

About Narrative Nonfiction

What is Narrative Nonfiction?

Students naturally write narratives when they begin writing. Narratives are comfortable and familiar. Students come to the classroom with a wealth of background in narrative experience. Students are usually eager to share their narrative experiences.

The difference between the types of narratives students are used to and the narratives they will write in these lessons is the element of nonfiction. Students are allowed to use details and imagination to describe events, people, places, and so forth, but it is important that they rely on accuracy for all the content. Narrative writing tells a story or recounts an event; narrative nonfiction tells a story or event that is true.

Types of Narrative Nonfiction

The two forms of narrative nonfiction are personal and biographical. Personal narratives tell about the experiences of the author. Biographical narratives tell the stories of people other than the author, whether they are individuals the author knows personally, from history, or from observation. Narrative can also be included as a part of other writing (such as persuasive or expository) in order to help that writing serve its purpose.

Narrative Nonfiction Content

The components of narrative nonfiction consist of story elements and authenticity. If these two components are considered, then the narrative nonfiction writing will be a success.

The content of narrative nonfiction is the same as fictional narrative. There need to be characters, a setting, plot, conflict, climax, resolution, and sometimes there is a theme involved. It is important to remind the students that all of these elements must be factual. Students cannot create an imaginary character or dream up a fantasy setting. The best way to bring the story elements alive in narrative nonfiction is to use detail, dialogue, description, and commentary from the author.

Narrative Nonfiction Structure and Function

The structure for narrative nonfiction is straightforward. The structure must be organized to relate a story in either the order it happened or in some other logical sequence. For example, a good narrative might begin with the climax to hook in the reader. Once this goal has been achieved, the author may start at the beginning to explain the sequence of events.

The function for narrative nonfiction is simple: it tells a story. Oftentimes, narratives also have an underlying purpose to share a message, moral, or a lesson as part of their function as well. Other purposes of narrative nonfiction are to entertain, inform, and to educate.

Narrative Nonfiction Writing Rubric

Competent

- The student can independently establish a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict.
- The student can independently engage the reader by establishing context.
- The student can independently create an organizational structure.
- The student can independently exclude extraneous details and inconsistencies.
- The student can independently present details in a logical manner.
- The student can independently use a wide range of strategies such as dialogue, figurative language, and suspense.
- The student can independently develop complex characters.
- The student can independently provide a context within which the incident occurs.
- The student can independently use an individual, authentic voice.
- The student can independently provide insight into why an incident is significant.

Emergent

- The student can usually establish a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict.
- The student can usually engage the reader by establishing context.
- The student can usually create an organizational structure.
- The student can usually exclude extraneous details and inconsistencies.
- The student can usually present details in a logical manner.
- The student can usually use a wide range of strategies such as dialogue, figurative language, and suspense.
- The student can usually develop complex characters.
- The student can usually provide a context within which the incident occurs.
- The student can usually use an individual, authentic voice.
- The student can usually provide insight into why an incident is significant.

Beginner

- The student needs help to establish a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict.
- The student needs help to engage the reader by establishing context.
- The student needs help to create an organizational structure.
- The student needs help to exclude extraneous details and inconsistencies.
- The student needs help to present details in a logical manner.
- The student needs help to use a wide range of strategies such as dialogue, figurative language, and suspense.
- The student needs help to develop complex characters.
- The student needs help to provide a context within which the incident occurs.
- The student needs help to use an individual, authentic voice.
- The student needs help to provide insight into why an incident is significant.

Parent Letter: Introduction to Narrative Nonfiction

Dear Parents,

Reading and writing are vital skills for anyone in this day and age. While our schools are working hard to provide a good foundation for our children, a strong language arts emphasis in the home is a great way to ensure your child's success. The students can be taught without the home-school connection, but it has been proven repeatedly how teamwork between school and home creates the most lasting success for children, both academically and in society.

There are many things that you can do in your home. Below is a list of suggestions and writing activities that will enhance what we are learning in school. These activities will reinforce the narrative nonfiction lessons and activities we are currently exploring. Remember to alter the suggestions or ideas in a way that would best meet the needs of you and your child. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Make frequent trips to the school or public library. Encourage your child to read both fiction and nonfiction books. Can you find biographies books? Read and enjoy these books together.
- Write down a personal experience you had with your child. Both of you can contribute. Write the first line and then switch papers. Add a line to the narrative. Continue switching and adding lines to each narrative, taking turns writing on each other's narrative. This can be a humorous and entertaining activity. When you have finished, read the two narratives. Did they turn out as you expected? Now try doing this with a biographical sketch.
- Learn about authors. Who are some famous authors you know? Who are the authors of some of your favorite children's literature? Look up information about these authors on the Internet. Many authors have their own web sites. Are there any authors that have written personal or biographical narratives?
- Help your child conduct an interview of an elderly family member or neighbor. Create a list of interview questions prior to the interview. If your child is concerned about keeping up during the interview, take a cassette recorder to record the information.
- Select a time period in United States history to study as a family. Collect library books about the topic. Interview a variety of people who were living during the time period to get their view of the events.
- Create a reading log as a family and record all of the books you have read for pleasure over the course of a month. Discuss how reading books can help with writing skills.

Your support will help your child become a competent narrative nonfiction writer. Thank you for your assistance. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Graphic Organizer: Biographical Sketch

Use the following map to help organize your writing.

Description of person/subject – dates, names, places
Event #1 in the life of subject
Event #2 in the life of the subject
Event #3 in the life of the subject
Conclusion (What are your thoughts and ideas on this person? What did you learn?)

Using First Person Point of View

Objective

The students will write a personal narrative using first-person point of view. (Standard I, Benchmark A, Skill 1; Standard I, Benchmark B, Skill 4; Standard I, Benchmark G, Skill 11; Standard I, Benchmark I, Skill 3; Standard I, Benchmark J, Skill 2)

Materials

- transparency of Narrative Nonfiction card 1, “Isn’t He Sweet?”
- overhead projector
- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or whiteboard marker
- writing paper/pencils
- red pencils or highlighter markers



Vocabulary

- promised
- gooey

For definitions, see page 27.



Reader's & Writer's Response Suggested Answers

See page 27.



Procedure

1. Ask the students to **think of a time when two students were having a disagreement on the playground**. Ask the students, “Did both students have a different idea of what happened?” Explain that each person was sharing their point of view.
2. **Write the words, “First Person” on the board.**
3. **Underline the word “first.”** Explain to students when we are writing in first person, we are explaining what happened from our point of view.
4. **Write first person point of view words on the board** and discuss them with the students: *I, we, our, my, me, and myself*. These are some of the words that are used when writing in the first person point of view. Explain to students that these words show who is “talking.”
5. **Display Narrative Nonfiction card 1** on overhead projector.
6. **Read Narrative Nonfiction card 1 aloud** while students follow along.
7. **Ask leading questions** such as, “Who wrote this narrative? Did Principal Long write the narrative? Who did? How can you tell?”
8. **Ask students to identify any of the first person point of view words** in the narrative. The words *our* (2 times), and *we* (6 times) were used.
9. **Take students on a mini field trip at your school.** You can take students on a tour of the library, play a game of kickball, go on an insect hunt, or select another activity of interest to your students.

Procedure (cont.)

10. Upon returning to the classroom **pair students with a partner to discuss their experience.**
11. When finished, distribute paper and pencils to students. Instruct them to **write a narrative about their experience.** Remind students to write in the first person point of view and to use words such as *I, we, our, my, me, and myself.*
12. Using a red pencil or highlighter marker, have **students underline the first person words** they used in their narrative.
13. **Select a few narratives to share with the class.** While reading, encourage the students to locate examples of first person point of view.

Using first-person point of view

Isn't He Sweet?

Q: What has two legs, ice cream, chocolate syrup and a cherry on top?

A: **Our** principal!

Our principal, Brian Long, asked the kids at the Brigham Elementary School to read. He **promised if we** read for a total of 1 million minutes **we** could turn him into a hman sundae.

We kept track of how many minutes we spent reading every day. By April, **we** had done it!

Mr. Long kept his promise. He sat down in the middle of the yard. When **we** were done, he was a big, gooeey mess. Reading sure is fun!

END

Note the first person words in use.



Fiction and Poetry/Nonfiction

This card can be used in conjunction with Fiction and Poetry card 1, “Ode to a Sundae.” Discuss with the students how reading the poem about the sundae helps the students visualize the principal covered with sundae toppings from Nonfiction Narrative card 1. Discuss with the students how descriptive writing can help us picture things with our minds.

Assessment

Allow time for the students to complete the writing of their narratives. When narratives are completed, use the personal narrative writing rubric on page 12 to determine the level of writing for each narrative/student. See pages 8–15 for other assessment assistance.

Cross References

For additional thematic support, you may wish to supplement this lesson with the following resources:

Exploring Writing: *Level 2:* Fiction and Poetry card 1, “Ode to a Sundae”; Persuasive card 1, “We Need More Recess”; Persuasive card 5, “The Cafeteria Should Recycle”

Writer’s Notebook: Time to Write, pages 6–12; Make a Plan, page 22; Drafting, pages 23–25

TIME For Kids Nonfiction Readers: *Kids around the World* (Upper Emergent)

Personal

**Grammar,
Usage, &
Mechanics**

**Grammar, Usage,
and Mechanics**

Explain that the use of pronouns can really enhance writing. Alternating proper nouns and pronouns can make the writing more interesting. Pronouns can also help communicate the point of view of the writing. Knowing how to use pronouns correctly in writing is an important skill to have. Have the students complete page 27, *Pronoun Pizzazz*. For additional practice of this skill, see pages 39–40 of the *Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics* book.

Suggested Class Discussion Questions

1. What do you think about what happened in the personal narrative? Would you like to do the same thing to your principal?
2. Why do you think the principal let the students do this? How can you tell?
3. Do you think your principal will be willing to do this same activity?
4. What goal would you like to set at your school? Brainstorm a list as a class.



Reader's and Writer's Response Suggested Answers

Reader's Response

1. Mr. Long promised the kids that he would let them turn him into a human sundae if they would read for a total of 1 million minutes.
2. Mr. Long wanted the kids to read. He probably thought being a goopy mess was worth it if the kids would read a lot.

Writer's Response

1. Answers will vary. Sample answer: It does make a good beginning. Kids love riddles. Readers will want to read to the end to solve the riddle.
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: Yes, the writer did choose a good title. It is funny. It could mean two things. Someone who is sweet is a nice person. But Mr. Long was also sweet because he had goopy ice cream and chocolate sauce put on him.



Vocabulary Definitions

1. **promised** — pledged, your word was given
2. **goopy** — sticky, gummy

Pronoun Pizzazz

A *pronoun* is a word that is used in place of a noun.

most common pronouns: I, you, she, he, it, we, they

Look at the underlined pronouns in the sentences below:

1. The principal asked the students to read a lot of books.

He asked the students to read a lot of books.

2. The students kept track of the minutes.

They kept track of the minutes.

3. Where is the principal who is covered in sundae toppings?

Where is he?



Directions: Replace the underlined word(s) in the following sentences with a pronoun. If necessary, change the verb. Write the new sentence.

1. Jeff should listen to his teacher.

2. Our family is planning to come and watch.

3. The assembly begins at 8:00 A.M.

4. The Jones brothers know how to read sixth grade books.

5. Ashley read the most books.

6. The principal sat down in the middle of the yard.

Expository Writing Overview

What Is Expository Writing?

While narrative text is perhaps the most comfortable and familiar for student writers, expository text is the most commonly required writing in schools. Expository writing serves to explain. It is, in fact, the backbone of nonfiction writing as seen in the real world. The outlining of directions, the retelling of events, or the description of processes are all examples of expository writing. It is found everywhere we look, from the cooking directions on a soup can to the recapping of the world's events in the daily newspaper.

Expository writing differs from narrative text in its structure, content, and function. One must approach expository writing with a structural plan. This requires careful planning and conscious organizational thought.

Categories of Expository Writing

Expository writing generally falls within two primary categories: informative and descriptive. Informative expository writing imparts news or information. Descriptive expository writing relates information in a way that creates sensory impressions. Certainly, there is tremendous crossover between the two, and most informative pieces contain descriptive elements. Generally, though, descriptive writing is a component of other genres rather than a complete form of writing on its own.

Informative Expository Writing Lessons

Lessons 1 through 6 will develop your students' informative expository writing skills. Informative writing presents facts to readers. Several resources may be utilized. Examples of this type of writing include news reports, essays, instructions, charts, graphs, time lines, advice columns, and biographies. Also included in this category are textbooks, magazine articles, nonfiction books, reference works, and historical reports. In addition, thousands of Web sites present information in a frequently-asked-questions format.

Descriptive Expository Writing Lessons

Lessons 7 through 12 will develop your students' descriptive expository writing skills. Descriptive expository writing is informative writing that speaks to the reader's sensory perceptions by building images in the mind. This includes songs and poetry based on real events, people, or things as well as advertisements, pamphlets, posters, and speeches.

Expository Formula

All good expository writing follows a formula. First, the main idea must be clearly and directly stated, or if implied, it must be clearly identifiable. The main idea must be thoroughly supported by relevant facts that are verifiable. These facts must be presented in a logical, organized, and clear structure. When your students carefully consider the structure, purpose, and supports used in their expository pieces, their written work is sure to be a success.

Expository Writing Rubric

Use this three-part rubric as a guide when assessing expository writing as a whole. The rubrics on pages 13 and 14 can be used specifically for informative or descriptive expository writing.

Competent

- The student can independently write descriptions of familiar persons, places, objects, or experiences.
- The student can independently write compositions that convey an intended purpose.
- The student can independently use standard format in written compositions.
- The student can independently generate topics.
- The student can independently use reference sources to gather information for topics.
- The student can independently organize information.

Emergent

- The student can usually write descriptions of familiar persons, places, objects, or experiences.
- The student can usually write compositions that convey an intended purpose.
- The student can usually use standard format in written compositions.
- The student can usually generate topics.
- The student can usually use reference sources to gather information for topics.
- The student can usually organize information.

Beginner

- The student requires assistance to write descriptions of familiar persons, places, objects, or experiences.
- The student requires assistance to write compositions that convey an intended purpose.
- The student requires assistance to use standard format in written compositions.
- The student requires assistance to generate topics.
- The student requires assistance to use reference sources to gather information for topics.
- The student requires assistance to organize information.

Introductory Parent Letter

Dear Parent,

As you know, reading and writing are important components of your child's education. Children typically spend most of their time reading and writing fiction, but in the real world, the majority of the reading and writing we do throughout our lives is nonfiction. For this reason, we will spend time focusing on nonfiction genres, including nonfiction narrative, expository, and persuasive writing. I encourage you to support this nonfiction focus at home in the following ways:

Reading Nonfiction

- Take trips to the library to check out nonfiction books of interest to your child.
- Encourage your child to read nonfiction magazines and newspapers.
- Have a family game night and ask your child to read the game instructions aloud.
- Have your child follow a recipe to help prepare a meal.

Writing Nonfiction

- Encourage your child to write letters to out-of-town family members or friends.
- Provide your child with a journal (or notebook and paper) and encourage him or her to write daily entries.
- Before going on errands, ask your child to list the stops that need to be made and the tasks that need to be accomplished in the most logical order.

Using Nonfiction Reference Materials

- Make use of maps when discussing vacations, political issues, and world events.
- Make use of dictionaries and encyclopedias. You can also purchase reference software, use those at your local library, or access online reference materials. (Search for “online dictionary” or “online encyclopedia.”)
- Spend time with your child reading nonfiction Web sites related to topics of interest to both you and your child.
- View nonfiction videos or DVDs with your child. Your local library may have many of these that are of interest to your child.

By participating in the activities above, you will model to your child that nonfiction reading and writing are important and have a place in everyday life. Your support will ensure your child's increased reading and writing success!

Sincerely,

Graphic Organizer: Fact or Opinion

Write three facts about your topic.

Fact 1: _____

Fact 2: _____

Fact 3: _____

Write a sentence to support each fact.

Fact 1: _____

Fact 2: _____

Fact 3: _____

Write three opinions about your topic.

Opinion 1: _____

Opinion 2: _____

Opinion 3:

Give reasons for the three opinions.

Opinion 1: _____

Opinion 2: _____

Opinion 3: _____

Write a paragraph below based on either fact or opinion. You can also write a paragraph using an opinion supported by facts.

Informative

Writing a Lead

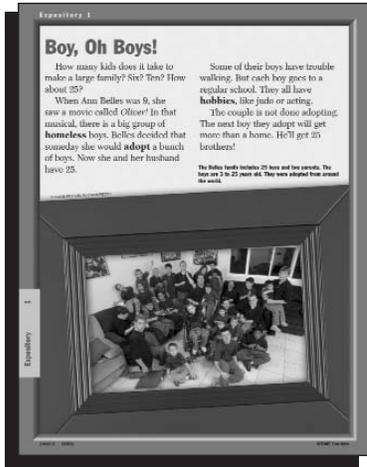
Objective

The student identifies and creates a lead for a paragraph.

(Standard I, Benchmark D, Skill 1; Standard II, Benchmark A, Skills 1–4; Standard III, Benchmark B, Skill 1)

Materials

- transparency of Expository card 1, “Boy, Oh Boys!”
- overhead projector
- sheet of paper
- chalk and chalkboard
- writing paper and pencils
- transparency of student writing sample from page 74
- highlighters for students



Vocabulary

- homeless
- adopt
- hobbies

For definitions, see page 24.



Reader's & Writer's Response Suggested Answers

See page 24.



Procedure

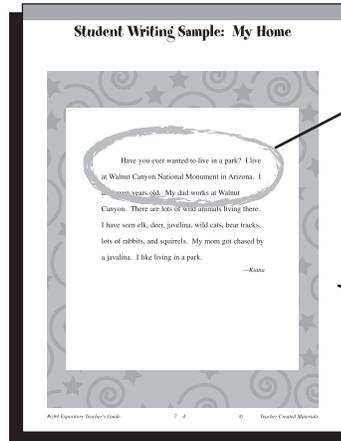
1. **Display Expository card 1, covering all but the first sentence** with a sheet of paper.
2. **Read the first sentence aloud** as the students follow along.
3. **Ask the students to make predictions** as to what the paragraph might be about. Write their predictions on the chalkboard.
4. **The first sentence of a paragraph is called the lead.** Its purpose is to “lead” the reader into the paragraph. Explain that a lead may be written in the form of a question, just as it is in this paragraph. The question makes the reader want to find out the answer.
5. Explain that since the first sentence asks a question, the remainder of the paragraph will probably answer the question.
6. **Remove the paper** covering the rest of Expository card 1 and direct the students to read the rest of the paragraph with you.
7. **Discuss the paragraph and how closely the content matches the predictions** written on the chalkboard.

Writing a Lead (cont.)

Procedure (cont.)

8. Display a transparency of the student sample from page 74. Read it aloud as a class and ask your students to explain why it shows a strong lead.

9. The student sample was written by a girl who lives in an interesting place. **Brainstorm with the class things that make a person's home interesting**, such as location, history, unique features, what's nearby, etc. For example, a student might choose to write about living where he or she can watch planes come and go at an airport.



Student opens with a thought-provoking question.

Student provides lots of details to interest the reader.

10. Instruct each student to write a paragraph about where he or she lives.

11. Have the students **exchange papers** with a partner who will read the paragraph and **suggest a question that might be an effective lead sentence**.

12. Ask the students to **revise their paragraphs to include lead sentences in question form**.

13. **Have volunteers share their expository paragraphs with the class**. Display the paragraphs in the writing center.

Assessment

Review each completed expository paragraph, checking for a lead sentence in the form of a question and for cohesion between the lead and the body of the paragraph. See pages 8–14 for rubrics and other assessment assistance.

Cross References

For additional thematic support, you may supplement the lesson with these resources:

Writer's Notebook: Time to Write Nonfiction, page 28; Make Your Writing Better, page 48

Exploring Nonfiction: *Level 2:* Social Studies card 5, "Kids Help the Hungry"; Language Arts card 12, "The Daily News: Help the Poor"

TIME for Kids Nonfiction Readers: *My Big Family* (Emergent); *Family Life in the U.S.A: Then & Now* (Early Fluent Plus)

Writing a Lead *(cont.)*

Class Discussion Questions

1. How big is your family?
2. What emotions do you think a homeless child feels when he or she is adopted?
3. What do you think it would be like to live in a home with 25 siblings?



Reader's and Writer's Response Suggested Answers

Reader's Response

1. Ann Belles saw *Oliver!* as a young girl. The movie was about a big group of homeless boys. She wanted to give homeless boys a home.
2. Questions will vary. Check that each student's question is a complete sentence and is properly punctuated.

Writer's Response

1. Some boys have trouble walking. Each boy goes to a regular school. The boys have hobbies like judo or acting.
2. Answers will vary. Here's a sample answer: I like the title. It is funny. When people are surprised or excited, they sometimes say, "Boy, oh boy!" The title comes from that saying. But the ending is changed to "boys" instead of "boy." That's a clue that the story is about many boys—25 in all!

Grammar, Usage, & Mechanics

Ask your students to use highlighters to identify all the marks of terminal punctuation in Expository card 1. Discuss why some are periods while others are question marks and exclamation marks. Then have your students complete page 25, Statements and Questions. For additional practice of this skill, see pages 1–2 of the *Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics* book.



Vocabulary Definitions

1. **homeless**—without a home
2. **adopt**—accept or take in
3. **hobbies**—activities

Statements and Questions

Directions: Change each statement into a question. Write the question on the line. Don't forget to use correct punctuation. The first one is done for you.

1. It was a nice summer day.

Was it a nice summer day?

2. I saw your sister on the playground.

3. I'm going to plant a garden tomorrow.

4. I like playing kickball.

5. This is my favorite movie.

6. Do your best on the spelling test.

7. That woman is my mother.

8. I had fun at the soccer game.

Persuasive Writing Overview

What Is Persuasive Writing?

Persuasive writing is a powerful communication tool. The intention of a persuasive piece is to influence the reader to change the way in which he or she thinks or acts. The writer attempts to convince the reader through argumentation, advice, or pure entreaty to believe or do as the writer desires.

In persuasive writing, the author states and supports an opinion and then tries to sway the reader into agreement and perhaps action. In this way, the goal of persuasive writing is active. It also depends upon the reader in a way that is far more concrete than with any other writing genre.

Persuasive Structures

The most common persuasive structures include the following:

Letters: A persuasive letter might take the form of a complaint with a call for reparation or as a request for a personal favor.

Editorials: Editorials clearly express an opinion on a topic. Without the opinion (or slant), the writing would be expository. The author's bias is the basis for the persuasion.

Reviews: Reviews can be found in most newspapers and many magazines, and they do just as their name suggests. They review or evaluate a film, television show, book, play, story, concert, etc. Reviews give an opinion of the item being reviewed with the intention of swaying the reader to see, read, or avoid the item.

Persuasive Components

The structure of different persuasive pieces may vary, but each will have some basic components:

Subject: The subject of the writing must always be clearly stated for the writing to be sensible.

Opinion: The author's opinion about the subject may or may not be stated, but the viewpoint should be clear through the gist of the writing.

Reader suggestion: The author's suggested course of action for the reader, if not expressly stated, is at least implied.

The Key to Good Persuasive Writing

Persuasive writing always tries to affect the reader's thoughts and/or actions. Language, structure, examples, and corresponding graphics—each of these must be chosen with persuasion in mind. Of course, the writing must be accurate so that the effects of the persuasion are not based on inaccuracies or, even worse, fabrication. The writer of a persuasive piece must always maintain his or her integrity.

Persuasive Writing Rubric

Use this three-part rubric as a guide when assessing persuasive writing as a whole. The rubrics on pages 11, 12, and 13 can be used specifically for letters, editorials, and reviews.

Competent

- The student can independently develop a main idea that conveys a judgment.
- The student can independently arrange supporting information.
- The student can independently exclude irrelevant information.
- The student can independently support arguments with evidence.
- The student can independently take and maintain a position.

Emergent

- The student can usually develop a main idea that conveys a judgment.
- The student can usually arrange supporting information.
- The student can usually exclude irrelevant information.
- The student can usually support arguments with evidence.
- The student can usually take and maintain a position.

Beginner

- The student requires assistance to develop a main idea that conveys a judgment.
- The student requires assistance to arrange supporting information.
- The student requires assistance to exclude irrelevant information.
- The student requires assistance to support arguments with evidence.
- The student requires assistance to take and maintain a position.

Introductory Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

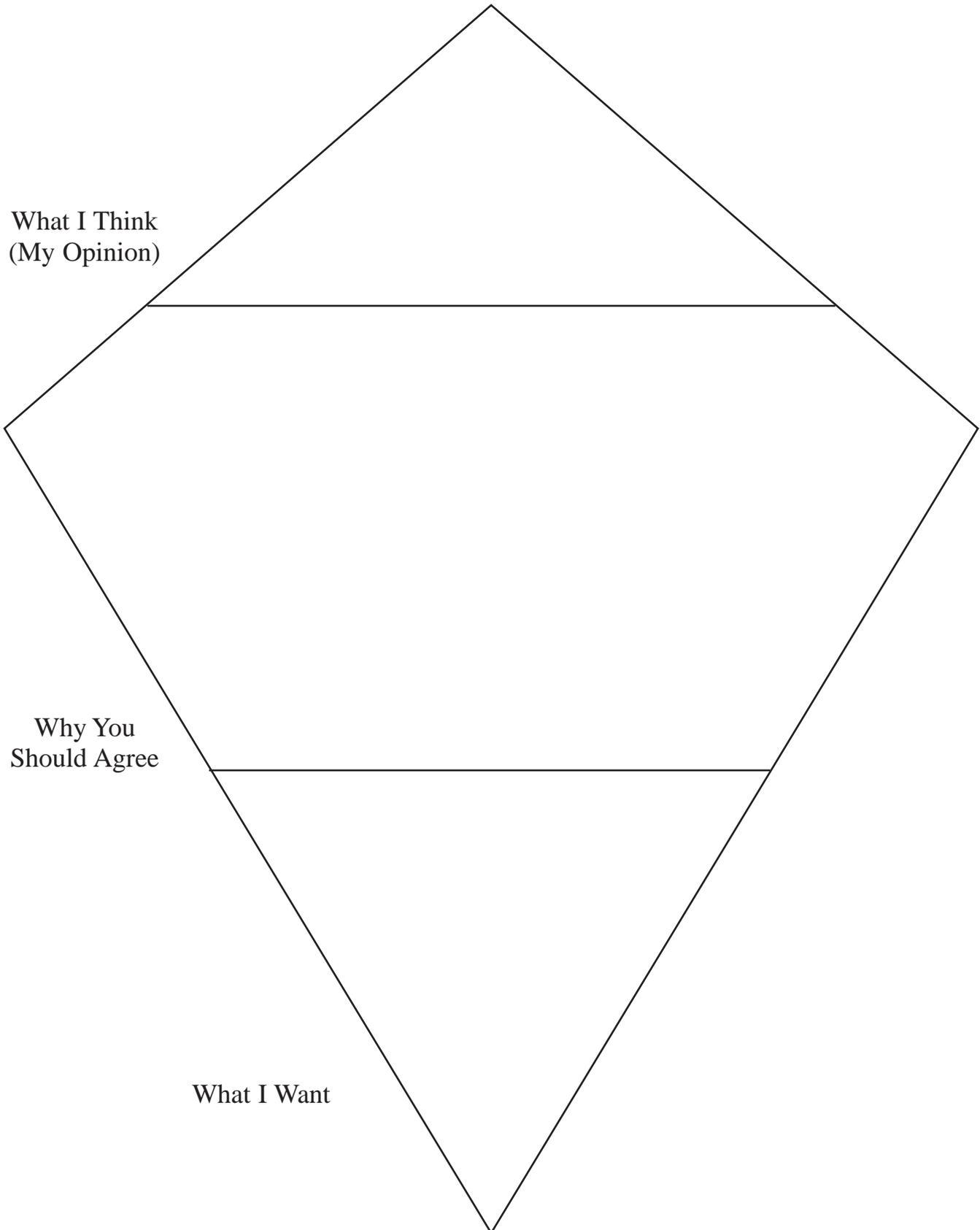
Persuasive writing can be found in many different places. Editorials and movie, book, and restaurant reviews all attempt to influence the reader to agree with the author's point of view. Our language arts curriculum includes a persuasive writing component. Your child will participate in reading and writing persuasive letters, editorials, and reviews this year. Here are some ways for you to strengthen your child's ability to write persuasive materials:

- Always praise and comment on the *ideas* found in your child's writing instead of simply concentrating on its form, spelling, or grammatical errors. Writing is a communication tool, and the most important thing a writer can do is to create a strong message.
- Have your child write you an explanation for why you should take him or her to a movie, buy a game, or host a sleepover. The more practice your child has at expressing an opinion and giving reasons to back it up, the easier persuasive writing will become.
- Ask your child to share his or her opinions with you on a daily basis. Share your opinions as well. Point out that what's being expressed is opinions, not facts (although opinions are often based on facts, and you can point that out, too).
- If you find a newspaper or magazine article that includes facts and opinions, read it aloud to your child. Ask your child to identify which items are facts and which are opinions.
- Read persuasive text (such as an editorial or movie review) to your child on any topic of interest. Children who listen to persuasive text have a much easier time reading and writing it.
- Have your child help you compose a letter to the editor about a topic that interests you both. Watch for it to be published. Seeing one's own ideas in print is a powerful motivator.
- Encourage your child to develop correspondence (traditional mail or e-mail) with an out-of-town family member or friend. The more practice children have with writing, the more confident and competent they become as writers.

Your support will help your child become a competent persuasive writer. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Graphic Organizer: Opinion and Support Diamond



Using Politeness in Writing

Letters

Objective

The student will write polite statements to make a request.

(Standard II, Benchmark C, Skill 1; Standard III, Benchmark A, Skill 1; Standard III, Benchmark C, Skill 1; Standard III, Benchmark K, Skill 2; Standard III, Benchmark L, Skill 1)

Materials

- Persuasive card 1, “We Need More Recess”
- overhead projector and pen
- chart paper and marker
- writing paper
- pencils



Vocabulary

- fresh

For the definition, see page 24.



Reader's & Writer's Response Suggested Answers

See page 24.



Procedure

1. **Ask your class questions about recess.** What is the purpose of recess? Is recess long enough? Would more recess be better? Why or why not?
2. **Display Persuasive card 1** on the overhead. Read it together as a group.
3. **Ask the students to identify what Peter is requesting.** Did he ask in a polite way? **How did he use courtesy?** (For example, “we want to ask . . .” (instead of demand); “thanks for taking the time . . .”) Do you think that using courtesy helped his chances of getting his request fulfilled? Why or why not?
4. **Brainstorm a list of courtesy words** and write them on chart paper or the board. (please, thanks, thank you, grateful, will, would, appreciate)
5. **As a class, write some polite statements** using at least one word from the brainstormed list in each. Request additional art supplies from the principal. For example:
 - Would you please consider getting us some more chalk pastels?
 - We would appreciate having more watercolor paints.
 - Thank you for thinking about my request for art supplies.
6. **Point out how you started each sentence** with a capital letter and included punctuation at the end.

Procedure *(cont.)*

7. **Have the students write three polite statements** in which they ask the parent teacher association to fund more playground equipment. Each polite statement must use one of the words from the brainstormed list.
8. **Have students exchange papers** with a partner. Ask **partners to underline the courtesy words** from the brainstormed list.

Assessment

If you have the partners sign their names at the bottom of the sheet, you can evaluate both students' grasp of the material. Check the statements for courtesy words and also note if the partner correctly identified the courtesy words. See pages 8–13 for rubrics and other assessment assistance.

Cross References

For additional thematic support, you may supplement the lesson with these resources:

Writer's Notebook: Kinds of Sentences, page 57

Exploring Nonfiction: *Grade 1*: Language Arts card 2, “Editorial Page: The Daily Record”

TIME For Kids Nonfiction Readers: *Games Around the World* (Fluent)

Letters

Using Politeness in Writing *(cont.)*

Class Discussion Questions

1. Is recess a valuable part of the school day? Why or why not?
2. Why might Ms. Carpenter respond to this request by giving more recess time?
3. Why might Ms. Carpenter respond to this request by refusing to give more recess time?
4. What kinds of things do you enjoy doing during recess?



Reader's and Writer's Response Suggested Answers

Reader's Response

1. It doesn't seem to be just Peter's idea. He says that some kids in the class asked him to write the letter. (Some students may note that Peter may have joined in with other kids in coming up with the idea.)
2. Peter thinks that recess gives kids a fresh start and helps them pay attention.

Writer's Response

1. "Your Friend" would make a good ending for a letter to a good friend. But it wouldn't be polite in a letter to the teacher.
2. No, it wouldn't make a better ending. Peter doesn't know if Ms. Carpenter will agree with him. If he says, "Thanks for giving us more recess time," it sounds as if he assumes she'll agree, or worse, is making a demand rather than a request. The original ending is good. It thanks Ms. Carpenter for paying attention to the letter and the request for more recess time, but it leaves the decision to her.



Vocabulary Definition

fresh—clean, cool, refreshing

Grammar, Usage, & Mechanics

Give the definition of common nouns: people, places, things. Demonstrate using familiar examples, such as *girl, forest, car*, etc. As a class, identify the common nouns in Persuasive card 1. Have your students categorize them as people or things. (No places are mentioned.) Then have your students complete page 25. For additional practice of this skill, see pages 7-8 of the *Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics* workbook.

Nouns

A **noun** is a person, place, or thing.

.....

Directions: Read the words below. If the word is a noun, circle Yes. Put an X in the column that shows the kind of noun. If the word is not a noun, circle No.

	Noun?	Person	Place	Thing
1. cat	Yes No			
2. jump	Yes No			
3. valley	Yes No			
4. hot	Yes No			
5. baby	Yes No			
6. beach	Yes No			
7. boy	Yes No			
8. bright	Yes No			
9. friend	Yes No			
10. walking	Yes No			

Directions: Draw a picture for each type of noun in the box below.

Person	Place	Thing

About Fiction and Poetry Writing

What Is Fiction?

Fiction is the art of invention and creativity. The word “fiction” is derived from a verb which means “to make,” “to form,” and sometimes “to feign.” When writing fiction, students are encouraged to use the power of their imaginations to create imaginary people, places, and events. Students love to write fiction because there seem to be no limits, but writing fiction is not easy. Asking a student to make something up and then write it down can be very difficult. In addition, there are conventions and rules for writing fiction and poetry that can help students to be more successful in making their own writing and poetry better.

Why Is Writing Fiction Important for Students?

Writing fiction is fun for students. Students enjoy crafting and inventing. While most of the reading and writing children and adults do is nonfiction, many of the elements of fiction writing can help students to be better nonfiction readers and writers as well. For example, understanding elements of poetry can help students write catchier titles for their nonfiction expository essays. Understanding character development can help students better use details to support their ideas in nonfiction persuasive writing.

Categories of Fiction

There are many categories within the genre of fiction—mystery, horror, science fiction, adventure, fantasy, poetry, myths, legends, fairy tales, historical fiction, and humor, just to name a few. Students using the materials provided in this kit will focus on improving their writing skills in poetry, fantasy, folk and fairy tales, and fables.

Fiction and Poetry Elements

All fiction contains the following elements: characters, setting, plot, point of view, and narrative voice. The economy of language in poetry encourages the use of figurative language, organization, and careful word choice. Using these lessons, students will learn how to include these elements in stories and poems to make their writing more interesting for the reader.

The Key to Writing Good Fiction and Poetry

All good fiction writing contains similar characteristics. The writer chooses words carefully to most precisely convey his or her ideas. Good fiction includes rich character development in which a character has a goal or problem to overcome. Developing a clear picture of the setting and scenery is also a characteristic of good fiction.

Good poetry is characterized by vivid word choice, descriptive details, and a rhythm to the lines.

Fiction Writing Rubric

Use this five-level rubric to evaluate each student's fiction writing.

Level 4—Exceptional

- The student successfully structures writing according to formats within the genre.
- The student effectively uses descriptive and figurative language to make the poem/story real for the reader.
- The student captivates the reader by writing a great beginning, or “hook.”
- The student includes character, setting, and plot that are appropriate for the type of story.
- The student effectively demonstrates an understanding of elements of a story, including conflict/resolution and action/suspense.
- The student plans a story and edits his/her writing to create a finished product.

Level 3—Capable

- The student structures writing according to formats within the genre.
- The student uses descriptive and figurative language to make the poem/story real for the reader.
- The student captivates the reader by writing a beginning, or “hook.”
- The student includes some element of character, setting, and plot that are appropriate for the type of story.
- The student demonstrates an understanding of elements of a story, including conflict/resolution and action/suspense.
- The student plans a story and edits parts of his/her writing to create a finished product.

Level 2—Developing

- The student attempts to structure writing according to formats within the genre.
- The student uses some examples of descriptive and figurative language to make the poem/story real for the reader.
- The student somewhat captivates the reader by writing a beginning, or “hook.”
- The student includes some elements of character, setting, and plot that are appropriate for the type of story.
- The student demonstrates a developing understanding of elements of a story, including conflict/resolution and action/suspense.
- The student plans a story and attempts to edit his/her writing to create a finished product.

Level 1—Beginning

- The student is unable to structure writing according to formats within the genre.
- The student uses few examples of descriptive and figurative language to make the poem/story real for the reader.
- The student attempts to captivate the reader by writing a beginning, or “hook.”
- The student includes few elements of character, setting, and plot that are appropriate for the type of story.
- The student demonstrates a beginning understanding of elements of a story, including conflict/resolution and action/suspense.
- The student plans some parts of a story and edits some of his/her writing to create a finished product.

Level 0

The student offers no writing or does not respond to the assignment as presented.

Introduction to Fiction and Poetry

Dear Parents,

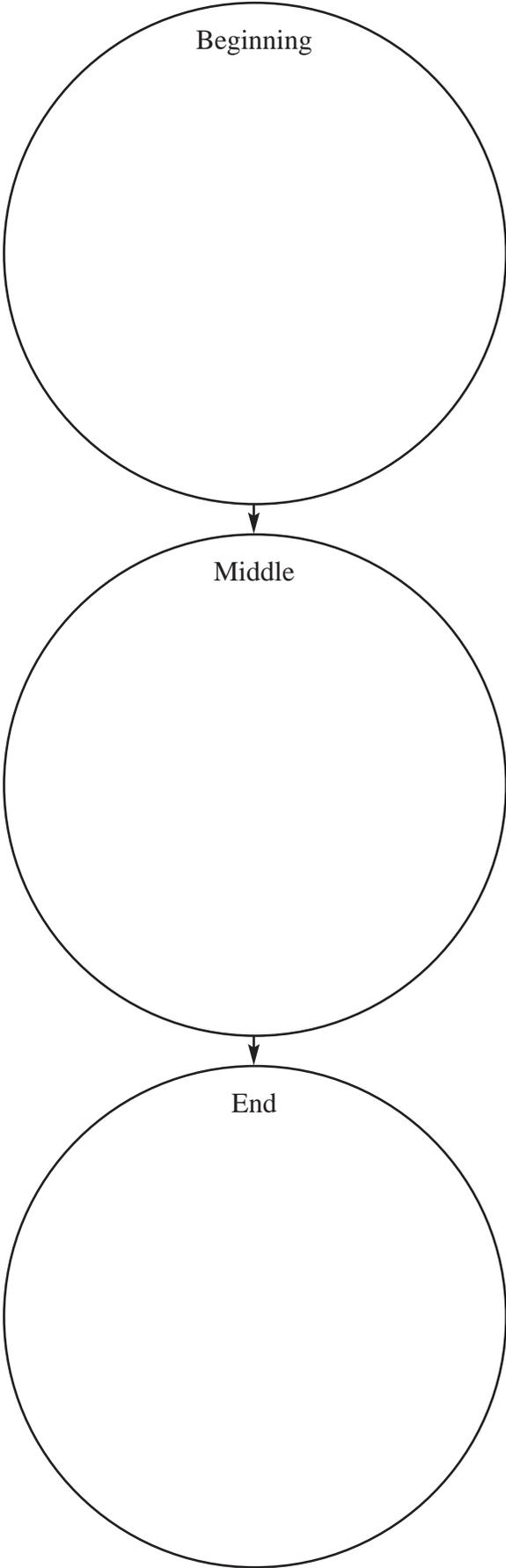
Throughout our Fiction and Poetry unit, your child will be writing poetry, folk and fairy tales, fables, and fantasy stories. Your child will learn many different skills to successfully write in each genre. Each of these skills directly corresponds to developing nonfiction writing skills. As we study examples of fiction writing, we will connect fiction writing to a nonfiction counterpart.

Below you will find some suggestions for ways you can assist your child in becoming a better writer:

- Support your child's writing by encouraging him or her to read. Have your child read independently and spend time reading together. Young readers need practice in reading silently to themselves and reading aloud to others. (Remember that it is always important for children to hear others read aloud to them.)
- As you share books with each other, discuss the language in the books. Point out ways that authors try to convey information. Analyze stories and talk about plot, character, and setting.
- Encourage your child to read poetry, folk and fairy tales, fables, and fantasy stories. Discuss his or her writing in class and how examples in books may help to expand on ideas.
- Look for authentic ways for your child to write at home. Shopping lists, letters or cards to family members, thank-you notes, and wish lists are just some of the ways you might be able to motivate your child. It is important for developing writers to see that writing has a real place in the outside world and is not just a classroom activity.
- Support your child's efforts in writing by reading his or her work and providing encouraging words and praise.

Sincerely,

Story Plan



Poetry

Writing with Rhythm

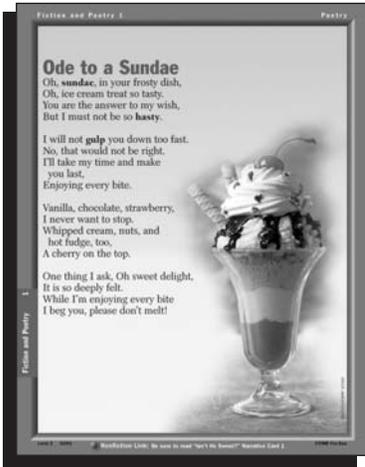
Objective

The student understands the use of rhythm in poetry.

(Standard I, Benchmark B, Skill 1; Standard I, Benchmark C, Skill 5; Standard I, Benchmark D, Skill 1; Standard I, Benchmark G, Skill 4; Standard I, Benchmark H, Skill 2;)

Materials

- overhead transparency of Fiction and Poetry card 1, "Ode to a Sundae"
- overhead projector
- poetry books
- writing paper
- pencils
- student writing sample (page 74)



Procedure

1. **Display the overhead transparency** of Fiction and Poetry card 1 on the overhead projector. Tell students that they are going to read a poem about an ice cream sundae. Give students time to discuss their prior knowledge of sundaes.
2. Explain to students that you are going to read the poem aloud. Ask the class to listen to the poem carefully and see if they can determine **what makes the poem different from other poems.**
3. **Read the poem aloud** to students. Make sure to add expression to your reading. Read the sections with rhythm, emphasizing the lines that rhyme with each other.
4. When you are finished reading, **ask students to share their reactions to the poem.** Students may notice the rhyming words, the way that the poet writes to the sundae itself, or the poet's use of sensory details. Point out the author's use of nouns throughout the poem.
5. Talk with students about the difference between how poetry sounds when it is read aloud versus how a story sounds when it is read aloud. **Explain that poetry has a rhythm to it.** Words and phrases flow together to make the poem almost sound like music. This "flow" may include rhyme, but it doesn't necessarily have to.
6. **Have students read the poem aloud** as a class. Let them practice their oral reading with a partner first, and then do a choral reading of the poem as a group.
7. Over the next few days, **read from a variety of poetry books** to show students examples of rhythm in poetry. The more examples you share, the better. Read all different kinds of poetry aloud. Choose poems with different topics, of different lengths, and using different poetic devices (e.g., alliteration, onomatopoeia, similes, and metaphors, etc.).



Vocabulary

- sundae
- hasty
- gulp

For definitions, see page 26.

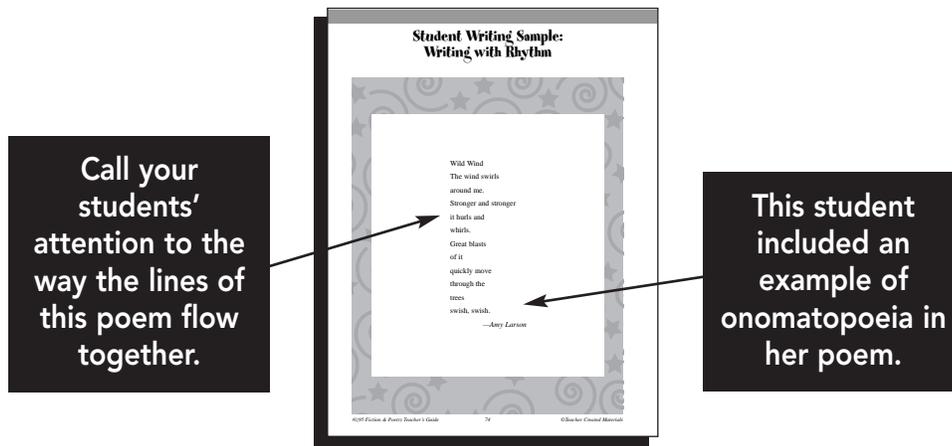


Reader's & Writer's Response Suggested Answers

See page 26.

Procedure (cont.)

8. Let students practice reading poetry aloud to learn more about the rhythm of poetry.
9. Have students write a poem independently. You may choose to have students write poetry about a particular topic or you may let them choose their own topics. The more freedom you give your students, the more likely you will get poems that show creativity and individuality. You can also model poetry writing with the sample on page 74.



10. When students are finished writing, give them time to **read their poems aloud** in small groups or as a whole class.
11. Have students **discuss** the use of rhythm in each poem.



Nonfiction/Fiction and Poetry

This card can be used with Narrative Nonfiction card 1, “Isn’t He Sweet?” Compare the structure of a poem versus the style of a first-person narrative text.

Assessment

Observe students as they read poems aloud, listening for students reading with rhythm. Assess students’ final written poems, checking for understanding the use of rhythm in poetry. See the student writing samples on page 74. See pages 8–14 for rubrics and other assessment assistance.

Cross References

For additional thematic support, you may supplement the lesson with these resources:

Exploring Writing: *Level 2:* Narrative Nonfiction card 1, “Isn’t He Sweet?”

Writer’s Notebook: Time to Write Poetry, pages 44–46; Choose Better Words, page 52

Exploring Nonfiction: *Level 2:* Math card 1, “Top 5 Ice Cream Flavors”

Time for Kids Nonfiction Readers: *All About Chocolate* (Early Fluent)

Writing with Rhythm *(cont.)*

Class Discussion Questions

1. How do you know that the poet likes ice cream sundaes?
2. What kind of food would you “talk to” in a poem?
3. Would this idea for a poem make a good story? Why or why not?



Reader's and Writer's Response Suggested Answers

Reader's Response

1. The ice cream will melt; “I beg you, please don’t melt.”
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: Yes, it would make me want to eat a sundae. I like all the things that are in a sundae. I like vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry ice cream. I like whipped cream, nuts, and hot fudge. I like the cherry on the top.

Writer's Response

1. frosty
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: It is a good title. The poet is praising a sundae.

Grammar, Usage, & Mechanics

Instruct students to complete page 27, “Nouns.” For additional practice of this skill, see pages 7–8 of the *Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics*.



Vocabulary Definitions

1. **sundae**—an ice cream treat consisting of a scoop of ice cream with a topping such as syrup, nuts, or whipped cream
2. **hasty**—quick, fast
3. **gulp**—to swallow quickly in large amounts

Nouns

A **noun** names a person, place, or thing.

Example: ice cream

A noun can be singular. This means it names one person, place, or thing.

Example: scoop

A noun can be plural. This means it names more than one person, place, or thing.

Example: scoops



Directions: Read the story below. Circle each singular noun. Draw a line under each plural noun.

My friend went to the store to buy ice cream. She had money in her pocket. The store had many flavors of ice cream. My friend picked two pints of ice cream. She gave the cashier five dollars. We ate the ice cream with cookies. Yum!

Isn't He Sweet?

Q: What has two legs, ice cream, chocolate syrup, and a cherry on top?

A: Our principal!

Our principal, Brian Lowe, asked the kids at the Brougham Elementary School to read. He **promised** if we read for a total of 1 million minutes, we could turn him into a human sundae.

We kept track of how many minutes we spent reading every day. By April, we had done it!

Mr. Lowe kept his promise. He sat down in the middle of the yard. When we were done, he was a big, **gooey** mess. Reading sure is fun!

Brougham Elementary School students pour gobs of chocolate syrup on principal Brian Lowe.

ARTVILLE



MICHELLE AFFOLTER/THE OLAH NEWS/AP PHOTO

Reader's Response

- 1 What did Mr. Lowe, the principal, promise the kids?
- 2 Mr. Lowe probably didn't enjoy being a gooey mess. Why do you think he made the promise he did?

Writer's Response

- 1 The writer of "Isn't He Sweet?" starts the story with a riddle. Do you think it makes a good beginning? Explain your answer.
- 2 Do you think the writer chose a good title for the story? Tell why you think that.

Be the Writer

Write a paragraph about something fun you've done with your family. You will be one of the characters in the story, so use words such as *I*, *me*, *my*, *we*, *us*, and *our*.

Words to Know

promised

gooey

From the Writer

There are many different kinds of stories. Not all are told the same way.

Suppose you told the story of Little Red Riding Hood. You'd talk about Red Riding Hood and the wolf. They're inside the story—but you're not. As the storyteller, you wouldn't write *I*, *me*, or *my* in the story (unless it is being said by a character).

Read "Isn't He Sweet?" Is the storyteller on the inside or the outside of the story?

This storyteller is inside. He was one of the kids who did the reading and got to turn Mr. Lowe into a human sundae!

When you tell or write a story, use the right words. If you are inside the story, you may use words such as *I*, *me*, *my*, *we*, *us*, and *our*.

Boy, Oh Boys!

How many kids does it take to make a large family? Six? Ten? How about 25?

When Ann Belles was 9, she saw a movie called *Oliver!* In that musical, there is a big group of **homeless** boys. Belles decided that someday she would **adopt** a bunch of boys. Now she and her husband have 25.

Some of their boys have trouble walking. But each boy goes to a regular school. They all have **hobbies**, like judo or acting.

The couple is not done adopting. The next boy they adopt will get more than a home. He'll get 25 brothers!

The Belles family includes 25 boys and two parents. The boys are 3 to 25 years old. They were adopted from around the world.

THOMAS MICHAEL ALLEMAN/PEOPLE



Reader's Response

- 1 How did a movie give Ann Belles the idea of adopting a bunch of boys?
- 2 Suppose you could talk to Ann Belles. What question would you like to ask her? Write your question.

Writer's Response

- 1 What does the writer tell you about the boys in the Belles family? Write three things.
- 2 Read the title. Do you think it is a good title? Would you choose a different one if you were the writer? Explain your answer.

Be the Writer

Think about a movie that was important to you. How did it make you feel? Did it give you ideas for trying new things or change how you thought about something? Write a paragraph about it.

Words to Know

homeless hobbies
adopt

From the Writer

Writers usually feel excited about their topics. The topic is what they are writing about. Will the readers feel excited, too? A good writer finds ways to get readers interested in the topic. One of the best ways is to write a good lead. The lead is the beginning of a news story.

Read “Boy, Oh Boys!” Then think about the writer’s lead. This writer found a good way to write a lead. He asked a question in the first sentence. When readers read a question, they think about how they’d answer it. They want to read on to find out how the writer will answer it.

As you write, think as a reader would think. Get the reader interested in your topic. Write a good lead. If you can think of a good question that readers will want to answer, use that in your lead.



PUNCHSTOCK

We Need More Recess

Dear Ms. Carpenter,

Some of the kids in our class asked me to write this letter. We have something important we want to ask you. We think we should have more time for recess.

We know that you have a lot of work to cover. Recess can help. It gives us a **fresh** start on the day. That makes it easier to pay attention.

Maybe there are ways we can save time during the day. We could all try to be faster when we put our things away. We could be quicker when we get ready to go out.

Thanks for taking the time to think about this.

Sincerely,

Peter Watkins

Reader's Response

- 1 Do you think the letter to Ms. Carpenter was Peter's idea? Give a reason for your answer.
- 2 In what ways does Peter think that recess helps kids? Write two ways.

Writer's Response

- 1 Why do you think Peter closed his letter with "Sincerely" rather than "Your friend"?
- 2 Suppose Peter had written, "Thanks for giving us more recess time." Do you think this would have made a better last sentence than the one he wrote? Tell what you think.

Be the Writer

Pretend you have an Aunt Sue and an Uncle Ned who live near an amusement park. You'd like to have them take you to the park. Write a note asking them if you can come.

Words to Know

fresh

From the Writer

Writing a letter is like talking to someone. Read "We Need More Recess." Peter's letter is polite. That's just the way he would talk to his teacher.

In the first paragraph, Peter says, "We have something important we want to ask you." That's a good beginning. It's always good to ask nicely. Saying something like "I want this, and I want it now!" would not be polite.

Peter also says, "We know that you have a lot of work to cover." It shows that he is trying to think about the things that might be important to Ms. Carpenter.

When you want to leave a good impression, saying "thank you"—as Peter does—is a good idea. At the end of his letter, Peter writes "Sincerely." This is a polite ending for a letter.

Ode to a Sundae

Oh, **sundae**, in your frosty dish,
Oh, ice cream treat so tasty.
You are the answer to my wish,
But I must not be so **hasty**.

I will not **gulp** you down too fast.
No, that would not be right.
I'll take my time and make
you last,
Enjoying every bite.

Vanilla, chocolate, strawberry,
I never want to stop.
Whipped cream, nuts, and
hot fudge, too,
A cherry on the top.

One thing I ask, Oh sweet delight,
It is so deeply felt.
While I'm enjoying every bite
I beg you, please don't melt!



BRUCE JAMES/FOOD PIX

Reader's Response

- 1 What will happen if a person eats a sundae too slowly? Write the line from the poem that tells this.
- 2 Suppose you've never had a sundae. Would this poem make you want to try one? Give reasons for your answer.

Writer's Response

- 1 How does the poet remind readers that ice cream is a cold treat? Find a word in the first stanza (group of four lines) that makes you think of something cold. Write that word.
- 2 In an ode, a poet praises someone or something. Do you think "Ode to a Sundae" is a good title for this poem? Why?

Be the Writer

Think about a food you love to eat. Write an ode to that food. Your ode can be like the one on this card. Think about rhyme and rhythm as you write. "Talk" to the food, just as this writer does to the sundae.

Words to Know

sundae gulp
hasty

From the Writer

Read the poem on this card. If you can, read it aloud. If you cannot read aloud, then read to yourself, but imagine the sound of your voice.

What did you notice about the sound of the poem? You probably heard rhymes. Did you hear something else as you read? Did your voice go up and down? A poem is like music. It has *stressed* and *unstressed* syllables. *Stressed* means strong. *Unstressed* means weak. Read the first line of the poem. It should sound something like this, with the capitalized word parts being spoken more strongly: "Oh SUNdae IN your FROSty DISH."

Rhythm is all the stressed and unstressed syllables put together in a pattern. In "Ode to a Sundae," the rhythm is a simple pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.

When you write your own poems, practice creating rhythm to make your writing almost musical.