



# Narrative Writing Guide

Grade 4

- Personal Experience
- Character/Problem/Solution
- Narrative Essay
- Literary Analysis Tasks
- Response to Text



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**Empowering**<sup>®</sup>  
Writers

Write. Read. Succeed.


## What You'll Find in This Guide


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

- Recognize and distinguish between genres (narrative, expository, opinion writing) and understand the purpose of each.
- Understand and recognize the organizational structure of a narrative story.
- Learn how to read narrative stories with a critical eye, identifying literary elements (character, point of view, setting, plot, motivation, conflict, theme)
- Annotate and analyze narrative stories.
- Learn to recognize and generate the following narrative skills (narrative craft): entertaining beginnings, vivid, relevant elaborative detail, suspense, fully elaborated main events, conclusions, and extended story endings.
- Develop literary language including powerful adjectives, vivid verbs, strong word choice, word referents, sentence variety, transitional language.
- Generate original narrative stories incorporating all of these elements and skills.
- Extend or modify a narrative story in some way in order to demonstrate understanding of the literary elements through a narrative extension task (NET).
- Respond, in writing, to narrative stories in order to demonstrate deep comprehension through a variety of literary analysis tasks (LAT).

## Lesson Formats

There are a number of different lesson formats to best address these objectives. When looking at the Table of Contents, you'll notice that some lessons are tagged with icons.


**Awareness Lessons** - These lessons are designed to introduce a skill or concept, raise student awareness, recognition, and understanding of a key concept or skill before they are asked to practice and apply it in their own writing. These awareness-building activities are short, straight-forward lessons, about 20 minutes in length and are indicated by  .

**Foundational Lessons** – Lesson plans that are designated with the building bricks  are designed to provide a conceptual foundation for writing. These lessons inspire the critical thinking necessary to inform student writing. Lessons where the teacher is modeling and students are involved in guided practice take more time, so as a general rule plan on 30-40 minutes for these lessons. There may be instances where you find it helpful to extend the lesson over two days.

**Annotation and Analysis Lessons** – Annotation and Analysis provides a means for students to clearly understand how stories are structured and what elements and skills authors use to create successful narrative stories. Exposure to this not only sets a bar for their own writing, but builds a powerful reading-writing connection. Annotation and Analysis is a **teacher-directed activity** that leads to gradual release for independence. It will take between 30-45 minutes and these lessons are indicated by 

A & A
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**Modeled Lessons** – These critical lessons are the backbone of the Empowering Writers approach. The teacher introduces or reviews the particular discrete skill, models it, engaging students in directed shared writing, using designated productive questions that guide students in thinking and responding like authors. These lessons take minimally 30 minutes, and can be continued over several days. Modeled Lessons are followed by guided practice and are considered foundational lessons. .

**Guided Practice** – During Guided Practice students practice the same skill previously modeled by the teacher, applying the productive questions to their own thinking process. They may borrow some of the language and sentence structure modeled by the teacher. As they work the teacher circulates, offering guidance, encouragement, and targeted feedback. Like modeling, Guided Practice requires minimally 30 minutes, and may be spread out over several days. Note that Guided Practice always follows a Modeled Lesson. These are a key sequence to student success.

**Process Writing** – During Process Writing students apply the skills they've practiced in a directed series of sessions, each focusing on a particular part of the story. The process includes review of key skills, rereading, revising, and editing and will take minimally seven 45 minute sessions.

**Turn and Talk** – Suggested questions or topics for Turn and Talks are provided within the context of the lesson plans. Set a timer for 2-3 minute discussions and use this format at anytime during the lesson to encourage accountable talk and provide students an opportunity to discuss the lesson and orally develop common vocabulary. These pairings allow for students to formulate ideas, clarify learning, practice common language and pose questions before sharing in the larger class setting. 

T & T
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## Introduction to Pacing Guide: From Baseline to Growth Line - Pacing your Instruction with the Narrative Resource

Building a scope and sequence that works for your unique needs requires a careful look at your students' narrative skills, what you intend to accomplish, and how much time you can allow for this genre while still leaving time to teach other genres.

In the chart on the following page, we have provided a recommended scope and sequence of lessons. Each section of the guide has been broken down into the lessons and skills needed to complete a successful narrative piece of writing. Each section of this scope and sequence can be used as a guide for planning instruction with built in assessment and process writing. Use the blank pacing guide, "From Baseline to Growth Line," to map out your curriculum calendar for the particular needs of your students.

Empowering Writers recommends daily writing lessons of 30-40 minutes, however given the scope of curriculum required across all content areas, 3-4 times per week - 30-40 minutes spent on writing instruction will greatly improve student performance.

### **Recommended Order of Narrative Skills:**

- Genre and Organization
- Elaborative Detail
- Beginnings
- Endings
- Suspense
- Main Event

The Table of Contents in each section of the guide includes a key for awareness lessons and foundational lessons. We have included this key with the name of the lesson to provide you with an at-a-glance planning tool. Then, there are lessons that support the understanding of the skills and optional response to text lessons. In some lessons you'll find multiple examples for student practice - choose the practice activities that best meets the needs of your students.



# Grade 4 Unit Pacing Guide





















 Awareness lessons - 15-20 minutes each

 Foundational lessons - 30-40 minutes each

*Italics: Lessons to Support Understanding - 20-30 minutes each*

*Italics: Before and After Lessons - to be used after Guided Practice as independent practice.*

**Optional: Response to Text Lessons** - To be used at the teacher's discretion. Can be broken into multiple days - from 20-40 minutes each.

Baseline: Day 1 Section 1: Recognizing Genre	Weeks 1 and 2 Section 1: Recognizing Genre	Week 3 Section 3: Elaborative Detail	Week 4 Section 2: Beginnings and Section 6: Endings	Weeks 5 and 6 Section 4: Suspense and Section 5: Main Event	Weeks 7 and 8 Section 7: Growth Line - Process Writing
<p>BEGIN the year with a baseline prompt -</p> <p>Section 7 of the resource will give the background knowledge - this will require at least 45-60 minutes</p> <p>Lesson 3: Administering Prompts as Timed Writing Assessments</p>	<p> Lesson 1: Introducing Graphic Organizers</p> <p> Lesson 2: Comparing Four Types of Writing (<i>prepare for two days of instruction</i>)</p> <p> Lesson 3: Narrative, Expository, or Opinion? Name the Genre!</p> <p> Lesson 4: Annotating Narrative Stories (<i>several examples to work through that could be broken down over the course of several days or used as review and reinforcement over the course of the academic year.</i>)</p>	<p> Lesson 1: Story Critical Characters, Setting, Objects</p> <p> Lesson 2: Irrelevant Details</p> <p> Lesson 3: General or Specific?</p> <p> Lesson 4: Story Critical Elements in Literature</p> <p> Lesson 5: Creating Elaborative Segments</p> <p><i>Lesson 6: Reading with Author's Eyes</i></p> <p><i>Lesson 7: Flip the Sentence Subject</i></p> <p> Lesson 8: Feelings and Showing or Telling?</p> <p><i>Before and After Revisions</i></p>	<p><b>SECTION 2: BEGINNINGS</b></p> <p> Lesson 1: Starting Off on the Right Foot</p> <p><i>Lesson 2: Analyze the Beginning</i></p> <p> Lesson 3: Revising Story Beginnings</p> <p><i>Before and After Activities</i></p> <p><b>SECTION 6: ENDINGS</b></p> <p> Lesson 1: Analyze this Ending</p> <p> Lesson 2: Extending this Ending</p> <p><i>Lesson 3: Writing Extended Endings</i></p> <p><i>Before and After Activities</i></p>	<p><b>SECTION 4: SUSPENSE</b></p> <p> Lesson 1: Find the Suspense</p> <p><i>Lesson 2: Word Referents</i></p> <p> Lesson 3: Red Flag Words and Phrases</p> <p> Lesson 4: The Magic of Three</p> <p> Lesson 5: Building Suspense</p> <p><i>Before and After Revision Activities</i></p> <p><b>SECTION 5: MAIN EVENT</b></p> <p> Lesson 1: Comparing Summaries and Fully Elaborated Main Events</p> <p> Lesson 2: Main Event</p> <p><i>Before and After Revision Activities</i></p>	<p>Complete a process piece where students can apply the skills they've learned to a whole piece</p> <p>Teacher Background - Process Writing</p> <p>Process Writing Projects - Process Writing Timeline</p> <p><b>OPTIONAL:</b> <i>1 Day</i> <i>Complete an assessment to show growth over time. This will require at least 45-60 minutes</i></p> <p><i>Lesson 3: Administering Prompts as Timed Writing Assessments</i></p>

## Optional Response to Text Lessons

	Section 1: Recognizing Genre	Section 3: Elaborative Detail	Section 2: Beginnings and Section 6: Endings	Section 4: Suspense and Section 5: Main Event	Section 7: Prompts and Process
<p><b>Optional Response to Text Lessons - use at your discretion</b></p> <p><b>Each lesson can be spread over several days</b></p>	<p>■ ■ ■ Lesson 5: Distinguishing Between Three Genres of Writing</p> <p>■ ■ ■ Lesson 6: Turning Questions into Responses</p> <p>■ ■ ■ Lesson 7: Digging Deeper - Be a Text Detective</p> <p>■ ■ ■ Lesson 8: Theme in Story</p>	<p>Lesson 9: Literary Analysis Task - Elaborative Detail</p> <p>Lesson 10: Narrative Extension Task - Elaborative Detail</p> <p>Lesson 11: Literary Analysis Task - Feelings</p>	<p>Lesson 4: Literary Analysis Task - Beginnings</p> <p>Lesson 5: Narrative Extension Task - Beginnings</p> <p>Lesson 4: Literary Analysis Task - Endings</p> <p>Lesson 5: Narrative Extension Task - Endings</p>	<p>Lesson 6: Literary Analysis Task - Suspense - Theme</p> <p>Lesson 7: Literary Analysis Task - Suspense</p> <p>Lesson 8: Narrative Extension Task - Suspense</p> <p>Lesson 3: Literary Analysis - Main Event</p> <p>Lesson 4: Narrative Extension Task - Main Event</p>	<p>Lesson 4: Writing a Literary Analysis Exploring Point of View</p> <p>Lesson 5: Writing in Response to Multiple Texts</p>

# Lesson 4: Literary Analysis Task - Beginnings

## Objective:

Students read and analyze a source text and write an analysis of the author's craft when creating a compelling beginning.


## Procedure:

1. Have students read, analyze and annotate Taking the Plunge, pp. 128-130, according to SRP 6, pointing out the way the story follows the “shape” of the Narrative Writing Diamond.

Student Reference Page

### Annotation and Analysis Process for Narrative Stories

1. Label the **title** – what *genre* does the title hint at?
2. Circle the **entertaining beginning**, identify, label the technique.
3. Identify the **purpose of the story action** and main character's **motivation**.
4. Find **elaborative detail** describing the **setting** – mark and label this.
5. Underline and label suspense, **story tension, conflict**.
6. Bracket the **main event**.
7. Underline and label the **conclusion/solution** or conclusion of adventure.
8. Circle the **extended story ending** and label each technique.
9. Identify the **theme**. Have students highlight the parts of the story that indicate theme.
10. Fill in **summarizing framework**. Allow students to prompt you.  
This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem/experience was \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem ended/concluded when \_\_\_\_\_.



The diagram is a diamond shape divided into four quadrants. The top quadrant is labeled 'Entertaining Beginning' and contains the instruction 'Show action in the first paragraph, hook the reader, establish the setting, introduce the characters.' The right quadrant is labeled 'The Main Event' and contains the instruction 'Show action in the middle, focus on the problem, describe the action, include description and main character's thoughts and feelings!'. The bottom quadrant is labeled 'Action Leads to Solution' and contains the instruction 'Show action in the middle, focus on the problem, describe the action, include description and main character's thoughts and feelings!'. The left quadrant is labeled 'Elaborative Detail' and contains the instruction 'Show action in the first paragraph, hook the reader, establish the setting, introduce the characters.'

SRP 6

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Discuss the literary elements in the text, drawing verbal responses from the class, and/or chart them. Have students refer to Literary Analysis Questions, SRP 13. OPTIONAL: Color code evidence from the text to identify *character, setting, motivation, and conflict*.

Student Reference Page

### Literary Analysis Questions

Locate evidence from text to identify **character, setting, motivation, and conflict**. (Optional: Color Code)

- Who is the main **point of view character**? \_\_\_\_\_ (red)
- What is the **setting**? \_\_\_\_\_ (green)
- What is the main character's **motivation**? What does she/he **want**? \_\_\_\_\_ (blue)
- What is the **conflict**? \_\_\_\_\_ (orange)
- What is the **plot**:  

This story is about _____.
The problem/adventure/experience was _____.
The problem was solved, experience or adventure concluded when _____.
- What is the **theme**? \_\_\_\_\_ (purple)

SRP 13

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## Lesson 4: Literary Analysis Task – Beginnings

2. Project the Literary Analysis Task: Taking the Plunge, pp. 134-135, read the assignment out loud, and discuss with the class. Ask the class to identify each question they must address. Based on the questions, guide them in filling out the summarizing framework as a prewriting tool.

**You've read the story Taking the Plunge. What techniques does the author use to create a compelling beginning? What do you learn about the main character's motivation and conflict? Provide evidence from the text.**

**Ex. TOPIC:** Taking the Plunge

**MAIN IDEA #1:** Beginning Techniques

**MAIN IDEA #2:** Main Character's Motivation and Conflict

3. Have the class discuss their ideas in response to the questions, finding evidence in the text.
4. MODEL the use of sentence starters to turn their verbal responses into writing.
5. When you feel confident that the students understand the process, have them proceed on their own. As they work, circulate, offering guidance and encouragement. At any point, you may stop and pick up again the next day. The idea is not to overwhelm them, but to build their confidence.
6. Remind students that one way to strengthen the writing is to provide evidence from the text to support each written response. Have them skim and scan to find each piece of evidence in their copy of the source text, highlighting or placing a (✓) above it. Circulate as they work, checking for accuracy.
7. Remind students to use the sentence starters, p. 135, because these phrases help the writer to smoothly and fluently express ideas and cite evidence.
8. Close the lesson by having students reiterate the steps necessary for a well-supported written response.



Taking the Plunge

title Genre: Character/Problem/Solution

action

I stepped up on the diving board, dripping wet and shivering. My swim coach called, "Remember what you learned, Gavin! Give it a try!" Reluctantly I drew my arms over my head, hands overlapping, fingers slanting toward the water. I bent my knees and tucked my chin. My heart raced and I pressed my eyes shut. A wave of dizziness came over me.

dialogue

main character

motivation

entertaining beginning

"Come on already," shouted the others in the class. Their voices echoed through the huge open room. Others in the pool swam laps, the sun reflecting off the crystal clear water. Children splashed and played in the low end, their happy voices mocking me.

elaborative detail

I just couldn't do it. It was like I had turned into a statue. My face grew hot, "Chicken!" someone yelled. I could feel their eyes on me. I stepped off the diving board and plunged, feet-first, into the pool, swam as quickly as I could, climbed out, and headed to the locker room. I could hear the thwack of the diving board followed by a splash as each of the others did their dive. Ashamed, I got dressed without even drying off so I could get out of there before the others.

conflict

feelings

Out in the car Grandpa looked up from his book. "You're early," he said with a smile. "And you're soaking wet! Did you forget your towel?"

suspense

I sighed. Tears burned the backs of my eyes.

story questions

"Hey buddy," Grandpa said. "What's the matter?"

I took a deep breath and bit my bottom lip. "I can't do it," I said. "The dive. I just freeze up there."

"Everyone's scared at first," Grandpa said.

"No," I argued. "They all can do it except me." I swiped a tear that escaped from the corner of my eye. "I'm not going back there, no matter what."

main event

Grandpa looked at me kindly. "Not so fast," he said gently. "Would you take a lesson with your old Grandpa?"

"You dive?" I asked.

"I used to compete, back in the day," he said with a wink.

dialogue

(continued)

“I don’t know...” I began.

“Saturday, you and me,” Grandpa said. “I’ll take you to my buddy’s pool. Nobody watching. I promise you’ll come out of there a diver!” He dropped me off in front of the house. “See you Saturday at 10:00 sharp!” he yelled. I managed a wave and slunk into the house. The last thing I wanted was to disappoint Grandpa.

thought

Friday night I thought about calling Grandpa and telling him I had a cold. But I couldn’t bring myself to do it. So, Saturday morning came, and at 9:55 I heard the beep of the horn outside. My stomach felt queasy and my knees like rubber as I climbed into the car. “Have a donut,” Grandpa said, throwing me a bag. I groaned and Grandpa eyed me with narrowed eyes. “You’ve got yourself in quite a state,” he said. “Gavin,” he said, “it’s all up here...” He tapped his finger on the side of his head. “Courage is a state of mind,” he said. “It’s all about how you think.”

feelings

I rolled my eyes and stared straight ahead. In no time we were at his friend’s pool. It wasn’t huge, but it must have been deep. There, at one end, was the highest diving board I’d ever seen, a huge ladder leading to the platform. Surprisingly, we didn’t head for the diving board. We went to the edge of the pool. Grandpa was wearing his funny golf hat and a pair of baggy plaid swim trunks. “Now,” he said, “Show me your form.”

description

“I can dive in from the side,” I said. “That’s not the problem!”

“Shut it and show me your form,” Grandpa barked. I shrugged and stood, poised, hands overhead, chin tucked, knees bent. “Now, when I say ‘dive’ push off like a spring! Focus on aiming with your hands and let them lead the way. ‘Now DIVE!’”

I cut through the water like a knife, surfaced and shook the water from my hair.

action

“Great job!” Grandpa yelled, applauding. “Now, ten more times – except for this. Use your imagination. Imagine you’re climbing the ladder, walking to the edge of the board. Pause, let your toes grasp the edge, stare straight down into the water. And DIVE!”

dialogue

main event continued

I tried it. Pretending to climb the ladder I lifted my right, then left leg. I walked to the edge of the pool, imagining I was on the narrow diving board. Clinging to the edge of the imaginary board with my toes, I stared into the water. "You're sixteen feet up," Grandpa called. "Same water down below!" I played along. When he yelled "DIVE" I did it again. And again. Each time I allowed myself to get more into the fantasy. Pretty soon I started to believe it.

main event continued

action

dialogue

The next swim practice Grandpa came to watch. Before I headed into the locker room he tousled my hair and said, "Remember...courage is all about how you think!" He tapped the side of his head and nodded.

When it was my turn I went through all the familiar motions, remembering what it felt like from the edge of the pool. It all felt familiar. "Focus!" I said to myself. "It's just water. Same as always."

conclusion

I climbed the ladder, walked to the edge just like I had at the pool. "DIVE!" the coach yelled. And I did! All it took was an instant. SPLASH! A perfect dive!

Everyone cheered. I heard Grandpa yell, "That's my boy!"

As I climbed out my coach said, "Good form Gavin!" But I knew my success wasn't about form. I waved to Grandpa and climbed the ladder for another high dive.

defining action

Possible Theme: Practice makes perfect  
Perseverance pays off  
Courage to try something new

extended ending

**SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK:**

This story is about Gavin.

The problem/adventure/experience was that Gavin was afraid of the high dive and chickened out when it was his turn.

The problem was solved, adventure/experience concluded when he's Grandpa practiced diving with him and he overcame his fear.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

### LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK: TAKING THE PLUNGE

You've read the story Taking the Plunge. What techniques does the author use to create a compelling beginning? What do you learn about the main character's motivation and conflict? Provide evidence from the text.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Is this a narrative or expository assignment?

Your teacher will walk you through the following STEPS:

1. Read, annotate, analyze, and summarize the story.
2. Fill in the following:
  - Who is the main **point of view character**? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What is the **setting**? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What is the main character's **motivation**? (What does she/he **want**?) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - What is the **conflict**? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Fill in the summarizing framework that outlines the **plot**.

*This story is about* \_\_\_\_\_ .

*The problem/adventure experience* \_\_\_\_\_ .

*The problem was solved, experience or adventure concluded when* \_\_\_\_\_ .

- What is the **theme**? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Consider the questions in the assignment, below:

What techniques does the author use to create a compelling beginning?

What do you learn about the main character's motivation and conflict?

Repeat the underlined part of the question in your response. This makes a strong first sentence!
  4. Your teacher will MODEL this process with you. You may use the sentence starters to help you cite examples in the source text.

**Sentence Starters for Literary Analysis:**

- The technique(s) the author used\_\_\_\_\_.
- The author also used\_\_\_\_\_.
- This compelling beginning included\_\_\_\_\_.
- To begin, the author used\_\_\_\_\_.
- The reader discovers that\_\_\_\_\_.
- We see that\_\_\_\_\_. The author reveals\_\_\_\_\_.
- (Character's name) was motivated by\_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ contributed to the story conflict.
- The conflict was that\_\_\_\_\_.
- In this story\_\_\_\_\_.
- The reader understands this when\_\_\_\_\_.
- As the story unfolds we learn that\_\_\_\_\_.
- The plot centers around\_\_\_\_\_.
- In the story, evidence suggests that\_\_\_\_\_.
- It isn't long before we discover\_\_\_\_\_.
- Through the text we learn that\_\_\_\_\_.
- Clearly, the theme was \_\_\_\_\_.
- In paragraph \_\_\_\_\_ we see that \_\_\_\_\_.
- We know this because \_\_\_\_\_.
- We see this when\_\_\_\_\_.

In the story Taking the Plunge the author created a compelling beginning using two techniques. To begin the author used action. She writes: "I stepped up on the diving board, dripping wet and shivering." The author also uses dialogue when the coach calls, "Remember what you learned Gavin! Give it a try!" Then we see Gavin on the diving board getting ready to take the plunge. That's action again. Both techniques help get the story rolling and bring the story to life.

In the story we see Gavin's motivation and conflict. He really wanted to dive from the diving board, but he was afraid. The reader understands this when Gavin shivers, his heart races, and he feels dizzy as he prepares to dive. He must have felt embarrassed when, in paragraph 3, the other kids called him a "chicken." So, even though Gavin wanted to dive, the conflict was that he was too afraid.

**\* NOTE:** In this sample, we don't see an introduction or conclusion paragraph. As the year unfolds, students will be guided into a more complete response, including introduction and conclusion.

# Lesson 5: Narrative Extension Task

## Objective:

Students apply their knowledge of techniques for creating entertaining beginnings to modify a source text, thus demonstrating competence with the skill.

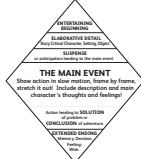
## Procedure:

1. If they haven't already, have students read, analyze and annotate Taking the Plunge, pp. 128-130, according to SRP 6, pointing out the way the story follows the "shape" of the Narrative Writing Diamond.

Student Reference Page

**Annotation and Analysis Process for Narrative Stories**

1. Label the **title** – what *genre* does the title hint at?
2. Circle the **entertaining beginning**, identify, label the technique.
3. Identify the **purpose of the story action** and main character's **motivation**.
4. Find **elaborative detail** describing the **setting** – mark and label this.
5. Underline and label suspense, **story tension, conflict**.
6. Bracket the **main event**.
7. Underline and label the **conclusion/solution** or conclusion of adventure.
8. Circle the **extended story ending** and label each technique.
9. Identify the **theme**. Have students highlight the parts of the story that indicate theme.
10. Fill in **summarizing framework**. Allow students to prompt you.  
This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem/experience was \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem ended/concluded when \_\_\_\_\_.



The diagram is a diamond shape with four points. At the top point is 'ENTERTAINING BEGINNING'. At the bottom point is 'EXTENDED ENDING'. At the left point is 'ELABORATIVE DETAIL'. At the right point is 'THE MAIN EVENT'. Inside the diamond, there is a box labeled 'THE MAIN EVENT' with instructions: 'Show action in this section. Name the first, middle and last. Include description and main character's thoughts and feelings!'. Below the diamond is the text '©2018 Empowering Writers, LLC'.

SRP 6

Discuss the literary elements in the text, drawing verbal responses from the class, and/or chart them. Have students refer to SRP 13. **OPTIONAL:** Color code evidence from the text to identify *character, setting, motivation, and conflict*.

Student Reference Page

**Literary Analysis Questions**

Locate evidence from text to identify **character, setting, motivation, and conflict**. (Optional: Color Code)

- Who is the main **point of view character**? \_\_\_\_\_ (red)
- What is the **setting**? \_\_\_\_\_ (green)
- What is the main character's **motivation**? What does she/he **want**? \_\_\_\_\_ (blue)
- What is the **conflict**? \_\_\_\_\_ (orange)
- What is the **plot**:  

This story is about _____ .
The problem/adventure/experience was _____ .
The problem was solved, experience or adventure concluded when _____ .
- What is the **theme**? \_\_\_\_\_ (purple)

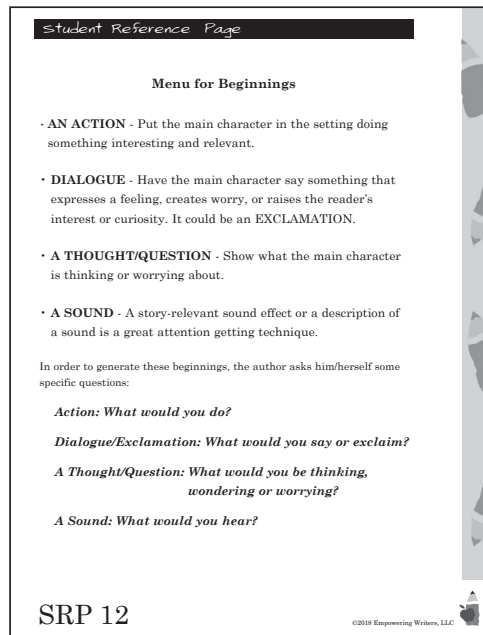
SRP 13

## Lesson 5: Narrative Extension Task

2. Distribute copies of Narrative Extension Task: Taking the Plunge, p. 140, read and discuss the Narrative Extension Task with the class:

**You've read the story Taking the Plunge in which Gavin wanted to dive, but his fear held him back. Imagine Gavin a month or two later getting ready to dive in a competition. Write an entertaining beginning for this new story that clearly shows Gavin's feelings about this new challenge.**

3. Discuss with students how Gavin changed from the beginning of the story to the end. How does this impact the new beginning?
4. Review the techniques for entertaining beginnings (p. 102). Have the class help you create a list on the board. (action, exclamation/dialogue, thoughts/questions, sound) Ask what productive questions the writer must ask to generate these techniques and list these as well. (See p. 102, for menu of questions and have students refer to SRP 12)



5. **MODEL** rewriting this beginning using one of the techniques, articulating the thought process of the author.

**Ex.** *Gavin moved slowly and deliberately up the ladder and took his place on the diving board. He stood up straight, his chin held high. He raised his arms, tucked his chin and prepared for his dive. You can do this, he said to himself as his toes gripped the edge of the board.* (action, thought, feeling)

Remind students that their rewritten beginning only needs to be a couple of sentences. Then, move to **GUIDED PRACTICE** and circulate as students rewrite this beginning.

6. Close the lesson by pointing out to students that there are many entertaining ways to begin a story. Ask them once again to list the techniques and corresponding productive questions.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**NARRATIVE EXTENSION TASK: TAKING THE PLUNGE**

You've read the story Taking the Plunge in which Gavin wanted to dive, but his fear held him back. Imagine Gavin a month or two later getting ready to dive in a competition. Write an entertaining beginning for this new story that clearly shows Gavin's feelings about this new challenge.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Based on Gavin's experience in Taking the Plunge, how do you think his feelings about diving had changed? How differently would he feel and behave at the competition?

**REMEMBER:** Here are the techniques you might use. Then, use the productive questions to help generate your beginning. Use one or more of these techniques in your entertaining beginning.

**Action** - Ask: *what would Gavin do?*

**Dialogue/Exclamation** - Ask: *what might Gavin say or exclaim?*

**A thought or question** - Ask: *what would Gavin wonder or worry?*

**A sound** - Ask: *what might Gavin hear?*

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# Lesson 1: Story Critical Characters, Setting, Objects

## Objective:

Students recognize and identify story critical characters, settings, and objects and understand that authors freeze the story action in order to describe these elements.

## Procedure:

1. Photocopy and distribute student activity sheet Story Critical Characters, Setting, Objects, p. 145, and project. Provide students with red, blue, and green markers.
2. Explain that the class will be reading a number of story plans. Point out that, in each plan, there are certain characters, settings, and objects that are in some way extraordinary, interesting, or thought provoking. These are the things that an author would take the time to describe.
3. Read through the first example together. Ask them to point out the story critical *character*. (I) Underline this in red. Approach the setting (amusement park) and object (roller coaster) in similar fashion, as directed. Discuss each.

## CREATIVE CONNECTIONS:

- Have students use the following template to create interesting story plans (or summaries) of their own which feature story critical characters, settings, and objects:

This story is about _____ .		
<i>character and setting</i>		
The problem was that _____		
<i>main event</i>		
The problem was solved/adventure concluded when _____ .		
_____	_____	_____
<i>character</i>	<i>setting</i>	<i>object</i>

- For more activities of this kind, go to section 7 of this book and use narrative prompts in similar fashion.

**Turn and Talk:** Discuss with a partner why the author “freezes” the story action for purposes of elaboration.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## STORY CRITICAL CHARACTERS, SETTINGS, OBJECTS

In every story there are certain people, places and things that are especially important. These are called **story critical characters, settings and objects**. Authors highlight these story critical characters, settings and objects by stopping and taking time to **describe** them. Read each story plan below. Think about the characters, settings and objects that would be most interesting to the reader.

**Underline story critical characters in RED, settings in BLUE, and objects in GREEN.**

1. I head to an amusement park for the first time and ride the biggest roller coaster.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. On a beautiful spring day, I take a bike ride through the woods. I am surprised when I see a bear on the trail.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. This is a story about the time my family rode the rapids on a raft down the river.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. I've wanted a new puppy for the longest time and finally there is a pet adoption day in my town where I get to choose my new puppy.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. A cardinal is building a nest right on my windowsill.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Jesse unloads her beach bag and surf board from the car and heads towards the crashing waves.

\_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 2: Word Referents

### Objective:

Students learn that there are numerous ways to refer to a story critical character, setting or object without directly naming them. Instead they can use pronouns (he, she, it, his, her, its) or a variety of combinations of adjectives and synonymous nouns, word referents..

### Procedure:

1. Project the student page.  
or....
2. Chart the example given.
3. Encourage students with some directed questioning to help generate a list of synonymous nouns or word referents:

**Ex. Shark** - In order to generate a number of nouns, say: “A shark is a kind of a...Sharks swim where \_\_\_\_\_, on the back of a shark is a ...” etc.

4. Explain how word referents such as those generated and those given as examples are used in place of a story critical character or object. Discuss that each word referent is made up of an adjective (describing words) and a noun. Both are essential when replacing a character, object or setting.
5. As a class, discuss and chart the other examples provided.

### Here are some examples of word referents for each character setting, character, or object:

- p. 232 Ocean: vast blue expanse, salt-water home, briny deep  
Boat: sailing vessel, marine vehicle, motor-driven cruiser, ocean-going vessel
- p. 233 Winter: cold season, snowy wonderland, barren expanse  
Sled: snow rocket, hill cruiser, wooden toboggan  
Snowman: winter person, frosty being, icy individual
- p. 234 Wildfire in the Woods: blazing forest, heated woodland, burning hillsides  
Firefighter: fearless hero, courageous fighter, blaze destroyer  
Fire Truck: red vehicle, blaze cruiser, hose transporter
- p. 235 Baseball Stadium: diamond-shaped field, ball park, field of dreams  
Pitcher: flame thrower, lefty specialist, ballgame closer  
Baseball Bat: wooden stick, homerun maker, batter’s best friend

**Turn and Talk:** Discuss with your partner why the use of word referents builds suspense in a story.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**WORD REFERENTS (1)**

Imagine that the author wants to build suspense before revealing a story critical element. One way to do this is by using word referents instead of immediately naming the setting, character or object. Using word referents makes the reader wonder exactly what kind of setting, character or object will be revealed. See how many different ways you can refer to each story critical setting or object.

**Ex. Story critical character (animal): Shark**

Adjective

large  
swimming  
gray  
sharp-toothed  
sea  
finned

Noun

fish  
menace  
beast  
giant  
predator  
hunter

Now, it's your turn:

Story critical setting: **Ocean**

Adjective

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Noun

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Story critical object: **Boat**

Adjective

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Noun

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## BEFORE AND AFTER REVISION ACTIVITY (1) - MAIN EVENT

Read this summary of a **main event**. It rushes through the most important part of the story way too quickly! It is BORING!

**I got lost in a corn maze.**

**Revise** this by writing a fully elaborated **main event** with a balance of action, description, dialogue, thoughts and feelings - and just for fun, a sound effect.

Be sure to:

- Show slow motion action. Ask: What did I do?  
S-T-R-E-T-C-H I-T O-U-T!
- Include an exclamation. Ask: What did I exclaim?
- Show how the main character is feeling.  
Ask: How did I feel?
- Include a description of the setting.  
Ask: What did I see, hear, feel, smell?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**ANALYZE THIS ENDING! (1)**

Read this story ending.

- Underline the main character’s memories of the main event in BLUE.
- Underline the main character’s feelings about the main event in RED.
- Underline a decision that the main character made in BLACK.
- Underline the main character’s hope or wish in GREEN.

**Tim leaned back against the building and heaved a sigh of relief. It had been close, that’s for sure. When he shut his eyes he could still see the huge, slobbering dog snarling and snapping at him. He knew that if he ever wanted to explore the junkyard again, he’d check first to see if the dog was there. And he’d come armed with some dog biscuits or a very big bone!**

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

What do you think this story was about? Use this ending to summarize what probably took place in the story!

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# Lesson 1: Analyzing Prompts for Givens & Variables

## Objective:

Reading prompts in order to identify given and variable elements necessary for successful responses.

## Procedure:

1. Project the example prompt below for the class or choose one of the prompts pp. 362-369.

*Imagine that one winter day you took a ride in a horse drawn sleigh. Write a story about your sleigh ride experience, including something beautiful that you saw.*

2. Explain to the class that at some future point they will be presented with a prompt such as this as a means of giving them an opportunity to showcase the specific writing skills they have learned. Discuss the testing process in a matter-of-fact way, explain that everyone will respond to the same prompt, that there are several story elements provided, (givens) and several decisions that each individual author would need to make (variables). It is helpful to stress that this is an opportunity for them to have a positive writing experience, rather than a pressure situation in which they need to compete.
3. Read the prompt together. Ask - does it sound as though it might be a realistic personal experience, (realistic fiction) or an imaginative or fantasy story? In this case, the prompt is realistic, fiction or something that could actually happen.
4. Discuss the GIVEN elements - those included in the prompt itself that need to be included in the response. For example, GIVEN elements might include a particular setting, a particular character, or object, and/or an activity or experience of some kind. Pick these out and discuss the fact that everyone's response should include the GIVEN elements.

GIVENS: character - first person "I"

setting - winter

object - horse drawn sleigh

Discuss the VARIABLE elements. These include the obvious decisions the author needs to make. The variables are the elements that will set each author's story apart.



## Lesson 1: Analyzing Prompts for Givens & Variables

In this case:

VARIABLES: particular beautiful sight

5. Point out that their main event must include the variable.
6. Chart the following PREWRITING FRAMEWORK, which is essentially a summarizing framework:

This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_.  
*character - GIVEN*

The adventure, problem, or experience is that \_\_\_\_\_.  
*main event - GIVEN and VARIABLE*

The adventure concluded/problem solved when \_\_\_\_\_.  
*VARIABLE*

7. MODEL what this framework might look like, brainstorming possible variables.
8. Additionally, have the class focus on one of the prewriting plans and based on the plan, identify at least two elements (character, setting, or object) that demand a vivid elaborative segment.  
**Ex.** *the winter landscape/setting and the horses or sleigh.*  
This reminds them to focus on story critical elements to which they must apply elaboration during the drafting process.
9. Explain that this analysis is the process they would use to read a prompt and plan for their response. Also ask the class to name and list all of the writing skills they've been taught in your class. List these, and explain that you would be looking for these skills in their responses.
10. For this objective, there is no reason to actually have the students write to the prompt. You might even go through this procedure with numerous prompts, simply for the purpose of analyzing and planning. (prewriting)