

PREVIEW



# Narrative Writing Guide

Grade 6

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

Expanded Edition  
Literacy Launch  
Section Included



Updated & Expanded Edition  
by Dea Paoletta Auray

**Empowering**<sup>®</sup>  
Writers

Write. Read. Succeed.

Students can make dramatic progress with their writing during the middle school years. Many will have the vocabulary, academic skills and body of general knowledge to make writing a meaningful way of communicating their interests and viewpoints. However, some will require significant support in all phases of the writing process and all will require ongoing review of the skills they need to organize their thoughts for writing, conduct effective research, and glean information from a variety of texts. Overall, the goal for the middle school years is to make writing a means through which students can effectively “show what they know.” Being able to do so is crucial for success in high school, college, and beyond.

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

- Recognize and distinguish between genres (narrative, informational, opinion, and argument writing). They will be able to spot the subtle differences between informational and opinion writing as well as the more complex argumentative writing.
- Annotate and analyze text to become strategic readers.
- Organize information in a logical manner so that their writing is easily understood, cohesive, and effective.
- Develop broad yet distinct main ideas.
- Generate a variety of rich supporting details and fact-based evidence.
- Conduct effective 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 in conclusions that sum up the whole piece and end with decisive, memorable statements.
- Respond, in writing, to a variety of texts in order to demonstrate deep comprehension (including Short Constructed Response, Extended Constructed Response and Literary Analysis).

The lessons provided here were developed for grade 6, as students hone 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 will 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 included 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 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.

## The Skill Sections are as follows:

Literacy Launch\*

**Section 1:** Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas

**Section 2:** Elaboration

**Section 3:** Research

**Section 4:** Introductions and Conclusions

**Section 5:** Authentic Writing Tasks

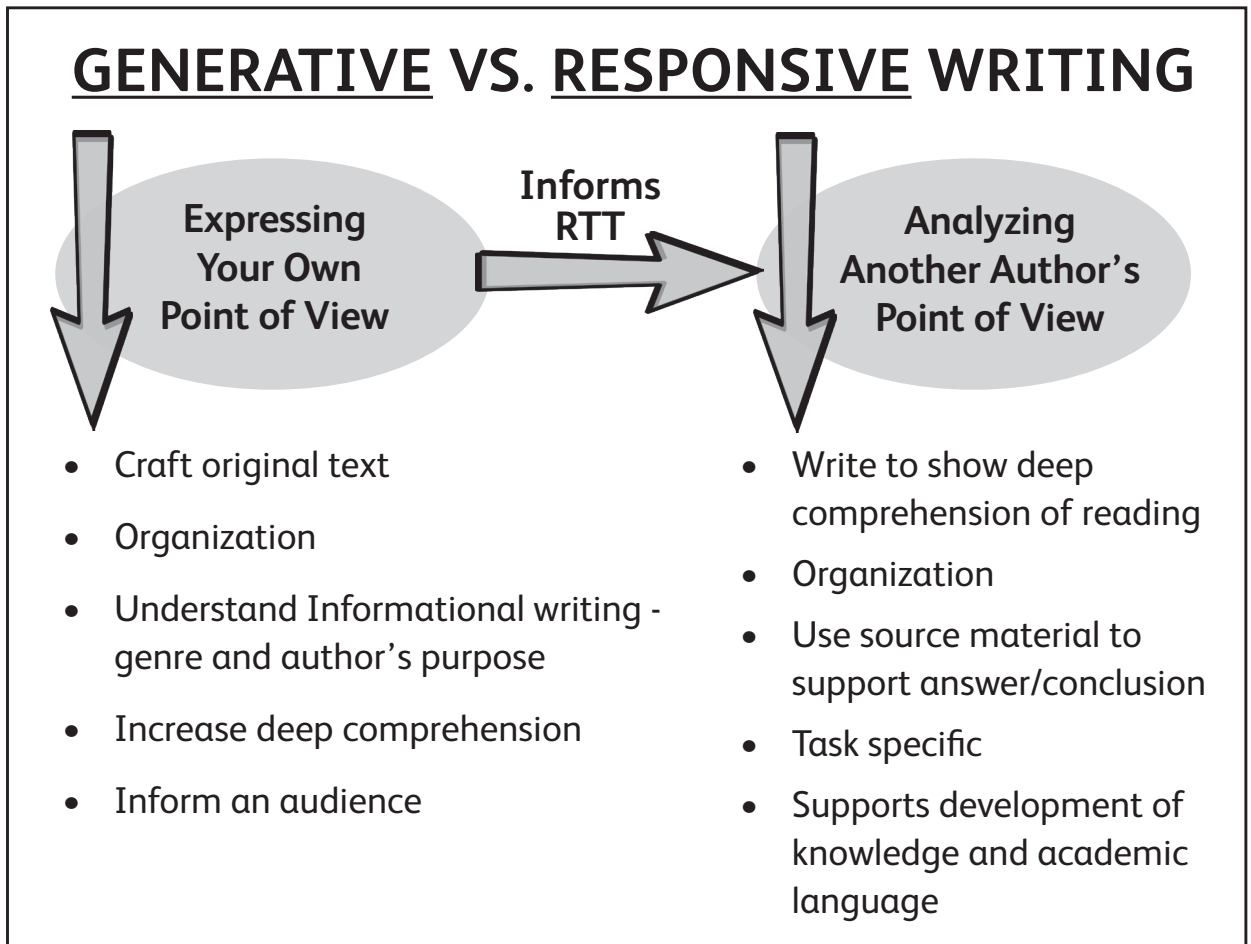
\*This essential jumping-off point to writing instruction and reading comprehension is the prerequisite to understanding all genres of writing and reading purposes. For that reason, we suggest that whatever genre you begin teaching, all students are first introduced to the Literacy Launch. Then, regardless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

Additionally, the foundational skills learned during the Literacy Launch provide students with the tools needed to address text-dependent and constructed response tasks. Note that Response to Text **(R)** activities are interspersed throughout this Guide. To find specific skills, see the Response to Text Index, pp. 345-346.



## 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.



## Four Common Types of Writing, at a Glance

### **NARRATIVE WRITING:**

- **Character/Problem/Solution**

Focus on Character

Main Character (Hero) struggles, grows, and changes

Purpose: to entertain an audience of others

Graphic Organizer - Narrative Diamond, RP 1

- **Personal Experience Story**

Focus on Experience, Activity, or Setting

Follows a beginning, middle, end sequence, is highly descriptive

Purpose: to entertain an audience of others

Graphic Organizer - Narrative Diamond, RP 1

### **INFORMATIONAL WRITING:**

Focus on a TOPIC

Follows an Introduction, Body, Conclusion sequence

Purpose: to give information

Graphic Organizer - Informational Pillar, RP 2

### **OPINION WRITING:**

Focus on a Point of View

Follows an Introduction, Body, Conclusion sequence

Purpose: to express a personal opinion

Graphic Organizer - Opinion Pillar, RP 3

### **ARGUMENT WRITING:**

Focus on a Point of View

Follows an Introduction, Body, Conclusion sequence

Purpose: to demonstrate the author's position in a reasoned, logical way

Graphic Organizer - Argument Pillar, RP 4

**TEACHING TIP:** Use this outline to create an anchor chart in your classroom. Refer to the chart EVERY time you read a book, article, text, or content textbook. In this way, you are reinforcing the concept of genre with every reading experience.



## Contents

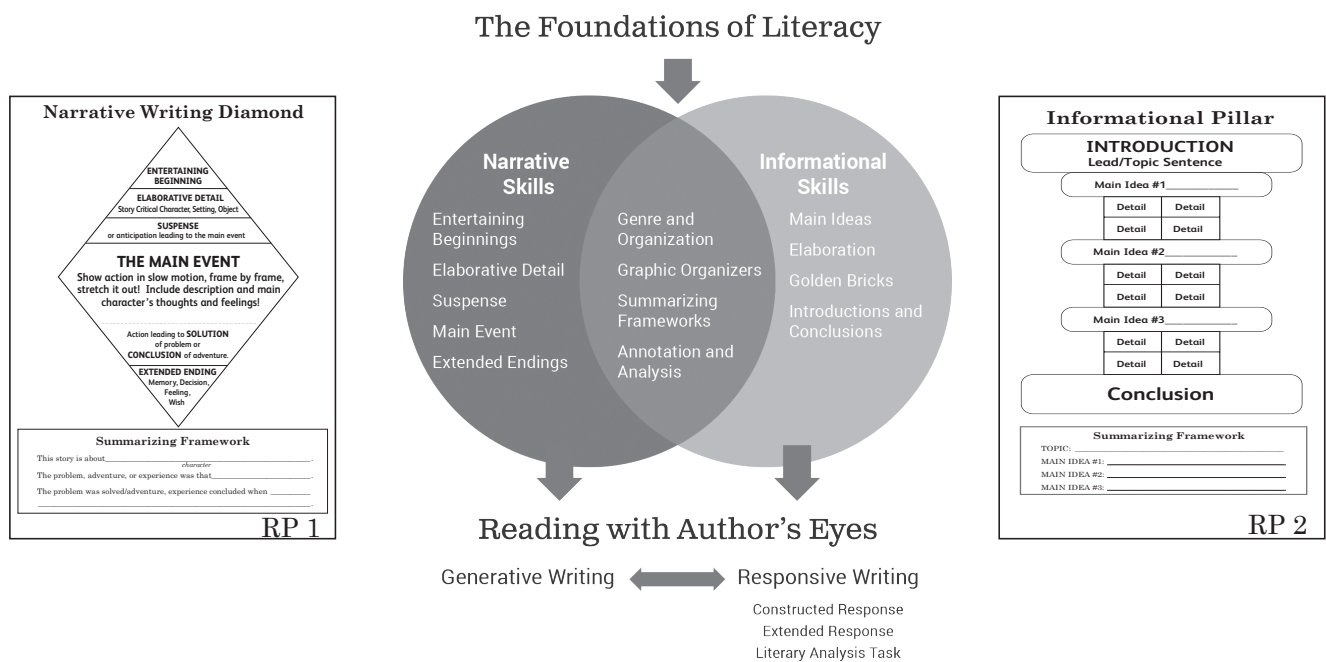
TEACHER BACKGROUND: The Literacy Launch.....	22
TEACHER BACKGROUND: Make-it-Your-Own .....	25
<b>LESSON 1</b>	
Introducing Graphic Organizers ..(A).....	28
<b>LESSON 2</b>	
Recognizing Genre ..(A).....	30
<b>LESSON 3</b>	
Informational and Narrative Book Covers and Summaries... (A).....	32
<b>LESSON 4</b>	
Distinguishing Between Informational, Opinion, & Argumentative Writing... (A).....	36
<b>LESSON 5</b>	
Strategic Reading - Informed Writing ..(A).....	38
<b>LESSON 6</b>	
Strategic Reading - Organization and Text Conventions .... (A).....	44
<b>LESSON 7</b>	
Close Reading Challenge ..(A).....	48
<b>LESSON 8</b>	
Cut and Paste Activities ..(A).....	50
<b>LESSON 9</b>	
Annotation and Analyzing: Distinguishing Between Three Genres of Writing... (A).....	63
I WANT MORE: Additional Analyzing and Annotating Opportunities for Informational Texts ... (A).....	74
I WANT MORE: Additional Analyzing and Annotating Opportunities for Narrative Stories ... (A).....	82
TEACHER BACKGROUND: Recognizing Literary Elements .....	88
<b>LESSON 10</b>	
Introduction to Literary Analysis ..(R).....	89
<b>LESSON 11</b>	
Analyzing Assignments for Givens and Variables ..(R).....	91
<b>LESSON 12</b>	
Introduction to Inferential and Evaluative Thinking... (R).....	93
I WANT MORE: Literary Analysis - Theme in Story ... (R).....	95



## Where do we begin?

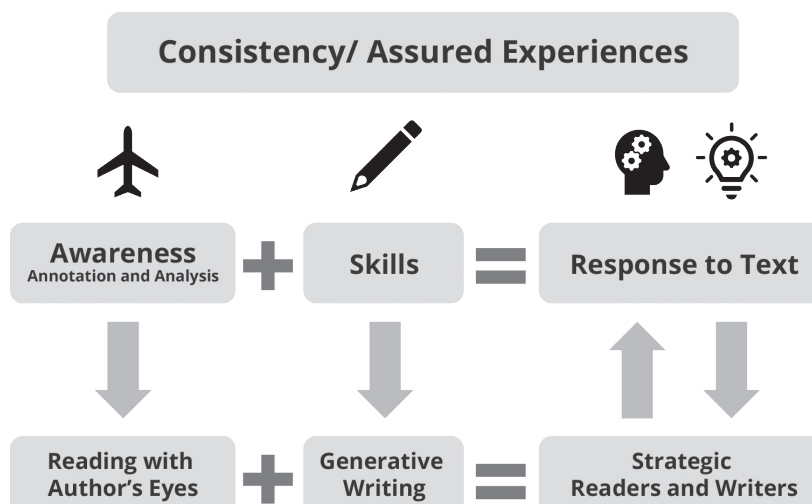
The Literacy Launch is the starting point! Before students can write or even read strategically, they need to be clear about genre and purpose. The lessons in this section help students develop the foundational concepts they need for both reading and writing. They'll be exposed to multiple genres of 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.



# Teacher Background: The Literacy Launch

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



## Defining Genre

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

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

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



## Teacher Background: The Literacy Launch

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

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

## LESSON 2

### Objective

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

### Procedure

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

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

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

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

**Response to Text**: Purpose – to demonstrate deep comprehension as illustrated by evidence from the text (focus on one or more source texts)

Chart these definitions on a white board or a piece of chart paper as you complete the rest of the activity. You might want to use some of the fiction and nonfiction books in your classroom as examples.

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

### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

#### Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Define genres.
- Read paragraphs and identify genre.

Student Page

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**NARRATIVE, INFORMATIONAL OR OPINION?**

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

1. The canoe started to rock back and forth as the wind swept it farther and farther from shore. "Paddle!" Daisy called from the beach. "Paddle harder, Rachel! Fight it!" I heard the panic in her voice and paddled as hard as I could, but it was a losing battle. I was no match for the powerful winds and rising white-capped waves that swept over the lake. One chilly gust later, I lost sight of shore.  
Narrative      Informational      Opinion
2. I am opposed to competitive team sports like soccer and football. As everybody knows, the pressure to win makes it nearly impossible to enjoy the game. Many players have such a drive to win that they risk painful injuries such as torn muscles and fractured bones in their quest to score the next point. It is easy to understand how the overwhelming focus on winning can lead to cheating. I much prefer taking long, relaxing hikes and bike rides.  
Narrative      Informational      Opinion
3. While the Pony Express lasted less than two years, it was a truly amazing mail service for the early settlers of the American west. Young, tough and adventurous, the riders of the Pony Express traveled the 1,900 mile route from Missouri to California in 8-10 days. Even in the winter, traveling over the icy Rocky Mountains and the steep Sierra Nevada range, they made the journey in no more than 12 days!  
Narrative      Informational      Opinion

SP 1

# Recognizing Genre

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? (If so, it is narrative.)
- Are you getting information, learning something about a person, place or thing? (If so, it's most likely informational.)
- Is the author stating and supporting a personal opinion? (If so, it's opinion.)
- Does the author refer to at least one source text? (If so, it's response to text.)

4. Point out the characteristics of each genre, as evidenced in the excerpt.
5. On another day, copy and distribute Informational, Opinion or Response to Text?, SP 2 and proceed similarly using the questions in the box above.

Student Page

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**INFORMATIONAL, OPINION OR RESPONSE TO TEXT?**

Read the following paragraphs and determine whether each paragraph is an example of Informational, Opinion or Response to Text writing. Circle your response.

1. The remotest forests of Canada and the northern United States are the realm of the beautiful and secretive Canadian Lynx. Rarely spotted by human eyes, this medium-sized wild feline lives alone and hunts at night. While often confused with the more common bobcat because of its short tail, a lynx can be easily recognized by its lush coat and the long tufts of fur on both sides of its face. On overgrown paws, the handsome cat moves silently and swiftly as it stalks its favorite prey, the snowshoe hare. The skillful hunter also has the benefits of great hearing and super sharp eyes that can spot a mouse from 250 feet away! Although the Canadian Lynx is hunted for its thick golden fur, the population of these reclusive predators is considered stable.

Informational      Opinion      Response to Text

2. The article, The Lives of the Mountain Gorilla, focuses on the keen intelligence of the Mountain Gorillas of central Africa. The author details an instance when the perceptive primates were observed working together to dismantle a snare set by poachers. Further, the text explains that these endangered mammals appear to have their own language. Communicating through grunts, howls and other vocalizations, the gorillas warn each other of danger and resolve conflicts. The author points out that these brains even seem to joke with and comfort one another. I've known for a long time that gorillas have the ability to learn sign language, but this article opened my eyes to the other amazing abilities of our closest cousins.

Informational      Opinion      Response to Text

3. If you are struggling with math or any other subject, I think you need to enroll in summer school this July. In my opinion, this is the best thing you can do to keep yourself from falling further behind when school starts up again in the fall. Summer school is especially valuable for middle school students as we prepare for our upcoming high school years. Nothing makes learning easier than individual attention from your teacher and you will receive just that at summer school, where the classes are almost always small. Of course, you're busy during the season of sunshine, but all responsible students make time for summer school. For sure, it's an invaluable experience!

Informational      Opinion      Response to Text

SP 2

Key:

Narrative, Informational or Opinion?, SP 1

1. Narrative 2. Opinion 3. Informational

Informational, Opinion or Response to Text?, SP 2

1. Informational 2. Response to Text 3. Opinion

## 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)

### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

#### Whole Class Activity

- Introduce students to text conventions.
- Model skimming and scanning.
- Point out how cues improve reading.
- Summarize piece.

### 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 The Mayan Empire, SP 9-10 and that they'll be learning some strategies for how to read more effectively in order to glean the most information from the piece.

Student Page

Name \_\_\_\_\_


### The Mayan Empire

Imagine a city of stone in a tropical jungle, ruled by kings and battling with hillside warriors. That could be what a Mayan settlement looked like the earliest days of Mesoamerica, the southern regions of North America from the year 2000 BC until the early 1600s. As the native people of this region, the Maya created one of the best known civilizations of ancient times in what is now Mexico and Central America. Let's take a look at how the Mayan empire rose and fell, and the legacy left behind by this fascinating civilization.

#### Early Mayan Settlements

The Maya civilization probably began as small settlements of hunter-gatherers before trading with one another. These settlements got together and formed regional chiefdoms, an organized system of rule usually based on kinship. They became skilled farmers, clearing areas of rain forest to grow crops such as corn, squash, beans and cacao. As a staple vegetable that tastes like a sweet potato and grows in the tropical region of the Americas, As their farms thrived and their

population grew, they set down roots. They began constructing vast cities of stone with tall pyramids that had steep stairs leading up the sides to the top where powerful rulers were laid to rest. Some of these pyramids still stand today. They also built palaces for their kahal ajaw or holy lords that were often situated on elevated stone platforms to keep them safe from seasonal flood waters. While the Maya were once considered a peaceful people, it is now believed that they were anything but. This inscription on the stone work they left behind shows that the Maya went to war with their neighbors often, fighting not only to protect their cities, but for the promise of victory and to take prisoners who became their slaves. Despite these bloody battles, the Mayan empire thrived for nearly 2,000 years.



In the peak, the Mayan Empire covered about 27,000 square miles in southern Mexico and Central America.

SP 9

Student Page

### The Mysterious Fall of the Mayan Empire

In the 9th A.D., the Mayan empire had great leaders and mighty armies. Trade seemed to flourish, but the population began a slow decline. One hundred years later, many of the great Mayan cities had been abandoned and swallowed up by the jungle. What happened? There are many theories surrounding the mysterious decline of the Mayan civilization. One of the most recent and widely accepted is that drought and the process of deserting, but not replanting trees in a sustainable known as *deforestation*, brought it to an end. In a recent study, researchers at Indiana State University concluded that the great Mayan city of Chichen Itza was abandoned at a time when "severe reductions in rainfall were coupled with a rapid rate of deforestation." This makes sense when we consider that the Mayans used massive amounts of wood to fuel their fires. The rapid deforestation, combined with drought, depleted the soil of nutrients so that crops could no longer grow in the region. The people left the Mayan cities and dispersed into small villages. Centuries later, many were taken as slaves by Spanish conquistadors. In spite of the struggles of the past, an estimated 7 million Maya keep their colorful culture alive today in southern Mexico and Central America.

### The Legacy of the Maya

The Mayan people were among the most advanced and innovative of their time. Amazing mathematics, they developed the concept of zero. This first brilliance allowed them to work with more manageable units and learn how to measure time. Simply by observing the stars and the cycles of the moon, they created an accurate calendar that is still used in some Mayan communities today. The Maya had their own complex language and kept their own historical records. They harvested rubber from the rubber tree and used it to make glue, water-resistant cloth and book bindings. If you're a chocolate lover, you'll surely appreciate the Maya's discovery and cultivation of the cocoa bean, with which they made a thick bitter version of the hot chocolate we enjoy today. It is interesting to note that the Maya people created one of the most complex forms for weaving cloth of the day, but they built their cities of stone without ever using as basic a tool as the wheel.

From its primitive beginnings to its unpredictable decline, the Mayan Empire made an indelible mark on world history and left us with a legacy of innovation. Without a doubt, it is fascinating to study the rich history and culture of the extraordinary Mayan people.

SP 10

### KEY VOCABULARY: FINDING INFORMATION WITHIN TEXT

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
Found at the front of the book, the table of contents lists the parts or chapters of a book.

**GLOSSARY**  
Usually found at the end of the book, a glossary defines words you will need to know to understand the text. In some books, short glossaries appear at the beginning of each chapter.

**INDEX**  
Found at the end of the book, the index is a listing of the topics in alphabetical order that are covered in the book and the pages on which you can read about those topics.

**CHAPTER TITLE**  
This tells you what the chapter or section of the book will be about.

**HEADINGS**  
Usually appearing in **bold-faced type** like this, headings sum up the main ideas of a section of text.

**KEYWORDS**  
Often in **bold-faced** or *italicized* type, these words are often defined in the glossary or within the text itself. To understand the text, you need to know the keywords.

**DIAGRAMS**  
Simple drawings that can help you understand the text. Charts and graphs are other visual ways to present information within text.

**ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS**  
These are another way to help you understand keywords or concepts. Unlike the diagram, the photograph or illustration is realistic and provides lots of specific detail. Captions appear underneath photographs or illustrations often in italics. They tell you about the picture.

**COPYRIGHT PAGE**  
Opposite the title page, the copyright page includes the copyright symbol ©, the owner of the copyright, publication date, and publisher. This is important in a bibliography.

RP 5

2. Distribute copies to the class and project it on the white board. *To build context and background, share a short video and/or discuss any background knowledge your students might have.* Read the piece aloud to give students a sense of what the text is all about.
3. Explain that before they read an informational piece, it's important to look for certain cues that can provide valuable information to aid the reader's understanding. Direct their attention to the piece and ask them to *annotate* it together, labeling the important parts. Use the guided questions from the teacher reference page Strategic Reading Guidelines, pp. 42-43 and Key Vocabulary: Finding Information Within Text, RP 5.

## Strategic Reading – Informed Writing

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.

**TOPIC:** The Mayan Empire

**MAIN IDEA #1:** Early Mayan Settlements

**MAIN IDEA #2:** The Mysterious Fall of the Mayan Empire

**MAIN IDEA #3:** The Legacy of the Maya

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

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

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

9. Point out the **map** and its **caption**. Ask students why both are important.
10. Model how to use the information on the summarizing framework to write an extended summary using the sentence starters coupled with informative verbs:

Example: This informational text provides information about *the Mayan Empire*. We'll trace its development from small early settlements to its mysterious fall and learn about the lasting legacy of the Maya.

**NOTE:** If appropriate at your school, you might want to work with your social studies department to create cross-curricular connections when you use this informational piece about the Mayan Empire for writing instruction.

11. Finally, have them read the text independently. Discuss how examining the following text conventions: **title, headings, bold or italicized key words, photographs and captions** guide their reading. Think about how much they've learned before they've even started reading! Also point out the way that the author organized the information made it more accessible to the reader. Save this text for use in the next unit.

**NOTE:** You can reinforce this lesson using any high quality magazine article or textbook chapter in the same way.

# The Mayan Empire

1.) Imagine a city of stone in a tropical jungle, ruled by kings and bustling with builders, star-gazing astronomers and fierce warriors. That could be what a Mayan settlement looked like the earliest days of **Mesoamerica**, the southern regions of North America from the year 2000 BC until the early 1500s. As the native people of this region, the Maya created one of the best known civilizations of ancient times in what is now Mexico and Central America. Let's take a look at how the Mayan empire rose and fell, and the legacy left behind by this fascinating civilization.

## Early Mayan Settlements

2.) The Maya civilization probably began as small settlements of hunter-gatherers began trading with one another. These settlements got together and formed regional **chiefdoms**, an organized system of rule usually based on kinship. They became skillful farmers, clearing acres of rain forest to grow crops such as corn, squash, beans and **cassava**, a starchy vegetable that tastes like a sweet potato and grows in the tropical regions of the Americas. As their farms thrived and their

population grew, they set down roots. They began constructing vast cities of stone with tall pyramids that had steep stairs leading up the sides to the top where powerful rulers were laid to rest. Some of these pyramids still stand today. They also built palaces for their **kuhul ajaw** or holy lords that were often situated on elevated stone platforms to keep them safe from seasonal flood waters. While the Maya were once considered a peaceful people, it is now believed that they were anything but. The inscriptions on the stonework they left behind show that the Maya went to war with their neighbors often, fighting not only to protect their cities, but for the prestige of victory and to take prisoners who became their slaves. Despite those bloody battles, the Mayan empire thrived for nearly 2,000 years.



*At its peak, the Mayan Empire covered about 37,000 square miles in southern Mexico and Central America.*

## The Mysterious Fall of the Mayan Empire

3.) In the 800s A.D., the Mayan empire had great leaders and mighty armies. Trade seemed to flourish, but the population began a slow decline. One hundred years later, many of the great Mayan cities had been abandoned and swallowed up by the jungle. What happened? There are many theories surrounding the mysterious decline of the Mayan civilization. One of the most recent and widely accepted is that drought and the process of clearing, but not replanting trees in a rainforest known as deforestation, brought it to an end. In a recent study, researchers at Arizona State University concluded that the great Mayan city of Chitzen Itza was abandoned at a time when “severe reductions in rainfall were coupled with a rapid rate of deforestation.” This makes sense when we consider that the Mayans used massive amounts of wood to fuel their fires. The rapid deforestation, combined with drought, depleted the soil of nutrients so that crops could no longer grow in the region. The people left the Mayan cities and dispersed into small villages. Centuries later, many were taken as slaves by Spanish conquistadors. In spite of the struggles of the past, an estimated 7 million Maya keep their colorful culture alive today in southern Mexico and Central America.

## The Legacy of the Maya

4.) The Mayan people were among the most advanced and innovative of their time. Amazing mathematicians, they developed the concept of zero. This feat of brilliance allowed them to work with once unimaginable sums and learn how to measure time. Simply by observing the stars and the cycles of the moon, they created an accurate calendar that is still used in some Mayan communities today. The Maya had their own complex language and kept their own historical records. They harvested rubber from the rainforest tree and used it to make glue, water-resistant cloth and book bindings. If you're a chocolate lover, you'll surely appreciate the Maya's discovery and cultivation of the cocoa bean, with which they made a thick bitter version of the hot chocolate we enjoy today. It is interesting to note that the Maya people created one of the most complex looms for weaving cloth of its day, but they built their cities of stone without even using as basic a tool as the wheel.

5.) From its primitive beginnings to its unpredictable decline, the Mayan Empire made an indelible mark on world history and left us with a legacy of innovation. Without a doubt, it is fascinating to study the rich history and culture of the extraordinary Mayan people.

## LESSON 10

### Objective:

Students learn to identify literary elements in a text and when responding orally and in writing to repeat key elements of the question in the beginning of their response.

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

### Procedure:

1. Explain to students that one way to demonstrate what they've comprehended from reading a text is to answer questions about it, both verbally and in writing. The important thing is to respond in complete sentences. Tell them that an easy technique for this task is to repeat the important parts of the question as they begin their response. Project Narrative Writing Diamond - Literary Elements, RP 13 and discuss how the diamond and the literary elements are connected.
2. Distribute copies of Literary Elements, RP 12.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

#### Whole Class and Independent Activity

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

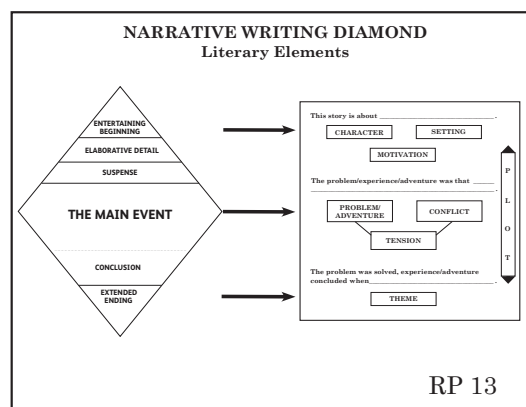
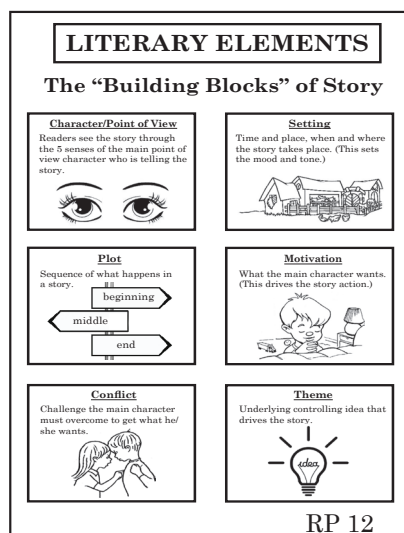


Chart the following literary elements and discuss:

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

Explain that these are called **literary elements** and that these are the basic building blocks of stories. Ask them to silently reread the story you selected and to see if they can pick out the literary elements listed. Discuss their findings.



# Introduction to Literary Analysis

3. Distribute copies of Turning Questions into Responses, SP 38. Model how to use the key parts of the question to begin their response. Move through each response to text question in the same way, having students frame their responses. MODEL how using the sentence starters can provide a series of more interesting responses. Have the students continue on their own. Use Literary Analysis Questions, RP 14 to color-code the evidence from the text as they locate it.

**Student Page**  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

**TURNING QUESTIONS INTO RESPONSES**

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

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

**KICK IT UP A NOTCH!**

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

In this story \_\_\_\_\_.

In the story (title here) \_\_\_\_\_.

The author introduces us to \_\_\_\_\_, our main character. We immediately meet (main character's name), the hero of the story.

The story took place \_\_\_\_\_.

The story was set \_\_\_\_\_.

The protagonist, (main character's name) wanted \_\_\_\_\_.

(Main character's name) was trying to \_\_\_\_\_.

The author created tension when \_\_\_\_\_ (conflict) \_\_\_\_\_.

The problem began when \_\_\_\_\_.

**SP 38**

**LITERARY ANALYSIS QUESTIONS**

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

**Main point of view character:** Who was the main character(s)? (red)

**Setting:** Where and when did the story take place? (blue)

**Plot:** What was the problem or adventure? (yellow)

**Motivation:** What did the main character(s) want? (green)

**Conflict:** What kept the main character(s) from getting what he/she/they wanted? (purple)

**Theme:** What was the big idea of the story? (orange)

Use this summary every time you read a story:

**Summarizing Framework:**

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

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

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

The theme of the story was \_\_\_\_\_.

**Sentence Starters for Providing Evidence:**

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

**RP 14**

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

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

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

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| The reader discovers that _____.         | We recognize _____.                         |
| The author reveals _____.                | (Character's name) was motivated by _____.  |
| _____ contributed to the story conflict. | I believe that _____ because _____.         |
| In this story _____.                     | The reader realizes _____.                  |
| At the beginning it's clear that _____.  | 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 _____.            | From my point of view, _____.               |
| The author definitely shows _____.       | We see this when _____.                     |

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

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

## LESSON 12

### 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 from earlier in this Guide 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 students pantomime a variety of feelings using both facial expressions and body language.

**\*NOTE:** See Teacher Background notes, p. 94, for more about What Feelings Look Like.

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 copies of Digging Deeper – Be a Text Detective, SP 39, along with Thinking About Reading, RP 15. **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)

### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

#### Whole Class Small Group Activity

- Select story previously read and annotated.
- Discuss and define Inferential Thinking and the Evaluative Thinking.
- Read and then model using sentence starters.

Student Page

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**DIGGING DEEPER – BE A TEXT DETECTIVE!**

To get the most out of a story, it's important to not just think about the action, but to consider why things happened in the story. What might the character's feelings have to do with it? What caused the character to feel as she or he felt? How did you feel about the events in the story? What about the things an author implies but doesn't actually explain? This routine helps you look for evidence in the text. Look at the questions below. Your teacher will select a story for you to read. Then, on another sheet of paper or at the keyboard, answer each of the questions below about the story using the sentence starters provided. You may also turn each question into a response by repeating the key parts.

1. In the story, how did (character) feel about his/her situation?
2. How do you know how (character) felt?
3. Did you ever have a similar experience? When?
4. How did you feel during your experience?
5. What did (character) learn from his/her experience?
6. What did you learn from your experience?
7. Why did you empathize with (character)?

**Sentence Starters:**

1. It was clear \_\_\_\_ was feeling \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_.
2. This was evidenced by \_\_\_\_.
3. I understand the way \_\_\_\_ felt because \_\_\_\_.
4. I'll never forget the time \_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_.
5. A similar experience I had was \_\_\_\_.
6. I could really empathize with her/him because \_\_\_\_.
7. It's easy to understand why \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_.
8. Although I never had an experience like this, I can imagine \_\_\_\_.
9. This scene kept my interest because \_\_\_\_.

SP 39


**THINKING ABOUT LITERATURE**

**Inferential Thinking**

This is the kind of reasoning you must use when the author hints at or *infers* something in a story, but doesn't state it outright.

**Ex. When Marc told his joke Claire rolled her eyes and shook her head.**

The reader *infers* that the joke wasn't very funny.



**Evaluative Thinking**

When we think in this way we compare what happened in the story to something in our own lives. This helps us empathize with and understand the story situation better.

**Ex. It was just like the time when I got separated from my family at the amusement park. I know what it's like to feel scared.**

RP 15

# Lesson 4: Literary Analysis Task - Beginnings

## Objective:

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

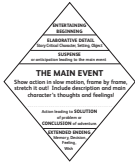
## Procedure:

1. Together as a class, read, analyze and annotate The Sand Castle Crusher, pp. 126-127, according to SRP 6, pointing out the way the story follows the organizational structure 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 Story Ending'. At the left point is 'Elaborative Detail'. At the right point is 'Conflict'. In the center is 'The Main Event'. Arrows point from the top and bottom points towards the center. Arrows also point from the left and right points towards the center. A note at the bottom of the diamond says 'Show action in these sections. Name by Name, search it out! Include description and main character's thoughts and feelings!'. Below the diamond is the text 'Action leading to SOLUTION'.

SRP 6

©2019 Empowering Writers, LLC

## LESSON AT A GLANCE:

### Whole Class Activity

- Read and annotate story for the literary elements.
- Project and discuss the task - what needs to be included in the response. (the givens)
- Reread the story and mark the parts that identify the techniques the author used to create an entertaining beginning and where the main character's motivation and conflict show up. (Highlight or underline)
- MODEL how to respond to the first main idea in the task - answer the questions "What does it look like? Why is it important?"
- Guide students through the writing process.
- MODEL and practice the second main idea.

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. 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. (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**? (What stands in the way of the character's motivation?) \_\_\_\_\_ (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

©2019 Empowering Writers, LLC

(continued)

## Lesson 4: Literary Analysis Task – Beginnings

2. Project the Literary Analysis Task: Beginnings, p. 131, read the assignment out loud, and discuss with the class. Remind students that in the task there are elements to look for – the givens are what everyone needs to address and the variables are the decisions the writer needs to make.

**You've read the story The Sand Castle Crusher. Write an essay identifying the techniques the author uses to create an entertaining beginning and explain why this is important for the reader. Explain what you learn about the main character's motivation and conflict. Provide evidence from the text to support your ideas.**

3. Ask the class to identify what they need to address. Highlight or color code the key words in the task. Based on the task, guide students in filling out the summarizing framework as a pre-writing tool. (Refer to the Informational/Expository Pillar, SRP 4 as the organizational structure of this response.)

Task:

**Givens:** Must identify the techniques used to create an entertaining beginning AND what the reader learns about the main character's motivation and conflict.

**Variables:** The specific evidence from the text each student chooses as proof of the beginning techniques and specific evidence that points to motivation and conflict.

Ex. of Summarizing Framework

TOPIC: The Sand Castle Crusher

MAIN IDEA #1: Beginning Techniques

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

4. Have the class discuss their ideas in response to the first main idea – What beginning techniques does the author use to hook the reader in? Underline or highlight the evidence in the text as students respond.

*Example responses: The author uses sound and action – Da-da-daa-duh – the sound of the bugle call, he raced across the hot sand and took a flying leap and crushes a sand castle*

5. Now ask students Why is it important to capture the reader's attention this way? (You are asking students to explain their answer.)

*Example responses: The beginning sets up the rest of the story, we are introduced to the main character, a girl and her brother, Jeff, the reader can easily see Jeff as a bully when he crushes the sand castle, we don't really like him much, we know the setting too!*

## Lesson 4: Literary Analysis Task – Beginnings

6. MODEL the use of sentence starters to turn their verbal responses into writing.  
*Ex. In the story, The Sand Castle Crusher, we meet the main character, Jill, who has a twin brother, Jeff. The author uses a sound and some action to get the story off to an exciting start. By using these techniques, it is easy to visualize a boy making the sound of a bugle and saying “Charge!” as he “raced across the hot sand took a flying leap,” to stomp on a little girl’s sand castle. The author establishes that Jeff is a bully and we certainly have a hard time liking him.*
7. GUIDED PRACTICE: Direct students to p. 131 and have them write their first paragraph. They can choose the details to provide evidence of the beginning techniques and ask students to explain how the reader knows this. As students 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.
8. Continue to Main Idea #2 and discuss how to find the evidence for the main character’s motivation and conflict. Underline or highlight the evidence as students respond.  
*Ex. for Main Idea #2:*  
**Ask:** *How do we know what the main character wants – the motivation, and what is standing in the way – the conflict?*  
**Possible Responses:** *Jill, the main character, is conflicted by her brother who is not really a bully in her eyes, she wants him to stop being a bully, he keeps making enemies*  
**Ask:** *Why is this important to the story?*  
**Possible Responses:** *she tries to get him to stop by talking to him, then she gets a plan to gather the others against him, it teaches him a lesson, we are interested to find out what really happens all the way to the end of the story.*
9. MODEL the paragraph. Then, direct students to write their second paragraph providing evidence and explanation. Remember that this can be done on another day. (See modeled sample)
10. Remind students to use the sentence starters because these phrases help the writer to smoothly and fluently express ideas and cite evidence.
11. Close the lesson by having students reiterate the steps necessary for a well-supported written response.

Entertaining  
Beginning  
Sound & Action

### The Sand Castle Crusher

Title  
Genre: Narrative Personal  
Experience

Da-da-daa-duh-da-da-duh-da-daaaaaaa. My brother made the sound of a bugle call and shouted “charge” as he raced across the hot sand and took a flying leap. He landed directly on the sand castle of a little kid.

“The sand castle crusher strikes again,” he yelled as he ran down the beach hooting with laughter and searching for another elaborate construction of shells, sand and stones to destroy. The little kid looked stunned and ready to cry!

Dozens of times, I’d told my twin to knock off this kind of behavior, but his response was always the same: “What’s the big deal, Jill? It’s just a sand castle and they can rebuild it in a minute.”

Sad to say, my brother Jeff was a bully. As a result, he’d made many enemies. I knew that beneath his swaggering exterior, he did have a soft heart, but you had to really get to know him before this fact was evident. He embarrassed me regularly; he infuriated me often. But I loved him and didn’t want to see him get into trouble.

conflict

As I helped the little kid restore her sand castle, I racked my brain trying to figure out some way to help him change his brutish ways. Of course, the little kid had a suggestion, but I don’t want to repeat it.

motivation

I was still drawing a blank that night as I watched a movie that took place a long time ago. When I woke up, I had an idea.

It was late morning when I arrived at the beach hauling a wagon filled with shovels, buckets and sand castle molds. I also brought along a loud whistle. Becky, my best friend, was already there and she was in on the plan. She’d already walked the length of the beach inviting every kid she saw along the way to join her in building the biggest, most elaborate sand castle of all time.

Elaborative  
Setting  
Detail,

“Okay, here’s the story,” I told them all. “Our kingdom has been under siege from a diabolical enemy and we are the bold knights of the days of yore. We must protect our castle. Somebody, keep a lookout for our arch-nemesis, who calls himself ‘the sand castle crusher.’ If you see him, blow this whistle. That will be our signal to stand up, join hands and surround the castle so that the sand castle crusher can’t get close enough to cause any destruction.”

main event

Everybody seemed to agree that my plan was a good one. We chose a boy to be the lookout and construction of our fabulous fortress began. In the blink of an eye, there

(continued)

were at least 20 kids, between the ages of four and 14, working together and having a wonderful time. I was constructing a tall turret in one corner of the castle. Others were digging tunnels and bridges. Samantha, the little girl who'd had the unpleasant encounter with the sand castle crusher just yesterday, was making a pathway to the entrance of the castle with smooth stones she'd collected. Our castle was full of intricate details and getting bigger by the minute.

main event cont.

Suddenly the shrill blast of the whistle rang out. We all froze. Sure enough, just down the beach was the sand castle crusher and he was running toward us at top speed.

story tension

"Everybody on your feet!" I shouted.

Moments later, all of us had formed a tight circle around the castle. The sand castle crusher stopped in his tracks when he saw us and a confused look came over his face.

"Go away, enemy of the kingdom," someone shouted.

I almost felt sorry for Jeff. There he stood, utterly helplessly with his mouth agape in astonishment. Without a word, he turned and walked away.

Work commenced on the castle and we were all feeling proud of what we'd created. It was at least 6 feet in diameter by now with walls reinforced by colorful scallop shells and winding staircases that led to steep lookout towers. Just a few yards down the beach, I saw Jeff splashing around in the water by himself and casting curious glances in our direction. I knew just by looking at him that my twin had learned his lesson.

conclusion

Twenty minutes later, he once again approached our castle. The whistle blasted and we all stood up like the boldest of knights to protect our masterpiece.

"I just wanted to see if you, maybe, would let me dig you a moat," Jeff stammered, sounding almost shy.

Samantha stuck her tongue out at him, but another boy said, "Sure. Just promise, no funny business."

Eagerly, Jeff made that promise and began digging a deep moat around the castle. At the end of the day, a photographer from the local newspaper came and took a picture of all of us and our magnificent castle. For the rest of the summer, the sand castle crusher was nowhere to be seen on our beach. It seemed, a soft-hearted guy named Jeff had taken his place.

So here's my advice to any kid who's being bullied: Just remember that the good kids almost always outnumber the bad — and if you all stick together, the bullies don't have a chance!

theme

Theme: Sticking together

Extended Ending Thoughts, Feelings

Name \_\_\_\_\_

LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK: BEGINNINGS

You've read the story The Sand Castle Crusher. Write an essay identifying the techniques the author uses to create an entertaining beginning and explain why this is important for the reader. Explain what you learn about the main character's motivation and conflict. Provide evidence from the text to support your ideas.

THINK ABOUT IT: Is this a narrative or informational/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 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 task:
- What techniques does the author use to create an entertaining beginning?
- Why is this important for the reader?
- What do you learn about the main character's motivation for the story?
- What do you learn about the conflict the main character faces?
4. Your teacher will MODEL this process with you. You may use the sentence starters to help you cite examples in the source text.



# Lesson 11: Narrative Extension Task - Feelings

## Objective:

Students apply their knowledge of techniques for crafting a segment to show rather than tell a character's emotions.

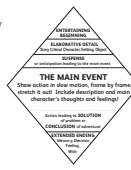
## Procedure:

1. If they haven't already, have students read, analyze and annotate The Best Report Card Ever, pp. 185-186, according to SRP 6, pointing out the way the story follows the organizational structure 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 text 'Show what is interesting about the beginning. Use techniques to engage the reader.' The bottom quadrant is labeled 'Extended Story Ending' and contains the text 'Show what is interesting about the ending. Use techniques to engage the reader.' The left quadrant is labeled 'Story Tension/Conflict' and contains the text 'Show what is interesting about the conflict. Use techniques to engage the reader.' The right quadrant is labeled 'Conclusion/Solution' and contains the text 'Show what is interesting about the conclusion. Use techniques to engage the reader.'

SRP 6

©2019 Empowering Writers, LLC

Discuss the literary elements in the text using SRP 13, drawing verbal responses from the class, and/or chart them. 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. (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**? (What stands in the way of the character's motivation?) \_\_\_\_\_ (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

©2019 Empowering Writers, LLC

## Lesson 11: Narrative Extension Task - Feelings

2. Project the Narrative Extension Task: Feelings, p. 201, read the assignment out loud, and discuss with the class. Remind students that the givens are what everyone needs to include. The variables are the decisions that writers get to make.

**You've read the story The Best Report Card Ever in which Ellen receives a disappointing report card. Write a segment describing how her friend Fiona feels when she gets her usual excellent report card. How does it make Fiona feel about herself and her friend Ellen?**

**Givens:** a segment showing emotions

**Variables:** the techniques the author chooses to use

Student Reference Page

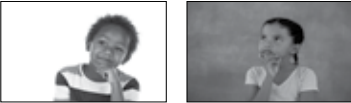
### THINKING ABOUT READING

**Inferential Thinking**

This is the kind of reasoning you must use when the author hints at or *infers* something in a story, but doesn't state it outright.

*Ex. When Marc told his joke Claire rolled her eyes and shook her head.*

The reader *infers* that the joke wasn't very funny.



**Evaluative Thinking**

When we think in this way we compare what happened in the story to something in our own lives. This helps us empathize with and understand the story situation better.

*Ex. It was just like the time when I got separated from my family at the amusement park. I know what it's like to feel scared.*

SRP 11

©2019 Empowering Writers, LLC

3. Remind students that in order to write this response in relationship to the original text, they should use several of the same elements from the original text to write their new segment. See example questions below to spark their ideas. Refer to SRP 11, inferential thinking as this requires students to infer how Fiona feels.
4. Review the techniques for what do feelings look like. (p. 175) Ask students to infer their ideas about Fiona and how she feels using “Show don’t Tell” strategies.

**Ex.** • How did Ellen feel about her own grades? • What do we know about Fiona?  
• How did Fiona feel about her grades? • What can we infer about how Fiona feels about herself and her friend Ellen? • What can we infer Fiona admires about Ellen?

## Lesson 11: Narrative Extension Task - Feelings

5. MODEL rewriting this segment using each of the techniques, articulating the thought process of the author.

**Ex.** *There were no surprises on my report card. I'd earned straight A's again. I tried to imagine how my friend Ellen would feel if she received a report card like this. She'd probably be jumping up and down with joy. I wished I could get excited about my good grades, but I took them for granted. Of course, I worked hard for them and I loved it when my parents felt proud of my report cards. But I knew that I'd trade in one of those A's for a B if it gave me the ability to turn a cartwheel as gracefully as Ellen or bake ginger cookies that were as delicious as hers.*

### SENTENCE STARTERS:

- I would feel \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ellen would \_\_\_\_\_.
- I wished \_\_\_\_\_.
- My grades \_\_\_\_\_.
- My parents would \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ellen's father might \_\_\_\_\_.
- I was proud \_\_\_\_\_.
- I felt good about myself when \_\_\_\_\_.
- I tried to imagine \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Close the lesson by asking the class to talk about the value of showing vs. telling.

SE/Turn and Talk: With your partner, discuss a friend who has an area of strength, where you have an area of weakness. How does that make you feel? Does it affect your friendship?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**NARRATIVE EXTENSION TASK: FEELINGS**

**You've read the story The Best Report Card Ever in which Ellen receives a disappointing report card. Write an elaborative segment describing how her friend Fiona feels when she gets her usual excellent report card. How does it make Fiona feel about herself and her friend Ellen?**

**THINK AND DISCUSS: How does showing or telling bring a story to life?**

**REMEMBER:** The answers to productive questions provide powerful elaborative detail!

- How did Ellen feel about her own grades?
- How did Ellen feel about Fiona?
- How did Fiona feel about her grades?
- What did Fiona admire about Ellen?
- How might Fiona's parents have reacted to her achievements?

**SENTENCE STARTERS:**

- I would feel \_\_\_\_\_.
- I wished \_\_\_\_\_.
- My parents would \_\_\_\_\_.
- I was proud \_\_\_\_\_.
- I tried to imagine \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ellen would \_\_\_\_\_.
- My grades \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ellen's father might \_\_\_\_\_.
- I felt good about myself when \_\_\_\_\_.

---



---



---



---



---



---

# Lesson 5: Building Suspense

## Objective:

Students learn the power of suspense, recognize three techniques for building suspense (story questions, word referents, and the Magic of Three) and practice building suspense using these techniques.

## Procedure:

1. Read a sample of suspense from literature. Several examples can be found on p. 207. Discuss and define the function and characteristics of suspense with the class.
2. Chart the 3 techniques for building suspense: - story questions, word referents, the Magic of Three. Use the examples, p. 205, to illustrate each technique to the class. Have students refer to SRP 15.

*Student Reference Page*

**Menu for Suspense**

**Story Questions:**


- What might your main character be wondering or worrying?

**Word Referents:**

- Brainstorm a number of alternative ways to refer to the character or object you plan to reveal. Then ask the usual questions that apply to elaboration - but, substitute the word referents for the named character or object.

**Magic of Three:**

- Name a red flag word or phrase to grab the reader's attention.
- What might you hear/see/feel/sense that hints at the revelation?
- What is your reaction to this hint?
- What do you discover? (Nothing, the first two times.)

 ©2019 Empowering Writers, LLC SRP 15

3. Choose one of the suspense exercises pp. 220-222, for modeling and guided practice. Use the questions from SRP 15, to guide your modeling, along with SRP 16, The Magic of Three Template.

# Lesson 5: Building Suspense

Student Reference Page

**THE MAGIC OF THREE TEMPLATE**

Red Flag word/phrase \_\_\_\_\_, 1st. HINT: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

No discovery: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reaction: \_\_\_\_\_

Red Flag word/phrase \_\_\_\_\_, 2nd. HINT: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

No discovery: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reaction: \_\_\_\_\_

Red Flag word/phrase \_\_\_\_\_, 3rd. HINT: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation/Discovery: \_\_\_\_\_

**RED FLAG WORDS AND PHRASES**

Suddenly	Just then	All of a sudden
A moment later	In the blink of an eye	Without warning
The next thing I knew	Instantly	To my surprise
	(add your own)	

SRP 16

©2019 Empowering Writers, LLC

After choosing the exercise you'd like to model, ask the questions that apply. Ask for a number of responses before charting a response that works. (Again, generating a number of responses is helpful for students as they move into guided practice.) It is always helpful to read through the modeled samples that follow. These will give you an idea of how to formulate your questions and how you might translate student responses into your modeled sample.

4. Review the modeled sample that the class helped with, then, move to **GUIDED PRACTICE**. Have students try the same example you modeled, circulate as they work, offering advice and encouragement. Read any effective segments aloud.
5. After students feel comfortable with this, have them work through several other exercises in this session independently. You can designate a particular technique, or allow them to choose. Encourage them to apply the skill in both process and timed writing experiences.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### BUILDING SUSPENSE (1)

- REMEMBER:**
- One of the best ways to hold the reader's interest is to add 3 or 4 suspenseful sentences building up to the main event.
  - Raise story questions, use word referents, or the "Magic of Three."

Read the revelation at the bottom of the page. Then, on the lines above the revelation, put the main character (Tony) in the setting (the ballpark) and write at least 3 or 4 suspense building sentences that **lead up to** the revelation! Have fun with this! ENTERTAIN! Stretch it out! Make the reader DYING to know what's next!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Going...going...gone! Tony's home run soared out of the ballpark.**

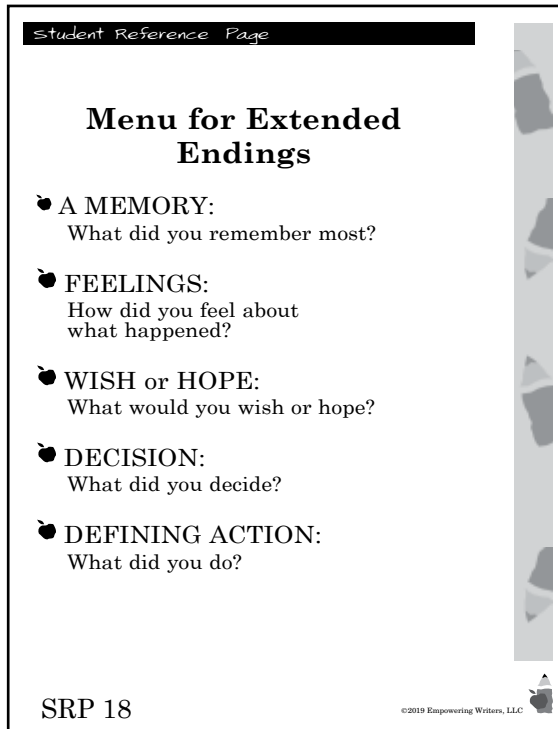
# Lesson 1: Analyze the Ending

## Objective:

Students analyze a story ending and identify the techniques used for effective endings.

## Procedure:

1. Photocopy and distribute copies of Menu for Extended Story Endings, SRP 18. Share the examples of extended endings on p. 275. Discuss these and point out the menu items as applied in the samples. Discuss.



2. Photocopy the student activity Analyze This Ending (1), p. 278. Project and read the directions to the class to set a purpose for the activity. Then read the ending aloud as students read silently.

Ask students to identify memories, feelings, decisions, hopes or wishes. Highlight and color code each sentence so that the class can watch and follow along.

3. Finally, talk about the way the ending “sums up” the story. Have the students summarize who the story was about, what the problem, adventure, or experience was, and how it was resolved. This is a marvelous comprehension tool, as well as a valuable writing exercise.
4. On another day, read aloud Analyze This Ending (2), p. 279, and have students proceed independently. Discuss their analysis as a group.

**Turn and Talk:** Discuss with a partner: What is the purpose of an extended ending? What are some techniques an author can use to craft an extended ending?



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.

**I lay awake until late that night thinking about how hurt and angry Daisy had been when she discovered that I'd spread the ridiculous rumor. What had I been thinking? Knowing I could lose my best friend over one reckless mistake made me feel furious with myself. I promised that I'd never again spread a rumor or listen to mean-spirited gossip. I hoped Daisy would realize how sorry I was and give me a second chance!**

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

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

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Everybody wants someone in their lives who loves them. Think of someone who loves you. Write a story about something this person did that showed you how much they care for you.**

As you prepare to write:

1. Analyze the givens and variables in this prompt.
2. List at least two segments of elaborative detail you would include.

\_\_\_\_\_ .

3. Remember to showcase all of the writing skills you have learned.
4. Use the following framework to plan your story:

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

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

The adventure or experience concluded/problem solved when \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .