegetable broth. You’ll also need some olive oil. Buy these and you’re ready to begin the next step - preparation.

SP 107

Student Page

Name: _____

USING DETAIL-GENERATING QUESTIONS (3)

Read the paragraph below from a comparison piece on the topic: The Ultimate Birthday Party. At Home or at the Bowling Alley? The author has simply listed a number of facts. None of the facts have been elaborated on in an effective way. On another page, revise the paragraph by applying the detail-generating questions. Also, be sure to include good sentence variety in your answer. Look for and correct redundant word choice.

One important aspect of any party has to do with the party games and activities. At home you can play Twister, Musical Chairs, and some games you play outside on Field Day. If the weather’s good you can have a pool party for swimming and water games. Of course, if the weather’s rainy, you can’t play outside. Rain or shine, at the bowling alley you mostly bowl, which you can’t do at home. You don’t bowl every day which makes it special. Whether it’s at home or the bowling alley, you can open gifts and have birthday cake!

SP 108

Using Detail-Generating Questions



3. Begin to **MODEL*** (see scripted lesson, pp. 176-179) the revision by approaching each weakness with the corresponding detail generating question. Refer to Sample Modeled Revisions, pp. 180-182, to guide your modeling with the class. However, it is critical that you incorporate student responses in your revision. The sample revisions are provided as examples only.
4. After modeling, possibly on another day, begin **GUIDED PRACTICE*** (see scripted lesson). Invite the class to try their hand at the same example. Point out the sentence starters on the bottom of the activity sheet.
5. Also, look for redundant sentence variety - ex. a number of sentences that begin with “You can...” “There are,” etc. The use of the sentence starters can help address this weakness.

Extensions

1. Provide a variety of online images for each revision activity theme. Allow students to refer to these to inform their revisions.
2. Research - have students research some of the details - for example, if the general word “flower” is used, have them find several specific examples of flowers. Whatever the topic, students can research for specific detail that will add dimension to the writing.



Giving the Author Credit

LESSON 13

Objective

Students learn the proper way to cite the author's exact words, and identifying where the quote appears in the text. They practice locating evidence and citing it, using informative verbs and quotation marks.

Procedure

1. Explain to students that when compiling evidence from a source text one powerful technique is to cite or quote the exact words of an author. Share the boxed examples, on the previous page, pointing out the author's words in quotes, and the citing sentence starters with informative verbs.
2. Photocopy and distribute Giving the Author Credit (1), SP 125 and talk it through with students. (Keep in mind that you'll also need to provide students with copies of the source text, The Honey Badger, SP 39.) Remind students to annotate and identify main ideas so that they can easily locate the details in the text.
3. As students work, circulate, offering feedback and sharing powerful examples aloud.
4. On another day, or for homework, have students approach Giving the Author Credit (2), SP 126, using Scarecrows, Yesterday and Today, SP 10-12 .

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class Activity

- Explain how to cite an author
- Distribute activity sheet and walk through together
- GUIDED PRACTICE

Student Page

Name: _____

THE HONEY BADGER

Picture yourself in the golden grasslands of Africa. As you search from a safe distance a group of six young lions chases down an animal that looks a lot like a big shark. You think it's a lion over for the black one who has been. Think again. Growing with legs, it bashes out at the lion with long, sharp claws. Now you're guessing the lion with legs is never tangled with a honey badger! Considered to be the most fearless animal in the world, the honey badger never backs down from a battle. Not only will this gummy brute take on animals twice its size, but it will "stare" you in the face with its eyes open for hours, and can even survive being hit with a club.

With a thick strip of white fat down its back, the honey badger not only looks like a shark, but smells like one too! These nasty weasels can unleash a stink bomb that smells worse than the spray of a shark. A single badger claims a territory of up to 200 square miles for itself and marks it with its disgusting odor. One sniff and you'll get the message: stay away, for sure.

A swarm of angry bees won't stop the bold badger when he's craving honey! It doesn't think twice about nesting a buzzing beehive because it thinks, neither do you products from stings. Amazingly, they can be stung over and over again without reacting. Badbees get a very difficult to protect their hives from these crafty weasels, who've been known to pick back, escape from traps and tunnel under fencing to attack a hive.

A snake bite? No problem. It's all in a day's work for the honey badger as it hunts down one of its favorite meals: caterpillars. Incredibly, honey badgers can survive snake bites that would kill humans, and scientists aren't sure exactly why. Some believe that the mild venomous sting helps bring them back up on immunity to the stronger toxins of snakes. Others think that the snake's venom isn't potent enough to penetrate the badger's thick skin deeply enough to deliver a serious bite. Whatever the case, even the worst snake bite will just cause the badger to feel deeply asleep for a while and wake up fully recovered.

Who would want to mess with a honey badger? With the ability to attack a crowd of wilding scorpions, withstand bee stings and chew down on venomous snakes, the brash beast seems more like a monster than a fish-and-bird mammal. Without a doubt, the honey badger deserves the title of "World's Most Fearless Animal."

SP 34

Student Page

Name: _____

GIVING THE AUTHOR CREDIT (1)

Once I finished reading the text, I wrote a response to test myself about the article titled The Honey Badger. Once I read the article and summarized the author's important points – but he forgot one important detail! He used the author's exact words without citing them first! The Honey Badger and the following sentences from Oscar's response. Slim and I can locate the sentences in the text. Then REVISE each sentence, using quotation marks to enclose the author's exact words and the words to help explain where the quote can be found in the text.

Ex: These nasty weasels can unleash a stink bomb that smells worse than the spray of a shark.

In paragraph two the author describes the honey badger's spray. "These nasty weasels can unleash a stink bomb that smells worse than the spray of a shark."

1. A swarm of angry bees won't stop the bold badger when he's craving honey.

2. Incredibly, honey badgers can survive snake bites that would kill humans, and scientists aren't exactly sure why.

3. Considered to be the most fearless animal in the world, the honey badger never backs down from a battle.

Citing Sentence Starters with Informative Verbs

- In paragraph _____, the author states: "_____."
- In the introduction the author informs us that: "_____."
- In the article the author explains: "_____."

BONUS: Substitute a different Informative Verb for the one given:

- divulges • shares • asserts • informs • says • explains

SP 125

Student Page

Name: _____

GIVING THE AUTHOR CREDIT (2)

Read each sentence from the text, Scarecrows, Yesterday and Today. Slim and I can locate each sentence in the text, then REVISE it as a citation, using quotation marks and a citing sentence starter to show where the citation is located in the text!

1. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters.
2. When German immigrants came to the U.S. in the 1800's they made scarecrows they called bodysmen or the bodysman.
3. Scarecrows are the inspiration for fall festivals all over the world.

Citing Sentence Starters with Informative Verbs

- In the section titled "The Need for Scarecrows," the author states: "_____."
- Later in the article the author mentions that: "_____."
- When describing the ways people have fun with scarecrows the author tells us: "_____."

BONUS: Substitute a different Informative Verb for the one given:

- divulges • shares • asserts • informs • says • explains

SP 126

Student Page

Name: _____

Scarecrows, Yesterday and Today

Once through your neighborhood in October, and chances are you'll see a few scarecrows. You may see them in hay-filled fields and backyards, standing on a wooden post or a wooden frame. They are made of straw, corn cobs, and other farm items. They are used to scare away birds and animals. Anyone who has ever seen a scarecrow knows that they are not scary at all. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals.

The Need for Scarecrows

Thousands of years ago when people began to grow crops, they needed a way to scare away birds and animals. They used scarecrows to do this. Scarecrows were made of straw, corn cobs, and other farm items. They were used to scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals.

Scarecrows around the World

You can find scarecrows just about anywhere people grow food! In ancient Egypt, people placed scarecrows along the shores of the Nile River. People built scarecrows out of straw, corn cobs, and other farm items. They were used to scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals.

SP 10

Student Page

Name: _____

Scarecrow Names Around the World

Spain: *cofrer*
 England: *Hayman*
 Greece: *Phyllos*
 Italy: *Sventoghosti*

Japan: *Karakusa*
 Malaysia: *Chang-oring*
 Philippines: *Tao Tao*
 Scotland: *Tartan-bogle*

SP 11

Student Page

Name: _____

Fun with Scarecrows

Scarecrows are used to scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals.

Fun with Scarecrows

Guests come in Halloween costumes and are invited to games, face-painting, and other fun activities. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals. In fact, in England and other places, people hire children to be bird-shooters. Bird-shooters are hired because they scare away birds and animals.

SP 12

Giving the Author Credit



EXTENSION: When students are responding to source text, they need to provide information using a variety of strategies. They need to include information that is paraphrased or cited directly from the source text. This reference page, [How to Write an Effective Response to Text Paragraph](#), RP 26, can be used for all response to text paragraphs. Use [Citing Sentence Starters](#), RP 22, for reference.

HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO TEXT PARAGRAPH

AUTHORS INCLUDE:

- A BROAD YET DISTINCT MAIN IDEA SENTENCE
- A number of PARAPHRASED DETAILS from the source text that support the main idea
- Direct QUOTES or CITATIONS from the source text that support the main idea
- WORD REFERENTS
- CITING SENTENCE STARTERS
- INFORMATIVE VERBS
- Powerful WORD CHOICE
- TRANSITIONAL WORDS, PHRASES

AUTHORS AVOID:

- Copying evidence word for word from the source text (PLAGIARIZING)
- The "Grocery List": (Do not list your details in a single sentence. Put each detail in a separate sentence.)
- The "Broken Record": (Do not begin each sentence with the same words.)
- Paraphrasing without a reference to where the information was found in the source text

RP 26

CITING SENTENCE STARTERS

- In this article the reader discovers _____.
- The text explains how _____.
- This informational piece outlines _____.
- The author discusses _____.
- In paragraph ____, we learn that _____.
- An interesting point the author makes is _____.
- According to this article _____.
- Based on this text _____.

RP 22

The Golden Bricks - Powerful Supporting Detail



LESSON 10

Objective

Students will be able to generate quotes, statistics, amazing facts, descriptive segments, and anecdotes.

Procedure

1. Review the various types of powerful details (Golden Bricks).
2. Distribute one of the Golden Bricks activity sheets, SP 147-149, and read it through together.

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Review “Golden Bricks”.
- MODEL revision, adding a “Golden Brick”.
- Students try it during GUIDED PRACTICE.

Student Page

Name: _____

SPECIFIC SUPPORTING DETAILS - YOUR “GOLDEN BRICKS” (1)

Read this main idea sentence. It needs some powerful supporting details to convince your readers.

The microwave oven is certainly a time-saver.

Convince your reader with an anecdote: _____

Convince your reader with a descriptive segment: _____

“Sentence Starters for an Anecdote: I remember the time _____ For example _____ I know, in my house _____ That makes me think of _____	“Sentence Starters for a Descriptive Segment: Open the microwave door and _____ Can you catch the aroma of _____? This marvelous machine _____ Don't you just love the _____ way?
---	--

BONUS: On a separate piece of paper, write an entire paragraph that supports the main idea sentence. Include a number of basic details that include “What does it look like? Why is it important?” along with your two “golden bricks.” Be sure to use good sentence variety and specific, vivid words.

SP 147

Student Page

Name: _____

SPECIFIC SUPPORTING DETAILS - YOUR “GOLDEN BRICKS” (2)

Read this broad main idea sentence. It needs some powerful supporting details to convince your readers.

Attending a professional baseball game is different than watching it on TV.

Convince your reader with a descriptive segment: _____

Convince your reader with a quote: _____

“Sentence Starters for a Descriptive Segment: Can't you just see _____? The sound of _____ You can almost feel _____ Your heart races as _____	“Sentence Starters for a Quote: _____ of the Yankees says, “_____.” “_____” says baseball fan _____. As _____ always says, “_____.” “_____” exclaims, _____.
---	---

BONUS: On a separate piece of paper, write an entire paragraph that supports the main idea sentence. Include a number of basic details that include “What does it look like? Why is it important?” along with your two “golden bricks.” Be sure to use good sentence variety and specific, vivid words.

SP 148

Student Page

Name: _____

SPECIFIC SUPPORTING DETAILS - YOUR “GOLDEN BRICKS” (3)

Read this main reason sentence. It needs some powerful supporting details to convince your readers.

The winter landscape after a snowstorm is beautiful.

Convince your reader with an anecdote: _____

Convince your reader with a descriptive segment: _____

“Sentence Starters for an Anecdote: I'll never forget the morning when _____ The last blizzard we had _____ Every winter I _____ Right after the storm passes by I _____ I remember the time when _____	“Sentence Starters for a Descriptive Segment: Gazing outside I noticed _____ You could almost feel _____ The air was _____ The trees were _____ It's breathtaking to observe _____
---	--

BONUS: On a separate piece of paper, write an entire opinion paragraph that supports the main reason sentence. Include a number of basic details that include “What does it look like? Why is it important?” along with your two “golden bricks.” Be sure to use good sentence variety and specific, vivid words.

SP 149

3. MODEL one of them for the class, using one of the sentence starters provided.
4. During GUIDE PRACTICE, have children try one independently. Circulate, offering encouragement, constructive criticism, etc. Share and compare successful responses.
5. Encourage students to try the “BONUS” activity. Also, you may have them apply this to a piece of process writing they may be working on, or as an opportunity to add some “golden bricks” to a previous piece of writing.



Analyzing Writing Assignments

for Givens and Variables

LESSON 1

Objective

Students analyze prompts in order to identify given and variable elements necessary for effective responses. They also learn to read assignments as a means of identifying genre and purpose.

Procedure

1. Choose one of the prompts/assignments on the following pages. (Use the Prompt Guide, p. 297, to help you select an appropriate prompt.) Reproduce it for students and project it for the class.

Ex: Prompt #1, SP 195.

Breakfast is an important meal. Explain why breakfast is important. Write about the kind of breakfast you'd have at home, and the kind you might have at a restaurant.

2. Explain to the class that at some future point they may be presented with a prompt such as this as a means of showcasing the specific writing skills they've learned. Explain that prompts can also be used for assessment. Explain that everyone will respond to the same prompt, that there are several elements provided, and several decisions that each individual author would need to make. (givens and variables)
3. Read the prompt together.
Ask: Does it sound as though it might be an informational or opinion prompt? (*informational*). Ask them what clues in the prompt lead them to make that distinction. (*explain why*)
4. Discuss the GIVEN elements - those included in the prompt itself that need to be included in the response. For example, the topic may be given and main ideas/reasons left to the discretion of the author. Sometimes the main ideas/reasons are given, and the *specific* topic is a variable.

GIVENS: topic: Breakfast

VARIABLES: kind at home, kind in restaurant, represented in the summarizing framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN REASON #1 _____

MAIN REASON #2 _____

MAIN REASON #3 _____ (etc...)

5. Fill in this framework in a number of ways, having the class name the GIVENS and brainstorm a range of possibilities for the VARIABLES. You may want to engage the class in the "PICK, LIST, CHOOSE" procedure in order to generate main ideas.

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Introduce prompt.
- Define and discuss givens and variables.
- Identify genre and purpose.
- Create summarizing framework.

(continued)

Analyzing Writing Assignments

for Givens and Variables



SAMPLE PROMPTS - INFORMATIONAL AND OPINION

Prompts 1 - 6 include the main ideas/reasons as “GIVENS”.

Prompts 7, 8 require students to generate their own broad yet distinct main ideas.

If your school or district provides prompts or assignments for either assessment, process writing, or for portfolio samples, be sure to remind students to approach these in similar fashion. They should read the prompt and determine the genre and purpose, then analyze the given and variable elements. Will they be writing their opinion or straight information, thus referring to the Opinion or Informational Pillar? What will their main ideas or main reasons be? This analysis helps to clearly define their task, and ensures that their written response is reflective of the assignment given. This analysis process should become their go-to first step before putting pencil to page or fingers to keyboard.

1. Breakfast - (*informational*) - SP 195
2. Sleepover Party - (*opinion*) - SP 196
3. Animal Helpers - (*informational*) - may require research - SP 197
4. Special Person - (*opinion*) - SP 198
5. Dogs vs. Cats - (*informational - compare/contrast*) - may require research - SP 199
6. Hobby/Sport - (*informational*) - SP 200
7. Music - (*informational*) - can include research - SP 201
8. Parks - (*informational*) - can include research - SP 202

For Response to Text assignments, see pp. 119-120.