

PREVIEW

Grade 7



# Expository & Opinion Writing

Deconstructing Text,  
Writing Essays, Reports,  
Response to Text



**Updated & Expanded Edition by Cynthia Williamson  
with Barbara Mariconda**

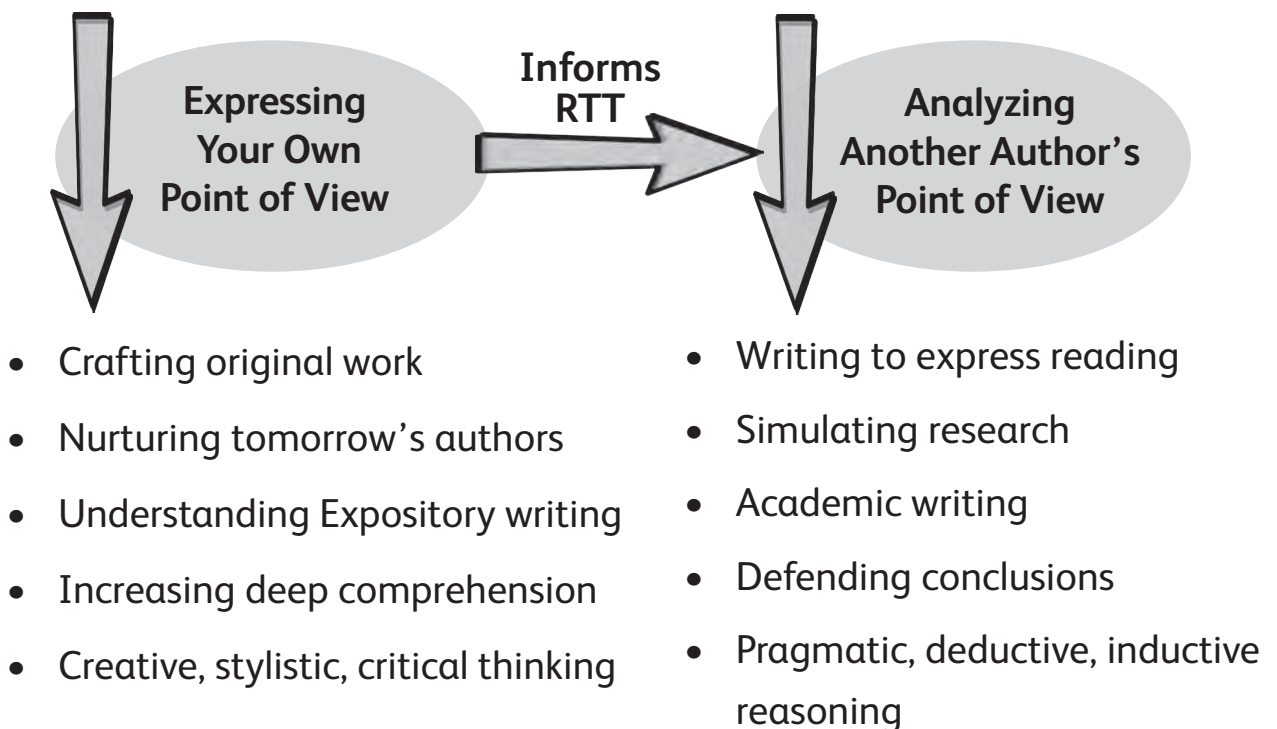
*Original work by Barbara Mariconda and Dea Paoletta Auray*

**Empowering**  
Writers

### 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 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 series of questions. They must back their ideas, conclusions, or positions by citing evidence in the text and from their own relevant personal experience. This kind of literary analysis task obviously encourages the kind of logical thinking required in secondary school and beyond. 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. Also, keep this in mind – while the world of academia and work will always appreciate and require analytical writing in response to text, we will still need the next generation of authors who will generate original writing for others to respond to. So, don't throw the baby out with the bath water! For these reasons we have included both generative and responsive writing tasks in throughout the book.

### GENERATIVE VS. RESPONSIVE WRITING



# Grade 7 Year-at-a-Glance

For use when teaching *Expository and Response to Text* writing across the course of a school year.

<b>MONTH 1</b> Section 1: Recognizing Genre/ Organization	<b>MONTH 2</b> Section 2: Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas	<b>MONTH 3</b> Section 3: Elaboration- Detail Generating Questions	<b>MONTH 4</b> Section 3: Elaboration- Detail Generating Questions	<b>MONTH 5</b> Research
<p><b>Baseline Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the Expository Pillar pp. 12-14</li> <li>Lesson 1: Recognizing Genre, p. 21</li> <li>Lesson 2: Distinguishing Between Expository and Opinion Writing, p. 23</li> <li>Lesson 3: Analyzing Real World Applications of Argumentative and Opinion Writing, p. 31</li> <li><i>Lesson 4: Strategic Reading - Informed Writing, p. 34</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 5: Strategic Reading - Organization and Text Conventions, p. 44</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 6: Close Reading Challenge, p. 52</i></li> <li>Lesson 7: Analyzing and Annotating Expository, Opinion and Argumentative Writing, p. 56</li> <li>Lesson 8: Writing Simple Summary Paragraphs, p. 87</li> <li>Lesson 9: Finding Irrelevant, Extraneous Details, p. 90</li> <li>Lesson 10: Expository Pieces for Comparison, p. 96</li> <li>Lesson 11: Cut and Paste Activities, p. 101</li> </ul> <p><b>Introduce Reference Sheet from Section 6: Clue Words in Writing Tasks, pp. 407-408</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson 1: Sort and Categorize, p. 115</li> <li>Lesson 2: Compare These Pieces, p. 117</li> <li>Lesson 3: Pick, List and Choose, p. 120</li> <li><i>Lesson 4: Pick, List, Choose, Ask, Find to Generate Main Ideas for Writing About Science or Social Studies, p. 123</i></li> <li>Lesson 5: Main Ideas - Don't Overlap Them!, p. 131</li> <li>Lesson 6: Main Ideas - Broad or Too Narrow?, p. 137</li> <li>Lesson 7: Recognizing Givens and Variables in Prompts and Assignments, p. 142</li> <li>Lesson 8: Generating Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas, p. 145</li> <li>Lesson 9: Alternatives to Boring, Redundant Main Idea Sentences, p. 147</li> <li>Lesson 10: Revising Boring, Redundant Main Ideas, p. 151</li> <li>Lesson 11: Using a Thesaurus and Standard Proofreading/editing Marks, p. 153</li> <li>Lesson 12: Main Idea Blurbs into Sentences, p. 157</li> <li><i>Lesson 13: Turning Questions into Responses, p. 161</i></li> <li>Lesson 14: The Missing Main Idea, p. 168</li> <li>Lesson 15: Sentence Variety and Word Choice, p. 171</li> <li><i>Lesson 16: Preparing to Write a Response to Text, p. 177</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 17: Preparing to Respond in Writing to Multiple Texts, p. 196</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson 1: What Does it Look Like? Why is it Important? Grab Bag, p. 215</li> <li>Lesson 2: Just OK or Much Better?, p. 217</li> <li>Lesson 3: Sentence Matching, p. 219</li> <li>Lesson 4: Writing Sentences Using the Detail Generating Questions, p. 221</li> <li>Lesson 5: Finding Overly General Words and Phrases, p. 224</li> <li>Lesson 6: Break up That Grocery List!, p. 228</li> <li>Lesson 7: Using Detail Generating Questions, p. 230</li> <li>Lesson 8: Flip the Sentence Subject!, p. 235</li> <li><i>Lesson 9: Reading and Summarizing Texts, p. 243</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 10: Comparing and Contrasting in Research Simulation Tasks, p. 253</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 11: Paraphrasing, p. 266</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 12: Giving the Author Credit, p. 272</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue: Using the Detail Generating Questions - Model and Guided Practice</li> <li><i>Continue: Response to Text Lessons</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Introduce from Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Lesson 1: Analyzing Prompts for Givens and Variables, p. 410</b></li> <li><b>Lesson 2: 7-Day Process Writing Timeline, p. 460</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Process Writing Piece:</b></p> <p>Choose an appropriate topic and use the process writing timeline to instruct how to put a fully developed piece together.</p> <p><b>Introduce from Section 6: Steps for Approaching Response to Text Compositions, pp. 423-424</b></p> <p>Choose an appropriate text or paired texts from your curriculum and write a response.</p>	<p><b>Mid-year Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Lesson 1: Reading Strategically and Finding Information Within Text, p. 279</i></li> <li>Lesson 2: Research! Using Search Engines, p. 282</li> <li><i>Lesson 3: Images and Videos: Adding Descriptive Details and Generating Research Questions, p. 285</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 4: Researching a Topic of Interest, p. 291</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 5: Using Diagrams, Charts, Graphs, and Maps, p. 295</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 6: Taking Notes from Lectures &amp; Multimedia Presentations, p. 300</i></li> <li><i>Lesson 7: Research/ Take Notes/ Write/ Cite, p. 304</i></li> <li>Lesson 8: Transitional Words and Phrases, p. 307</li> <li>Lesson 9: Revise this Paragraph, p. 311</li> <li>Lesson 10: Writing a Paragraph Using Supporting Details, p. 315</li> <li>Lesson 11: Using Information from Multiple Sources, p. 323</li> </ul>

(continued)

# Grade 7 Year-at-a-Glance

<b>MONTH 6</b> Introductions and Conclusions	<b>MONTH 7</b> Process Writing Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks	<b>MONTH 8</b> Review all skills as needed	<b>MONTH 9</b> Review all skills as needed	<b>MONTH 10</b> Review all skills as needed
<p><b>Introductions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson 1: Leads and Topic Sentences, p. 331</li> <li>Lesson 2: Writing an Attention Grabbing Lead, p. 337</li> <li>Lesson 3: Effective Topic Sentences, p. 343</li> <li>Lesson 4: Writing Topic Sentences, p. 345</li> <li>Lesson 5: Writing the Introduction Paragraph, p. 347</li> <li>Lesson 6: Writing in Response to Text: Introduction Paragraph, p. 357</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson 7: Revising Dull Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 370</li> <li>Lesson 8: Revise This Conclusion Paragraph, p. 373</li> <li>Lesson 9: Definitive Words and Phrases and Informative Verbs, p. 375</li> <li>Lesson 10: The Hypothetical Anecdote, p. 380</li> <li>Lesson 11: Analyzing More Complex Conclusions, p. 382</li> <li>Lesson 12: Crafting Powerful Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 384</li> <li>Lesson 13: Broadening Your Topic, p. 390</li> <li>Lesson 14: Writing Response to Text: Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 393</li> </ul> <p><b>From Section 6:</b>  <i>Authentic Writing Tasks Steps for Approaching Response to Text Compositions, pp. 423-424</i>                      Choose an appropriate text of paired texts from your curriculum and write a response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson 1: Analyzing Prompts for Givens and Variables, p. 410</li> <li>Lesson 5: 7-Day Process Writing Timeline, p. 460</li> </ul> <p><b>Process Writing Piece</b>                      Choose an appropriate expository topic and use the process writing timeline to put a fully developed piece together</p> <p><b>Throughout the rest of the year, review all skills and apply to content area themes or units. (Read science or social studies texts and respond using the Response to Text skills learned and/or the expository/opinion skills.)</b></p> <p><b>In addition, choose from these appropriate authentic tasks to enhance and inform your instruction.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference Pages: Clue Words in Writing Tasks, pp. 407-408</li> <li>Reference Pages: Steps for Approaching Response to Text Compositions, p. 424</li> <li>Lesson 2: Identify the Theme, p. 426</li> <li>Lesson 3: Read Like an Author, p. 439</li> <li>Lesson 4: Writing the Literary Analysis Exploring "Point of View", p. 444</li> <li>Additional Literary Task Assignments, p. 458</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Research Project</b> - Use a science or social studies theme to make an authentic application to the skills learned.</li> </ul>	<p><b>End of Year Assessment</b></p>	



## Let's Compare Expository/Informative and Argumentative Writing

	EXPOSITORY/ INFORMATIVE	ARGUMENTATIVE
<b>Organization</b>	Expository/Informative Pillar	Argument Pillar
<b>Purpose</b>	To inform	To logically present an opinion
<b>Introduction</b>	Lead/topic sentence	Lead/issue statement/ claim
<b>Body of Piece</b>	Main <i>ideas</i>	Main reasons
<b>Supporting Details</b>	<p>What does it “look” like? Why is that important?</p> <p>Did you give a specific example?</p> <p>Quotes, statistics, anecdotes, amazing facts, descriptive segments</p>	<p>What does it “look” like? Why is that important to your argument? (What does the reader have to gain/lose by agreeing or disagreeing?)</p> <p>Did you give a specific example?</p> <p>Acknowledge the opposing view</p> <p>Quotes, statistics, anecdotes, amazing facts, descriptive segments</p>
<b>Conclusion</b>	Creatively restate each idea	<p>Creatively restate each argument</p> <p>Highlight the most important argument</p>

## STRATEGIC READING GUIDELINES

1. Circle the ***title***. Ask students 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.
2. Number each paragraph for reference purposes.
3. 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.
4. Fill in the summarizing framework, based solely on the title and headings.

**TOPIC:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Main Idea #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Main Idea #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Main Idea #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Discuss the way that identifying the topic and headings can set a purpose for learning. As readers they already have a good idea what they'll be reading about, which aids in comprehension.
  - Discuss how a summary such as this might be an excellent way for an author to begin. (Helps with organization and focus.)
5. Next, in each paragraph, have students 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.
  6. Point out the ***photograph*** and its ***caption***. Ask students why both are important.

7. Next, on the white board or chart paper, translate the information on the summarizing framework into an extended summary using the following sentence starters:

This expository text provides information about\_\_\_\_\_.  
We'll discover \_\_\_\_\_, learn about\_\_\_\_\_,  
and become familiar with \_\_\_\_\_.

**Or...**

This informative piece discusses \_\_\_\_\_. The author  
explores \_\_\_\_\_, investigates \_\_\_\_\_,  
and reveals \_\_\_\_\_.

8. Finally, have students 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.

## LESSON 13

### Objective

Students analyze response to text questions to identify key phrases and use these phrases to frame their written response in the form of a topic or straightforward sentence. This is a general expression of basic literal comprehension.

### Procedure

#### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class, Small Group, Independent Activity

- Read the response to text question or assignment.
- Restate the question to become the topic sentence.

1. Explain to students that one way to powerfully demonstrate their understanding of a written passage is to write about it. In writing about reading, the author must respond to a question or questions about the text and craft a clear, focused response. A great way to get started is to locate a key phrase within the question and repeat or restate that key phrase at the beginning of their written response.

2. Write or project the following question for the class:

Write a response describing the experiences of westward bound settlers on the Oregon Trail.

3. Read the question aloud and ask students what it is all about (westward bound settlers' experiences on the Oregon Trail). Explain that *westward bound settlers' experiences on the Oregon Trail* is the key phrase in the question. This is the phrase they will repeat or restate in their response. MODEL how to begin their response with this key phrase and underline it:

**Ex.** Westward bound settlers had many unique experiences as they traveled the Oregon Trail. Another might be: Traveling the Oregon Trail was the experience of a lifetime for westward bound settlers.

4. Now, write or project this example and have your students respond similarly. Chart their effective responses.

Write a response identifying the characteristics of a chemical reaction.

**Ex.** There are several characteristics of a chemical reaction.

A chemical reaction has several distinct characteristics.

The characteristics of a chemical reaction are numerous.

5. Explain that this first sentence in their written response becomes their TOPIC SENTENCE. The topic sentence tells the reader what they will learn by reading on. Of course, without reading the source text, it's impossible to craft a full response. Remember, our objective here is simply to reiterate the key phrase as a means of

## Turning Questions/Prompts into Responses

getting started. Students should feel free to revise this TOPIC SENTENCE after drafting their response. Also, explain to students that when the prompt reminds them to cite examples or evidence, these specific textual references do not need to be included in the topic sentence, but in the body of the writing that follows. Direct them to GUIDED PRACTICE using the student activity sheets on p. 164. Then, assign p. 165, for independent APPLICATION, in class or as homework.

**Tip:** When the word **WHY** appears in the question, the answer (*topic sentence*) should include **REASONS**.

When the word **HOW** appears in the question, that answer (*topic sentence*) should include examples or steps.

**Ex. Write about why Theo was hesitant to try out for the play.** (*There were several reasons why Theo was hesitant to try out for the play.*)

**Write an essay explaining how to raise funds for a class trip.** (*Raising funds for a school trip requires several steps.*)

### Sample Responses

Keep in mind that these are just suggestions and not meant to exclude other ways of stating the same thing. Below, we provide examples of some flipped sentence options in italics.\*

### Turning Questions/Prompts into Responses (1)

1. Erosion affects coastal communities in many ways.
  - There are many ways in which erosion affects coastal communities.\*
2. Several disturbing events led to the end of Jen and Maya's friendship.
  - Jen and Maya's friendship ended after a series of disturbing events.\*
3. Tools made life easier in many ways for Cro-Magnum people during the first Stone Age.
  - During the first Stone Age, life for Cro-Magnum people was easier because of the use of tools.\*
4. The process of photosynthesis allows plants to create nutrition for themselves.
  - Plants create nutrition for themselves through the process of photosynthesis.\*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## TURNING QUESTIONS/PROMPTS INTO RESPONSES (1)

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each question/prompt below and underline the key phrase. Then, on the lines beneath the question/prompt, use this key phrase to create an effective **TOPIC SENTENCE**.

**REMEMBER:** When writing a response to text, you will be given a question or prompt to consider. Within the question or prompt you'll find a *key phrase* that you'll need to address. One effective way of getting started is to use this key phrase in the first line of your response. This key phrase becomes your *TOPIC SENTENCE*. Keep in mind also that you can revise this topic sentence later in the writing process.

1. Write an informational piece about erosion and the ways in which it affects coastal communities.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Write an essay recounting the series of disturbing events that led to the end of Jen and Maya's friendship.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Based on the text, describe the ways in which tools made life easier for Cro-Magnum people during the first Stone Age.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Explain how plants provide nutrition for themselves through the process of photosynthesis.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## ELABORATION TOOLS FOR RESPONSE TO TEXT TASKS

When writing in response to text, it's important to cite evidence from the source material without copying word for word. Here are some ways to cite evidence in interesting ways:

- **SUMMARIZE**

In a sentence or two, *summarize* the topic and main ideas of the source material.

**Ex.** *In the text, The Great Depression, the author explains the hardships the people of North America faced. The article explains what life was like in shantytowns called “Hoovervilles,” how the dust bowl destroyed agricultural lands and what Franklin D. Roosevelt did to address these complex and serious issues.*

- **PARAPHRASE**

In your own words, rephrase specific details in the source material in order to support your summary.

**Ex.** *The author explains that the Dust Bowl devastated more than 40% of the farms in the state of Oklahoma.*

- **CITE THE SOURCE TEXT**

Cite specific words, phrases, examples from the source material, using quotation marks to indicate the source author's exact words.

**Ex.** *In paragraph four the author states: “More than 2.5 million young men benefited from this program and many served the nation further in the upcoming World War II.”*

## LESSON 10

### Objective

Students use skimming and scanning skills to highlight key information in two different texts in order to address the specific requirements of a compare and contrast writing assignment that simulates research. They read and analyze an exemplar response text and, using this as a model, sort relevant information from their grid chart into a thoughtful, well-organized pre-writing plan and begin a draft.

### Procedure

1. If you haven't already, engage students in the usual annotation and analysis process for both texts, Abby Sunderland, Sailor, and Thomas Nickerson, Whaler. Use the annotated teacher versions, pp. 247-248, and pp. 251-252, to guide the process.
2. Remind them that when authors write they often have to refer to multiple sources to find the information they need to inform their writing (research). In order to do this it's helpful if authors know, in advance, what specific information they'll need to find in order to complete their writing assignment. Analyzing the assignment for givens and variables helps identify research questions.
3. Project, distribute, and discuss the writing assignment and Discussion Questions, pp. 255-256.

**You have read two informative texts about survival at sea, Abby Sunderland, Sailor and Thomas Nickerson, Whaler. Write an essay outlining the traits these survivors shared and the ways in which their experiences differed. Be sure to cite evidence from both texts.**

4. Walk them through the Discussion Questions, pp. 255-256. Use the Annotated Teacher Page as a guide.
5. Distribute copies of the Comparison Grid, p. 259, and project this. Citing information from both texts, assist students in filling in the comparison grid with simple bulleted notes. (See sample, p. 260. For more on note-taking see, p. 300.)
6. MODEL how to incorporate a detail from the grid into the writing:

**Ex.** Noting the grid details under the "Ambition" column, you can surmise that *both* teenagers were indeed ambitious. Explain that a like characteristic can be expressed in a single sentence using the word 'both' or in two separate sentences using a transitional phrase such as 'likewise' to connect the two:

*Both Abby Sunderland and Thomas Nickerson were ambitious and unafraid of hard work.*

**or...**

*Abby Sunderland was driven to meet the challenge of being the youngest person ever to sail solo around the world and she trained extensively for her voyage. Likewise, Thomas Nickerson was burning with ambition too and **showed it by his willingness to do the most difficult and unpleasant jobs on the whale ship to prove himself.***

### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

#### Whole Class Activity

- Project assignment and questions
- Walk through together
- Complete Comparison Grid
- MODEL how to add detail into writing
- Match details with source

## Comparing & Contrasting in Research Simulation Tasks

7. Next, project the Exemplar Text, pp. 261-262. Have individual students match the details in this piece with the evidence in both source texts. If the evidence came from Abby Sunderland have them underline it in blue in the Exemplar Response. If it came from Thomas Nickerson underline it in red. In this way students begin to see the clear connection between the source material and the written response to it.

Be sure to point out that the author of the exemplar response did not copy word for word, except when directly citing the source. Copying without citing would be plagiarizing.

Instead, the author reworded the material (paraphrased) and referenced the article/author.

**BONUS:** Have students circle all of the various ways the authors of these pieces refer to Abby and Thomas described in these texts (**word referents**). It's important for students to understand the many ways an author can refer to the same thing, and learning to recognize word referents helps. Then have them circle all of the **informative verbs used in the exemplar piece**. Also point out the transitional words and phrases that are helpful in compare/contrast and list these as follows:

### TRANSITIONAL WORDS AND PHRASES

- Both
- Likewise
- Also
- Despite this
- In addition
- However
- Besides
- Additionally
- Surprisingly

8. Finally, on another day, have students, in directed fashion, begin their draft. Their prewriting plan should look like this:

**TOPIC:** *Abby Sunderland and Thomas Nickerson*

**MAIN IDEA #1:** *Ambitious teenagers*

**MAIN IDEA #2:** *Survived at sea*

**MAIN IDEA #3:** *Wrote about their experiences*

Explain that they will only construct their introduction using a summary paragraph, linking main ideas to informative verbs. (Display the chart of Informative Verbs, p. 130.) On subsequent days approach each body paragraph in directed fashion, modeling how to paraphrase and cite from the texts. Project the Citing Sentence Starters, p. 270, to help with fluency.

Since we haven't yet discussed conclusion paragraphs, you can set their writing aside and complete it after you've covered conclusions, p. 367, or you can simply explain that in the conclusion, for now, they can write what they thought the significance of these texts were to them personally, what they learned from them, and how they view the capability of teenagers differently as a result (or more likely, have their existing views confirmed). (More specific techniques on crafting Response to Text Conclusions, p. 392.

**EXTENSION:** The piece about Abby Sunderland offers a great topic for an argumentative essay: Were Abby's parents negligent in allowing her to make the voyage? To help your students learn how to support an argument, you might opt to divide them into groups, some assigned to research and come up with main reasons why "Yes, Abby's parents were negligent..." and the other group doing the same to support the claim that "Abby's parents were bold, but not negligent ..."

## RESEARCH SIMULATION TASK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - ABBY SUNDERLAND & THOMAS NICKERSON

You have read two informative texts about survival at sea, Abby Sunderland, Sailer and Thomas Nickerson, Whaler. Write an essay outlining the traits these survivors shared and the ways in which their experiences differed. Be sure to cite evidence from both texts.

1. Fill in the summarizing frameworks, below, for each text:

### ABBY SUNDERLAND, SAILER

TOPIC: Abby Sunderland

MAIN IDEA #1: Young and ambitious

MAIN IDEA #2: Controversies

MAIN IDEA #3: Rescue and aftermath of the experience

### THOMAS NICKERSON, WHALER

TOPIC: Thomas Nickerson

MAIN IDEA #1: Young and hard working

MAIN IDEA #2: Struggle to survive at sea

MAIN IDEA #3: Later years

2. What do you notice about the second main idea in each summarizing framework?

They have similarities—young, stranded at sea, life afterwards.

3. What are the “givens” in the boxed assignment?

Common traits/ways in which their experiences differed.

4. Go back to each text. Based on your main idea “blurbs” in the margins, circle the “young and ambitious/hard working” paragraphs in yellow, the “survival at sea” paragraphs in pink, the “aftermath” paragraphs in orange.

5. Create a summarizing framework for this essay:

**TOPIC:** Abby Sunderland & Thomas Nickerson

**MAIN IDEA #1:** Young and hardworking (this is a similarity)

**MAIN IDEA #2:** Controversy (this is a difference)

**MAIN IDEA #3:** Struggles at sea (this is another difference)

6. Based on your summarizing framework and the assignment, write a topic sentence for your essay and both main idea sentences:

**TOPIC SENTENCE:** Abby Sunderland & Thomas Nickerson were both young and ambitious, but their experiences at sea were quite different.

**MAIN IDEA SENTENCE #1:** While a century apart, both Abby Sunderland and Thomas Nickerson went to sea at an early age.

**MAIN IDEA SENTENCE #2:** Abby's voyage was controversial while Thomas' decision to set sail on a whale ship was customary.

**MAIN IDEA SENTENCE #3:** Both Thomas and Abby were set adrift in the open ocean, but Thomas' experience was far worse than Abby's.

7. Go back to both texts. Underline evidence of their common traits in green, the controversies surrounding Abby's voyage in red and struggles at sea in blue. Then, use the Grid, p. 259, to organize and list your evidence to support each main idea.

**BONUS:** Go back to each source and circle the word referents the authors refer to Abby and Thomas:

- young sailor
- courageous captain
- lucky seafarer
- terrified boy
- fledgling sailor
- daring Californian

## COMPARISON GRID

	ABBY SUNDERLAND	THOMAS NICKERSON
<b>Young &amp; Ambitious</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wanted to set a record for being the youngest person to sail solo around the world.</li> <li>• Age 16</li> <li>• Prepared well and trained hard for the journey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed on as a cabin boy on the whale ship Essex.</li> <li>• Age 14</li> <li>• Did the dirty work on the whale ship.</li> </ul>
<b>Controversies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should Abby's parents have allowed her to go on such a risky voyage all alone?</li> <li>• Was her family hoping to make a reality show?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not controversial.</li> <li>• Customary for the times.</li> </ul>
<b>Adrift at Sea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abby was rescued in days.</li> <li>• High tech GPS helped find Abby.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas was adrift for 93 days.</li> <li>• Thomas rescued only by chance.</li> </ul>

## EXEMPLAR TEXT

## ABBY SUNDERLAND &amp; THOMAS NICKERSON

In these articles we meet Abby Sunderland and Thomas Nickerson, two ambitious young sailors who managed to survive after disasters at sea. While generations apart, the hardworking seafarers share some common traits, but their stories of survival are quite different. The controversies surrounding Abby's voyage and their actual experiences adrift in the open ocean set them firmly apart.

*young and ambitious* Both authors portray these teenage mariners as hard working and ambitious. The text emphasizes 16-year-old Abby Sunderland's determination to become the youngest person ever to sail solo around the world and how hard she worked to train for the 2010 adventure. The article goes on to detail the measures taken to assure the safety of her vessel, "Wild Eyes" and concludes that both the ship and its captain were well-prepared for the adventure. At only 14, Thomas Nickerson was equally ambitious. As the text explains, he was "eager to see the world and make his fortune from the precious oil of the sperm whale" when he signed on as a cabin boy on the whale ship Essex. Once aboard, he did the some of the most difficult and unpleasant jobs aboard the ship and slept in cramped quarters. While Thomas was embarking on a career and Abby simply challenging herself, both seemed highly motivated to succeed.

*Abby*

*Thomas*

*transition*

*customary or controversial* In 1819, when the Essex set sail, it was customary for boys as young as Thomas Nickerson who were from the whaling capital of Nantucket to go to sea. For Abby, in the first decade of the 21st century, it was anything but! Controversy over whether or not her parents should have allowed her to embark upon this adventure raged! As the text explains, some believed that her parents were "guilty of the crime of child endangerment." Of course, others praised Mr. and Mrs. Sunderland for their "bold parenting." There was also the question of whether the young sailor was embarking upon this risky expedition to secure a reality TV deal for her family. From start to finish, the voyage of the teenaged Californian made headlines around the world. That was certainly not the case for Thomas Nickerson.

*cite*

*paraphrase*

*adrift at sea* Sadly, both of the teenagers ended up helplessly adrift at sea. A rogue wave ruined Abby's "Wild Eyes" while <sup>transition</sup> an enraged Sperm Whale destroyed the "Essex." Abby was rescued within two days, but Nickerson endured 93 torturous days drifting on a rickety wooden whale boat. He watched his comrades die of thirst and exposure and was forced <sup>paraphrase</sup> to eat their dead bodies just to stay alive. Sunburned and starving, he was rescued by a <sup>Thomas</sup> passing British ship only by a stroke of good luck. Abby was lucky too, but she also had the <sup>Abby</sup> benefit of a sophisticated Global Positioning System developed by NASA which was able to pinpoint her location quickly and accurately.

Without a doubt, both authors capture the drama of these seafaring teenager's frightful experiences at sea. While the two sailors share a few characteristics, their stories differ in many ways, including the controversies surrounding Abby's voyage and the horrors Thomas endured while adrift at sea.

## Teacher Background: Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is another important tool, not just for response to text or research simulation tasks, but in any essay or report writing that is informed by way of source material. “Saying it in your own words” is a tricky challenge for students. They often tend to copy source material word for word. This is the time for a conversation about plagiarizing, or taking or implying credit for the written words of another author. At the computer keyboard it’s so easy to highlight or copy relevant online text, paste it into a report, change the font, and have it disappear into a composition. So, what do students need to know in order to effectively paraphrase the words of a source author?

1. Begin with some reference to the source material – some simple sentence starters can really help with this.

**Ex.** In this text \_\_\_\_\_.

The author explains how \_\_\_\_\_.

The article illustrates why \_\_\_\_\_.

In paragraph 2 we learn that \_\_\_\_\_ etc.

Once again, the use of informative verbs can really help to reference the source material and give credit to the original author.

2. Look for a key word and assign a word referent in its place. (Remind students of the techniques presented on p. 171) on word referents and sentence variety. The application of these skills is a great way to learn to paraphrase. They can also use the thesaurus.
3. Flipping the sentence subject, in conjunction with word referents is another helpful tool for paraphrasing. (p. 235)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## PARAPHRASE IT!

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

Read each sentence below from a text titled, The Vietnam Veterans Memorial. On another paper, paraphrase each sentence in your own words. Use sentence starters and replace underlined words or phrases with word referents. Then, try "flipping the sentence."

**Ex.** Made of black granite that stands in stark contrast to the white marble of other Washington D.C. monuments, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has generated controversy since its installation in 1983.

*In the article, we read about the controversy generated by the black granite monument and its stark contrast to the white marble of other such Washington D.C. landmarks.*

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

*Controversy has been generated by the black granite monument and its stark contrast to the white marble of other such Washington D.C. landmarks, according to the article.*

1. The names of the 58,282 men and women who lost their lives serving the United States in Vietnam are inscribed on the memorial, and on special occasions they are read aloud.
2. Visitors to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are often seen tracing names from the wall with charcoal pencils and paper to create a precious keepsake.
3. No government funds were used to build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Visitors to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are often seen tracing names from the wall with charcoal pencils and paper to create a precious keepsake.
3. No government funds were used to build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

4. In the nation's capital, here is also a memorial dedicated specifically to the 7,484 women, most of them nurses, who served in Vietnam.

## **SENTENCE STARTERS:**

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

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

## NOTE TAKING - EXEMPLAR

**Lecturer says:** The central nervous system consists of the brain and the spinal cord.

**Student writes:** Central nervous system - brain/spinal cord

**Lecturer says:** The peripheral nervous system includes the nerves that branch out from the spinal cord and carry messages to other parts of the body.

**Student writes:** Peripheral nervous system - nerves

**Lecturer says:** The brain is divided into left and right hemispheres each of which has a specialized purpose.

**Student writes:** Brain - left /right hemispheres (A quick sketch might be equally effective!)

**Lecturer says:** Located between the brain and the spinal cord, the brain stem controls breathing, heart rate and sleep.

**Student writes:** Brain stem - breathing, heart rate, sleep

**NOTE:** Keep in mind that “the lecturer” can be a teacher delivering instruction, the narrator or host of a video, or the presenter of a power-point report.

1. **Lecturer says:** The cerebellum lies at the base of the brain and controls balance as well as muscle movements.

**Student writes:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Lecturer says:** Nerve cells are called neurons and they deliver messages from the spinal cord to the brain.

**Student writes:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Lecturer says:** The hippocampus is the specialized part of the brain responsible for memory.

**Student writes:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## TAKE SOME NOTES

Read the complete sentences below and translate them into brief notes. Write just enough to trigger your memory of what the sentence taught you so that you can recall it at a later time. Focus on keywords. Keep it short by using dashes (-) and slashes (/) whenever you can.

1. Cells are made of protein and organelles, which are tiny structures within a living cell.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Created in the bone marrow, red blood cells transport oxygen around the body.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Mitochondria are organelles that provide a cell with energy.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Another organelle, known as the cytoplasm, consumes that energy.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

5. A third organelle is the nucleus of the cell where the genetic code is stored.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Mitosis is the process of cell division that creates two identical cells.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Animal cells are irregular in size and shape while plant cells are more uniform.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Plant cells contain chloroplasts which absorb the sunlight necessary for the process of photosynthesis to begin.

Your notes: \_\_\_\_\_

### VOCABULARY LIST

**Protein:** Large biological molecules consisting of the amino acids necessary to build healthy living tissues such as muscle, hair, enzymes and antibodies.

**Organelle:** Specialized structures with specific functions found within a living animal cell.

**Cell:** the smallest unit of a living organism.

**Chloroplast:** a part of a plant cell that includes the chlorophyll necessary for photosynthesis.

**Photosynthesis:** the process through which green plants and some other organisms use sunlight to transform carbon dioxide and water into nutrients.

## Teacher Background:

### The Introduction Paragraph in Response to Text

Whether in straight expository/informative writing (*generative*) or when writing an expository essay in response to text (*responsive*), the purpose of the introduction paragraph is the same - to let the reader know what she/he will be learning by reading the piece. But, since the purpose of each type of writing is different, the nature of the introduction will change as well. A more straightforward, matter of fact introduction is appropriate for responding to text, as the purpose is to simply demonstrate deep comprehension.

#### *What are the techniques suitable for this task?*

The good news is applying previously learned skills can empower students to produce an effective introduction for a response to text assignment.

The skills we can apply to Response to Text introductions are:

1. Analyzing Assignments for Givens and Variables
2. Using the Summarizing Framework to craft a paragraph with Informative Verbs, p. 87
3. Turning Questions into Responses, p. 160

Let's start with a typical response to text task:

**You've read two articles about Lost Civilizations, one describing three such civilizations and another detailing the reasons for their downfall. Write an essay citing the key differences between two of the civilizations. Make sure your essay includes paragraphs discussing the accomplishments of the civilization, what is known about its belief system and/or government and why it disappeared.**

1. Analyze the assignment for givens and variables:  
**Givens:** three main ideas  
**Variables:** each author can select which two civilizations to focus on
2. Use a summarizing framework to craft a paragraph with informative verbs.  
**Topic:** Incan Empire vs. Minoan Civilization  
**Main Idea #1:** Accomplishments of each  
**Main Idea #2:** Belief System  
**Main Idea #3:** Downfall

# The Introduction Paragraph in Response to Text

*Both of these texts focus on lost civilizations from the ancient world. The first article, Lost Civilizations, describes three such lost civilizations while the second, Why Civilizations Disappear, recounts the reasons why they and others like them disappeared. Both articles emphasize the fact that there is much we still have to learn about these lost civilizations.*

3. Turn the question into a response.

*Both the Incan Empire and the Minoan Civilization flourished during ancient times, but they differed in many ways.*

4. By combining these techniques students can compose a solid introduction paragraph:

*As detailed in both of these articles, the Incan Empire and the Minoan Civilization were both very successful ancient kingdoms. The first text describes some of the achievements of each civilization while the second focuses on the probable reasons for the downfall of such settlements. Based on what we learned from both texts, we are able to identify some of the key differences between the accomplishments, belief systems and downfall of the Incan Empire and the Minoan Civilization.*

## STRATEGIES FOR CRAFTING A RESPONSE TO TEXT INTRODUCTION

1. Read the assignment or prompt and analyze it for GIVENS and VARIABLES.
2. Fill in a SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK for each source text and use this to write a paragraph using INFORMATIVE VERBS.
3. Read the assignment and TURN QUESTIONS INTO RESPONSES.

**You've read two articles about Lost Civilizations, one describing three such civilizations and another detailing the reasons for their downfall. Write an essay citing the key differences between two of the civilizations. Make sure your essay includes paragraphs discussing the accomplishments of the civilization, what is known about its belief system and why it disappeared.**

1. Analyze the assignment for GIVENS and VARIABLES:  
Givens: three main ideas (accomplishments, belief systems, downfall)  
Variables: which two civilizations to write about
2. Use summarizing framework to craft a paragraph with informative verbs:  
**TOPIC:** Incan Empire vs. Minoan Civilization (or Indus Valley Civilization)  
**Main Idea #1:** Accomplishments  
**Main Idea #2:** Belief system  
**Main Idea #3:** Downfall

*Both of these texts focus on lost civilizations from the ancient world. The first article, Lost Civilizations, describes three such lost civilizations while the second, Why Civilizations Disappear, recounts the reasons why they disappeared. Both articles emphasize the fact that there is much we still have to learn about these lost civilizations.*

3. Turn the question into a response: *Both the Incan Empire and the Minoan Civilization flourished during ancient times, but they differed in many ways.*

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## Teacher Background:

### The Conclusion Paragraph in Response to Text

In both straight expository/informative writing (*generative*) and in response to text essays (*responsive*), the function of the conclusion paragraph is to wrap up the piece of writing in a kind of synopsis, providing a summation of the key points presented in the body of the piece.

However, in response to text, the conclusion paragraph is the perfect place for students to demonstrate a deeper level of comprehension relative to the source texts. In evaluative comprehension, the student writer builds on literal understanding and inferential reasoning, weighing information in regard to his/her own experience of the world, extending cause and effect thinking, considering how the source material might influence or affect the world in which they live. When engaged in evaluative thinking, the student will reflect on the information provided, make connections to other related subjects and perhaps challenge held assumptions about the topic. They might be inspired to take action, support a cause or conduct research to learn more. All of this can be expressed in a powerful conclusion paragraph as evidence that the writer has assimilated the information on a deep and personal level.

Therefore, to guide students' thinking in this regard, there are a number of techniques that are helpful.

- REITERATE your TOPIC and MAIN IDEAS (*literal*)
- Based on the prompt or assignment SYNTHESIZE information from source materials to draw a conclusion (*inferential*)
- EVALUATE how the information and your conclusion might inspire or challenge you, or change your view of the world (*evaluative*)

**Ex.** Based on the two texts, it is reasonable to conclude that the geography, climate and atmosphere of Mars makes it an unwelcoming place for human beings. Research, such as that conducted by the Mariner and Viking missions as well as the data currently being collected by the Mars Space Laboratory, has uncovered many intriguing possibilities, but no definitive answers. Considering the information presented in these texts, I do not believe that building a colony on this inhospitable orb is a reasonable possibility in the near future. Before we even think about doing so, we would have to fully understand why the Martian atmosphere changed and why its water disappeared. Before I read these texts, I didn't understand how very different Mars really is from Earth. Without a doubt, the information presented made me realize how far we are from truly understanding this unique and complicated planet.

Synthesize

Evaluate

Keep in mind that some source material may lend itself more readily to this kind of an evaluative conclusion - other material may be more literal in nature. Regardless, the best conclusions will draw on these techniques, encouraging the reader/writer to think about the topic in more sophisticated ways.

## Steps For Approaching Response to Text Compositions

1. Read source texts, **ANALYZE** and **ANNOTATE**.
2. Fill in a **SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK** for each source text.
3. Analyze the prompt for **GIVENS** and **VARIABLES**. What are the questions being asked?
4. Create a **GRID** to compare both texts.
5. Based on the grid create a new **SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK** outlining the response to text composition.
6. Write **INTRODUCTION** using main ideas and informative verbs. (literal comprehension)
7. Compose a **BROAD YET DISTINCT MAIN IDEA SENTENCE** for each body paragraph.
8. Support each main idea with **CITED EVIDENCE** from the text. Use word referents and transitional words and phrases.
9. Write a **CONCLUSION** that includes evaluative thinking – how was the reader affected by the texts? What applications can be made to the writer's life?

These steps can be approached in a single sitting as impromptu writing, or can be applied over several days or more, one step at a time. At first, it's wise to guide students through the process in directed fashion, discussing and modeling each step, reminding them that they've practiced all of these skills discretely in the past. Also remember that you don't need to wait until late in the year for students to undertake this, despite the fact that they may not have learned all of the skills yet. Simply hold students accountable for what you've already taught, and **MODEL** what you haven't taught yet, understanding that their attempts to emulate what you've modeled will not be of the same quality as the skills they've practiced over time.

### Teacher Background:

### Literary Analysis Task: Identifying “Theme” in Writing

Sometimes literary analysis tasks involve having students identify the theme of a piece of narrative writing, a play, or poetry. Theme can be defined as the author’s view or opinion about some aspect of life or human behavior. In a narrative story or play the theme is expressed through the main character’s problem, significant experience or adventure, the thought processes involved in making meaning of it, as evidenced by the thoughts, feelings, actions and decisions the main character (also referred to as the narrator) makes. The theme is seldom explicitly stated. The reader needs to read closely to infer what the theme might be. Some common themes that the narrator/main character might grapple with include questions of loyalty, the meaning of friendship or family, the value of honesty, courage, perseverance, self-sacrifice, acceptance, compassion, cooperation. Poems also might express a theme through the title, imagery within the poem, or poetic devices such as similes or metaphors.

**Keep in mind, that while the genre of the texts being analyzed for this purpose (exploring theme) are usually narrative stories, plays or pieces of poetry, the related writing task is *expository* in structure and purpose.** The author needs to present her/his analysis in a logical sequential way, presenting their topic, an introduction that identifies the theme, a number of body paragraphs, each with a main idea and supporting details, and a conclusion. The supporting details need to include specific examples from the text as evidence.

Literary analysis is primarily about inferential reasoning and is best informed through deep discussion. Taking students beyond literal comprehension requires looking closely at action, dialogue, description, what feelings “look” like, figurative language, connotation, and text structures (the way the text is presented - paragraphs, scenes, acts, stanzas, for example). It also involves challenging students to compare and/or relate the story or poem to his/her own life (evaluative thinking) and to use this personal experience and reflection to inform and draw conclusions. Writing in response to these kinds of literary analysis tasks cannot be successful without the deep discussion that fuels multi-layered comprehension. Therefore, a powerful reading-writing connection is critical; their writing will only be as strong as their ability to read and comprehend. The resulting work is as much a measure of reading comprehension as it is of writing.

## Teacher Background:

### Literary Analysis Task - How to Read Like an Author

When students are asked to write in response to a piece of literature – generally a narrative story or an excerpt of one, they're faced with three challenges.

**The first challenge** is that they need to comprehend, on a deep level, what the author was trying to communicate. Sometimes the message may be straight-forward, but as students mature and the literature they read becomes more sophisticated they need to comprehend on **literal**, **inferential**, and **evaluative** levels. Not only *what* happened in a story, but the complexity of *why* it happened. They need to connect the dots between cause and effect. This “why” part of comprehension involves critical inferential reasoning, making associations between hints or clues that the author skillfully placed in order to engage and intrigue the reader more fully. In order to do this the reader must apply evaluative thinking, weighing story circumstances against personal experience, stepping into a character's point of view to better understand things like motivation and emotional responses and reactions to story events.

After this, comes the **second challenge**, which is related to the first. The student needs to understand author's craft, to recognize the techniques an author uses to skillfully tell the story, show character traits, hint at the untold story between the lines. It's important to be able to identify the basics such as character, setting, problem, solution, but also to understand the ways authors create and apply detail, suspense, the manner in which they craft scenes using action, description, dialogue, thoughts and feelings. The places where an author applies these techniques are the story critical moments – and authors purposefully and intentionally use these skills to direct readers' attention to these spots in the story. (For more on narrative craft, see [The Comprehensive Narrative Writing Guide](#).)

**Thirdly**, it's a challenge for students to synthesize all of this rather subjective information into a well-organized written response designed to demonstrate their depth of understanding. So, in addition to deep comprehension and knowledge of author's craft, students need to be able to communicate this in a well-organized piece of exposition. Even that can be confusing – analyzing a narrative text via an expository response.

Therefore, it's critically important to set students to their reading with these challenges in mind, and with some strategies to make these challenges manageable.

A basic Empowering Writers philosophy is that the quality of the questions we ask determines the quality of written response students can generate. Over time, students internalize the powerful questions that yield effective results and make them a part of their “thought repertoire.” There are a number of productive framing questions that can be used to help students focus on these more challenging aspects of comprehension and the writing intended to demonstrate it. Asking these questions *before*, *during*, and *after* reading can certainly increase comprehension and awareness of author's craft. See the list of framing questions on the next page.

## Framing Questions for Reading & Responding to Literature

- **Who is the main character in the story** (*point of view character/protagonist*)?

This main character is also known as the protagonist or point of view character. The main character is the one conveying the story, the one who is faced with a challenge or presented with an adventure of some kind. The main character may be thrust into a difficult situation against her/his will, or might set out to solve a problem of his/her own free will. In short, the story is all about the main character.

- **Where is the story set?** (*setting*)

The setting is where the story takes place. It is important because the story world affects everyone and everything in it. We see the setting through the five senses of the main point of view character and the way they see it reveals something about their point of view.

- **What is the tone or mood of the story?**

The mood and tone of the story is determined by the main character's attitudes and feelings and is reflected through the description of the setting, word choice, and details.

**Ex. Jess scuffed her feet along the floor of the dimly lit hallway and sighed.**

What is the mood or tone? (*dark, discouraged*)

**Jess danced with her shadow and smiled as she skipped down the hallway of the school.**

What is the mood or tone? (*Upbeat, carefree*)

- **What is the main character's problem, challenge, or adventure?**

Most stories involve a problem or challenge faced by the main character. Facing and solving the problem is what reveals character and demonstrates growth. The problem causes the main character to grow, change, and learn something important.

- **What is the main character's motivation?** (*what the character wants*)

Sometimes what the character wants causes a problem, and sometimes a problem causes the main character to want something. It could be that the main character wants a particular outcome and has to struggle and persevere to achieve that.

- **Who or what stands in the way of the main character's motivation?**

It could be a person whose motivation is at odds with the main character's motivation.

**Ex. Jill wants to go camping with a friend, but her parents want her to go to her aunt's birthday party.** Or, it could be circumstances such as the weather or other event that causes conflict. **Ex. Jill has a camping trip planned but there's a hurricane predicted.**

- **Where does the author use suspense and/or foreshadowing?**

When the main character is wondering or worrying the reader experiences a sense of tension or suspense. Other times the author only reveals part of what's going on, leaving questions in the reader's mind. Foreshadowing occurs when the author hints at some outcome before it happens.

- **How does the main character feel about the situation?**

There is usually a cause and effect relationship between story events and the main character's feelings and responses. The main character's feelings often change in response to events over the course of the story.

- **How does the main character show his/her feelings?**

Most often the author will show rather than tell how story characters are feeling.

**Ex.** Instead of writing: '**Adam was mad**' the author might write: **Adam's jaw was clenched and he breathed heavily.**

- **How did the main character grow and change in response to story events?**

The most powerful stories are the ones in which the main character struggles, grows and changes. This is why the main character is sometimes referred to as the "hero" or "heroine" of the story. Consider this character as the story begins, and again at the end. There will likely be a difference.

- **What figurative language did the author use and why?**

Authors use similes and metaphors to make strong impressions about story critical characters, settings, and objects. Why did the author draw this comparison? Readers should pay attention to figurative language as a pointer to whatever is important. **Ex.** **Lily's face was set like the wall of stone at the edge of the village.** (*simile*) **Lily's face became a wall of stone.** (*metaphor*)

- **What is the theme of the story and how is it demonstrated?**

The main story event, the main character's struggle, and realizations the characters come to point to the story theme. Some common themes are: friendship, courage, acceptance, forgiveness, cooperation, perseverance, loyalty, responsibility, honesty, freedom, kindness, individuality, justice. Have a chart of these abstract nouns (and others) hanging for student reference.

- **What would you do if faced with a similar challenge or adventure?**

In order to empathize and relate to a character's struggles it's important for the reader to consider the times when she/he felt similarly - in this way the reader can better anticipate or predict outcomes and can more readily empathize with the main character.

## LESSON 3

### Objective

Students read a select piece of literature (or an excerpt), apply and consider the framing questions, and engage in discussion around their verbal responses. Then they turn each question into a response and use sentence starters to express their responses in writing.

### Procedure

1. Explain to the class that the strongest readers are those who read “with purpose.” Compare this to a detective trying to solve a mystery. The first thing the detective might do is write down a number of questions he/she needs to answer in order to put all of the pieces of the puzzle together. Without these framing questions it would be much harder to know what the detective’s looking for. Some important clues might be missed.
  2. Photocopy and distribute copies of student reference page: Framing Questions for Reading and Responding to Literature, p 436. Introduce each example as an important “Text Forensics” question. Explain that the best readers will:
    - Read the entire selection first for sheer enjoyment.
    - Read the Framing Questions and consider them in relation to the text.
    - Reread the selection with these Framing Questions in mind.
    - Annotate the answers to these questions as you come across them in the text.
    - Answer the questions.
  3. Discuss each question, with students offering and defending their responses based on evidence in the text.
  4. Distribute copies of pp. 441-443, and remind students how to turn the key words in the question into a simple written response. MODEL an example or two for them. Then, have them continue answering the questions in this way, in writing (GUIDED PRACTICE).
- NOTE:** You may want to address the first 6 questions one day, and the second 6 questions on a subsequent day, or, if students need more time, discussion, and direction, tackle 3 questions a day for 4 days.
5. Finally, show students how these “answers” can be combined into a paragraph in response to the text. Have them compile these into a paragraph on another sheet of paper or on the keyboard. Have students adjust sentence structure where needed for fluency, sentence variety, and flow and share with the class. **Apply this same question and answer process to any piece of literature your class is reading.**

#### LESSON AT A GLANCE:

##### Whole Class and Independent Activity

- Discuss reading with “purpose.”
- Introduce the Framing Questions.
- MODEL applying questions.
- GUIDED PRACTICE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT'S THE THEME?

In this excerpt from *Far North* by Will Hobbs, 15-year-old Gabe Rogers, a Texan who has recently arrived in the Northwest Territories of Canada, is flying on a small plane with his boarding school roommate, Raymond Providence, a native of the ancient Dihnay nation, first people of the Northwest Territories. Raymond has dropped out of boarding school when the plane that's bringing him home takes a risky detour to see the spectacular scenery below. Raymond's aged uncle is also in the plane, which is piloted by the youthful Clint.

I tried to relax and quit worrying. In the deep gorge below us, the river we were following wound like a snake, and Clint was all concentration adjusting to the bends. Just let him fly the plane, I told myself. Anyway, the mountainsides off both wingtips gave us no choice but to keep following this canyon upstream – no room to turn around here even if you had to. Hang on and try to think positive, I thought.

We kept following the river canyon's snaking turns until finally we cleared the pass at its headwaters and entered a world of mountains without end, ranges upon ranges, the highest ones wrapped in glaciers and cloud. I was overwhelmed by what I was seeing, thankful after all that Clint had bent the rules for me, or maybe broken them, in order to show me this. IT was all too beautiful, too immense to be believed, and yet it was real. I began to read out loud some of the names Clint had talked about the first day we met: "The Ragged Range, the Sunblood Range, the Sombre Mountains, the Funeral Range, the Headless Range...Hey, Clint, this is a cheerful place!"

"Up here," he replied dramatically, "nature reigns supreme."

"Listen to these! Crash Canyon, Stall Gorge, Death Lake, Hellroaring Creek...So where's that Deadman Valley you had all the stories about?"

"It sits in a break down in the canyons of the South Nahanni. Up ahead here, that's the very headwaters of the South Nahanni you're looking at, right up against the N.W.T.'s border with the Yukon." He reached for the radio. "Now we'll tell 'em where we are," Clint said confidently. "Cessna 6-7-Z-RAY calling Fort Simpson. Fort Simpson, do you read? Do you read me?"

Nothing but more static.

*Taken from Far North by Will Hobbs*  
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### Additional Literary Analysis Task Assignments

Below you will find a variety of additional Literary Analysis Tasks. Each requires the student to access at least two sources of information on a given topic. These sources might be magazine or online articles, videos, or images. Each requires students to take notes on each source and refer to these notes in composing an essay. Some suggested online resources are provided, but you may choose to substitute other sources of your own, including textbooks, nonfiction texts, etc. (Keep in mind that video content can change, so always check these before referring students to them.) You can also easily substitute curriculum related topics for any of the suggested assignments.

1. Watch the video “What are Integers?” Break students into small cooperative learning groups and have each compose a short story with the title Integers Save the Day! Not only is this a creative challenge, but there is a compelling body of research suggesting that writing about math using the proper vocabulary is a very effective way of helping students encode mathematical concepts into long-term memory.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkJyNjfRvTo>

2. Watch this quick video about symbolism in literature. Write a paragraph identifying at least one symbol in a work of fiction you’ve read recently. (One example would be the lollipop, which is a symbol for Charlie’s gratitude in the story The Happy Ending.)

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRl\\_sINZi38](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRl_sINZi38)

3. Watch these two scenes from the theatrical production The Great Gilly Hopkins and write an essay explaining how the character of Gilly changes from the first scene to the second. Cite specific examples from Gilly’s words or body language that communicate her feelings.

Video: <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/b35dea9e-8bf7-4357-a52a-776988c36d19/the-great-gilly-hopkins/>

4. Select a topic you’ve learned about in science or social studies. Locate at least two online articles and/or videos on this topic. Take notes from these sources and write an informative essay, citing your sources.

5. Select a narrative story that you enjoyed and think about a scene involving more than one character. Rewrite the scene from the alternate character’s point of view.