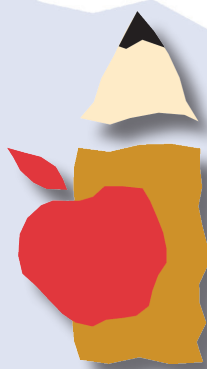Grade 5

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, gleaning 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 Contructed Response, Extended Constructed Response and Literary Analysis).

The activities provided here were developed for grade 5, 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.

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 5. 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 ⓡ activities are interspersed throughout this Guide. To find specific skills, see the Response to Text Index, pp. 329-330.
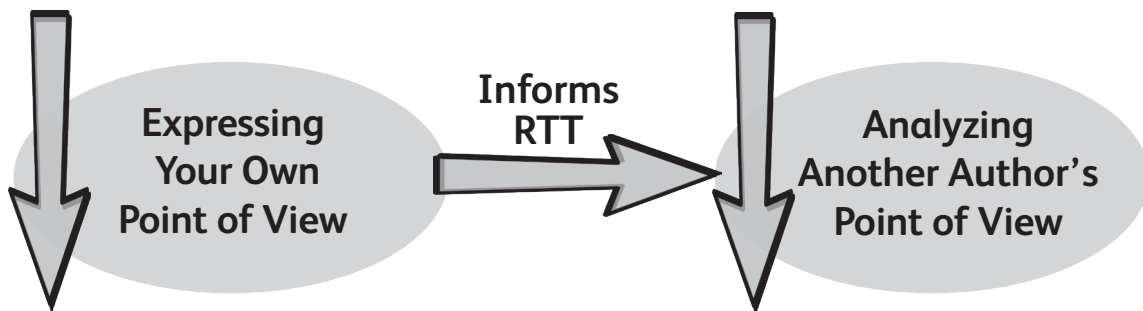
(continued)

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

Expressing Your Own Point of View

Informs RTT

Analyzing Another Author's Point of View

- Crafting original work
- Nurturing tomorrow's authors
- Understanding Informational writing
- Increasing deep comprehension
- Creative, stylistic, critical thinking

- Writing to express reading
- Simulating research
- Academic writing
- Defending conclusions
- Pragmatic, deductive, inductive reasoning

(continued)

At a glance...
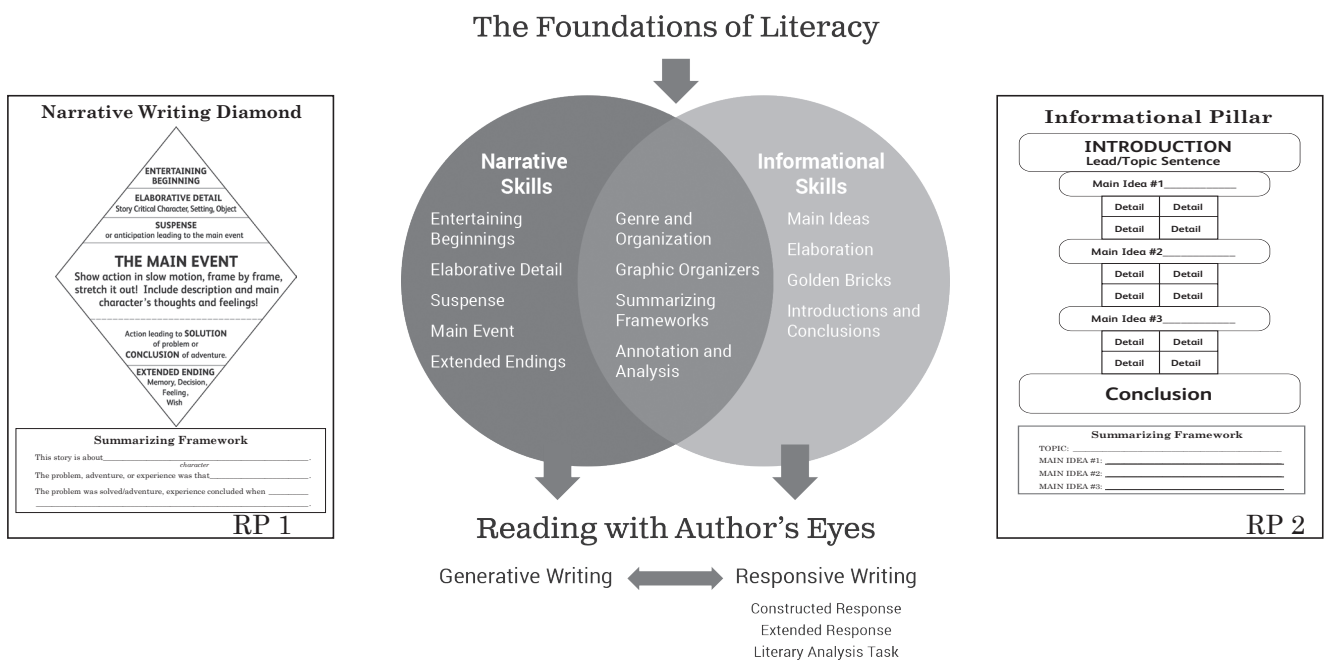
Let's Compare Informational, Opinion, and Response to Text

	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

Literacy Launch

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.
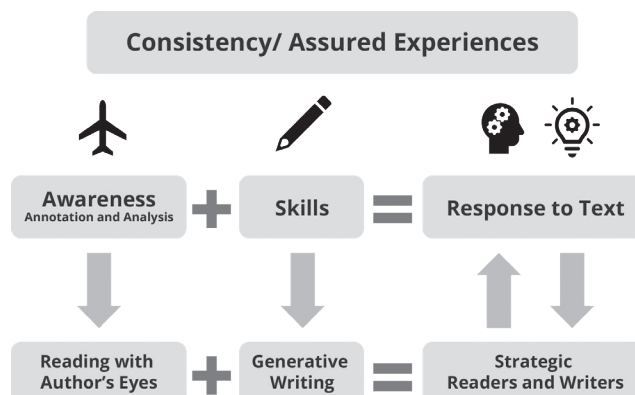
The Venn Diagram illustrates the Literacy Launch and the powerful writing-reading connection. The core of the diagram outlines the skills inherent in learning to recognize genre, organization, annotation and analysis, and the salient features of the various genres. By understanding how text is constructed, 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.

The Foundations of Literacy

Narrative Writing Diamond

- ENTERTAINING BEGINNING
- ELABORATIVE DETAIL — Story Critical Character, Setting, Object
- SUSPENSE — or anticipation leading to the main event
- THE MAIN EVENT — Show action in slow motion, frame by frame, stretch it out! Include description and main character's thoughts and feelings!
- Action leading to SOLUTION of problem or CONCLUSION of adventure.
- EXTENDED ENDING — Memory, Decision, Feeling, Wish

Summarizing Framework
This story is about _____ character
The problem, adventure, or experience was that _____
The problem was solved/adventure, experience concluded when _____

RP 1

Narrative Skills
- Entertaining Beginnings
- Elaborative Detail
- Suspense
- Main Event
- Extended Endings

(center overlap)
- Genre and Organization
- Graphic Organizers
- Summarizing Frameworks
- Annotation and Analysis

Informational Skills
- Main Ideas
- Elaboration
- Golden Bricks
- Introductions and Conclusions

Reading with Author's Eyes

Generative Writing ⟷ Responsive Writing

Constructed Response
Extended Response
Literary Analysis Task

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

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.

Consistency/ Assured Experiences

Awareness Annotation and Analysis	**+**	Skills	**=**	Response to Text

Reading with Author's Eyes	**+**	Generative Writing	**=**	Strategic Readers and Writers

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.

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

   <u>**Informational**</u>: Purpose – to give information (focus on a TOPIC)

   <u>**Opinion**</u>: Purpose – to share a personal opinion (focus on a point of view)

   <u>**Response to Text**</u>: 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 <u>Narrative, Informational, or Opinion?</u>, SP 1.

Student Page

Name: _____

NARRATIVE, INFORMATIONAL, OR OPINION?

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

1. Geologists classify rocks three ways. *Igneous rocks* come from deep within the earth and are formed from cooled magma. *Sedimentary rocks* are created when layers of sediment, plant and animal matter and rock fragments are pressed together. Finally, *metamorphic rocks* are produced when igneous or sedimentary rocks are exposed to intense heat or pressure.

       Narrative   Informational   Opinion

2. It was Monday morning and I was late for school. As I ran to catch the bus, I saw the glimmer of two sparkling green eyes peering out at me from within the overgrown bushes that circled our lawn. All day long, I kept remembering that set of playful, friendly eyes and I guessed that they belonged to a cat. I certainly hoped so; I'd been wanting a cat for a long time and I hoped that one had found me.

       Narrative   Informational   Opinion

3. Don't you agree that fall is the best of the four seasons? The season starts with the excitement of a new school year in September. In October, everybody loves dressing up like a witch or ghoul and celebrating a spooky Halloween. Veteran's or Remembrance Day falls in November and is usually celebrated with parades and moving tributes to war veterans. Of course, there are great holidays in the winter, spring and summer also, but the festivities of autumn will always be my favorites.

       Narrative   Informational   Opinion

SP 1

---

3. Project and read each example together. 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. Point out the characteristics of each genre.

5. Distribute Informational, Opinion, or Response to Text, SP 2, and proceed similarly.

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. Be ready to explain how you determined the genre of each.

1. Becoming a pianist involves many skills. You must learn to read music and develop an ear so that you can recognize the way the notes should sound. Just as an athlete needs muscle strength and dexterity, a pianist must strengthen her or his fingers and learn to move them independently across the keys. This is accomplished by practicing exercises and scales every day. It's also important to listen to music in a variety of styles – blues, jazz, classical, and rock so that you'll become skillful in addressing these styles in your own playing.

   Informational   Opinion   Response to Text

2. In the text titled The Civil Rights Movement we learn about the struggles in the United States during the 1950's and 60's that attempted to end racial discrimination. The author describes the many forms of prejudice, inequality, and segregation that existed and, in some ways, continue to exist even today. In paragraph two we learn about the role of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his efforts to bring about change through peaceful protest, community organizing, and non-violent agitation. The author goes on to describe the violent responses to these efforts that included bombings, lynchings, and police brutality. We learn that the Civil Rights Act was signed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964. It was designed to make discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, or national origin illegal. The article ends by outlining the many strides we've made as a nation, as well as the many challenges we continue to face in defending the civil rights of all our citizens.

   Informational   Opinion   Response to Text

3. In our town there is talk of changing the school schedule from a ten to twelve month calendar. Proponents believe that year-round school would provide more consistency and less "learning drop off" during the summer break. But, I disagree. Based on my experience, I know that by the time May and June roll around what I need most is some down time to relax, enjoy the out-of-doors, and to have some fun. There are many ways to learn, and not all of them are in the classroom! I think that kids need an extended break from all of the structured pressure we experience all year. I know year round schooling offers a greater number of shorter breaks, but from my perspective, there's nothing like two months of extended freedom to get my creative juices flowing!

   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 Giant's Causeway and that they'll be learning some strategies for how to read more effectively.

2. Distribute and project SP 8-9. To build context and background begin by showing the students numerous online images of a variety of the Giant's Causeway (or, for the following lesson, Ice Cubes, SP 10-11) 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.

3. Explain that it's important to look for certain cues that can provide valuable information to aid the reader's understanding. Project Common Informational Text Features, RP 5, and discuss. Direct their attention to the text and ask them to annotate it together, labeling the important parts. Use the Strategic Reading Guidelines, pp. 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.

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

    Chart:

    > **TOPIC:** Giant's Causeway
    >
    > **MAIN IDEA #1:** Unusual Landform
    >
    > **MAIN IDEA #2:** Geology of the Region
    >
    > **MAIN IDEA #3:** Legend of Finn MacCool

    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. (You'll follow the same process for the text titled Ice Cubes - Before the Age of Freezers.)

(**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 *photographs, illustration, and captions*. Ask students why these are important.

10. Model how to use the information on the summarizing framework to write an extended summary using the 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

This text **provides information about** __*The Giant's Causeway*__. We'll **discover** ___ *the unusual land forms* ___, **learn about** the geology of the region, and **become familiar** with __*the legend of Finn MacCool.*__.

Or…

This informative piece **explores** __ice cubes before the age of freezers__. The author **delves into** __*the use of ice in the olden days*__, and **uncovers** __*how harvesting ice became a business*__.

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 Snow Days, each with a different purpose.

2. Review <u>The Informational Pillar</u>, as well as <u>The Opinion Pillar</u>. Project and read <u>Safety First: The Necessity of Snow Days</u>, SP 29-30, and <u>Save Me from Snow Days!</u>, SP 32-33. **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: _____

SAFETY FIRST: THE NECESSITY OF SNOW DAYS

While most students revel in a snow day, few know how difficult the decision to close schools because of bad weather can be. Schools face criticism if they close too readily due to bad weather or if they choose to remain open during a storm. When making this tricky decision, most schools consider the amount of snow, the timing of the storm, and any accompanying weather conditions.

Obviously, the amount of snowfall is an important consideration. After all, the heavier the snowfall, the longer it takes to clear the roads. As a general rule, most schools consider closing when there is more than three inches of snow on the ground. They are more likely to close school when the snow is heavy and wet because of the increased chance of power outages. Just imagine how parents would worry if their children were stranded at school without heat or lights!

The timing of the storm always needs to be taken into account. School officials must consider when the snow fell or when it is predicted to begin and end. If snow falls early in the morning, it is likely that schools will be closed because the roads will not be cleared in time for buses. If a substantial snowstorm is predicted to begin in the afternoon, a snow day may be called because travel conditions are likely to be treacherous by the close of school. However, the School Superintendents Association advises that snow days never be called just on the basis of a single weather forecast. Instead, it suggests that superintendents "rely on multiple sources of information including subscription weather alert systems, local radio and television meteorologists and their own judgment."

SP 29

Student Page

Finally, school closings are more likely when icy conditions, extreme cold or strong winds accompany the snowstorm. Strong winds may cause dangerous snow drifts as well as fallen tree branches in the roadways. Icy conditions cause cars to skid and people to sustain falls. On very cold mornings, school buses need time to warm up, so they are likely to run behind schedule. Children could get frost-bite while waiting for the school bus, and sadly some children just don't have the winter clothing they need to stay warm when the temperature drops dramatically.

While parents sometimes have to miss work when schools call a snow day, it is wise to stay home when winter weather becomes treacherous and unpredictable. A snow day is not just a happy surprise for students, but a genuine necessity, especially when a significant amount of snow falls, when the storm hits at an inconvenient time and when it is accompanied by other dangerous conditions.

SP 30

Student Page

Name: _____

SAVE ME FROM SNOW DAYS!

Imagine a gray winter day. Your fingers and toes tingle with the cold, your knees and elbows are sore and possibly bleeding (you can't tell for sure since you are wearing two sweaters and ski pants) because you slipped on ice-covered pavement. The hours roll by slowly since you are bored beyond belief. You can't enjoy your favorite winter sports, you could have a power outage at any minute and snow days can cut into your summer vacation.

On snow days travel is difficult making it challenging to get to your favorite winter sport. After all, how many of us live within walking distance of a skating pond, sledding hill or ski mountain? You can be sure nobody is going to give you a ride to any of these places because driving in the slushy mess of the road is dangerous. In my opinion, this is extremely frustrating because the freshly fallen snow usually makes conditions for skiing, snowboarding and sledding absolutely perfect.

Another problem with snow days is that you have to worry about power outages. This is a serious concern because you are stuck at home with nothing to do except watch dull daytime television and play computer games until your wrist aches. You won't even be able to rely on these simple diversions if the raging storm knocks out the electricity at your house. Picture yourself stuck in a cold, dark house with absolutely nothing to do. What could be worse?

SP 32

Student Page

In the darkest hours of this never-ending day, you remember that sometimes snow days have to be deducted from your summer vacation. So, you've traded in a sunny summer day that you could have spent fishing, swimming, bike riding and canoeing for this boring snow day. Instead of cutting days off summer vacation, some schools cancel their February vacations, shorten spring break or hold classes on Saturdays to make up for snow days. From my point of view, this makes snow days something to avoid at all cost.

Who needs snow days? I believe they should be outlawed. After all, studded snow tires and four-wheel drive vehicles are available and they make travel possible through the worst of winter weather. On these boring days, we can't enjoy winter sports and we run the risk of a power outage. The final insult is that these long, dreary days may cost us some of the fair-weather fun we look forward to all year long.

SP 33

3. Annotate and analyze the text as students annotate their papers, identifying and labeling all key elements by following your lead.

   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.

   Ex. If the main idea sentence is: *Obviously, the amount of snowfall is an important consideration...* ask the students for a "blurb" that summarizes what the entire paragraph is about (*amount of snowfall*) and have them mark that in the margin. Then, as you read each subsequent detail **Ex**. *After all, the heavier the snowfall, the longer it takes to clear the roads...* ask the class if that detail supports the main idea. (yes) It's important to emphasize this relationship between main ideas and details so that they'll transfer this critical questioning to their own writing.

   Finally, answer the accompanying questions, SP 31 and SP 34. Repeat the process for the partner piece, pointing out the differences in genre and purpose.

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 11

Objective

Students begin to consider questions that will lead them to think inferentially and evaluatively about the stories they read, citing examples from the text and drawing parallels from their own personal experience. They will respond verbally and in writing.

**Important: *Before beginning, select a story they've read, annotated, and analyzed earlier that will serve as the source text for this lesson. Be sure students have their copies handy for reference.*

Procedure

1. Discuss with students the fact that in the stories they read authors don't usually communicate everything they want to say in a straightforward way. Authors leave some of the work up to the reader! They *infer* or *imply* aspects of the story by showing rather than telling. It's a little bit like giving the reader hints that must be figured out and connected.

2. Begin a conversation about the way that people (and characters) express the way they are feeling. Ask them the following: Can you tell the way a person may be feeling or reacting if they didn't say a word? How might you know? Discuss, demonstrate, and have children pantomime a variety of feelings using both facial expressions and body language.

*NOTE: See Teacher Background for more about "What Feelings Look Like", p. 91.

3. Tell students that strong readers notice the body language and facial expressions of the characters they read about and these clues provide valuable information about these characters. Authors include these kinds of powerful details to bring the story to life!

4. Distribute <u>Thinking About Literature</u>, RP 13. **Read through the questions together. Identify which questions are inferential and which are evaluative.** This will set a purpose for close, inferential reading. It will also inspire students to draw comparisons to their own personal experiences. (evaluative reasoning)

SP 53

RP 13

5. Have students silently reread the selected story. Discuss each question verbally, asking students to cite evidence from the text by highlighting or underlining the sentences (or, in the evaluative questions from their own lives) to back their responses. Finally, MODEL how to apply the sentence starters in order to write their responses. When you're confident students know how to proceed, let them continue with GUIDED PRACTICE.

6. On another day, have students combine their sentences in paragraph form. Close the lesson by having students discuss the ways that authors hint at the way characters feel without simply stating it.

NOTE: This is an **ANYTIME and ALWAYS** lesson - use this technique often when students read to ensure that they know how to think inferentially and evaluatively and know how to respond to these types of questions in writing. This must be done often in order for students to feel comfortable with it.

LESSON 10

Objective

Students understand the value of rich language and varied sentence structure and are able to bring both to their main idea/reason sentences.

Teacher Background

Along with understanding the concept of BROAD YET DISTINCT, effective main idea/reason sentences need interesting word choices and good sentence variety. As developing writers try to generate their main idea/reason "blurbs" into sentences, they often resort to redundant, formulaic sentence structure. Read these three main idea sentences for an informational piece that provide information about geysers.

TOPIC: Geysers

MAIN IDEA #1: First, I will tell you about how geysers are formed.

MAIN IDEA #2: Next, I will tell you two types of geysers.

MAIN IDEA #3: Finally, I will tell you where you can see a geyser.

You can't help but notice the redundant "broken record" approach in each sentence. First…Next…Finally… Besides being redundant, the sentences are boring. Read the next group of sentences that communicate the same main ideas in a much more interesting fashion.

TOPIC: Geysers

MAIN IDEA #1: What would cause hot water and steam to burst into the air from deep within the earth?

MAIN IDEA #2: Do you realize there are two types of geysers?

MAIN IDEA #3: If you'd like to see a geyser there are a few places you'll want to visit.

Students can be empowered to use vivid, interesting words and good sentence variety. One way to accomplish this is to provide them with alternatives to dull, overly general adjectives, as well as a menu of sentence starters that will enable them to vary redundant sentence structure.

A list of possible "main idea/reason sentence starters is found on RP 18. Also, a list of common general adjectives is provided, each with a group of more interesting synonyms, RP 19. We recommend that you provide students with a selection of sentence starters from the list, choosing several that work well in a given situation. (Providing students with the entire list can overwhelm them!) This is an excellent introductory activity to expose students to new vocabulary and sentence structure, and to encourage them to experiment with language they might not otherwise use.

(continued)

MAIN IDEA/REASON SENTENCE STARTERS

Have you ever wondered _____ ?
Do you realize that _____ ?
It is amazing to think about _____ .
Surprisingly, _____ .
Usually, _____ .
By the way, _____ .
Lastly, _____ .
There are many reasons why _____ .
There are many ways in which _____ .
How can _____ ?
There is no doubt that _____ .
Why do _____ ?
Have you ever _____ ?
When do _____ ?
Of course, _____ .
For years, _____ .
Sometimes _____ .
You will find that _____ .
Why are _____ ?
In many ways _____ .
It is true that _____ ?
Where can _____ ?
I agree that _____ .
I would rather _____ .
Just imagine how _____ .

RP 18

THESAURUS OF GENERAL ADJECTIVES

interesting
appealing
fascinating
enthralling
intriguing
curious

nice
charming
delightful
enchanting
captivating
pleasant

pretty (as in a person)
beautiful
attractive
handsome
elegant
lovely
adorable
gorgeous
regal

great
terrific
incredible
fantastic
awesome
grand
magnificent
splendid
marvelous
excellent

big
enormous
gigantic
huge
immense
colossal
giant
massive

fun
enjoyable
entertaining
amusing
delightful
pleasant
satisfying

strange
bewildering
bizarre
curious
extraordinary
mysterious
odd
peculiar
unusual
weird

exciting
exhilarating
thrilling
sensational
electrifying
rousing
stimulating
death-defying
daring

dangerous
harmful
hazardous
perilous
risky
challenging

smart
clever
skillful
bright
intelligent
shrewd
brilliant

beautiful (as in a place)
charming
captivating
lovely
lush
majestic
splendid
breathtaking

scary
frightening
terrifying
alarming
shocking
horrifying
spooky
eerie

small
tiny
petite
little
miniature
microscopic
puny

hot
blazing
burning
flaming
scalding
scorching

cold
arctic
chilly
cool
freezing
frigid

difficult
hard
challenging
complex
demanding
perplexing
troublesome

easy
effortless
simple
uncomplicated
manageable
comfortable
a cinch

special
unique
exceptional
distinctive
extraordinary
meaningful

(**animal** – although a noun, students often benefit by having word referents to use: creature, beast, monster, critter, feathered/furry/four-legged friend, varmint, carnivore, herbivore, predator, hunter.)

RP 19

Procedure

1. Chart the "Geysers" example as shown below. You might want to have this prepared ahead of time.

> **TOPIC: Geysers**
>
> **MAIN IDEA #1**: First, I will tell you about how geysers are formed.
>
> **MAIN IDEA #2**: Next, I will tell you two types of geysers.
>
> **MAIN IDEA #3**: Finally, I will tell you where you can see a geyser.

2. Read the sentences aloud, stressing, through the inflection of your voice, the dull, redundant sentence structure. Ask students what they notice about these sentences. (Hopefully, they'll notice that all begin very similarly.)

3. Explain that in order to be interesting and engaging to the reader, these main idea sentences need to be changed. Next, chart the revisions as shown below. Again, you might want to have this prepared ahead of time.

> **TOPIC: Geysers**
>
> **MAIN IDEA #1**: What would cause hot water and steam to burst into the air from deep within the earth?
>
> **MAIN IDEA #2**: Do you realize there are two types of geysers?
>
> **MAIN IDEA #3**: If you'd like to see a geyser there are a few places you'll want to visit.

4. Read and compare the before and after versions. Discuss and explain that writers need to use many different kinds of sentences, some long, some short, some exclamations, some questions – as well as rich, varied vocabulary.

EXTENSION: For additional practice, refer to the summarizing frameworks above, and MODEL this same process. Simply construct boring, predictable main idea sentences using the first, next, finally structure, and MODEL ways to improve these using the sentence starters, RP 18, and some interesting words from the list on RP 19.

LESSON 4

Objective

Students write sentences using two basic detail-generating questions: <u>What does it "look" like? Why is it important?</u>

Procedure

1. Review the way that detail-generating questions can help writers go beyond "Just the Facts" sentences, and allow them to "show" rather than "tell."

2. Display several online photos of tigers. Chart the following "Just the Facts" sentence as a starting point:

   Tigers have <u>stripes</u>.

   Point out the underlined detail in the sentence (stripes). Look around the room to see if anyone is wearing a striped shirt. Or, find a photo of a zebra, striped curtains, a striped dress, etc. Ask how a tiger's stripes are different and unique. (What does it "look" like?)

   Revise the sentence using some of the details students' contributed:

   Tigers have <u>unique sets of gold, orange, black and white stripes</u>.

   Now, ask <u>Why is it important?</u> See if students can contribute ideas about why stripes are important to tigers. Another way to phrase that might be, "What function do the tigers' stripes serve?" Students might decide that the stripes serve as camouflage and that this helps them sneak up on prey. Write:

   Tigers have unique sets of gold, orange, black and white stripes <u>that help camouflage them in their natural habitat. This helps them move through their surroundings undetected, making them stealthy predators</u>.

3. Point out how this revision corresponds to the detail-generating questions by underlining the <u>What does it "look" like?</u> words (gold, orange, black and white stripes)) in one color and underlining the <u>Why is it important?</u> part (camouflage in natural habitat, move through surroundings undetected, stealthy predators, etc.) in another color.

4. Copy and distribute one of the student activity sheets <u>Writing Sentences with: What does it look like? Why is it important?</u>, SP 98-100. Read through the example, underlining the <u>What does it "look" like?</u> words (spiral-bound notebook with lined paper) and circling the <u>Why is it important</u> phrase for writing down assignments and taking notes in class).

Student Page

Name: _____

WRITING SENTENCES WITH:
WHAT DOES IT "LOOK" LIKE? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT? (1)

Read the detail sentence below. Revise the sentence using the detail-generating questions:
What does it look like? Why is it important?

Ex. *Bring a notebook to school.*
Revision: *Having a spiral-bound notebook with lined paper is a must for writing down assignments and taking notes in class.*

Detail sentence:
  Students need a backpack for school.

Your revision:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SP 98

Student Page

Name: _____

WRITING SENTENCES WITH:
WHAT DOES IT "LOOK" LIKE? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT? (2)

Read the detail sentence below. Revise the sentence using the detail-generating questions:
What does it look like? Why is it important?

Ex. *Raccoons have little front paws.*
Revision: *Raccoons have small front paws with long fingers. These nimble-fingered creatures use their paws to capture, peel, and crack open a wide variety of foods.*

Detail sentence:
  Going to the dentist is important.
Your revision:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Detail sentence:
  Playing a musical instrument is a good thing to do.
Your revision:
_____
_____
_____
_____

SP 99

Student Page

Name: _____

WRITING SENTENCES WITH:
WHAT DOES IT "LOOK" LIKE? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT? (3)

Read the detail sentence below. Revise the sentence using the detail-generating questions:
What does it look like? Why is it important?

Ex. *Wear your boots out in the snow.*
Revision: *When heading out in the snow, pull on a pair of waterproof boots lined with lamb's wool to keep your feet, warm, dry and comfortable.*

Detail sentence:
  A hat is a must during cold weather.
Your revision:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Detail sentence:
  I love to play outside in the snow.
Your revision:
_____
_____
_____

BONUS: Which of these detail sentences belongs in an opinion piece? How do you know? _____

SP 100

(continued)

Reading and Summarizing Texts

LESSON 9

Objective

Students read two related texts, summarize each through the use of the summarizing framework format, then expand this information into a summary paragraph using informative verbs.

Procedure

1. Review how to write a summary paragraph with main ideas and informative verbs. Explain that they'll be taking this a step further by reading a text, annotating that text, filling in the summarizing framework and using that as the basis for a summary paragraph.

2. Photocopy, distribute, and project the text Bessie Coleman - Aviator, pp. SP 112-113. Walk them through the annotation process introduced in the Literacy Launch Section, marking title/topic, underlining main idea sentences, writing a main idea blurb for each body paragraph in the margin, circling the introduction and boxing the conclusion.

Student Page

BESSIE COLEMAN - AVIATOR

The year was 1922, in an era of American history when women were deprived of most of the privileges men enjoyed. It was also a time when African Americans experienced tremendous prejudice, discrimination, and segregation. So, it is remarkable to learn that in this same year, a young African American woman named Bessie Coleman fought against all odds and earned her pilot's license! Bessie, as a girl, had high hopes despite experiencing hardship and poverty. As she grew she struggled to achieve her goal of flying, despite the odds stacked against her. Her career was tragically short, yet impressive, and this amazing dynamo left behind a legacy for other young women to follow in her footsteps.

Bessie's younger years were difficult. She was born in Texas in 1892, the tenth of 13 siblings. Her parents were *sharecroppers*, farming land that belonged to a wealthy landowner in exchange for some of the harvested crops. Her father eventually left the family to return to Oklahoma and her mother and the children survived on their own. Still, this ambitious student managed to complete the eighth grade in a small local school. Throughout this time Bessie saved what little money she had in order to go to college. She had a strong urge to learn and to find a more challenging and exciting life for herself. As she was fond of saying, "I just want to amount to something." This hardworking, frugal girl made it to college, but after a single semester she was forced to quit when her money ran out.

Little did she know that when she set out at age twenty-three for Chicago, that it would lead to a career in aviation! Once there, she became a beautician and a manicurist. Always interested in adventure, she began reading stories of the great World War I pilots. Two of Bessie's brothers had served in the military in France and, knowing how competitive and ambitious she was, teased her about the fact that in France women could learn to fly planes. Bessie tried to find an aviation school in the United States where she could learn to fly, but

SP 112

Student Page

over and over again they refused to admit her. Bessie decided she would save her money and go to France to earn her pilot's license. In 1919 she finally left Chicago for France. Three years later this persistent over-achiever became the first black woman to earn a pilot's license! She returned to the U.S. and performed stunt and exhibition flights and parachuting in air shows across the country. Courageously, she only agreed to fly in performances for audiences that were desegregated. Bessie's larger goal was to start her own flight school for African Americans. She had declared, "I decided blacks should not have to experience the difficulties I had faced, so I decided to open a flying school and teach other black women to fly." She soon began saving for a plane of her own. Her dream was finally being realized!

Bessie Coleman's legacy was cut short by tragedy during the first test flight of her new plane. She and her mechanic took off, there was a malfunction, and the plane hurtled toward the earth and crashed. Bessie was thrown out of the open cockpit and fell several hundred feet to the ground. She was killed immediately. Still, even after her death, Bessie Coleman continued to influence aviation and those interested in pursuing it. A flight school for African Americans was founded in Los Angeles and named after her. Many talented pilots earned their licenses there, thanks to Bessie's dream and determination. Almost fifty years later female pilots in Chicago honored her by naming their aviation club in her memory. And in 1995 the United States Postal Service featured Bessie on a commemorative stamp celebrating her achievements.

There is much to learn from Bessie's early life and ambitions, her struggle to achieve seemingly impossible goals, and the legacy she left behind at her untimely death. Generations of women of all races continue to be bolstered and inspired by the Bessie Coleman story.

SP 113

3. Distribute copies of Reading and Summarizing Texts, SP 114, and, as a class, fill in the summarizing framework. Point out the box of informative verbs and work together on using these to create a summary paragraph.

Student Page

Reading and Summarizing Texts

1. Read the text Bessie Coleman - Aviator.

2. Annotate it, marking in the following: TOPIC, INTRODUCTION, MAIN IDEA BLURBS, CONCLUSION. Then fill in the summarizing framework, below:

TOPIC: _____
MAIN IDEA #1: _____
MAIN IDEA #2: _____
MAIN IDEA #3: _____

3. Finally, write a summarizing paragraph based on this framework on the lines below. Be sure to use informative verbs.

On the back of this paper, do the same thing for the partner text Judith Resnik - Astronaut. Be sure to read, annotate, create a summarizing framework, and then create a summary paragraph using informative verbs.

SP 114

Ex. *In this text the author <u>introduces</u> Bessie Coleman, the first African American woman to earn a pilot's license. After <u>describing</u> her early life and ambitions, the article <u>highlights</u> Bessie's struggle to achieve her goal of flying planes. The reader also <u>learns</u> about Bessie's tragic death and the legacy she left behind.*

Be sure to connect the topic and main idea references to the related information on the summarizing framework and to underline the informative verbs. It is also helpful to point out some of the "citing sentence starters":

In this text the author _____ .

The article _____.

The reader also learns _____ .

Note the way that these, in combination with informative verbs, make the summary effective.

4. On another day, approach the partner piece titled <u>Judith Resnik - Astronaut</u>, SP 115-116, in the same way.

Student Page

Name: _____

JUDITH RESNIK - ASTRONAUT

Not many people can boast having a star, an asteroid, and craters on the moon and planet Venus named after them. But these are among the many honors astronaut Judith Resnik received after her untimely death aboard the space shuttle Challenger. Throughout her early years Resnik was devoted to learning, and as a young adult she excelled at science and math. All of this culminated in her being accepted into the NASA Space Program.

Young Judith came from a family that valued learning. Born in 1949 to Jewish-Russian immigrants, this brilliant child was reading and completing math problems by the time she was in kindergarten. Her father was an optometrist and both parents encouraged their curious, high-performing daughter. Judith was a gifted student, studying Hebrew and piano. She devoted time to practicing and became a talented classical pianist by the time she was in high school. Judith didn't, however, ever express a specific interest in becoming an astronaut. At that time in history such a notion would have seemed like an impossibility.

Judith's exceptional talent in math and science eventually launched her career in high-tech aviation. Her hard work, discipline, and drive helped her to achieve a remarkable score of 800 on the math section of her high school SAT exam. This landed her a spot in Carnegie Tech where she studied electrical engineering. After graduating, this young scientist worked in missile and surface radar design before continuing post-graduate studies in engineering. While studying for her doctoral

SP 115

Student Page

degree Judith worked as a biochemical engineer in the neurophysics lab at the National Institutes of Health. She was a high achiever, striving for excellence in all of her academic and professional pursuits. In the late 1970's Judith's accomplishments in science and math led her to NASA. NASA made an effort to attract more women and minorities into the space program and this appealed to Judith. At the time there were over 8,000 applicants! Being a Jewish-American female, Judith was one of only 6 women to finally be accepted into the program. As a result of her diligence and focus she eventually earned a spot as an astronaut. Judith became the second female American astronaut to launch into space, following in the footsteps of astronaut Sally Ride. Through her disciplined and perfectionist approach to work and study Judith became an expert in operating a specialized mechanical arm designed to move objects outside of the space vehicle. Specialist Resnik's first flight was in 1984 aboard the space shuttle *Discovery*.

Tragically, Judith's next mission was to be her last. She was part of a surprisingly diverse crew, including African and Asian Americans, as well as elementary school teacher Christa McAuliffe, aboard the shuttle Challenger. Just over a minute into the launch the *Challenger* was lost due to a faulty "O" ring designed to prevent hydrogen leaks. Her father, who was always so proud of his gifted daughter's many accomplishments, watched in horror as the shuttle exploded in a fiery burst. The entire crew was killed.

Millions of viewers the world over witnessed the *Challenger* disaster. Ironically, the tragic mission raised awareness about possibilities for women's careers in space. Judith's dedication to life-long learning, her expertise in science and math, and the way she distinguished herself as an astronaut, helped pave the way for other women and minorities to pursue their dreams as explorers and scientists in orbit.

SP 116

5. Close the lesson by reading a number of summary paragraphs aloud, looking at the variety of ways students used informative verbs. Ask them if anyone who read these paragraphs would have a good idea about what they'd learn by reading the source texts. Emphasize the importance of summarizing as a tool for demonstrating comprehension.

6. Set both completed summary paragraphs aside for another day to approach the lesson <u>Comparing and Contrasting in Research Simulation Tasks</u>, p. 195. This activity is designed to synthesize all skills practiced thus far.

NOTE: For extra practice in writing summary paragraphs, have students revisit any of the texts in the Literacy Launch Section of the Guide and approach them in the same way. In addition, and more valuably, have them apply this technique to any content-specific reading they encounter throughout the school day - a new unit in a science or social studies textbook, magazine or online articles.

Paraphrasing

LESSON 11

Objective

Students learn the importance of paraphrasing and practice through the use of sentence starters, word referents, and flipping the sentence subject.

Procedure

1. Define paraphrasing (saying it in your own words) and discuss why it is important in order to avoid plagiarism. Also discuss the ethical use of another's words, and how plagiarism is a form of "stealing."

2. Explain that there are some familiar tools they can use in order to successfully paraphrase. Write the following on the board and discuss, guided by the Teacher Background, above:

   - **Use Sentence Starters that refer to the text.**
   - **Use Word Referents for key words.**
   - **Flip the sentence subject.**

3. Photocopy and distribute copies of Paraphrase It!, SP 122-123. MODEL an example or two, and circulate during GUIDED PRACTICE, offering suggestions and sharing effective responses with the class. More Paraphrasing!, SP 124, for additional practice.

Student Page — SP 122

Name: _____

PARAPHRASE IT!

When writing a response to text or when using researched material in a report or an essay, it's important not to take another author's words and use them as your own. That is called plagiarism. Instead, you need to refer to the text or source material and then express what you learned in your own words. This is called paraphrasing.

Read each sentence below from the text Twister. On another paper, paraphrase each sentence in your own words. Use sentence starters and replace underlined words or phrases with word referents. Then, try "flipping" the sentence." Note that when you flip the sentence, the sentence starters appear at the end.

Ex. Generations of kids and teens have laughed themselves into knots playing the hilarious game of "Twister" at parties of all kinds.

In the article, we read about how thousands of kids of all ages enjoyed getting tangled up in the rollicking party game called "Twister" on special occasions.

Underline the sentence starter and circle each word referent used for the underlined key words. Notice how the writer "flipped the sentence," below:

For decades, kids attending everything from grade school sleepovers to sweet sixteen parties have been crazy about the zany game known as "Twister" on special occasions according to this article.

1. The Twister game board is a large plastic mat with six rows of brightly colored polka dots on which players must place their hands or feet.
2. Twister participants are challenged by having to reach over, under, around and through the hands, arms, feet, and legs of the other players in order to cover the designated circle.
3. The hilarious part of Twister is to see how long you can continue to move your hands and feet as directed without toppling over.

Student Page — SP 123

4. The game was originally called "Pretzel" before it was sold to the renowned toymaker Milton Bradley who released it as "Twister."

SENTENCE STARTERS
- The author discusses _____ .
- In the article we learn that _____ .
- The text explains the way _____ .
- It was interesting to learn how _____.
- Reading the piece, I discovered that _____.
- The writer outlines _____ .
- The reader learns that _____.
- This informational piece examines _____.
- In this article we discover _____.
- According to this article _____.
- Based on this text _____.

BONUS: Select several sentences from a textbook, magazine article, or nonfiction book and paraphrase them using these techniques.

Student Page — SP 124

Name: _____

MORE PARAPHRASING!

Read these sentences from an article titled The Woman on the Twenty Dollar Bill. Imagine that you are writing a report about Harriet Tubman and want to use this information. Paraphrase each sentence. Use word referents for the underlined words and the Citing Sentence Starters to help you. You might also flip the sentence subject!

1. As a child born into slavery, Harriet Tubman watched many of her nine siblings sold and shipped away.

2. When Harriet was just thirteen she was struck in the head for disobeying her master, which caused life-long pain and seizures.

3. She escaped and made her way north to Philadelphia, only to return thirteen times to bring relatives to safety.

4. Harriet became an expert guide, evading slave hunters, leading many to freedom, and assisting the Union army as a spy and a scout.

5. Ms. Tubman spent all of her life helping those less fortunate and was recently commemorated by having her likeness on the twenty dollar bill.

CITING SENTENCE STARTERS

The author points out that_____. The text explains_____. In the article we learn that_____. The reader discovers that_____. It is interesting to note that_____. The author shows how_____. I learned in the text that_____. The author explains how_____. The text includes the fact that____.

---

4. **EXTENSION:** Present sentences from your science or social studies text and use these for additional practice.

NOTE: This activity challenges students to create word referents for the game of Twister. Just a few of the word referents they may come up with include: party pleaser, popular party game, and hilarious activity.

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 activity sheets, SP 150-152, and read it through together.

Student Page

Name: _____

SPECIFIC SUPPORTING DETAILS - YOUR "GOLDEN BRICKS" (1)

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

> **Sharing a room with a sibling can be difficult.**

Convince your reader with a statistic*: _____
_____
_____

(Ask your classmates how many share a room. Use this as the basis for your statistic.)

Convince your reader with an anecdote**:_____
_____
_____

* Sentence Starters for a Statistic:	**** Sentence Starters for an Anecdote:**
Of _____ kids polled _____.	You may find this hard to believe, but _____.
The majority of kids polled report that_____.	I'll never forget the time when _____.
_____% of kids say that if given a choice____.	That reminds me of _____.
Statistics show that _____.	For example, _____.

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 150

Student Page

Name: _____

SPECIFIC SUPPORTING DETAILS - YOUR "GOLDEN BRICKS" (2)

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

> **Butterflies begin their life cycles without wings.**

Convince your reader with an amazing fact*: _____
_____
_____

(Research the life cycles of a butterfly in order to generate an amazing fact.)

Convince your reader with a quote**:_____
_____
_____

*Sentence Starters for an Amazing Fact:	****Sentence Starters for a Quote:**
It's hard to believe but, _____.	_____ reports, "_____."
Can you imagine _____?	Viewing this process, _____ says, "_____."
Incredibly, _____.	Many an observer comments, "_____."
It is amazing to think that _____.	Seeing this, _____ remarked, "_____."

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". This may require some research. Be sure to use good sentence variety and specific, vivid words.

SP 151

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.

> **There are many reasons to grow your own vegetables.**

Convince your reader with an anecdote*: _____
_____
_____

Convince your reader with a quote**:_____
_____
_____

*Sentence Starters for an Anecdote:	****Sentence Starters for a Quote:**
Out in my garden, _____.	Longtime gardener_____ explains, "_____."
That makes me think of _____.	"_____," says _____.
In my own experience, I can tell you that___.	_____ reports that, "_____."
I know I've spent many a summer afternoon _____.	_____who loves home grown vegetables says,"_____."

BONUS: On a separate piece of paper, write an entire 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 152

---

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.

MODELED SAMPLES

1. **SHARING A ROOM**

   Statistic: Considering my circle of friends, statistics show that of 10 fifth graders polled, four shared a room with a brother or sister. Of the four, three reported that it was not an easy situation.

   Anecdote: That reminds me of my friend, Jessica, who is neat and organized. She shares a room with her younger sister, Abbie, who throws her clothes on the floor and never makes her bed. This drives Jessica crazy!

2. **BUTTERFLIES**

   Anecdote: !It's hard to believe, but the graceful, beautiful butterfly begins life as a tiny egg, which grows into a homely brown sack called a pupa. Inside this sack, the butterfly begins to take shape.

   Quote: My brother Jack's class studied the life cycles of butterflies. "A dark little bag hung from the top of the observation tank," Jack reported. "It grew, and eventually a small, wet-looking butterfly emerged."

3. **VEGETABLES**

   Anecdote: Out in my garden we grow fresh tomatoes that you can eat right off the vine! Absolutely delicious!

   Quote: My Aunt Linda, a longtime gardener, explains," It's not only the taste of fresh vegetables - it's the satisfaction of working with the soil."

LESSON 8

Objective

Students analyze weak conclusion paragraphs and revise them by restating each main idea/main reason as a question. They are also encouraged to use word referents in place of topic or main idea/reason words or blurbs, and a general restatement of a TOPIC SENTENCE.

Procedure

1. Use the teacher background information on <u>Conclusion Techniques</u>, pp. 265-267, and distribute RP 28, in order to review the following techniques:
   - restating each main idea/main reason as a question
   - word referents
   - restatement of general topic sentence

2. Chart the weak "before" version of the conclusion paragraph and ask the students to help you to fill in the prewriting plan which states the topic and each main idea/reason.

3. Photocopy and distribute the corresponding student activity sheet, SP 180-181. MODEL the process of restating each main idea as a question. (Samples on p. 270) Use the sentence starters to help. Model the first main idea/reason, and ask students for suggestions for the remaining ones. Encourage them to use the sentence starters.

4. Move on to the BONUS - continue to model the revision process through the use of word referents (ask the question: What is another way to refer to that main idea/reason) and a general restatement of the topic sentence. You might refer to <u>Thesaurus of General Adjectives</u>, RP 19. There they will find a wide variety of general adjectives that are useful for this purpose.

MODELED SAMPLES

Revise this Conclusion Paragraph (1) - Crystal Lake (*Opinion*) - SP 180

Wouldn't it be terrific to take a dip in the clear waters of Crystal Lake? Do you agree that it would be exciting to cruise along in a powerboat or take a relaxing sail on a summer afternoon at this vacation destination? Isn't fishing a fun way to spend an afternoon? If you answered yes to any of these questions, I know you'd love visiting beautiful Crystal Lake.

Revise this Conclusion Paragraph (2) - Parades *(Informational)* - SP 181

Which holidays do you celebrate with a parade? Can you imagine the variety of floats and marching bands? It's easy to see why parades are a popular tradition.

Analyzing Writing Assignments
For Givens and Variables

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class and Independent Activity
- *Introduce prompt.*
- *Define and discuss givens and variables.*
- *Identify genre and purpose.*
- *Create summarizing framework.*

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. 293, to help you select an appropriate prompt.) Reproduce it for students and project it for the class.

    Ex: Prompt #1, SP 195.

    > *Our solar system has fascinated people for centuries. Explain what the solar system contains, how we've explored the Solar System, and how scientists intend to learn more about it.*

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. Remind them that everyone will respond to the same prompt, that there are several elements provided, and at least one decision 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: Solar System and Main Ideas *(solar system contains, how we've explored the Solar System, and how scientists intend to learn more)*

    VARIABLES: the details to support each main idea

TOPIC:_____
MAIN IDEA #1_____
MAIN IDEA #2_____
MAIN IDEA #3_____ (etc...)

(continued)

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.

SAMPLE PROMPTS - INFORMATIONAL AND OPINION

Prompts 1 - 4 include the main ideas/reasons as "GIVENS".
Prompts 5-12 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. Solar System - (*informational*) - may require research - SP 195

2. Electrical Appliances - (*opinion*) - SP 196

3. Pollution - (*informational*) - may require research - SP 197

4. Future Job - (*informational*) - may require research - SP 198

5. Favorite Holiday - (*opinion*) - SP 199

6. Movie Theater/Home Viewing - (*opinion*) - SP 200

7. Good Friend - (*opinion*) - SP 201

8. Kid Earning $$$ - (*informational*) - may include research - SP 202

9. City vs. Country Vacation - (*opinion*) - may include research - SP 203

10. Babysitting - (*informational - how to*) - may include research - SP 204

11. Museums - (*informational*) - may include research - SP 205

12. School - (*opinion*) - SP 206