

PREVIEW



# Narrative Writing Guide

Grades 7-8

- Personal Experience
- Character/Problem/Solution
- Narrative Essay
- Literary Analysis Tasks
- Narrative Extension Tasks



by Cynthia Williamson,  
Dea Paoletta Auray,  
& Diane Lazar

**Empowering**  
*Writers*

**Write. Read. Succeed.**

**Teacher Background Pages, Reference Pages, Annotated Selections,** and **Lessons Plans** are all designated with a border of Apples. Student Pages are indicated with a border of **Pencils**. Student Reference Pages (SRP) and all student activity pages are available for download.

**For ease of use, this resource has been divided into two tabbed skill sections:**

Section 1: Lessons that review essential narrative writing skills, such as recognizing the author's purpose and organizational structure of different genres, building suspense, foreshadowing key plot points, making transitions between settings and time frames, and many others.

Section 2: Literary Analysis/Narrative Extension Tasks that explore motivation and conflict, point-of-view, the use of irony and alliteration and more. Students will have the opportunity to:

- Analyze how characters change in narrative text.
- Try their hand at creating a segment that foreshadows an event.
- Identify and analyze themes and revise text to showcase an alternate theme.
- Rewrite narrative text from a differing point of view.

Also, given the demands of the latest standards and testing trends, **it is critical for students to generate their writing in both the traditional pen and paper mode as well as directly at the keyboard.** It is important to note that the latest research suggests that each modality stimulates the brain differently. Pen to paper is often a slower, more multi-sensory process. At the same time, in order to be an effective communicator in the 21st century students must also possess agile keyboard skills. Therefore we suggest that students are given the opportunity to respond to written tasks in both modalities, at the teacher's discretion.

Throughout the guide, we've provided ideas for **Making it Your Own**, tailoring them to the content you are teaching as well as the specific needs and interests of your students. In addition, if students need more practice on a particular skill, be sure to utilize the templates to create these opportunities.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Teacher Background: • What is Narrative Writing</b> .....	13
• <b>Recognizing Genre</b> .....	22
Lesson 1: Introducing Graphic Organizers .....	29
Lesson 2: Comparing Four Types of Writing ... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">A &amp; A</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	32
<b>Teacher Background: Beginnings</b> .....	48
Lesson 1: Analyze the Beginning ... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	50
Lesson 2: Revising Story Beginnings ... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	55
<b>Teacher Background: Elaborative Detail</b> .....	59
Lesson 1: Story Critical Elements ... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	62
Lesson 2: Creating Elaborative Detail Segments.....	64
Lesson 3: Elaborative Detail - Reading with Author's Eyes.....	76
<b>Teacher Background: What Feelings Look Like</b> .....	81
Lesson 4: What Do Feelings Look Like? ... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	82
<b>Teacher Background: Suspense</b> .....	86
Lesson 1: Find the Suspense... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	88
Lesson 2: Word Referents.....	91
Lesson 3: Red Flag Words and Phrases ... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	93
Lesson 4: Building Suspense.....	96
<b>Teacher Background: Main Event</b> .....	101
Lesson 1: Comparing Summaries and Fully Elaborated Main Events. <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	104
Lesson 2: Main Event.....	108
<b>Teacher Background: Endings</b> .....	111
Lesson 1: Analyze the Ending... <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">T &amp; T</span> .....	113
Lesson 2: Extending this Ending.....	117
<b>Teacher Background: Prompts, Assessment and Process Writing</b> ...	120
Lesson 1: Analyzing Prompts for Givens and Variables .....	122
Lesson 2: Administering Prompts as Timed Assessments.....	124

## Lesson 2: Comparing Four Types of Writing

### Objective:

**Day 1:** Students recognize and distinguish between character problem solution narratives, personal experience narratives, informational, and argument texts.

**Day 2:** Students recognize and distinguish between informational and argument texts.

### Procedure:

#### Day 1

1. Explain that they will be reading a particular kind of text called a personal experience narrative. Using the teacher background information on p. 14, define and discuss this type of story (genre), emphasizing the key elements. (See chart on p. 24)
2. Project and distribute copies of The Battle in My Backyard, (Personal Experience), pp. 37-39 (link), and SRP 6, Annotation and Analysis Process for Narrative Stories. First read the entire story aloud to them and have them simply listen. Then, go back and annotate the story with the class. Use the SRP 6, for step by step procedure and refer to the annotated teacher version, pp. 37-39. Discuss the story as you go, having students annotate (mark the parts of the story) along with you. In this exemplar, be sure to point out the entertaining beginning, middle, and end, the wealth of elaborative detail, and discuss what the theme might be. Finally, use the Narrative Summarizing Framework, outlined at the end of the reference page, to orally summarize the story.

**Student Reference Page**

**Annotation and Analysis Process for Narrative Stories**

1. Label the **title** – what *genre* does the title hint at?
2. Circle the **entertaining beginning**, identify, label the technique.
3. Identify the **purpose of the story action** and main character's **motivation**.
4. Find **elaborative detail** describing the **setting** – mark and label this.
5. Underline and label **suspense**, **story tension**, **conflict**.
6. Bracket the **main event**.
7. Underline and label the **conclusion/solution** or conclusion of adventure.
8. Circle the **extended story ending** and label each technique.
9. Identify the **theme**. Highlight the parts of the story that indicate theme.
10. Circle examples of **foreshadowing** and **irony** within the text.
11. Underline any use of **alliteration** or **figurative language** in the title or text.
12. Fill in **summarizing framework**. Allow students to prompt you.  
This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem/experience was \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem ended/concluded when \_\_\_\_\_.

**THE MAIN EVENT**  
Show action in clear motion, frame by frame, stretch it out! Include description and main character's thoughts and feelings!

SRP 6

(continued)

## Lesson 2: Comparing Four Types of Writing

3. If time allows, go on to the character/problem/solution narrative titled Moody Molly Meets the Past, pp. 40-41 (link). Follow the same process as in the previous story, using the annotated pages to guide the process. Be sure to emphasize the problem and the solution in this story and mention that again, the purpose here is to entertain. (Of course, you may approach this story on a separate day.)

### Day 2

4. On a subsequent day(s), walk students through the informational text Key Battles of the Civil War, pp. 43-44, pointing out the way this text is organized using the Informational Pillar, SRP 4, and Annotation and Analysis Process for Informational and Argument Texts, SRP 8. Emphasize that the purpose of this text is to inform the reader, to provide them with information. Compare this to the 2 narrative stories and discuss the many differences. Move on to the Argument text Preserving the Past, pp. 45-46, moving through it in the same manner. Be sure to point out the purpose (to demonstrate the writer's position in a reasoned, logical way.) Use the annotated teacher version to guide your discussion.

Student Reference Page

### Informational Pillar

**INTRODUCTION**  
Lead/Topic Sentence

Main Idea #1

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #2

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #3

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

**Conclusion**

Summarizing Framework

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN IDEA #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN IDEA #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN IDEA #3: \_\_\_\_\_

SRP 4

Student Reference Page

### Annotation and Analysis Process for Informational and Argument Texts

1. Identify title/topic.
2. Number each paragraph.
3. Circle and label **introduction**.
4. Bracket and label **body** of the piece.
5. Underline **main idea** or **main reason** sentences, place **blurb** in margin (a word or phrase).
6. Cross check **supporting details** to main ideas.
7. Box and label the conclusion. Reference **main ideas**.
8. Fill in summarizing framework:

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN IDEA #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN IDEA #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN IDEA #3: \_\_\_\_\_ etc.

ISSUE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CLAIM: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN REASON #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN REASON #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN REASON #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Informational Pillar

**INTRODUCTION**  
Lead/Topic Sentence

Main Idea #1

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #2

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #3

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

**Conclusion**

Argument Pillar

**INTRODUCTION**  
Issue/Reason

Main Reason #1

Evidence	Evidence
Evidence	Evidence

Main Reason #2

Evidence	Evidence
Evidence	Evidence

Main Reason #3

Evidence	Evidence
Evidence	Evidence

**CONCLUSION**

SRP 8

(continued)

## Lesson 2: Comparing Four Types of Writing

5. As a culminating activity, have the students look back over the four texts they annotated. Write the following on the board:

**NARRATIVE STORIES** – purpose: to entertain

- Character/problem/solution – focus on a **character** who solves a problem
- Personal experience narrative – focus on a **place or activity**, highly descriptive

**INFORMATIONAL PIECES** – focus on a **topic** – purpose: to inform

**ARGUMENT PIECES** – focus on an **issue** – purpose: to demonstrate the writer's position in a reasoned, logical way

6. Display the Narrative Diamond, SRP 1; Informational, SRP 4; and Argument Pillars, SRP 5. Ask students to try to match the various sections of the respective pieces of writing to the corresponding graphic organizer.
7. Finally, consider having students save the annotated texts to serve as source texts for other lessons in this guide.

**Turn and Talk:** Discuss with a partner the similarities and differences in each genre. Why is it important to identify genre before reading the piece?

Entertaining  
Beginning  
sound, action

## The Battle in My Backyard

### Genre: Personal Experience

Clover let out a whinny of joy as I leaned forward to stroke her silky mane. It was a sweltering hot day, typical weather for south Texas in May. But Clover and I weren't going to let the heat get us down. My chestnut mare and I hadn't had much time to spend together for the past few weeks and we were just so glad to be ambling along the dusty trail beside the warm, murky waters of the Rio Grande.

I felt a deep sense of contentment, a feeling that only intensified when I heard the call of my favorite bird in the whole wide world, the green jay. With brilliantly blue and green feathers, the jay looked like it belonged in a lush tropical jungle. Instead, it inhabited the same dry, flat sagebrush plains as I did.

elaborative  
detail

On this sunny afternoon, I was dreaming of the day I'd fall in love and feeling as free as a bird myself due to the fact that I was away from the house of heavy sorrow. That's how I come to think of my home in the past few years. Shortly after the War of Northern Aggression broke out, my brother left home to join the cavalry and almost instantly, my mother'd been stricken with melancholy. My father looked exhausted from working without Travis' help every single day and lying awake with worry every night.

When Travis returned home in the dark of night two weeks ago, it was clear that he was a changed man. While unharmed in the fighting, Travis came back from the war looking infinitely older and sadder. I couldn't help but wonder what he'd had seen or done that transformed him into the young man with the wary eyes and the trembling hands he was today. But Travis was a steel trap. I knew the good-humored boy I remembered was lurking somewhere within this quiet, haunted version of my brother, and hoped he'd come back to us soon.

Suddenly, I felt Clover stiffen with tension beneath me. Her ears pricked up and she tossed her head nervously. I knew she'd detected danger in the air, so I

suspense

(continued)



main event cont.

My head was spinning with confusion. I found it hard to believe that the union soldiers had instigated a battle just to steal horses. After all, the weary, soft-spoken soldier I'd met on the banks of the Rio Grande could have easily taken Clover from me and he hadn't. Instead, he'd been a gentleman, and he might well have been among the many union casualties.

Some time later, I heard that the mission of the union soldiers was to take back a nearby fort, which definitely sounded familiar. Hadn't union soldiers been ordered to reclaim Fort Sumter from the Confederate rebels four years earlier? Could it be that the first and the last battles of the Civil War were fought for the same reason? Doesn't it seem like we should have learned our lesson?

conclusion

Even if I'm lucky enough to live to a ripe old age, I doubt I'll ever make sense of the battle that took place so close to my backyard. It may have been fought without much of a purpose but it taught me to never question the horrors of war and to take every opportunity to work for peace.

Extended Ending  
Memory

Theme: take every opportunity to work for peace

See p. 42 for annotated summarizing framework.



## Summarizing Frameworks

Look back at the narrative pieces on pp. 37-41. Notice how they fit into the summarizing frameworks:

### The Battle in My Backyard - Personal Experience - pp. 37-39

This story is about a girl who meets up with an encampment of Union soldiers while she is riding her horse near her home.  
*Character*

The problem, adventure, or experience was that the Union soldiers and the Confederates engage in a battle, even though the war is over.  
*Main Event*

The problem was solved/adventure, experience concluded when when the battle is won by the Confederates but the girl is left wondering about why it took place.  
*Solution/Conclusion*

### Moody Molly Meets the Past - Character/Problem/Solution pp. 40-41

This story is about a girl who visits a Civil War battlefield with her family.  
*Character*

The problem, adventure, or experience was that she finds battlefields spooky and sad.  
*Main Event*

The problem was solved/adventure, experience concluded when when she discovers fascinating new facts about a civil war battle and the people involved in it.  
*Solution/Conclusion*

In each case, the use of the summarizing framework helps the reader reduce a fully elaborated piece of writing to the author's basic story plan.

Another benefit of using these frameworks as a follow-up to every reading experience is that students will internalize the frameworks and can use these as a concise, simple prewriting graphic organizer. However, they will need more guidance in order to FULLY ELABORATE their writing.

## Lesson 3: Elaborative Detail – Reading with Author's Eyes

### Objective:

Students read a sample of powerful elaborative detail from middle-grade fiction and identify the questions the author must have generated in order to compose the description. Additionally, students use it as a model for creating an elaborative segment of their own.

### Procedure:

1. Copy and distribute student activity pages Elaborative Detail (1) - (3), pp. 77-79.
2. Read the literary sample aloud from Elaborative Detail (1), p. 77 and discuss the following:
  - the numerous specifics rather than general details
  - the sentence variety
  - the sensory details
3. Discuss the detail generating questions the author must have asked in order to generate the detail. Have students refer to SRP 10.

**Ex.** *“It smelled like the country. It was a filet mignon farm, all of it, and the tissue spread for miles around the paths where we were walking. It was like these huge hedges of red all around us, with these beautiful marble patterns running through them. They had these tubes, they were bringing the tissue blood, and we could see the blood running around, up and down. It was really interesting. I like to see how things are made, and to understand where they come from.”*

The author asked himself: What would be growing on the farms of the future? What would they look like? How would they work? How would the character react to seeing this?

From Feed by M.T. Anderson, Candlewick Press, 2002

4. Have students work independently to complete the Elaborative Detail activity sheets and the bonus homework assignments.
5. Use the “Make it Your Own” template on p. 80, to reinforce this lesson using a passage from a book you are reading together as a class.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## ELABORATIVE DETAIL (1)

Read this descriptive segment below. The author uses elaborative detail to describe this story critical setting. The sensory information allows the reader to see, and experience the setting right along with the main character.

*I had never been in a hospital before, so I was surprised to see that it resembled our school in a lot of ways. Inside, people moved through hallways and doors like blood cells pumped along by an invisible heart. Every possible surface was labeled and marked by arrows. The last door we went through was labeled “Children’s Ward” and had streamers and clowns taped to the door. One clown had a bubble coming out of his mouth that read: “Don’t share. Germs, that is.”*

From: The Phoenix Cave by Hope A.C. Bentley, Golden Light Factory, 2018

Now, think about the questions the author must have asked herself in order to compose this descriptive passage. Write the questions on the lines below.

---

---

---

---

**CHALLENGE:** Where did the last party or family gathering you attended take place? Write an elaborative segment describing this place in great detail. Make sure your reader will be able to visual the setting of the party or gathering. The questions below will help you.

- *Where did it take place?*
- *What size was the space?*
- *Who was there?*
- *What kinds of decorations? Games?*

## Lesson 2: Extending this Ending

### Objective:

Students recognize effective endings and boring endings, and learn the following techniques to revise boring endings:

- a memory of the main event
- the main character's feelings about the main event
- a decision the main character makes
- the main character's wish or hope

### Procedure:

1. Photocopy and distribute the student activity page Extend this Ending, p. 118. Model and direct students to practice revising the boring ending. Circulate and read effective revisions aloud.

**Tino licked his lips and gave a satisfied belch. When that green goop was slopped onto his plate he vowed he'd never try it. Of course, that's when the dare was thrown down. With one tiny bite at a time, Tino discovered he actually like the taste of this exotic food and made a decision to try new things when they came his way.**

2. **Make-it-Your-Own:** Use the template on p. 119, to complete this activity using a story summary and ending of your choice. You may choose to relate it to a theme you are exploring or a book you're reading together as a class.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## EXTEND THIS ENDING!

**REMEMBER:** Story endings should sum up the story and show how the main character has grown and changed. Extended endings often include:

- A memory - What do you remember most?
- A feeling - How did you feel after everything that happened?
- A decision - What did you decide to do after everything that happened?
- A wish or hope - What did you wish or hope for?
- A defining action - What did you do to show how you felt, or what you decided?

Read this story summary:

*This is a story about the first time Tino ate a new food.*

Now read the way the author ended the story. It is abrupt and unsatisfying.

**Tino realized that he really did like the new food. THE END**

REVISE this story ending. Include the main character's memories, feelings, decisions, hopes, or wishes.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Prompts, Assessment, and Process Writing

As students learn critical writing skills they need opportunities to apply these skills in a variety of ways. Included are strategies for process writing, prompts that can be used as jumping off points for the application of skills (assignments) or for assessment purposes.

### Making-it-Your-Own

Every state has its own test and related guidelines for administering these assessments. In preparing students for testing the goal is to make them thoroughly familiar with the test format, instructions, and timing considerations. We strongly encourage you to consider district and state guidelines and expectations and adjust the resources here accordingly. Doing so will only increase student confidence, competence, and preparedness.

*The primary objective* of using impromptu (or prompt) writing is as a diagnostic tool to help teachers assess student writing. When a group of students write to a prompt (a writing assignment provided to the entire class) teachers can compare their pieces against some objective criteria - usually a **rubric**. A rubric typically consists of a rating scale ranging from 1 to 4 points, each point characterized by specific writing characteristics, 1 representing the weakest characteristics, 4, the strongest. (A zero score is often used to indicate that the student wrote nothing, or wrote so totally off topic that the paper could not realistically be compared to the other pieces to be scored.) **A rubric for assessing narrative writing is included on SRP 15 (although rating scales can vary).** A holistic rubric and a skill specific rubric are both available to use as needed, SRP 16. Follow the scoring recommendations as put forth in your state or district.

Student Reference Page

### 4 Point Narrative Writing Rubric

**0 - Unscorable!** Wrote nothing, illegible or wrote about something different from the prompt.

**1 - Still has a Way to Go!** Shopping list. Too short. Hard to understand. Not enough details and interesting words.

**2 - Still needs Work!** It has a little bit of detail, but mostly general details like nice, good, red, blue, very, etc. It has an okay beginning, middle and end. Lacks a single entertaining MAIN EVENT! Does not include the main character's feelings or reactions. Needs more elaboration to make it interesting.

**3 - Good!** Has a beginning, middle, end, organized. Has some specific elaborative details and remains focused on the important events. Needs more elaboration to make it interesting. Although there is a single main event, the piece lacks a balance of action, description, and dialogue for a significant, single, and entertaining main event. Does not include enough of the main character's feelings or reactions. Includes evidence of most parts of the writing diamond.

**4 - Great! Fantastic!** Has a strong beginning, middle and end. It is interesting and entertaining. Stays focused on the important events. There is clear evidence of every section of the writing diamond and lots of great description. Author uses interesting words, vivid vocabulary and sentence variety. There is a mixture of action, description, feelings and dialogue. This story is smooth and easy to read.

SRP 15

Student Reference Page

### Narrative Writing Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Organization</b>	Clear beginning, middle, and end. Sequence of events unfolds naturally. Consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies.	Beginning, middle, and end. Sequence is loosely connected. Some transitional strategies.	Basic beginning, middle, and end. Clashing in parts and hard to follow. Few, if any, transitional strategies.	No story sequence. Events are random and hard to follow. No transitional strategies.
<b>Entertaining Beginning</b>	Begins using a variety of strategies to establish the character, setting and story purpose. Draws the reader immediately into the story and compels them to read on.	Begins using a simple strategy to establish the character, setting and story purpose. Brief and may not compel the reader to read on.	Begins in a didactic way. Does not compel the reader to read on.	Lacks an entertaining beginning. Does not compel the reader to read on.
<b>Elaborative Detail</b>	Creative descriptive and sensory details. "Shows" character emotion. Uses a variety of detail generating questions with story critical characters, settings, and objects. Interesting words and sentence variety.	Some specific descriptive and sensory details. "Shows" character emotion. Uses some detail generating questions with story critical characters, settings, and objects. Some sentence variety.	Few relevant descriptive and sensory details. "Tells" character emotion. Does not focus on story critical characters, settings, and objects. Little variety in sentence structure.	Lacks descriptive and sensory details. Shows no character emotion. Does not focus on story critical characters, settings, and objects. Little or no variety in sentence structure.
<b>Suspense</b>	Skillfully provides sense of anticipation or tension using red flag words/phrases and story questions.	Some sense of anticipation or tension using red flag words/phrases and story questions.	Little sense of anticipation or tension using red flag words/phrases and story questions.	Lacks a sense of anticipation or tension.
<b>Main Event</b>	Single, significant main event with a balanced mix of strategies. Maintains focus. Shows interesting word choice and sentence variety.	Single, significant main event with some strategies. Maintains focus. Shows interesting word choice and sentence variety.	A series of actions or steps. Lacks focus. Weak word choice and little sentence variety.	Uses a summary statement.
<b>Extended Ending</b>	Skillful extended ending. Strong sense of closure.	Somewhat satisfying ending. Sense of closure.	Ends abruptly.	No sense of closure.
<b>Vocabulary, Fluency, mechanics</b>	Precise and appropriate vocabulary. Thorough understanding of mechanics with few errors in spelling, usage, punctuation, or capitalization. Errors do not interfere with the readability. Fluency response.	Adequate vocabulary. Average understanding of mechanics with some errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. Errors do not interfere with the readability.	Simple and general vocabulary. Incomplete understanding of mechanics with frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. Difficult to read or understand. Errors affect the readability.	Vague and inappropriate vocabulary. Frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. Difficult to read or understand.

SRP 16

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Learning something new can be challenging. Write a story about a time you learned how to do something you'd never done before.**

As you prepare to write:

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

\_\_\_\_\_ .

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

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

The adventure, experience, or problem is that

\_\_\_\_\_ .  
*main event - GIVEN and VARIABLE*

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Foundational Lessons:

Lesson 1: Introducing Literary Elements ..	A & A	137
Lesson 2: Turning Questions into Responses ..	A & A   T & T	141
Lesson 3: Analyzing Assignments for Givens and Variables.....		146
Lesson 4: Digging Deeper - Be a Text Detective! .....		148
Make-it-Your-Own: Framing Questions for Reading and Responding to Literature .....		151

### Teacher Background: Literary Analysis Task .....155

### Teacher Background: Narrative Extension Task.....165

• Beginnings			
• Literary Analysis Task ..	A & A	156	
• Narrative Extension Task ..	A & A   T & T   SE	166	
• Elaborative Detail			
• Literary Analysis Task ..	A & A	170	
• Narrative Extension Task ..	A & A   T & T	179	
• Suspense			
• Literary Analysis Task ..	A & A   T & T   SE	184	
• Narrative Extension Task ..	A & A	192	
• Main Event			
• Literary Analysis Task ..	A & A   T & T   SE	195	
• Narrative Extension Task ..	A & A	204	
• Endings			
• Literary Analysis Task ..	A & A   T & T   SE	208	
• Narrative Extension Task ..	A & A	217	

### Writing in Response to Multiple Texts.....220

## Lesson 3: Analyzing Assignments for Givens and Variables

### Objective:

Students review the process of identifying given and variable elements in a writing prompt in order to compose a successful response.

### Procedure:

1. Project the example below for your class. Have them imagine that they've just read a story called Stowaway on a Submarine.

**You've read the story Stowaway on a Submarine. Write an essay describing how the author foreshadows the main event of this story. Additionally, identify examples of figurative language throughout the story and recount how the story is eventually resolved. Be sure to provide evidence to support your ideas.**

2. Explain to the class that they will be presented with such a task many times as they proceed through middle school and into high school. Read the prompt together and discuss the GIVEN elements — those included in the task itself that need to be included in the response. For example, GIVEN elements might include a specific setting, a point of view or secondary character, or a theme. Pick these out and emphasize the fact that everyone's response should include the GIVEN elements. (NOTE: Be sure students understand that this is an informational response even though they're reading literature. Refer to the informational pillar if needed.)

In this case:

**GIVENS:** how the main event is foreshadowed, the use of figurative language and the resolution of the story.

Then, go on to discuss the VARIABLE elements. These include the decisions the author needs to make. The variables are the elements that will set each author's writing apart and allow the author to showcase her own personal response to literature.

In this case:

**VARIABLES:** the explanation for how the main event is foreshadowed, specific examples of figurative language and the description of the resolution.

(continued)

## Lesson 3: Analyzing Assignments for Givens and Variables

3. Ask the class to identify what they must address. Highlight or color code the key words in the task. (Key words: essay, foreshadows, figurative language, resolved, evidence). Based on the task, guide them in filling out the summarizing framework as a prewriting tool. MODEL what this framework might look like:

**Ex. TOPIC:** Stowaway on a Submarine

**MAIN IDEA #1:** Foreshadowing of Main Event

**MAIN IDEA #2:** Use of Figurative Language

**MAIN IDEA #3:** How the story is resolved

Student Reference Page

**Informational Pillar**

**INTRODUCTION**  
Lead/Topic Sentence

Main Idea #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

Main Idea #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Detail	Detail
Detail	Detail

**Conclusion**

**Summarizing Framework**

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

MAIN IDEA #1: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN IDEA #2: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN IDEA #3: \_\_\_\_\_

SRP 4

4. Have students refer to the Informational Pillar, SRP 4, to indicate the organizational structure of this response. Students need to understand that the response is informational even though the source text is narrative.
5. Explain that this analysis is the process they would use to read an assignment or task and plan for their response.
6. For this objective, there is no need to actually have students write the task. You might even go through this procedure with numerous tasks simply for the purposes of analyzing and planning (prewriting). This will be valuable as students are presented with similar assignments in a multitude of testing situation.

# Literary Analysis Task - Elaborative Detail

## Objective:

Students will read and analyze a source text and identify the ways in which the setting influenced the character and plot development, as well as the mood of the story.

## Procedure:

1. As a class, read, analyze and annotate The Island, pp. 173-175 (link), according to SRP 6, pointing out the way the story follows the organizational structure of the Narrative Writing Diamond.

Student Reference Page

Annotation and Analysis Process for Narrative Stories

1. Label the **title** - what *genre* does the title hint at?
2. Circle the **entertaining beginning**, identify, label the technique.
3. Identify the **purpose of the story action** and main character's **motivation**.
4. Find **elaborative detail** describing the **setting** - mark and label this.
5. Underline and label **suspense, story tension, conflict**.
6. Bracket the **main event**.
7. Underline and label the **conclusion/solution** or conclusion of adventure.
8. Circle the **extended story ending** and label each technique.
9. Identify the **theme**. Highlight the parts of the story that indicate theme.
10. Circle examples of **foreshadowing** and **irony** within the text.
11. Underline any use of **alliteration** or **figurative language** in the title or text.
12. Fill in **summarizing framework**. Allow students to prompt you.  
This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem/adventure/experience was \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem ended/concluded when \_\_\_\_\_.

THE MAIN EVENT  
Show action in clear, vivid, forceful language by using strong verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and sensory details. Show character's thoughts and feelings.

SRP 6

## LESSON AT A GLANCE:

### Whole Class Activity

- Read and annotate story for the literary elements.
- Project and discuss the task - what needs to be included in the response. (the givens)
- Reread each elaborative detail segment and mark as evidence. (Highlight or underline)
- MODEL and practice each main idea.
- Guide students through the writing process.

Discuss the literary elements in the text, using SRP 19, drawing verbal responses from the class, and/or chart them. Color code evidence from the text to identify *character*, *setting*, *motivation*, and *conflict*. Fill in the summarizing framework.

Student Reference Page

Literary Analysis Questions

Locate evidence from text to identify character, setting, motivation, and conflict. (Color Code)

- Who is the main **point of view character**? \_\_\_\_\_ (red)
- What is the **setting**? \_\_\_\_\_ (green)
- What is the main character's **motivation**? What does she/he **want**? \_\_\_\_\_ (blue)
- What is the **conflict**? (What stands in the way of the character's motivation?) \_\_\_\_\_ (orange)
- What is the **plot**:  

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

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

The problem was solved, experience or adventure concluded when \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is the **theme**? \_\_\_\_\_ (purple)

Examples of:  
Figurative Language \_\_\_\_\_  
Irony \_\_\_\_\_  
Foreshadowing \_\_\_\_\_

SRP 19

(continued)

## Literary Analysis Task – Elaborative Detail

2. Project the Literary Analysis Task: Elaborative Detail, p. 176, read the assignment out loud, and discuss with the class. Remind students that the givens are what everyone needs to include and the variables are the decisions that writers get to make. (Refer to the Informational Pillar, SRP 4, as the organizational structure for this response.)

**You’ve read the story The Island which takes place on a faraway island. Write an essay examining how this dramatic setting influenced the main character, plot and mood of this story. Be sure to provide evidence from the text.**

Ask the class to identify what they must address. Highlight or color code the key words in the task. Based on the task, guide them in filling out the summarizing framework as a prewriting tool.

Ex. **TOPIC:** The Island

**MAIN IDEA #1:** influence of setting on the main character

**MAIN IDEA #2:** influence of setting on plot

**MAIN IDEA #3:** mood of the story

**Givens:** how the setting influences the main character, plot and mood of the story

**Variable:** the evidence and explanation

3. Encourage students to share their ideas about the task. Find evidence in the text to support their ideas. Have them skim and scan to find each piece of evidence in their copy of the source text, highlighting or color coding.
4. MODEL, with student input, the first main idea paragraph using some of the suggested sentence starters.

**Ask:** *Who is the main character?*

**Response:** *The lighthouse keeper’s wife.*

**Ask:** *How does she feel about the setting of the story?*

**Possible responses:** *She doesn’t feel at home on the island at first. She is lonely and bored. But she doesn’t like the city either and wonders if she’ll ever find a place where she really belongs.*

**Ask:** *Why is this important to the story?*

**Possible responses:** *Because the story is about her getting used to living on the island and feeling like she belongs there.*

(continued)

**Ask:** Can you understand her feelings? How would you feel in her place.

**Possible responses:** I understand that she has to make a difficult adjustment, which is always a challenge. I would feel really lonely and bored in her place. I think I'd rather be in the city, even though the island sounds beautiful and peaceful.

**Ask:** How do the character's feelings about the island change from the beginning of the story to the end?

**Possible responses:** At first, she appreciates the natural beauty and peace of the island, but then she gets bored and notices all the things she doesn't like about it (like the smell of rotting seaweed on the beach). By the end, she has made the island her home and she loves it, even though she says it's sometimes boring

(See Modeled Response on p. 178.)

5. GUIDED PRACTICE: Direct students to student page 176 and have them write their first paragraph. They can choose any of the details generated by classroom discussion. Remind them to answer the question “Why is it important to the story?” with every bit of evidence they include in their response. Be sure to provide suggested sentence starters to encourage sentence variety.
6. As students work, circulate, offering guidance and encouragement. At any point, you may stop and pick up again the next day. It's important not to overwhelm them.
7. Continue onto Main Idea #2. Model the paragraph as outlined above and then direct students to write their second paragraph providing the evidence and explanation. Remember that this can be done on another day. (See full modeled sample on p. 178.)
8. On another day or as homework, have students work independently to complete their third paragraph about the mood of the story.
9. Close the lesson by having students reiterate the steps necessary for a well-supported written response. Be sure to emphasize that in order to show their analysis, they need to answer the question, “Why is it important?” to explain the evidence they have chosen.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK: ELABORATIVE DETAIL

You've read the story The Island which takes place on a faraway island. Write an essay examining how this dramatic setting influenced the main character, plot and mood of this story. Be sure to provide evidence from the text.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Is this a narrative or informational assignment?

Your teacher will walk you through the following STEPS:

1. Read, annotate, analyze, and summarize the story.
2. Fill in the following:
  - Who is the main **point of view character**? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What is the **setting**? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What is the main character's **motivation**? (What does she/he **want**?) \_\_\_\_\_
  - What is the **conflict**? (Who or what stands in the way of the main character's motivation?) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Fill in the summarizing framework that outlines the **plot**.

*This story is about* \_\_\_\_\_ .  
*The problem /adventure /experience* \_\_\_\_\_ .  
*The problem was solved, experience or adventure concluded when* \_\_\_\_\_ .

- What is the **theme**? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Consider the task:
    - How does the setting influence the character?
    - Why is this setting important to the plot of the story?
    - What is the impact of this setting on the mood of this story?
  4. Your teacher will MODEL this process with you. You may use the sentence starters to help you cite examples in the source text.



# Narrative Extension Task – Suspense

## Objective:

Students apply their knowledge of foreshadowing to create a suspenseful segment based on the source text.

## Procedure:

1. If they haven't already, have students read, analyze and annotate Mr. Muscles, pp. 187-189 (link), according to SRP 6, pointing out the way the story follows the organizational structure of the Narrative Writing Diamond.

**Student Reference Page**

**Annotation and Analysis Process for Narrative Stories**

1. Label the **title** – what *genre* does the title hint at?
2. Circle the **entertaining beginning**, identify, label the technique.
3. Identify the **purpose of the story action** and main character's **motivation**.
4. Find **elaborative detail** describing the **setting** – mark and label this.
5. Underline and label suspense, **story tension, conflict**.
6. Bracket the **main event**.
7. Underline and label the **conclusion/solution** or conclusion of adventure.
8. Circle the **extended story ending** and label each technique.
9. Identify the **theme**. Highlight the parts of the story that indicate theme.
10. Circle examples of **foreshadowing** and **irony** within the text.
11. Underline any use of **alliteration** or **figurative language** in the title or text.
12. Fill in **summarizing framework**. Allow students to prompt you.  
This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem/experience was \_\_\_\_\_.  
The problem ended/concluded when \_\_\_\_\_.

**THE MAIN EVENT**  
(Show evidence to show motion, framed by form, which is said to include description and main character's thoughts and feelings!)

**SRP 6**

Discuss the following literary elements in the text, using SRP 19, drawing verbal responses from the class. Color code evidence from the text to identify *character*, *setting*, *motivation*, and *conflict*.

**Student Reference Page**

**Literary Analysis Questions**

Locate evidence from text to identify character, setting, motivation, and conflict. (Color Code)

- Who is the main point of view character? \_\_\_\_\_ (red)
- What is the **setting**? \_\_\_\_\_ (green)
- What is the main character's **motivation**? What does she/he **want**? \_\_\_\_\_ (blue)
- What is the **conflict**? (What stands in the way of the character's motivation?) \_\_\_\_\_ (orange)
- What is the **plot**:  

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

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

The problem was solved, experience or adventure concluded when \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is the **theme**? \_\_\_\_\_ (purple)

**Examples of:**  
Figurative Language \_\_\_\_\_  
Irony \_\_\_\_\_  
Foreshadowing \_\_\_\_\_

**SRP 19**

(continued)

## Narrative Extension Task – Suspense

2. Distribute copies of the Narrative Extension Task: Suspense, p. 194, read and discuss with the class:

**You’ve read the story Mr. Muscles. Write a segment explaining what happens the following day when Fred quits the team and comes clean with his friends about his lack of interest in football. Make sure your segment includes at least one example of foreshadowing.**

3. Review the purpose of foreshadowing (to drop hints about what is to come in the story, inspiring readers to make inferences and take guesses to increase reader involvement and suspense.)
4. Move onto GUIDED PRACTICE. As students work independently to compose their segment, circulate throughout the room as they work, reading successful pieces aloud and offering help as necessary.

Example:

*“Shake it off,” Nate advised me. “Everybody has a bad game once in a while.”*

*It was Monday morning and I was determined to come clean with Nate and all my other teammates about my plan to quit the football team. I’d practiced what I was going to say over and over again, but I couldn’t predict how they’d respond. They’d piled their hopes on me and I wouldn’t blame them if they were disappointed or angry. On the other hand, after my performance at the game, they might just understand.*

*“It was more than a bad game, Nate,” I said. “Sports just aren’t my thing.”*

*“Sports aren’t your thing?” He was incredulous. “You could be great.”*

*“Can’t I be great at something else?”*

*Nate was quiet for a few long, tense moments. Finally, he turned to me and asked, “So what is your thing?”*

*As it turned out, Nate liked hiking in the woods and kayaking on rushing rivers too. While it was only October, I began counting the days until summer vacation. \*\**

*(\*\*This revelation foreshadows the continuing friendship of Fred and Nate.)*

5. Close this lesson by asking the class to share their ideas about the power of foreshadowing as well as examples of it from their independent reading.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## NARRATIVE EXTENSION TASK: SUSPENSE

You've read the story Mr. Muscles. Write a segment explaining what happens the following day when Fred quits the team and comes clean with his friends about his lack of interest in football. Make sure your segment includes at least one example of foreshadowing.

**THINK AND DISCUSS:** Why do authors foreshadow key events in their stories? How does foreshadowing increase suspense and reader involvement in the story?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*While it was only October, I began counting the days until summer vacation.*

Revelation

**What does this revelation foreshadow?**

---

---

---

**Teacher Background:** An important 21st century skill involves having students read multiple texts, compare and contrast them, and write in response to them. It involves close reading, analytical thinking, understanding of writer's craft, and the ability to express all levels of comprehension (literal, inferential, evaluative) in writing. This is a very tall order for students, for if they are weak in any of these skills it will be reflected in the written response. In addition, the necessary reading, analyzing, annotating, comparing and contrasting – in other words the process - is complex. It's easy for students to get bogged down in this complexity and lose focus.

Therefore, it's critically important to **break this process into its essential components, and guide students through it step by step.** Throughout the year students have been asked to respond in writing to a single narrative story. This experience provides a solid foundation for you to build on. Think of it this way: when analyzing and comparing two or more texts, simply follow the process that they've been using, but apply it to each text. After each individual text has been read, annotated and analyzed, students will read the assignment, go back and skim and scan for relevant evidence in each text, marking as needed, then place elements to be compared on a simple comparison grid p. 225. As always, they can use sentence starters, turn questions into responses, etc.

In this lesson we'll walk students through every step, demystifying the process.

## Procedure:

1. Project and distribute copies of the first text and follow the usual annotation and analysis process on SRP 6, including filling in the summarizing framework. Discuss the story with the class using the guiding questions to guide the conversation:
  - Who was the protagonist or main point of view character?
  - What is his/her conflict?
  - What is his/her motivation?
  - How do you think this story will end?
  - What was the theme?
2. Have the class help you fill in the summarizing framework for the text.
3. Project and distribute copies of the second text. Have the class help you fill in the summarizing framework for the text.
4. Explain to the class that they will be comparing two texts and writing about them. Project and distribute p. 223, Literary Analysis Task – Comparing Two Narrative Texts, read through the assignment together, and discuss. If possible, send both texts and the

(continued)

# Writing in Response to Multiple Texts

Literary Analysis Task sheet home with them, and for homework ask them to think about their response to the assignment.

**You've read two texts. Compare and contrast the conflict, plot, and theme from both texts and cite evidence from both texts.**

5. Read through the writing assignment and briefly review/discuss it with the class, allowing them to share ideas and evidence.
6. Help students fill out an informational summarizing framework, based on the assignment:  
**TOPIC:** Text #1 and Text #2  
**MAIN IDEA #1:** Plot  
**MAIN IDEA #2:** Conflict  
**MAIN IDEA #3:** Theme
7. Based on these elements (conflict, plot, theme) have students skim and scan, marking evidence of their ideas about these elements with a check mark in the text. You may ask them to color code their check marks – ex. red – conflict, green – plot, blue – theme.
8. Project and distribute Literary Analysis Task: Comparing Two Narrative Texts, p. 223, and explain that this is a tool to help them look at important evidence from both texts and more easily compare it. Using the sample grid on p. 225, fill in the chart collaboratively, eliciting student input.
9. Finally, citing evidence from the text, MODEL writing this Response to Text. Refer to the Sentence Starters, on the following page, to help students more easily articulate their ideas in writing. Once students understand the process, move on to GUIDED PRACTICE. Circulate as they work, offering encouragement, suggestions, and support.