

PREVIEW **Grade 8**



Expository & Opinion Writing

**Deconstructing Text,
Writing Essays, Reports,
Response to Text**



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

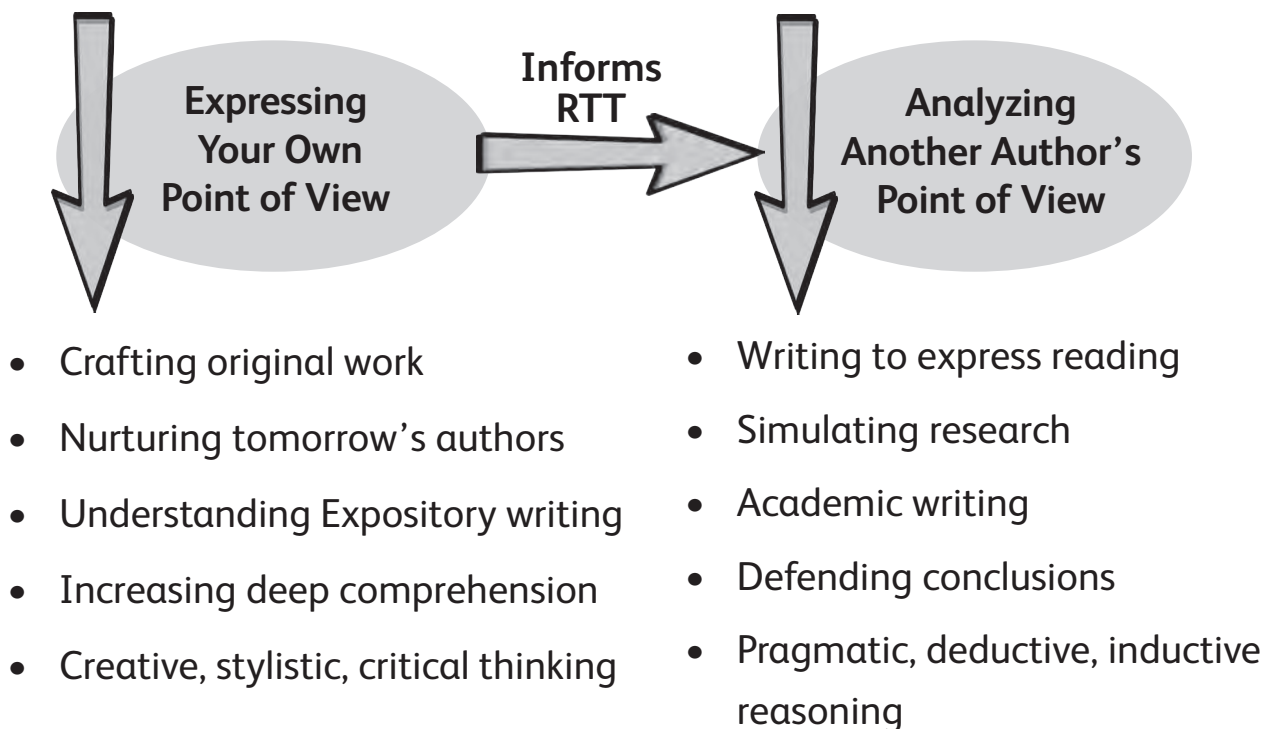
Original work by Barbara Mariconda and Dea Paoletta Auray

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 8 Year-at-a-Glance

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

MONTH 1 Section 1: Recognizing Genre/ Organization	MONTH 2 Section 2: Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas	MONTH 3 Section 3: Elaboration- Detail Generating Questions	MONTH 4 Section 3: Elaboration- Detail Generating Questions	MONTH Section 4: Research
<p>Baseline Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the Expository and Argument Pillars, pp. 14-15 Lesson 1: Recognizing Genre, p. 21 Lesson 2: Distinguishing Between Opinion & Argumentative Writing, p. 23 Lesson 3: Analyzing Real World Applications of Argumentative and Opinion Writing, p. 30 <i>Lesson 4: Strategic Reading - Informed Writing, p. 33</i> <i>Lesson 5: Strategic Reading: Organization and Text Conventions, p. 41</i> <i>Lesson 6: Close Reading Challenge, p. 45</i> Lesson 7: Analyzing and Annotating Expository and Argumentative Writing, p. 48 <i>Lesson 8: Writing Simple Summarizing Paragraphs, p. 82</i> Lesson 9: Finding Irrelevant, Extraneous Details, p. 85 Lesson 10: Expository and Argumentative Pieces for Comparison, p. 91 <i>Lesson 11: Finding Evidence Within Text, p. 96</i> <p>Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Student Reference Pages 399-400, Clue Words in Writing Tasks</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: Sort and Categorize, p. 109 Lesson 2: Compare These Pieces, p. 111 Lesson 3: Pick, List & Choose, p. 114 <i>Lesson 4: Pick, List, Choose, Ask, Find to Generate Main Ideas for Writing About Science or Social Studies, p. 117</i> Lesson 5: Main Ideas - Don't Overlap Them!, p. 125 Lesson 6: Main Ideas - Broad or Too Narrow, p. 132 Lesson 7: Recognizing Givens & Variables in Prompts & Assignments, p. 138 Lesson 8: Analyzing Response to Text Prompts & Assignments for Givens & Variables, p. 143 Lesson 9: Generating Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas, p. 147 Lesson 10: Alternatives to Boring, Redundant Main Idea Sentences, p. 149 Lesson 11: Revising Boring, Redundant Main Ideas, p. 153 Lesson 13: Main Idea Blurbs into Sentences, p. 159 <i>Lesson 14: Turning Questions into Responses, p. 162</i> Lesson 15: The Missing Main Idea, p. 167 Lesson 16: Sentence Variety & Word References, p. 171 <i>Lesson 17: Preparing to Write a Response to Text, p. 179</i> <i>Lesson 18: Preparing to Respond in Writing to Multiple Texts, p. 185</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: What Does it Look Like? Why is it Important? Grab Bag, p. 205 Lesson 2: Just Okay...or Much Better, p. 207 Lesson 3: Sentence Matching, p. 209 Lesson 4: Writing Sentences Using the Detail-Generating Questions, p. 211 Lesson 5: Find the Overly General Words and Phrases, p. 215 Lesson 6: Break up That Grocery List!, p. 218 Lesson 7: Using Detail-Generating Questions, p. 220 Lesson 8: Flip the Sentence Subject!, p. 223 <i>Lesson 9: Reading & Summarizing Texts, p. 230</i> <i>Lesson 10: Comparing & Contrasting in Response to Multiple Texts, p. 242</i> <i>Lesson 11: Paraphrasing, p. 255</i> <i>Lesson 12: Giving the Author Credit, p. 261</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue: Using the Detail Generating Questions - Model and Guided Practice <i>Continue: Response to Text Lessons</i> <p>Introduce from Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: 7-Day Process Writing, p. 397 <p>Process Writing Piece:</p> <p>Choose an appropriate expository topic and use the process writing timeline to instruct how to put a fully developed piece together.</p> <p>Choose a Response to Text Lesson from Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Lesson 2: Identify Theme, p. 402</i> <i>Lesson 3: Read Like an Author, p. 419</i> <i>Lesson 4: Writing a Literary Analysis - Narrator's "Point of View", p. 425</i> 	<p>Mid-year Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Lesson 1: Reading Strategically and Finding Information Within Text, p. 268</i> Lesson 2: Research! Using Search Engines, p. 271 <i>Lesson 3: Images and Videos: Adding Descriptive Details and Generating Research Questions, p. 274</i> <i>Lesson 4: Researching a Topic of Interest, p. 280</i> <i>Lesson 5: Gleaning Information Using Diagrams, Charts, Graphs, Maps, and Timelines, p. 288</i> <i>Lesson 6: Taking Notes from Lectures & Multi-media Presentations, p. 292</i> <i>Lesson 7: Research/Take Notes/Write/Cite, p. 296</i> Lesson 8: Locating Golden Bricks for Research, p. 300 Lesson 9: Transitional Words & Phrases, p. 303 Lesson 10: Revise This Paragraph, p. 308 Lesson 11: Writing a Paragraph Using Supporting Details, p. 312 Lesson 11: Using Information from Multiple Sources, p. 318

(continued)

Grade 8 Year-at-a-Glance

MONTH 6 Introductions and Conclusions	MONTH 7 Process Writing Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks	MONTH 8 Review all skills as needed	MONTH 9 Review all skills as needed	MONTH 10 Review all skills as needed
<p>Introductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: Leads and Topic Sentences, p. 325 Lesson 2: Writing an Attention-Grabbing Lead, p. 329 Lesson 3: Effective Topic Sentences, p. 336 Lesson 4: Writing Topic Sentences, p. 338 Lesson 5: Writing the Introduction Paragraph, p. 340 Lesson 6: Writing Response to Text Introduction Paragraphs, p. 349 <p>Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 7: Revising Dull Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 357 Lesson 8: Revise This Conclusion Paragraph, p. 360 Lesson 9: Definitive Words and Phrases and Informative Verbs, p. 362 Lesson 10: Hypothetical Anecdote, p. 366 Lesson 11: Analyzing More Complex Conclusions, p. 368 Lesson 12: Crafting Powerful Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 371 Lesson 13: Broadening Your Topic, p. 378 Lesson 14: Writing Response to Text Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 382 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: 7-Day Process Writing Timeline, p. 397 Additional Expository Prompts/Assignments, p. 440 <p>Process Writing Piece</p> <p>Choose an appropriate expository topic and use the process writing timeline to put a fully developed piece together.</p> <p>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 skills.)</p> <p>In addition, choose from these appropriate authentic tasks to enhance and inform your instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference pages: Clue Words in Writing Tasks, pp. 399-400 Lesson 2: Identify the Theme, p. 402 Lesson 3: Read Like an Author, p. 419 Lesson 4: Writing the Literary Analysis-Narrator's "Point of View", p. 425 Additional Text-Based Assignments, p. 438 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Project - Use a science or social studies theme to make an authentic application to the skills learned. 	<p>End of Year Assessment</p>	

Grade 8 Unit Pacing Guide

For use when teaching expository/opinion writing using a unit by unit approach - Response to Text lessons are woven throughout the unit.

First 8-week unit of Expository and Response to Text Writing

WEEKS 1-2 Section 1: Recognizing Genre/Organization	WEEKS 3-4 Section 2: Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas	WEEKS 5-6 Section 3: Elaboration - Detail Generating Questions	WEEKS 7-8 Section 5: Introductions and Conclusions Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks
<p>Pre-Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the Expository and Argument Pillars, pp. 14-15 Lesson 1: Recognizing Genre, p. 21 Lesson 2: Distinguishing Between Opinion & Argumentative Writing, p. 23 Lesson 3: Analyzing Real World Applications of Argumentative and Opinion Writing, p. 30 <i>Lesson 4: Strategic Reading - Informed Writing, p. 33</i> <i>Lesson 5: Strategic Reading: Organization and Text Conventions, p. 41</i> Lesson 9: Finding Irrelevant, Extraneous Details, p. 85 Lesson 10: Expository and Argumentative Pieces for Comparison, p. 91 <p><i>Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks</i></p> <p><i>Student Reference Pages 399-400, Clue Words in Writing Tasks</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: Sort and Categorize, p. 109 Lesson 2: Compare These Pieces, p. 111 Lesson 3: Pick, List and Choose, p. 114 <i>Lesson 4: Pick, List, Choose, Ask, Find to Generate Main Ideas for Writing About Science or Social Studies, p. 117</i> Lesson 5: Main Ideas - Don't Overlap Them, p. 125 Lesson 6: Main Ideas - Broad or Too Narrow, p. 132 Lesson 9: Generating Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas, p. 147 Lesson 10: Alternatives to Boring, Redundant Main Idea Sentences, p. 149 Lesson 11: Revising Boring, Redundant Main Ideas, p. 153 Lesson 13: Main Idea Blurbs into Sentences, p. 159 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: What Does it Look Like? Why is it Important? Grab Bag, p. 205 Lesson 2: Just OK or Much Better?, p. 207 Lesson 3: Sentence Matching, p. 209 Lesson 4: Writing Sentences Using Detail-Generating Questions, p. 211 Lesson 5: Find the Overly General Words and Phrases, p. 215 Lesson 6: Break up that Grocery List!, p. 218 Lesson 7: Using Detail-Generating Questions, p. 220 <i>Lesson 9: Reading and Summarizing Texts, p. 230</i> 	<p>Section 5: Introductions and Conclusions</p> <p>Introductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: Leads and Topic Sentences, p. 325 <p>Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 7: Revising Dull Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 357 Lesson 8: Revise This Conclusion Paragraph, p. 360 <p>Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: 7-Day Process Writing, p. 397 <p>Process Writing Piece</p> <p><i>Choose an appropriate topic and use the process writing timeline to create a full piece - use this as an instructional time, not a fully independent assignment.</i></p> <p>***Administer an expository prompt as a post-assessment. This should be saved in a portfolio and used to drive instruction for the next 8-week unit.</p>

Grade 8 Unit Pacing Guide

Second 8-week unit of Expository and Response to Text writing

WEEKS 1-2 Section 1: Recognizing Genre/Organization Section 2: Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas	WEEKS 3-4 Section 3: Elaboration - Detail Generating Questions Section 4: Research	WEEKS 5-6 Section 4: Research Section 5: Introductions and Conclusions	WEEKS 7-8 Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks
Pre-Assessment Section 1: Recognizing Genre/Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 6: Close Reading Challenge, p. 52 Lesson 7: Analyzing and Expository and Argumentative Writing, p. 48 Lesson 8: Writing Simple Summarizing Paragraphs, p. 82 Lesson 9: Finding Irrelevant, Extraneous Details, p. 85 Lesson 11: Finding Evidence Within Text, p. 96 Section 2: Main Ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 7: Recognizing Givens and Variables in Prompts and Assignments, p. 138 Lesson 8: Analyzing Response to Text Prompts and Assignments for Givens and Variables, p. 143 Lesson 13: Main Idea Blurbs into Sentences, p. 159 Lesson 14 Turning Questions into Responses, p. 162 Lesson 15: The Missing Main Idea, p. 167 Lesson 16: Sentence Variety and Word References, p. 171 Lesson 17: Preparing to Write a Response to Text, p. 179 Lesson 18: Preparing to Respond in Writing to Multiple Texts, p. 185 	Section 3: Elaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Lesson 1: What Does It Look Like? Why is it Important? Grab Bag, p. 205 Review Lesson 7: Using Detail-Generating Questions, p. 220 Lesson 8: Flip the Sentence Subject, p. 223 Review Lesson 9: Reading and Summarizing Texts, p. 230 Lesson 10: Comparing and Contrasting in Response to Multiple Texts, p. 242 Lesson 11: Paraphrasing, p. 255 Lesson 12: Giving the Author, p. 261 Section 4: Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 1: Reading Strategically and Finding Information Within Text, p. 268 Lesson 2: Research! Using Search Engines, p. 271 Lesson 3: Images and Videos: Adding Descriptive Details and Generating Research Questions, p. 274 Lesson 4: Researching a Topic of Interest, p. 280 Lesson 5: Gleaning Information Diagrams, Charts, Graphs, Maps and Timelines, p. 288 Lesson 6: Taking Notes from Lectures & Multi-Media Presentations, p. 292 Lesson 7: Research/ Take Notes/ Write/ Cite, p. 296 	Section 4: Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 8: Locating Golden Bricks, p. 300 Lesson 9: Transitional Words and Phrases, p. 303 Lesson 10: Revise This Paragraph, p. 308 Lesson 11: Writing a Paragraph Using Supporting Details, p. 312 Sub-genres of Expository Writing, p. 314 Lesson 12: Using Information from Multiple Sources, p. 318 Section 5: Introductions and Conclusions Introductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Lesson 1: Leads and Topic Sentences, p. 325 Lesson 2: Writing an Attention Grabbing Lead, p. 329 Lesson 3: Effective Topic Sentences, p. 336 Lesson 4: Writing Topic Sentences, p. 338 Lesson 5: Writing the Introduction Paragraph, p. 340 Lesson 6: Writing Response to Text Introduction Paragraphs, p. 349 Conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson 9: Definitive Words and Phrases and Informative Verbs, p. 362 Lesson 10: The Hypothetical Anecdote, p. 366 Lesson 11: Analyzing More Complex Conclusions, p. 368 Lesson 12: Crafting Powerful Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 371 Lesson 13: Broadening Your Topic, p. 378 Lesson 14: Writing Response to Text: Conclusion Paragraphs, p. 382 	Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks Research Project - use a science or social studies theme to make an authentic application to the skills learned. AND/OR Complete a Process Writing Piece Lesson 1: 7-Day Process Writing Choose an appropriate topic and use the process writing timeline to create a full piece. Post - Assessment This will show growth over time when compared to previous prompts administered during the year. Choose from any one or more of the following lessons: Section 6: Authentic Writing Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference Pages: Clue Words in Writing Tasks, pp. 399-400 Lesson 2: Identify the Theme, p. 402 Lesson 3: Read Like an Author, p. 419 Lesson 4: Writing a Literary Analysis - Narrator's "Point of View", p. 425 Additional Text-Based Assignments, p. 438



Let's Compare Expository/Informative and Argumentative Writing

	EXPOSITORY/ INFORMATIVE	ARGUMENTATIVE
Organization	Expository/Informative Pillar	Argument Pillar
Purpose	To inform	To logically present an opinion
Introduction	Lead/topic sentence	Lead/issue statement/ claim
Body of Piece	Main <i>ideas</i>	Main reasons
Supporting Details	<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>
Conclusion	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 14

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

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 outlining the plant and animal life found in a rainforest environment.

3. Read the question aloud and ask students what the question is all about. Explain that *the plant and animal life found in a rainforest environment* is the key phrase in this question. This is the phrase they will repeat in their response. MODEL how to begin to write a response with this key phrase and underline it:

Ex. There is a multitude of plant and animal life in a rainforest environment. Another way to say it might be: **A rainforest environment supports a multitude of plant and animal life.**

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

Write a response describing why top predators such as sharks and wolves are so important to an ecosystem.

Read the question aloud and ask students what the question is *all about*. (top predators) Explain that *why top predators are so important to an ecosystem* is the key phrase in the question. This is the phrase they will repeat in their response. MODEL how to begin their response with this key phrase and underline it:

Ex. Top predators such as sharks and wolves are important to an ecosystem for several reasons.

There are several reasons why top predators such as sharks and wolves are important to an ecosystem.

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.

Turning Questions/Prompts into Responses

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 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 pp. 165-166.

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 how meeting Augustus Waters at a Cancer Kids Support Group changed the final months of Hazel's life. (*In the novel A Fault in Our Stars by John Green, there are many examples of how August Waters changed the final months of Hazel's life.*)

Write an essay explaining why it's so important to preserve large tracts of land for wildlife. (*There are many reasons why it's important to preserve large tracts of land for wildlife.*)

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. Artist Leonardo Da Vinci has numerous inventions to his credit.
 - *Numerous inventions are credited to artist Leonardo Da Vinci.*
2. Several significant economic conditions led up to the Stock Market Crash of 1929.
 - *The Stock Market Crash of 1929 was preceded by several significant economic conditions.*

Turning Questions/Prompts into Responses

3. Katniss Everdeen takes responsibility for her family and her community in many ways in the Hunger Games series.
 - *There are many ways in which Katniss Everdeen takes responsibility for her family and her community in the Hunger Games series.*
4. In this poem the poet used numerous images to set a exuberant tone.
 - *To set an exuberant tone in this poem, the poet used numerous images.*

Turning Questions/Prompts into Responses (2)

1. There are both similarities and differences between the Salem Witch Trials and the Cuban Missile Crisis.
2. There were many important ways in which the invention of the cotton gin changed agriculture in the 19th century.
3. In these stories, both Tom and Susan learned the value of family relationships.
4. Maya Angelou and Alice Walker both contributed to literature and civil rights in many ways.

Name _____

TURNING QUESTIONS INTO RESPONSES (1)

DIRECTIONS: Read each question/prompt below and underline the key phrase. Then, on the lines beneath the question, use this key phrase in your 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.

1. Using evidence from the text, describe the inventions of artist Leonardo Da Vinci.

2. Write an essay explaining the economic conditions leading up to the Stock Market crash of 1929. Be sure to cite examples from the text.

3. Based on examples in the story, explain how Katniss Everdeen takes responsibility for her family and her community in the Hunger Games series.

4. Write an essay explaining how images the poet created contribute to the exuberant tone of the poem.

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. Then they sort this relevant information into a comparison grid.

Procedure

1. Engage students in the usual annotation and analysis process for both texts, The Squid, pp. 231-232, and The Octopus pp. 236-237. Use the annotated teacher versions to guide the process.
2. Explain that when authors write they often have to refer to multiple sources to find the information they need to inform their writing. In order to do this it's helpful if authors know, in advance, what specific information they'll need to complete their writing assignment.
3. Project, distribute, and discuss the writing assignment and Discussion Questions, pp. 243-244.

You have read informative texts about two types of marine life, The Squid and The Octopus. Write an essay comparing and contrasting the anatomy, intelligence, habitat and defensive behaviors of both animals. Be sure to cite specific examples from both texts.

4. Walk them through the Discussion Questions, pp. 243-244. Use the Annotated Version as a guide, pp. 245-246.
5. Distribute copies of the Comparison Grid, p. 248, and project this. Citing information in both texts, assist students in filling in the comparison grid with simple bulleted notes. (See sample, p. 249. For more on note-taking see, pp. 292-293.)
6. Finally, project the Written Response Exemplar, pp. 250-251, and have individual students match the details in this piece with the evidence in both source texts. If the evidence came from The Squid have them underline it in the Exemplar Response in blue. If it came from The Octopus 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, unless clearly citing the source. Copying without citing the source would be *plagiarizing*. Instead, the author reworded the material and credited back to the author.

BONUS: Have students circle all of the various ways the authors of these pieces refer to the sea creatures 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.

LESSON AT A GLANCE:

Whole Class Activity

- Compare and contrast two related texts.
- Identify evidence from both texts and create comparison grid.
- See how this evidence can be incorporated into a compare and contrast piece.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - THE SQUID AND THE OCTOPUS

You have read informative texts about two types of marine life, The Squid and The Octopus. Write an essay comparing and contrasting the anatomy, intelligence, habitat and defensive behaviors of both animals. Be sure to cite specific examples from both texts.

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

THE OCTOPUS

TOPIC: The Octopus

MAIN IDEA #1: physical characteristics

MAIN IDEA #2: habitats

MAIN IDEA #3: social behavior

MAIN IDEA #4: intelligence

THE SQUID

TOPIC: The Squid

MAIN IDEA #1: physical characteristics

MAIN IDEA #2: habitats

MAIN IDEA #3: defenses

2. What do you notice about these summarizing frameworks?

Some of the main ideas are the same, some are different. One provides 4 main ideas,
one only 3.

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

Must compare/contrast the anatomy, intelligence, habitat and defensive behaviors
of squid vs. octopus.

4. Go back to each text. Based on your main idea “blurbs” in the margins, circle the paragraphs describing physical characteristics and intelligence in pink, habitats in blue, and defensive behaviors in green.
5. Read your selected paragraphs. What common information might you use to compare/contrast?

anatomical features, habitats

6. If you were going to expand the text The Squid what is another main idea you might include:

squid conservation, different types of squid, related folklore and myths.

7. If you were going to expand the text The Octopus what is another main idea you might include:

octopus conservation, predation, evolution of octopus

BONUS: Go back to each source and circle all of the ways the authors refer to the birds described in these texts. (*word referents*)

Circle: • intriguing invertebrates • combative carnivores • pugnacious predators
• carnivorous creatures • saltwater animals • 8-armed relative • hungry hunter

COMPARISON GRID

	SQUID	OCTOPUS
Anatomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • body encased in "pen" • huge eyes • "mantle" housing internal organs • 8-10 arms, plus 2 tentacles • barbed hooks or "sucker rings" • sharp beaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No skeleton, pen or spine • huge eyes • "mantle" housing internal organs • 8 arms • 4 hearts • "suckers" on arms • strong beaks
Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large brain • Shows signs of intelligence, but no real understanding of their ability to learn and remember. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • largest, most sophisticated brain of any invertebrate • Have personalities • Can be naughty, seem curious
Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free floaters • tropical and temperate zones of Atlantic, Pacific and Southern oceans • Giant specimens found in waters near Antarctica 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build dens around the world • many species found near Coral Reefs in the Caribbean and the Great Barrier Reef • Largest types found in colder waters
Defensive Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • squirt ink • change colors for camouflage • Use bioluminescence to disorient enemies • fight with hooks, sucker cups and sharp beaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • squirt ink • change colors for camouflage

EXEMPLAR TEXT

THE SQUID AND THE OCTOPUS

Our oceans teem with life. From the gargantuan Blue Whale to the dainty seahorse, the diversity found in saltwater ecosystems is truly amazing. These texts examine two of the most fascinating marine creatures on earth: the squid and the octopus. While closely related, these two animals each have characteristics that are uniquely their own.

physical characteristics The author details the anatomical characteristics of each species and informs us that the squid has huge eyes and “their internal organs are encased in a sack known as a mantle.” The octopus has the same features. As the texts explain, both animals have multiple arms, but while octopuses have 8 arms, squid can have up to 10 arms. Squid also have two tentacles, tipped with barbed hooks or “sucker rings,” which the author describes as “a circle of razor sharp teeth that latch onto prey like a suction cup.” The octopus, on the other hand, has “rows of suction-cup like suckers that hold prey in place as the hungry hunter injects it with venom.” The author also describes the form and functions of both animals’ beaks. Another difference between the squid and the octopus noted in the text is that the squid has a “pen,” which the author explains is “a flexible structure similar to an exterior skeleton.” The octopus lacks a pen, as well as a skeleton and spine.

intelligence The text reveals that both animals have large, complex brains. Readers are informed, however, that little is known about the squid’s capacity for learning and memory. We learn that more is known about the intelligence of the octopus and the author details instances of captive octopuses escaping their enclosures and finding their way back in. Readers are also informed that these brainy beings have the most sophisticated brain of any invertebrate and exhibit curiosity.

habitat We learn from the texts that both animals are widely distributed throughout the world. Squid are found free-floating in the Atlantic, Pacific and Southern oceans while octopuses

build themselves dens on the ocean floor, often near coral reefs. As the author explains, large specimens of squid have been found living in the frigid waters of the Antarctic and the biggest species of octopus are also found in cold waters.

defenses Both texts highlight the similarities between the defensive behaviors of the squid and octopus. Each animal is able to produce ink and change colors because they have specialized cells called chromatophores in their bodies. The author tells us these abilities help them camouflage themselves from predators. The squid has the additional advantage of bioluminescence, the capacity for creating light to disorient predators. The text goes on to explain that squid will use their sharp beaks, sucker rings and barbed hooks to defend themselves too.

As these texts detail the anatomical features, intelligence, habitats and defensive behaviors of the octopus and the squid, we learn that the two animals share some similarities but have distinct differences, too.

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. 223)

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 Island of Madagascar. 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. During the Golden Age of Piracy, Madagascar was overtaken by buccaneers who set up camp on its beautiful beaches and plundered passing ships.

In the article, we learn that buccaneers set up camp on the beautiful beaches of the tropical island and robbed passing ships during the Golden Age of Piracy.

Underline the sentence starter in the sentence above. Below, notice how the article is cited at the end of the sentence. Notice also the word referent, “tropical island for “Madagascar” and the substitution of “robbed” for “plundered.”

Buccaneers set up camp on the beautiful beaches of the tropical island and robbed passing ships during the Golden Age of Piracy, according to the article.

1. With a population of nearly 25 million, Madagascar is an independent island nation in the Indian Ocean.
2. An impressive 250,000 different species can be found on this isolated landmass and more than 600 of them have been discovered in the past decade.
3. In the 7th century, the remote region was an important trading port visited regularly by sailors from Africa, India and the Arabian Peninsula.

4. The Lemur, a primate known for its ear-splitting howls and lush black and white tail is one example of the many animal species found in Madagascar and nowhere else on earth.

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: Entomology is the scientific study of insects.

Student writes: Entomology – study of insects.

Lecturer says: Most entomologists conduct their research at large universities and focus on a specific classification of insect, such as bees or butterflies.

Student writes: Entomologists research/large universities. Focus: one insect – bee/butterfly.

Lecturer says: Among the topics being studied extensively by entomologists around the world are the impact of climate change on insect populations, insecticide resistance and the effects of insects on crops.

Student writes: Topics studied – climate change, insecticide resistance, effect on crops.

Lecturer says: One of the first important discoveries in the world of entomology was the identification of the link between malaria and mosquito bites in 1900.

Student writes: 1900, link between malaria/mosquito bite.

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:** It is estimated that there are 30 million species of insects on earth that have not yet been identified.

Student writes: _____

2. **Lecturer says:** In 2016, nearly 100 new species of aquatic, or water-dwelling, beetles were discovered in Australia.

Student writes: _____

3. **Lecturer says:** North America’s recently discovered insect species include a firefly that glows only on the tip of its tail and a moth that looks like it has a tuft of blonde hair on top of its head.

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. Often called the Seven-Year War, the French and Indian War was fought between Britain and France and spanned the years 1756 and 1763.

Your notes: _____

2. When the war broke out, France controlled the Louisiana Territory and Canada. Spain, which allied with France, controlled Florida.

Your notes: _____

3. It is often assumed that the native peoples of North America sided with the French and some did. However, the Iroquois Confederacy formed an alliance with the British and many other tribes remained neutral.

Your notes: _____

4. A turning point of the war was the 1759 British victory in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. This conquest brought Quebec and months later, the city of Montreal, under British control.

Your notes: _____

5. The official end to the war came in 1763 when the Treaty of Paris was signed. This treaty gave Britain control of all the land west of the Mississippi and took Florida from the Spanish. The French ceded the Louisiana Territory to Spain.

Your notes: _____

6. The treaty also gave France control of the Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. While defeated in battle, the French profited from the sugar industries on these islands for many years to come.

Your notes: _____

7. Britain tried to recoup the costs of the war by imposing heavy taxes on the North American colonies, which set the stage for the American Revolution.

Your notes: _____

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. 353
3. Turning Questions into Responses, p. 162

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

You've read two articles the Battle of the Little Big Horn – one focusing military strategies of General George Armstrong Custer and the other on those of Lakota Chief Crazy Horse. Write an essay describing the effectiveness of at least three of these tactics.

1. Analyze the assignment for **givens and variables**:

Givens: *The military strategies of two leaders*

Variables: *Which tactics were the most or least effective?*

2. Use a **summarizing framework** to craft a paragraph with informative verbs.

Topic: Crazy Horse vs. General Custer

MAIN IDEA #1: *Communication among the troops*

MAIN IDEA #2: *The initial charge*

MAIN IDEA #3: *Decoy tactics*

MAIN IDEA #4: *Taking hostages*

The Introduction Paragraph in Response to Text

These texts focus on the Battle of the Little Big Horn and the military strategies of its leaders, General George Armstrong Custer and Lakota Chief Crazy Horse. As the author explains, these strategies included maintaining communication among the troops, making an initial charge, using decoy tactics and taking hostages.

3. Turn the question into a response.

While both Crazy Horse and General Custer provided effective leadership, some of their tactics set the stage for victory and others for defeat at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

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

These texts focus on the Battle of the Little Big Horn and the military strategies of its leaders, General George Armstrong Custer and Lakota Chief Crazy Horse. As the author explains, these strategies included maintaining communication among the troops, making an initial charge, using decoy tactics and taking hostages. While both Crazy Horse and General Custer provided effective leadership, some of their tactics set the stage for victory and others for defeat at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

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*)

Topic **Ex.** *Based on the two texts, it clear that both Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson made momentous contributions to America and its government. In his early years, Hamilton transformed himself from an impoverished orphan into a Revolutionary War hero. Jefferson, on the other hand, was a privileged plantation owner who was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence and went on to become the third president of the United States. Before Hamilton was killed in a duel with a political adversary, he served George Washington's administration as the first Secretary of the Treasury. At the same time, Jefferson was the Secretary of State. Of course, their conflicting views created immense tension between the two and we will never know how much more both might have accomplished if they'd been able to work together cooperatively. Reading these texts made me better understand that the fundamental differences between political ideologies cause much the same problems today as they did back in the time of Hamilton and Jefferson.*

REITERATE:
Main Idea
Main Idea
inferential
SYNTHESIZE:
EVALUATIVE:
evaluative

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.

Teacher Background:

LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK

Students are often asked to respond to narrative stories in order to demonstrate their understanding of narrative craft. Identifying and reflecting on character development, point of view, theme, setting, conflict, and other narrative elements helps students to comprehend in deeper ways and to better understand authors' craft in application. ***The straight-forward analysis of and response to these kinds of narrative elements in stories needs to be organized within the expository framework, because while the source text is narrative (for the purpose of entertaining the reader) the purpose of the response to that narrative story is to inform the reader, providing written evidence of the close reading they did.***

There are other types of assignments which ask students to respond to narrative stories by assuming the point of view of a secondary character and retelling the story accordingly or crafting an alternate ending, but that is not what we're covering in this Expository Guide. The response to those types of tasks are essentially narrative extension activities, requiring students to organize their writing within a different framework. For more on this, see our [Comprehensive Narrative Writing Guide](#). (One of the two prompts below does ask the reader to imagine how the story would be different if told by another character, but it is clear that an expository response is required.)

To clarify, here are two examples – the first, a literary analysis task focusing **on theme** and the second **on point of view**. **Both require an expository response.**

1. Literary Analysis Task Focusing on Theme

The characters in the stories [Spring Break](#) and [A Golden Heart](#) use words and actions to show that they are feeling envy. Citing specific evidence from the text, write an analytical essay exploring how the uncomfortable feeling of envy is showcased by the major characters in each story. Your essay must also include a paragraph about a time in your life when you felt envious of another.

2. Literary Analysis Task Emphasizing Point of View

The character of Mandy narrates the story of [Motor Mouth](#), pp. 431-432, but how would it be different if told from Tori's point of view? What if the story of [Fearless Fred](#), pp. 427-428, was told from the point of view of Fred himself? Citing specific examples from the narrative, explain how the story would differ if told from another character's point of view.

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 this fluently 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. 416. 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/highlight 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 Read Like an Author, pp. 421-423, 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. An alternative is to assign some for homework.

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

Sample:

In this dramatic excerpt from Bird with the Heart of a Mountain by Barbara Mariconda, we meet 16-year-old Drina, half Spanish and half Roma, Drina has just suffered the loss of her mother and is meeting her father for the first time. Set in 1936, during the Spanish Civil War, the tone of the story is somber and quite tense as father and daughter awkwardly try to get to know each other. Alone in the world and mourning her mother, Drina is motivated by her desire to find a place where she belongs. We learn that Drina's father was a flamenco dancer as was her mother who forbade Drina from dancing. When Drina says "I...dance," her tone is hesitant. She seems to be questioning if she should share this information and we can't help but wonder if Drina fears her father will discourage her from dancing also. At the end, the reader understands Drina's hope as her father expresses renewed interest in his long-lost daughter after learning of her interest in dance. Could it be that the author is foreshadowing Drina's opportunity to pursue her dream of dancing flamenco? I believe that the character will gain confidence in herself through dance as the story continues and that flamenco will bring her a sense of community. Also, I believe she will learn more about her mother's past as the story continues. Judging from this excerpt alone, I think the theme of this story might be following your dreams and trusting that they'll lead you to a place where you belong. If I were in Drina's place, I hope I would have the courage to pursue my dreams, too.

EXTENSION: Narrative Extension Tasks – One form of critical thinking that is often asked of students is to extend or revise a narrative story based on some specific criteria. Discuss and have students attempt any of the following tasks using Motor Mouth and/or The Golden Heart as the source material. Be sure to review the story critical elements of narrative stories. (See The Comprehensive Narrative Writing Guide for more information on all aspects of narrative writing.)

- Think about the events that took place in the narrative story Motor Mouth. In this story Mandy was the protagonist or point of view character (main character). The reader sees the story world through her eyes. Re-imagine the events of this story through her friend Tori's eyes. How would it differ? How might it be the same? Rewrite this story from Tori's viewpoint. Compare it to the original. Which point of view do you think is more compelling?
- As the story of The Golden Heart ends, we learn that the point-of-view character, Ella, is grieving for her dear grandmother. Extend this story to show what might happen between Sophie and Ella in the coming weeks as Ella comes to terms with her loss.

Name _____

READ LIKE AN AUTHOR

In this excerpt from Bird with the Heart of a Mountain by Barbara Mariconda, 16-year-old Drina has just met father, a flamenco dancer, for the first time. The year is 1936; the Spanish Civil War is raging and Drina's mother has just died. Of mixed Spanish and Roma heritage, Drina is searching for her place in a chaotic, war-torn world where she doesn't quite know where she belongs. Her dearest desire is to be a flamenco dancer herself, but her mother never allowed her to pursue this dream.

My words come out of their own accord, like bullets from the machina. "My mother was a dancer?"

He blinks. Shakes his head. "What a thing to ask! Of course. Surely you knew that." There is an edge of accusation in his tone.

"Never. My mother never danced again."

His face and shoulders sag. A bill slips from his fingers and blows across the terrace like a fallen leaf.

"She called for you at the end. Said you were coming back for us."

"I am so sorry. I ..."

I take a deep breath. "And you are a dancer. I knew that."

"Yes..."

I pause, the words poised on my lips. "I ...dance..."

Something in his eyes and posture shifts. "You are your mother's daughter then."

"And my father's?"

He hesitates. Stuffs the money back into his pocket. Studies me in a new way.

It is easier, I suppose, to talk of dance than of betrayal. Abandonment. Yet, it is a hint of encouragement. Despite the ache I feel, I cannot deny the thrill of this small flicker of interest. Of hope. Of dancing. My father and I remain, many feet apart, staring at one another.

Nothing but more static.

Taken from Bird with the Heart of a Mountain (p. 138) by Barbara Mariconda
Amazon Children's Publishing, Las Vegas, NV

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Additional Text-Based Assignments

Below you will find a variety of additional Text-Based 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. You have viewed a video about the Great Wall of China. Please conduct a keyword search to identify at least two other sources of information (print, video, or podcast) about this historical structure and write an expository essay explaining its significance in the history of China. Be sure to cite your sources!

Suggested video: <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/exploreorg/china-great-wall-eorg?gc=%2Fvideo%2Fhistory-civilization>

2. You have viewed two videos about one of the darkest hours in history: the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor; the first recounted a survivor's experiences while the other focused on President Franklin D. Roosevelt's response to the attack. Use the information provided by these videos to write a report about the consequences of this attack. Feel free to use additional sources of information -- just make sure to cite them.

Suggested videos: <http://www.smithsonianchannel.com/videos/a-pearl-harbor-veteran-tells-his-harrowing-story-of-survival/53898>

www.history.com/topics/world-warII/pearl-harbor/videos/fdrs-pearl-harbor-address

3. You have read the story In the Exclusion Zone, 2055, pp. 440-441, and watched a video about the animals of the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. Based on the story as well as the video, write an argumentative essay supporting the claim that it is or is not ethical to allow wildlife populations to flourish in an environment that has been contaminated by radiation. Make sure to cite evidence from both sources in your essay and, if necessary, conduct research on your own to support your claim.

Suggested video: <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/news/160418-chernobyl-exclusion-zone-nature-vin>

4. Research a profession you'd like to explore. Citing at least two sources from your research, write an essay explaining the pluses and minuses of this profession.