

Write for a Month

Dumbo



Level
III

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write-for-a-Month

What Are Write-for-a-Month (WFAM) Writing Books?

The *Write-for-a-Month* (WFAM) series of books is from LAL's line of digital publications. WFAM is a digital arm of the small- press homeschool publisher, Character Ink Press/Language Arts Lady Blog, and houses a variety of month-long writing books, grammar downloads, readers, and more for teachers, parents, tutors, co-op leaders, and homeschoolers.

The WFAM books are writing/composition books of two to four lengthy lessons each, between 50 and 120 pages per book (depending on the level). These books contain writing projects that last one month (four weeks) and are based on old books/current movies/characters that children and adults love **or** historical characters/animals/nature topics (indicated by titles/covers). The books contain all types of writing, especially focusing on research reports, essays, and stories.

The projects in the WFAM books all use the author's signature "Directed Writing Approach," which takes students by the hand every step of the way from prewriting (brainstorming, character and plot development, research, etc.) to skill building (for projects requiring certain skills, such as quotes or imagery or persuasion, etc.) to outlining (based on the type of writing) to writing rough drafts to editing (via the Checklist Challenge) to final copy. Each project has detailed samples for students to see how the project was written by another student (a rarity in writing programs) and in-depth lessons of all of the skills needed in order to complete that project.

Each series contains five books*

Level I = Grade 2nd & 3rd – Purple
Level II = Grade 4th & 5th – Red
Level III = Grade 6th, 7th, & 8th – Blue
Level IV = Grade 9th & 10th – Green
Level V = Grade 11th & 12th – Yellow



Projects:

- Original Informative Essay Writing– Elephants
- Original Animated Elephant Story

Skills:

- Brainstorming
- Reseach
- Thesis Statement
- Thesis Statement "Reloaded"
- Transitions
- LINK Sentences
- Checklist Challenge Coding
- Goals of the character
- Obstacles for the character
- Description of setting

About the “Write-for-a-Month” Book Series

The Write-for-a-Month (WFAM) composition series is a non-religious, yet meaningful, writing program for use in homes, schools, co-ops, and tutoring situations. The books are writing/composition books of two to four lengthy lessons each, between 50 and 120 pages per book (depending on the level). These books contain writing projects of all types at grades two through twelve. Each WFAM book is either **topic-specific** (Mowgli, Peter Pan, Beauty and Beast, Christmas Friends, Dumbo, Slinky Dog, Fairy Tales, Nature, Animals, Famous People, etc.) or **writing-type-specific** (i.e. story writing, reports, essays, dialogue, Twice-Told Tales, Tools and Tricks, poetry, and much more). All of the books are grade-level specific (five levels from 2nd through 12th grades--see note below).

The projects in both series use the author’s signature “Directed Writing Approach,” which takes students by the hand every step of the way from prewriting (brainstorming, character and plot development, research, etc.) to skill building (for projects requiring certain skills, such as quotes or imagery or persuasion, etc.) to outlining (based on the type of writing) to writing rough drafts to editing (via the *Checklist Challenge*) to final copy. No vagueness. No questions as to what to write or how to write.

All of the book types that will be released are listed on the WFAM Series Titles back matter. I recommend that you start out with a *Tools and Tricks* or *Writing Boxes* book if you and your students are unfamiliar with Language Arts Lady’s writing programs. (After that, your student will love any of the books!)

By utilizing our **writing-type-specific** books, you will be able to work on learning the LAL’s ways! These writing type books include **Tools and Tricks** (introducing my methods to prepare for any future books) and **Twice-Told Tales** (story writing spin off projects).

By using our **topic-specific** book, your student can choose the characters, books/movie, science, or history themes he would like to write about. Again, both sets are month-long downloads with incremental and extremely-detailed instructions.

Partial sample lessons are available at the Language Arts Lady store (though the best way to try a WFAM book for your home or classroom is to purchase an early to mid-level book and try it out with your students). I recommend that younger students do a WFAM “Writing Boxes” book and middle and upper level students do a “Tools and Tricks” book first.

There are price differences for home/individual use vs. classroom/co-op use, and we ask that you follow our copyright guidelines of use by the purchaser only for whichever setting it was purchased.

Project Labels/Levels and Printing/Use

The projects within each book are labeled with numbers. A larger project is labeled as Projects 1 and 2, indicating that, that project is lengthy and will likely take two weeks to complete if writing is a daily

subject for your students (longer than that if writing is a twice weekly or non-daily activity). The number of projects in each book roughly coincides with the length of the project in a one-month situation. (Most books will take about one month with daily writing.) The books can be stretched out over two months with less frequent writing or condensed to a two-week time period in remediation or workshop situations.

The author is creating videos about how to teach the projects, so check out the **How I Teach videos** at **Language Arts Lady Blog** or **YouTube** to see if the book you are interested in has a video yet. (There are over fifty there at this time.)

The author has tested each project in each book between three and six times live with fifty to sixty students every year and has made changes according to their responses. We recommend that you print out the books two-sided and three hole-punch them and put them in half or one-inch binders for ease of use. It is especially nice to print the cover in color and slide it into the front of the student binder.

Time Spent in Write-for-a-Month

The method of instruction in most of the books will require one or two 30-60 minute meetings each week with the teacher to discuss the assignments, introduce the outlining technique, check the student's rough draft, review his Checklist Challenge (CC), and grade his final composition.

In addition, the student will need to work approximately 20-50 minutes (depending on level of book) per day four days a week by himself in order to complete all the assignments contained herein during a one-month period of time. (High school students will be on the upper end of that.)

Again, the time and teacher assistance needed in each book will vary according to whether the student is learning to write sentences or multiple paragraph compositions (as well as whether he is doing a *Tools and Tricks* book vs a story vs a report—and his interest level in all of those). It is recommended that you start out working together and see which areas your student is able to work alone and which areas he needs your assistance. The time needed will also be different if a book is spread out over two months.

Two Skill Levels in Each Book

All books have two skill levels within each level: Basic and Extension. These two levels provide two different skill levels of writing and revising for students in each book. Thus, a younger student using a certain book would not do as many paragraphs and revisions as an older (or more advanced) student using the same book. The composition is dependent upon a student at least understanding the fundamentals of sentence structure (and these are introduced and built upon in the *Tools and Tricks* books).

Students will be able to complete the projects much more effectively if they understand the functions of subjects and verbs. Students will be able to insert the Checklist Challenge revisions into their writings much more easily if they understand how to do the revisions (how to combine sentences, how to add sentence openers, how to write SSS5's, etc.). The groundwork for many of those skills is laid out in *Tools and Tricks* and *Writing Boxes*—for beginning students as well as older students who need instruction in those fundamentals.

(Also, the *Tools and Tricks* books, in addition to being grade-level appropriate, are strong remediation books with specific instruction in “How to Create and Write From a Sentence-by-Sentence Outline Over Given Material” and “How to Complete the Checklist Challenge,” etc. These are good starter books and are available at all five levels.)

Grade Levels

Note that WFAM books are not *exactly* grade level specific. The books are labeled with numbers that approximate the grade level of the projects. However, writing is extremely subjective. An advanced seventh grader (with years of writing experience) may do great in one of the Level V books whereas a seventh grader without much writing experience may be more comfortable going in the II or III *Tools and Tricks* books for what a sentence or paragraph contains and how to put paragraphs together for essays and reports. Check out the samples at our store to find the right fit for your student(s).

Semester-Long Character Quality Writing Books

Note that homeschoolers or Christian schools who desire the types of projects in WFAM but want a complete writing program with Christian/character emphases (as well as many of the WFAM projects) should check out my semester-long books, *Meaningful Composition* (MC). Two-week samples of each MC book are available at our [Language Arts Lady Store](#).



Write On: Dumbo--Level III

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|---------|
| Projects 1 & 2: Original Informative Essay Writing--Elephants..... | page 3 |
| Projects 3 & 4: Original Animated Elephant Story..... | page 27 |
| Appendix A: Editing and Revising..... | page 65 |
| Appendix B: Other Language Art Lady Products..... | page 67 |

Projects 1 & 2: Original Informative Essay

5 Paragraph Essay--Elephants

Overview of Original Informative Essay

In this project, you will learn about informative essay writing (using the Sentence-by-Sentence method—but over your own material, not from a given source).

I. TOPIC OF ESSAY

You will be writing an **Informative Essay** about **elephants**. You may choose an **aspect** given below or design your own aspect

- A. Three places you can find elephants
- B. Three movies with elephants
- C. Three unique characteristics of elephants
- D. Three elephant fallacies
- E. Three endearing characteristics of elephants
- F. Three uses for elephants in history
- G. Three books or authors who wrote about elephants
- H. Three reasons people poach elephants
 - I. Three early references to elephants in history
 - J. Three quotes about elephants
- K. Three times elephants were used in battle
- L. Three elephant quotes
- M. Other

II. NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS IN THE BODY OF YOUR ESSAY

All students will write **3** paragraphs for the body (P'soB*).

*P'soB--Paragraphs of Body

III. SENTENCES PER PARAGRAPH

- A. **Basic** students will write **5-7** sentences per paragraph.
- B. **Extension** students will write **6-8** sentences per paragraph.

IV. OPENING PARAGRAPH

All students **will** write an **Opening Paragraph**.

V. CLOSING PARAGRAPH

All student **will** write a **Closing Paragraph**.

VI. SOURCES

Students will not cite sources, but will need to use **sources to find information** about their chosen aspects if needed or desired.

VII. QUOTATIONS WITHIN YOUR ESSAY

Students are not assigned the addition of quotes but should **consider adding quotes if they will help further develop your essay topic**. Any added quotes will not have to be formally cited; you may just include the author of the quote.

VIII. WRITE ON/ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Students will learn/work on these skills:

- A. **Brainstorming**
- B. **Research**
- C. **Thesis Statement**
- D. **Thesis Statement "Reloaded"**
- E. **Transitions**
- F. **LINK Sentences**
- G. **Checklist Challenge Coding**

Note: This Overview Box, which is provided at the beginning of each project, is here to give students (and teach-ers) an at-a-glance look at the entire composition assignment. Each step of each lesson is assigned and detailed throughout the week(s).

Lesson A. Study Skills/Prewriting: Planning Three Paragraphs for the Body of Essay

<> A-1. Read the student sample, "A Mammal of Many Talents" (Box A-1), paying close attention to:

- (1) Opening Paragraph and Closing Paragraph
- (2) 3 P'soB
- (3) Three Aspects
- (4) Thesis Statement
- (5) Thesis Statement Reloaded
- (6) Transition from one paragraph/one reason to the next

A Mammal of Many Talents [Sample Expository Essay]

A group of blind men hobbled up to an elephant a merchant had brought into town. The first blind man reached forward and grabbed the animal's trunk. "The new animal is like a snake!" he exclaimed.

The second blind man then reached forward and seized the elephant's ear. "No, it's not. It's like a fan," he retorted.

A third blind man stuck his arm out, but to see how he fared, you'll have to wait until the end of this essay. However, besides this tale, three other famous stories that include elephants are Rudyard Kipling's "The Elephant's Child" (in the story collection *Just So Stories*), Disney's *Dumbo*, and Dr. Seuss's *Horton Hears A Who!*. **[Opening Paragraph--Book-End Story (First Half)]**

The first story, "The Elephant's Child," focuses on the elephant's unique and useful trunk. This story cleverly explains how the elephant obtained this wonderful nose. Kipling tells of a curious young elephant who wanted to know what crocodiles eat for supper. When he reaches the river, a crocodile bites his nose. In his struggle to escape, the elephant's nose stretches out until it turns into a trunk. At first, the elephant is sad, but then he discovers uses for his trunk. Soon, he cannot imagine not having a trunk to use for eating, bathing, and swatting flies. **[PoB-A: "The Elephant's Child"]**

The second tale, Disney's *Dumbo*, portrays an elephant who uses his special abilities to gain acceptance and fame. Dumbo is a tiny elephant with huge ears. Because he is part of a circus, he has to perform. However, he trips over his ears and accidentally collapses a pyramid of elephants. The angry circus master then begins forcing him to entertain audiences by painfully falling into a pit of mud. Dumbo runs away from this torment, and a bird teaches him how to use his massive ears to fly. Dumbo then displays his amazing talent at the circus. The audiences love his performance, and he grows extremely famous. **[PoB-B: Dumbo]**

Box A-1 & C-3 (continued on next page)

The final story, Dr. Seuss's *Horton Hears a Who!*, displays the kindness and perseverance of an elephant named Horton. Horton discovers a flower with whos (tiny people) on it and decides to protect these creatures. The other animals cannot see or hear the whos, so they mock Horton. A group of monkeys steals the flower and drops it in a huge field of clover. Horton only finds it again after a long search. The animals then tie Horton up and threaten to burn the flower in oil. The whos start yelling as loud as they can, and soon everyone can hear their voices. So, the animals stop harassing Horton and start helping him instead. **[PoB-C: Horton Hears a Who]**

When the third blind man placed his arm on the elephant, he touched its leg. "Actually, it's like a tree," he declared.

Then, the fourth blind man grabbed the elephant's tusk. "You are all wrong," he announced. "It's like a spear."

Of course, the elephant was all of these at once, but it is such a unique animal that it's hard to describe. It's also a fascinating creature to write a story about. Not only is this elephant tale famous, but three other stories about this animal are also famous. Rudyard Kipling's "The Elephant's Child," Disney's *Dumbo*, and Dr. Seuss's *Horton Hears A Who!* all include elephants as a key element of their tale. **[Closing Paragraph: Book-End Story (Second Half)]**

[Yellow Box] = Thesis Statement & Thesis Statement Reloaded

Bold & Underline = Transition/paragraph topic sentences
PoB = Paragraph of Body

<> **A-2.** Now that you have studied the provided sample, complete the following steps:

1. Do a quick online search of the many benefits of fairy tales
2. Choose the three you would like to write about and list them in the Directed Brainstorming Box (Box A-2) provided
3. Research those three and write down facts, quotes, etc., under each one, including who said the info and what makes that person an expert.

| Directed Brainstorming Box | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Three Elephant Aspects | | |
| First Elephant Aspect | Second Elephant Aspect | Third Elephant Aspect |
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Brainstorming Box A-2

Lesson B. Research and Study Skills: Design Working Thesis Statement

A Thesis Statement is a statement declaring what your entire paper is going to be about. This is similar to when you learned how to write the opening sentence of a paragraph—a sentence that tells what your entire paragraph is about.

However, in the case of a **Thesis Statement**, you will not just write what one paragraph is about—but **you will write what the entire essay is going to be about.**

For instance, if you were writing an opening sentence for a paragraph about the story of Dumbo, you might say *The second tale, Disney's Dumbo portrays an elephant who uses his special abilities to gain acceptance and fame.*

However, **you can not use that sentence for the Thesis Statement of your entire essay because it only tells what the one paragraph is about**—the paragraph about Disney's *Dumbo*. **The Thesis Statement must tell what the entire essay is about.**

For example, *Three famous stories that include elephants are Rudyard Kipling's "The Elephant's Child" (in the story collection Just So Stories), Disney's Dumbo, and Dr. Seuss's Horton Hears A Who!*

<> **B.** Now that you have thought about your cities and possibly researched them, you are probably ready to write a "Working" Thesis Statement about your category of cities. Consider these tips when you design your Thesis Statement:

- (1) Write one sentence that tells the reader what your essay is about.
- (2) Be sure it includes **all aspects** of your essay.
- (3) Do not say, *In this essay, you will learn about....or In this essay, I will tell you about...*
- (4) Include your aspects in your Thesis Statement in **the same order** that they will appear in the body of your essay.

Sample "Working" Thesis Statement

Three famous stories that include elephants are Rudyard Kipling's "The Elephant's Child" (in the story collection Just So Stories), Disney's Dumbo, Dr. Seuss's Horton Hears A Who!

Sample Box B

My “Working” Thesis Statement for this essay: _____

Box B

Note: If you do not feel prepared to write your “Working” Thesis Statement at this time, you may skip this assignment and come back to it after you complete your outlining.

Note: The “Thesis Statement” above is a “Working” Thesis Statement. You will tweak it later when you write your Opening Paragraph so that it fits well with the type of Opening Paragraph you write.

Lesson C. Write On: Transitions

While your Opening Paragraph--namely your “Thesis Statement”--will introduce the topic of your essay, you still need to remind the reader of the topic of your essay in each paragraph via transition sentences--or LINKS.

If you have written one paragraph reports and essays before, you have probably already learned about the Topic Sentence.

The Topic Sentence is the sentence in a paragraph that tells that paragraph’s topic. That is, it tells what the **entire paragraph is going to be about.**

Even though you are writing three P’soB this week, you still need a point in each paragraph that tells the reader, “Hey, this paragraph is about ____!” (Without saying that though!).

The Topic Sentence is **often found in the first two sentences of a paragraph.** This is why some programs call it the Opening Sentence.

You should consider the Topic Sentence of each paragraph to be the “LINK” that links that paragraph’s topic to the entire paragraph. This Topic Sentence will **sometimes be called the Transition Sentence** in longer and more detailed essays in the future.

Regardless of what it is called, this is an extremely important sentence in your paragraph--as **linking each paragraph with the whole essay is crucial for helping readers to enjoy and understand your essay.**

LINK

Regardless of what you call it, every paragraph needs a **LINK**--a sentence that LINKS that paragraph to the entire essay:

- **Topic Sentence** of a Paragraph--is a **LINK**
- **Opening Sentence** of a Paragraph--is a **LINK**
- **Transition Sentence** of a Paragraph--is a **LINK**

<> **C-1.** In the sample essay provided, highlight the following sentences in P's oB-A, B, and C (second, third, and fourth paragraphs).

- a. The first story, "The Elephant's Child," focuses on the elephant's unique and useful trunk.
- b. The second tale, Disney's *Dumbo*, portrays an elephant who uses his special abilities to gain acceptance and fame.
- c. The third tale, *Dr. Seuss's Horton Hears A Who!*, displays the kindness and perseverance of an elephant named Horton.

Each of these sentences is a transition sentence that links that paragraph with the topic of the essay (the "thesis").

This is sometimes called **sign posting**--telling your reader where you've been, where you are, and where you are headed in your essay.

In order to write these transition/LINK sentences, you will want to use transition words or statements.

<> **C-2.** Study the Transition Words and Phrases provided in the box.

<> **C-3.** In the Sample Essay provided (Box A-1 & C-3), highlight six transition types of words or phrases, excluding the word *and*. (If you need help with this, use the Transition Words and Phrases box.) Remember, transition words and phrases may fall anywhere in a paragraph. They are used to LINK and transition, but they are also used to introduce examples, to compare, to contrast, and more within a paragraph.

Transition Words and Phrases

For transition sentences, you will often use transition words. Consider the following words and phrases for introducing continuing paragraphs--as well as for showing chronology, comparisons, contrasts, cause/effect, and more in sentences **within** a paragraph.

To Show Addition or More

- and
- than
- equally important
- last
- next
- consequently
- thus
- in addition to
- too
- first
- finally
- likewise
- in the same way
- therefore
- furthermore
- also
- second, etc.,
- not only-but also
- similarly
- for example
- otherwise
- moreover
- both-and
- again
- as well as
- in fact
- for instance
- besides
- another
- further
- in the second place
- as a result
- however

To Introduce an Illustration or Example

- thus
- in other words
- for example
- in particular
- for instance
- specifically
- namely
- such as
- to illustrate

To Contrast

- on the contrary
- nevertheless
- on the other hand
- at the same time
- contrarily
- in spite of
- rather
- while this may be true
- notwithstanding
- in contrast
- or
- but
- yet
- nor
- however
- on one hand
- conversely

To Compare or Show Similarities

- similarly
- likewise
- in like fashion
- in like manner
- analogous to

To Emphasize

- above all
- surely
- also
- indeed
- in fact
- furthermore
- truly
- in truth
- in addition
- of course
- again
- certainly
- besides

To Give Suggestions or Challenges

- for this purpose
- therefore
- to this end
- with this in mind
- with this purpose in mind

To Show the Results of or Consequences of Something

- so that
- accordingly
- since
- with the result that
- for this reason
- due to
- thus
- therefore
- as a result
- consequently
- so
- in other words
- hence
- because
- then

Box for C-2 & C-3

Lesson D. Study Skills and Prewriting: Outline Original Paragraphs

<> D. Outline each paragraph of your three elephant aspect essay on the outlining lines provided, following these tips:

- (1) **Review your Brainstorming Box and add to it** as you think of more ideas (from Box A-3).
- (2) **“Work” in your Brainstorming Box** by doing the following:
 - a. **Review it** and add to it as you think of more ideas.
 - b. **Mark through anything you do not want** to include in your essay.
 - c. **Number the information you have in the order that you think you would like to include each in** your paragraph.
- (3) **Outline your essay one paragraph at a time** in a Sentence-by-Sentence (S-by-S) manner.
 - a. You may use complete sentences, statements, or key words for each sentence.
 - b. You may want to outline using words from your source and then write the material in your own words when you write your essay.
 - c. You may or may not use all of the outlining lines provided.
- (4) **Somewhere in your first sentence or two, you need to transition into your paragraph**--a sentence or two that does all of the following:
 - a. Transitions **from the previous paragraph into this one**
 - b. **Introduces the next aspect**
 - c. **“Links” that city with the thesis.** This is why the first two outlining lines for each paragraph have the words LINK Sentence provided--to remind you to include that LINK/transition.

Note: This is why the first two outlining lines for each paragraph have the words LINK/Transition provided--to remind you to include that LINK/Transition.

All--Paragraph A of Body

Topic of Paragraph A _____

LINK/Transition (+)--Sentence 1 _____

LINK/Transition (+)--Sentence 2 _____

Support Sentence (SS-1) _____

SS-2 _____

SS-3 _____

SS-4 _____

SS-5 _____

SS-6 _____

SS-7 _____

SS-8 _____

SS-9 _____

SS-10 _____

All--Paragraph B of Body

Topic of Paragraph B _____

LINK/Transition (+)--Sentence 1 _____

LINK/Transition (+)--Sentence 2 _____

Support Sentence (SS-1) _____

SS-2 _____

SS-3 _____

SS-4 _____

SS-5 _____

SS-6 _____

SS-7 _____

SS-8 _____

SS-9 _____

SS-10 _____

All--Paragraph C of Body

Topic of Paragraph C _____

LINK/Transition (+)--Sentence 1 _____

LINK/Transition (+)--Sentence 2 _____

Support Sentence (SS-1) _____

SS-2 _____

SS-3 _____

SS-4 _____

SS-5 _____

SS-6 _____

SS-7 _____

SS-8 _____

SS-9 _____

SS-10 _____

+ Eighty percent of the time the paragraph's topic sentence (or LINK) falls within the first two sentences of a paragraph.

Lesson E. Composition: Writing Original Essay

<> E. Follow these steps to write your essay.

- (1) **Read your original "Working" Thesis Statement** to remind you of what your entire essay needs to be about.
- (2) **Read the topic of your first paragraph** of the body **and the sentence notes** beneath it.
- (3) **Add any notes to this paragraph that you desire**—or mark through things that you do not want or re-number the sentence lines if you want your information in a different order.

Note About Thesis Statement: You will be writing an Opening Paragraph later. You do not need to include the Thesis Statement in your essay yet.

- (4) **Write the first paragraph of the body** of your essay (PoB-A) in your notebook or key it on the computer.
- (5) Be sure to **double space** (if keying) or **write on every other line** if writing by hand.
- (6) **Continue the steps above** for the rest of the essay.

Note: Be sure you write in the third person for the body. This is not a narrative, re-telling, story, or journal entry. Write it in the "formal" third person. Use the words *they, them, a child, parents, people, others, individuals, etc.* not *I* or *you*.

Lesson F. Study Skills/Prewriting/Composition: Take Notes and Write an Original Opening Paragraph

<> **F-1.** Now that you have written the body of your essay, you are ready to write notes for an original Opening Paragraph:

- (1) Read the body of your paper aloud to yourself, and consider how you desire to open your essay.
 - a. **Introducing the relationship of your three paragraphs to your aspect**
 - b. **Definition of elephant, story, poaching, etc.**
 - c. A **dialogue**: Dialogue between **two people about elephants or two elephants**
 - d. A **song or rhyme**: "But I be done seen about everything; When I see an elephant fly, When I see an elephant fly."
 - e. Quote **about your elephant-related aspect**
 - f. **Informative paragraph about your elephant aspect**
 - g. **Story** (Such as one in sample)
- (2) **In your notes, plan on what you will include in your Thesis Statement.* (You may tweak your original Thesis Statement to fit in your Opening Paragraph however you see fit.)**
 - a. Remember, a Thesis Statement is a statement that **tells the "thesis" of your paper--what your entire paper is about.**
 - b. It should be a sentence or two in length and should introduce your reader to your topic.
 - c. It may be at the very beginning of your Opening Paragraph or at the end of your Opening Paragraph.
 - d. It should bridge the gap between your catchy Opening Paragraph and the body of your essay.
- (3) Write enough notes for **6-8 sentences** on the lines provided.
- (4) You may just jot down some thoughts, references, etc., for your Opening Paragraph notes, or you may create a "Sentence-by-Sentence" Outline like you did for the body of your essay.

Notes for Opening Paragraph

<> **F-2.** Follow these steps for writing your Opening Paragraph:

- (1) **Write your Thesis Statement at the beginning of your paragraph that tells or introduces the topic of your paragraph. (Or plan to put your Thesis Statement later, if desired.)**
- (2) **Number your notes in the order you want them, and add any information you may have forgotten.**
- (3) Consider what you want to say about those notes.
- (4) Say aloud a sentence that you want to use.
- (5) Write down that sentence.
- (6) Repeat these steps for all of your notes.
 - a. You may leave out some information that you do not want to include or add more information if you remember something you forgot.
 - b. Write this paragraph in your notebook (on every other line) or key it on the computer (double spaced) before the essay you just wrote.

Lesson G. Study Skills/Prewriting/Composition: Take Notes for an Original Closing Paragraph

<> **G-1** Now that you have written the body and Opening Paragraph of your essay, you are ready to write a Closing Paragraph.

(1) **Your Closing Paragraph will include a Thesis Statement “Reloaded.”**

- a. Remember, a **Thesis Statement “Reloaded”** is a statement that **“closes” your paper--sums up what your entire paper is about.**
- b. It should be a sentence or two in length and should close your essay.
- c. It may be at the very beginning of your Closing Paragraph or at the end of your Closing Paragraph.
- d. It should bridge the gap between your catchy Closing Paragraph and the body of your essay.
- e. It should leave your reader with a feeling of satisfaction after reading your paper.
- f. It may repeat something catchy from your opening or may repeat the title of your essay, if desired.
- g. Be sure your Thesis Statement “Reloaded” is not identical to your Thesis Statement---it should be “reloaded” with the key words still in it.

(2) Write enough notes for **6-8 sentences** on the lines provided, again not worrying about the order, having too much information, etc.

(3) You may just jot down some thoughts, references, etc., for your Closing Paragraph notes, or you may create a “Sentence-by-Sentence” Outline like you did for the body of your essay.

Notes for Closing Paragraph

<> **G-2.** Follow these steps for writing your Closing Paragraph:

- (1) Write an **opening sentence (Thesis Statement “Reloaded”)** at the beginning of your Closing Paragraph that tells what your essay was about. (Or plan to put your Thesis Statement “Reloaded” later, if desired.)
- (2) Number your notes in the order you want them, and add any information you may have forgotten.
- (3) Using each set of notes for one sentence:
 - a. Read a line of notes.
 - b. Think about what you want to say about those notes.
 - c. Say a sentence aloud that you want to use.
 - d. Write that sentence down.
 - e. Repeat these steps for all of your notes.
 - f. You may leave out some information that you do not want to include or add more information if you remember something you forgot.
 - g. Write this paragraph in your notebook (on every other line) or key it on the computer (double spaced), after the essay you just wrote.

Lesson H. Composition and Editing: Edit and Revise Using the Checklist Challenge

<> H. Use the Checklist Challenge located after this week's lesson to edit your essay.

- (1) Complete **each revision for each paragraph, as indicated.**
- (2) Insert revisions with pen or pencil into your rough draft paper.
- (3) **Highlight (or code) each revision on your rough draft paper** as directed by your teacher.
- (4) **Check off (or code) each item's check box on the Checklist Challenge** for this week.

Note: Notice that after several tasks of the Checklist Challenge, the items start to contain words like "If you have already done this, highlight the word or sentence in your paper and highlight the check box(es) as directed by your teacher." When you start to see these words, you may just locate the items in your paper and code them for your teacher rather than adding more of them. Be sure you code the items in your paper and in the task list of the CC Chart.

Note: Language Arts Lady Store and my Teachers Pay Teachers Store have several Challenge how-to products (including a free one for languageartsladyblog.com subscribers).

Lesson I. Composition: Final Copy Essay

<> I-1. **Write the final copy of your essay** in your notebook (on every line). If you prefer, you may key it on the computer (double spaced).

<> I-2. **Read your final copy aloud.** Do you like the way it sounds now? Do you notice an improvement in your essay since you completed the Checklist Challenge?

Optional--Checklist Challenge (CC) Coding

Your teacher may desire for you to code your CC for her so that she can grade it/check it more easily. The following steps will help you learn to code your CC for your teacher.

1. Use **colored pencil** or **colored pens** or **highlighters**.
2. **Print off your** double spaced **rough draft report or essay** (or use your handwritten rough draft).
3. **With your CC on one side and your paper on your dominant side** (right hand side for right handed students), complete the first CC task.
4. **Place a check mark in the check boxes for the items that say "read" or "look for errors,"** etc., with a pen as you complete them.
5. For items that involve inserting things or omitting something and adding something else, code in one of two ways:
 - a. **Insert the change or addition with a pen or pencil on your paper and use a highlighter to mark it in your paper** in a distinguishing way--highlight the addition with an orange highlighter, circle the change with blue highlighter, double underline the title with a pink highlighter, etc. (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). **OR**
 - b. **Insert the change or addition with a colored pencil or colored pen** (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). (In this method, you will eventually need to add the change AND circle it or underline it so that your exact same marking is not repeated. For example, you might add verbs with a blue pen but add the title with a blue pen and underline the title with that same blue pen--two different markings, one written in blue pen and one written in blue pen *and* underlined with the blue pen.)
6. **Whatever you do to the insertion on your paper should be done to the CC check boxes for that item.**
 - a. For example, if you highlight your new verbs with an orange highlighter in your paper, you will color in the check box with orange highlighter.
 - b. If you underline your title with purple highlighter in your paper, you should underline the check box with purple highlighter.
 - c. If you write your new verbs in green colored pencil in your paper, make a check mark in the check box with that same green colored pencil.
7. **If your teacher gives you permission to skip a CC task** (or you and she do not think a change will improve a paragraph), **place an NC** (no change) **in the check box for that paragraph**, so your teacher will not look for it.
8. If you skip a task altogether (without your teacher's permission), place an X in the task box(es), so your teacher will know not to search for the revisions. Obviously, it is always preferred that you do all of your assignments, but it would be better to indicate that you skipped something than to leave the box(es) blank.

The point is that **the coding you put into the paper copy of your composition should be identical to what you do to (or above, beneath, around, etc.) the CC check boxes for that task.** This method will allow your teacher to have your CC chart on one side and your "colorful paper" (with the CC revisions inserted with colors) on the other. She can check at a glance to find your new insertions, title, Thesis Statement, and more.

Note: Some students prefer to do the CC on their paper on the electronic document on the computer with the colored shading tool provided in word processing programs. This is fine, too, but the student should still do the same marking/coding on the CC chart as he did on the electronic document--or write beside the tasks what color each task is. For example, if the student shades the verbs he replaced in pink shading, he should write PINK beside the CC task for the verbs on the chart. Then when he prints this "colorful" version, the teacher can still check his revisions easily.

*You can find free CC lessons at languageartsladyblog.com

Box H

Checklist Challenge (CC) for Projects 1 & 2: Original Informative Essay Writing

5 Paragraph Essay--Elephants

Complete the Checklist Challenge by using these guides:

- Determine which check boxes apply to your level.
- Each box will indicate the number of changes that need to be completed (normally one box for each paragraph).

All ALL LEVELS

B BASIC LEVEL only

E EXTENSION only

Optional OPTIONAL -- Your teacher will decide whether you should complete this task or not, based on your grammar/usage level.

All All All All

All

Read your essay to your teacher or an older sibling. Together, listen for sentences that sound unclear. **Be sure to read aloud.** You will “hear” errors you would otherwise not find. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

☞ Focus on content errors at this time.

All All All All

All

Circle each **verb** with a light colored highlighter. This will make it easier to change your verbs and to add adverbs (*ly* words and others) as further directed. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way you coded your located verbs in your paper.**

Be sure to circle all of the following verbs:

- Action verbs--show what the subject *does*
- Be, a Helper, Link verbs (BHL)--being, helping, and linking verbs (is, are, am, was, were, has, had, do, does, etc.)
- Infinitives--to + verb (to +action verb or to + BHL verb)

☞ **Be sure you circle the verbs in your writings as this step is crucial later in the Checklist Challenge. However, do not get discouraged if you miss some. You do not need to labor over each word, fearful of missing a verb. The more you look for the verbs, the better you will get at finding them--and the better you will get at the verb-related CC items.**

All All All All

All

Change one of the “**boring**” verbs in each paragraph to a “**strong**” verb. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added verbs in your paper.**

| <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| found | discovered | looking | appearing | run | sprint |
| coming | visiting | sit | recline | talk | communicate |
| go | hasten to | asked | interrogated | lay | recline |
| said | announced | write | pen | lie | deceive |
| look | examine | answered | responded | play | frolic |
| walk | saunter | lie | stretch out | talk | proclaim |
| list | enumerate | become | develop | work | toil |
| look | scan | see | determine | add | enhance |
| help | assist | teach | instruct | | |

☞ **Be sure you add or delete words in the sentence when inserting your new verb, as needed for clarity.**

All All All All

All

Add an **adverb** (*ly* word or other) to each paragraph. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added adverbs in your paper.**

Examples:

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| only | totally | joyfully | willingly | completely | never |
| practically | significantly | closely | finally | diligently | seldom |
| cheerfully | carefully | laboriously | gladly | slowly | later |
| extremely | gratefully | happily | sometimes | always | tomorrow |
| fully | thoughtfully | interestingly | apparently | cautiously | repeatedly |

☞ **An adverb is a describer that describes or modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. An adverb tells *where, when, how, or to what extent.***

All All All All

All

Add one descriptive **adjective** to each paragraph. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added adjectives in your paper.**

Examples:

| | | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| stringent | gracious | lengthy | trusted | courteous | infallible |
| meek | meager | valiant | understanding | trustworthy | horrendous |
| courageous | fulfilling | preoccupied | terrible | incapable | presumptuous |

☞ **An adjective is a describer that describes a noun or pronoun. It tells *whose, which one, how many, or what kind.* You should add descriptive adjectives--those that tell *what kind.***

All All All All

All

From the **Banned Words List** below, select one word (or form of that word) that you have in one of your paragraphs, omit it, and substitute a similar, but stronger, word. ***If you do not have any Banned Words, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher (or place a check mark in each one that represents a paragraph with no Banned Words).***

Banned Word List

| | | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|------|-------|------|--------|
| very | big | really | good | great | fine | slow |
| say | bad | little | want | see | look | such |
| ask | lot | find | walk | said | go | become |
| sit | think | soft | fast | many | find | |

*like (*Like* is only banned when it is a verb. When used as a preposition, *like* often creates a simile--and is not a Banned Word.)

☞ **Advanced students should omit as many Banned Words as possible throughout all paragraphs.**

All All All All

All

Add one **word you have never used before in writing** (or more than one, according to your level), if you and your teacher think it is appropriate. ***If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and these words in your paper as directed by your teacher.***

☞ **A word you have never used in writing might be one you use in speaking but not in your essay. Do not be afraid to use words you cannot spell! Use spell check on the computer or a dictionary to spell these challenging words.**

All

Add a sentence to the beginning of your paper that describes the whole piece. This is called the **Thesis Statement**. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- Report about raccoons: Ever wonder how that furry bandit known as a raccoon manages to get into your coolers while you sleep in your tent at night?
- Report about an experience: When I just turned thirteen years old, I found out the challenging way how important siblings truly are.

☞ **Tips**

- Write a sentence that describes your paper without telling the reader exactly what it is about.
- Do not say: *In this paper you will learn about . . .*
- Be sure this Thesis Statement is truly representative of the content of your *entire* composition.
- Your Thesis Statement is your commitment to write about that topic. It should cleverly introduce your composition’s subject.
- If your paper does not have a separate Opening Paragraph, you will want to add an Opening Thesis Statement-Plus--a sentence or two introducing your topic that contains the Thesis Statement--to the beginning of your paper.

All

Add a sentence to the very end of your writing that **restates your Thesis Statement** in some way. This is called the **Thesis Statement “Reloaded”** and should conclude your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement “Reloaded” as directed by your teacher.*

☞ You may choose to include Thesis Statement “Reloaded” that restates the title of your paper rather than the Thesis Statement.

All

Add one **SSS5—Super Short Sentence** of five words or fewer. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the SSS5 in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- They display extraordinary stealth.
- Then, they are trapped!
- And soon it happened.

All

All

All

All

All

Using a thesaurus, if needed, change one word in each paragraph to a **more advanced or distinct word**. *If you and your teacher feel that your vocabulary is advanced enough, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the advanced words in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Instead of:

tree
kind
grass

Use:

maple
compassionate
blades

Instead of:

deep
turn
loud

Use:

bottomless
swerve
obnoxious

☞ This may be any type of word--noun, verb, describer, etc. When choosing the new word, select one that paints a more vivid picture, gives better detail, is more distinct, etc. Do not just randomly select a word. Your new word choice should be *intentional*.

All

Create a **title**, and put it at the top of your paper. ***If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the title in your paper as directed by your teacher.***

Consider the following ideas:

- Something catchy: "**A Legendary Beast**"
- Something bold: "**A Literary Sensation**"
- A song title or line: "**All Creatures Great and Small**"
- A Scripture: "**A Beast of the Field**"
- Something informative: "**Elephant Tales**"
- Song: "**When I See an Elephant Fly**"
- Something about character: "**Consider the Elephant**"
- Other: "**The Five-Armed Animal**"
- Other: "**Poach No More**"
- Other: **War Elephant**

☞ **Tips:**

- **Center your title at the top of the first page of your composition.**
- **Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word.**
- **Capitalize all the words within the title that are important--but not three-letter-or-fewer articles, pronouns, or prepositions.**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

All

All

All

All

All

Choose a word (or forms of a word) that you used more than one time within each paragraph. If the word sounds **redundant**, change that word, at least once, to a word with a similar meaning. ***If you do not have any redundancy, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher.***

Examples:

- If *joyful* is redundant, substitute *elated* the next time.
- If *drove* is redundant, substitute *careened* the next time.
- If *answered* is redundant, substitute *retorted* the next time.

Note: Advanced level students should omit as much redundancy as possible throughout all paragraphs.

☞ **Do not change insignificant words such as *was, it, and, etc.***

E

E

E

E

E

Add different sentence openers (also known as **introductory material or non-essential information**). ***If you have already done these, you should still “code” the CC check boxes and the sentence openers in your paper as directed by your teacher.***

Examples:

- A subordinate clause opener: **When the spider’s victims are in these challenging positions**, those critters are dinner for sure! (Sub Clause + Subordinator + subject + verb)
- A prepositional phrase opener: **From these traps and snares**, their prey seldom escape.
- An *ing* opener: **Acting via traps and snares**, spiders trap prey easily.
- An *ed* opener: **Designed individually for each family of spider**, a web is truly a work of art.
- A short PP that requires a comma: **From this**, the prey cannot get loose.
- A transition word or phrase: **Next**, the spider designs a temporary spiral of non-sticky silk to act as basting.
- An *ly* word (adverb): **Amazingly**, the spider produces silk threads from special glands in its abdomen.
- An *ly* phrase or clause followed by a comma: **Slowly backtracking**, the spider creates a spiral of sticky silk.
- A conjunctive adverb: **Henceforth**, the victim cannot escape.
- An interjection: **Yes**, the spider is a stealthy creature.
- Other non-essential material of your choice: **Once there**, the “dinner” has no way of escape.

☞

Upper level students should choose various ones -- preferably without much repeating.

E

Combine two complete, related sentences with a semicolon. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the “semicolon compound sentence(s)” in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- Some predators do not catch their prey by assailing them directly; these sneaky ones use far more subtle methods.
- They act via traps and snares; they put their victims in challenging positions.

☞ A semicolon in the middle of two Complete Sentences (CS) is one way of creating a compound sentence--two sentences joined together as one. When you are instructed concerning this compound sentence creation, you may see this combination as CS ; CS (Complete Sentence semicolon Complete Sentence).

E

Add one **coordinating conjunction** (cc) with a complete sentence on both sides (or more than one, according to your level). Be sure to put a comma before the cc. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the CS, cc CS in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- Some predators do not catch their prey by assailing them directly, for these sneaky ones use far more subtle methods. (CS , cc CS)
- It steps into the trap, for the trap was hidden from view. (CS , cc CS)

☞ A “comma cc” in the middle of two complete sentences (CS) is one way of creating a compound sentence--two sentences joined together as one --CS , cc CS). When you are instructed concerning this compound sentence creation, you may see this combination as CS, cc CS (Complete Sentence “comma coordinating conjunction” Complete Sentence).

All

All

All

All

All

Edit each paragraph with your teacher, and correct any usage or spelling errors. Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.

Projects 3 & 4: Original Animated Elephant Story

The Very Short Story: Goals, Obstacles, and Description

Overview of Story Writing: The Very Short Story

You will be writing a very short story of five to six paragraphs this week. You will be “directed” in this just like you are in all CI essays and reports -- in a step-by-step manner.

You will write a story about an elephant.

I. TOPIC OF STORY

You will be writing an original short story about an elephant.

So, if your story contains a lot of dialogue, instead of paragraphs, count your sentences.

II. NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS IN THE BODY OF YOUR STORY

- A. **Basic** students will write 5 paragraphs for your story.
- B. **Extension** students will write 6 paragraphs for your story.

V. OPENING PARAGRAPH

Students will not write an **Opening Paragraph**. You will weave all background information into your story.

III. SENTENCES PER PARAGRAPH

- A. **Basic** students will write 6-8 sentences per paragraph.
- B. **Extension** students will write 8-10 sentences per paragraph.

VI. CLOSING PARAGRAPH

Students will not write a **Closing Paragraph**. You will weave your story’s conclusion into the story.

IV. SENTENCES VS. PARAGRAPHS+

- A. **Basic** students will write 30-40 total sentences.
- B. **Extension** students will write 48-60 total sentences.

VII. QUOTATIONS

You should **plan to include dialogue**. You will be instructed in how to write dialogue in this week’s project.

- C. The paragraphs assigned here are the minimum that you should plan to write. Since some of your paragraphs may contain dialogue, you should write more paragraphs than the number assigned -- and count total number of sentences rather than paragraphs to complete this assignment.

VIII. WRITE ON/ADDITIONAL SKILLS

You will learn/further develop the following additional skills:

- A. **Goals of the character**
- B. **Obstacles for the character**
- C. **Description of setting**

Note: This Overview Box, which is provided at the beginning of each project, is here to give students (and teachers) an at-a-glance look at the entire composition assignment. Each step of each lesson is assigned and detailed throughout the week(s).

Lesson A. Prewriting/Goal Setting: The Protagonist Must Have a Goal

The protagonist is the main character of the story. He or she is sometimes called the “star.” This character may be human, animal, or even object, but the important thing is that most of the action centers around the protagonist.

- (1) Human: Merida (*Brave*)
Carl (*Up*)
- (2) Animal: Martin (*Finding Nemo*)
Flick (*A Bug's Life*)
- (3) Object: Woody (*Toy Story*)
Woody and Buzz (*Toy Story III*)
Lightning (*Cars*)

The “action” is the goal that the entire story revolves around. A character may, and usually will (in longer stories), have smaller goals and secondary goals (otherwise known as subplots).

But a character must have a singular goal that holds the entire story together. Without this goal, the story is just a description of events (i.e. a narrative or re-telling essay) not a genuine story.

In the sample story, the goal for Edgar is to protect his leaves and water. In other stories, the goals may be more complex such as keeping a best friend or doing the right thing in a trying situation.

Two goals may even contradict. For example, if doing the right thing causes you to lose a friend, your goals may clash.

The important thing at this point is that you are clear at the beginning of your story writing what the main character’s goal is (keeping a friend at all costs [not recommended] or doing the right thing even if it means losing a friend).

In other cases, the character’s goal may change. The original goal may have been wrong or unrealistic. This usually involves the character changing (character arc) over the course of the story.

<> **A-1.** Look up each of the stories/characters given below (if needed). What goals did each of the following characters have?

Note: See the Help Box following this lesson for help with this assignment, if needed.

Note: Fill in the answers for all the stories you have seen. Don’t worry about getting names right, just the ideas.

- 1. Marlin (*Finding Nemo*) _____
- 2. Mr. Incredible (*The Incredibles*) _____
- 3. Mike and Sully (*Monsters University*) _____
- 4. Merida (*Brave*) _____
- 5. Carl (*Up*) _____
- 6. Woody (*Toy Story*) _____

- 7. Woody and Buzz (*Toy Story III*) _____
- 8. Remy (*Ratatouille*) _____
- 9. Mike and Sully (*Monsters Inc*) _____
- 10. Flick (*A Bug's Life*) _____
- 11. Lightning (*Cars*) _____

Help Box for A-1.

Possible **Goals** of Characters

- 1. Marlin (*Finding Nemo*) -- To find Nemo (surprise)
- 2. Mr. Incredible (*The Incredibles*) -- Stop Syndrome from killing super heroes
- 3. Mike and Sully (*Monsters University*) -- Make it into the scare program
- 4. Merida (*Brave*) -- Be able to decide who she should marry/de-bear mom
- 5. Carl (*Up*) -- Get to the waterfall
- 6. Woody (*Toy Story*) -- Be Andy's favorite toy/return to Andy
- 7. Woody and Buzz (*Toy Story III*) -- Find a child to care about them
- 8. Remy (*Ratatouille*) -- Be a chef
- 9. Mike and Sully (*Monsters Inc*) -- Scare children to make power
- 10. Flick (*A Bug's Life*) -- Save the ant colony
- 11. Lightning (*Cars*) -- Get to and win the Piston Cup Championship

<> **A-2.** Go back through the list above and circle any of the stories where the goal changes or the main character is happy even though he or she didn't achieve the original goal. In those stories, what was the new goal and why was it better than the original?

Note: The main character may achieve his/her original goal but learn that something else is even more important.

- 1. Marlin (*Finding Nemo*) _____
- 2. Mr. Incredible (*The Incredibles*) _____
- 3. Mike and Sully (*Monsters University*) _____
- 4. Merida (*Brave*) _____
- 5. Carl (*Up*) _____

6. Woody (*Toy Story*) _____
7. Woody and Buzz (*Toy Story III*) _____
8. Remy (*Ratatouille*) _____
9. Mike and Sully (*Monsters Inc*) _____
10. Flick (*A Bug's Life*) _____
11. Lightning (*Cars*) _____

Help Box for A-2.

Possible **Goal** Changes of Characters

1. Marlin (*Finding Nemo*) -- No. He learned things on his journey but the most important goal was finding Nemo.
2. Mr. Incredible (*The Incredibles*) -- No
3. Mike and Sully (*Monsters University*) -- No
4. Merida (*Brave*) -- No
5. Carl (*Up*) -- Yes. He reached the falls but learned that saving Russell was more important.
6. Woody (*Toy Story*) -- Yes. While he achieved the goal of getting back to Andy, he is no longer Andy's favorite alone.
7. Woody and Buzz (*Toy Story III*) -- No
8. Remy (*Ratatouille*) -- No
9. Mike and Sully (*Monsters Inc*) -- Yes. They learned that laughter gets more power than screams.
10. Flick (*A Bug's Life*) -- No
11. Lightning (*Cars*) -- Yes. He won the race, but learned that having friends is more important.

Lesson B. Prewriting/Obstacles: The Protagonist Must Face Obstacles

Even the best goal means nothing in a story unless there are **significant obstacles that stand in the way of the main character reaching his goal**. *The character must have the inner strength to fight through whatever obstacles are in his way.*

If, in your story, your elephant wants to get away from another angry elephant, but all he has to do to achieve that goal is go to the door, turn the knob, and run away, it will obviously not be an interesting story.

So your character has a goal and big obstacles standing in his or her way. What does he or she do? This is where stories get very interesting.

If your character sees all of the obstacles and decides to give up the goal, then the story ends there.

But if your character faces the obstacles, he or she may succeed and achieve the goal or fail and not achieve the goal.

Either way, the character meeting those obstacles creates what every story needs: **drama**.

<> **B.** What were the primary obstacles facing the following characters? See the Help Box following this lesson for help with this assignment, if needed.

Note: Fill in the answers for all the stories you have seen. Don't worry about getting names right (places, bad guys, etc.), just the ideas. Each one may have several obstacles.

1. Marlin (*Finding Nemo*) _____
2. Mr. Incredible (*The Incredibles*) _____
3. Mike and Sully (*Monsters University*) _____
4. Merida (*Brave*) _____
5. Carl (*Up*) _____
6. Woody (*Toy Story*) _____
7. Woody and Buzz (*Toy Story III*) _____
8. Remy (*Ratatouille*) _____
9. Mike and Sully (*Monsters Inc*) _____
10. Flick (*A Bug's Life*) _____
11. Lightning (*Cars*) _____

Help Box for B.

Possible **Primary Obstacles** of Characters

1. Marlin (*Finding Nemo*) -- Distance; sharks; jellyfish; Nemo is in fish tank
2. Mr. Incredible (*The Incredibles*) -- He is retired; various robots
3. Mike and Sully (*Monsters University*) -- They don't get along; Mike doesn't have scaring skills; Sully doesn't work hard
4. Merida (*Brave*) -- Tradition; Mor'du (the bad bear); they only have two days; father wants to kill bears
5. Carl (*Up*) -- Court orders him to move to retirement home; Charles Muntz; pack of dogs
6. Woody (*Toy Story*) -- Buzz is cooler; Sid likes to torture toys; moving van is leaving the next day
7. Woody and Buzz (*Toy Story III*) -- Sunny Acres is run by a dictator; the giant incinerator; Andy is growing up
8. Remy (*Ratatouille*) -- He's a rat
9. Mike and Sully (*Monsters Inc*) -- Child gets into their world
10. Flick (*A Bug's Life*) -- He is independent in an ant colony that wants uniformity; his only allies are circus bugs; grasshoppers are really large
11. Lightning (*Cars*) -- He must fix the road he tore up; he is distracted and falls into last place

Lesson C. Scene Development: Creating Scene Descriptions

↔ C-1. Read the Original Animated Elephant Sample Story provided in Box C-1.

Original Animated Elephant Sample Story

Edgar the elephant woke up to the warmth of bright sun on his closed eyelids. Lazily, he gathered his huge legs under him and rose up. He lumbered nonchalantly over to the nearby pool. After drinking, he waded into the deepest part of the pool and began splashing himself with water. The luxuriously cool water of the pool on his hot skin woke him up and made him hungry. So, he reached up to the tree hanging above him and began munching some leaves. The day was starting exactly how he loved it to begin.

Suddenly, he stopped eating, with leaves and branches hanging out of his mouth. He had heard something behind him. There it was again, an unmistakable crunching and chewing noise. Some other animal was stealing food from inside his zoo enclosure! With a trumpet of indignation, he turned and charged toward the direction of the sound. He expected to discover a monkey or some other sneaky creature. However, as he rounded the corner, to his surprise, he discovered another elephant!

Skidding to a halt, he drew himself up to his full height. Then, he spread out his ears and glared at the newcomer. The new, smaller elephant calmly gazed back at him, munching leaves. After several minutes, Edgar gruffly demanded to know the intruder's name and business. The trespasser, seeming confused, replied that he believed his name was Fred, but was not sure. As to his business, he did not know how or why he was in the enclosure. He explained that he had just woken up there and started eating.

"Well, don't eat my leaves," Edgar grumped. Then, with a harrumph, he stormed back to the tree at the pool's edge. Though he did not trust the newcomer, he wished to remain in the wonderfully cool water. There he continued his usual routine of eating and spraying water on himself periodically. Then, out of the corner of his eyes, he spotted Fred. To his horror, Fred was spraying trunk full after trunk full of water around the enclosure! If he kept up at this rate, he would waste all of the precious water. Frustrated, Edgar splashed over to Fred and began sternly lecturing him

When Edgar's speech was over, Fred was quiet and then asked a question. He mentioned that he thought the water replenished itself each day. Edgar sternly told him that was ridiculous, and Fred obediently stopped spraying water. Bitterly, Edgar refused to stand in the half-empty pool for the rest of the day. He was so consumed with himself that he didn't notice Fred staring at the leaves confusedly. Fred tried to remember what had happened with the leaves earlier in the day. He couldn't, so he decided to go ahead and eat again.

The next day, Edgar broke his routine and did not lumber to the pool immediately. Instead, concerned about whether Fred had eaten more leaves, he checked the trees. Angry, but not surprised to see some missing, he stomped over to the pool, where Fred was. He was about to scold the newcomer when he noticed the water level. The pool was back up to its normal level! Shocked, he shifted his gaze back and forth between the water and Fred. Finally, he bowed his head and began slowly spraying water from his trunk onto his back. Maybe Fred was not quite as dumb as he thought, and maybe he could share his resources.

Two Gutters--Lack of Description and Over-Description

Descriptive writing is like bowling in that there are two gutters. The **first gutter is the lack of description**. This type of writing projects **no pictures into the imagination** of the reader.

The **second gutter is over-description**. This is when every aspect of the scene is described in too much detail. When this happens, the whole scene grinds to a stop while an entire paragraph is spent describing a chair, for example.

Two Keys--Use Action and Be Picky

The **first key to avoiding either of these pitfalls is to describe using action as much as possible**. For example, instead of writing, *The spindly antique chair sat in the corner*, write, *The antique chair wobbled precariously as the man sat down*. By doing this, **you keep the scene moving while describing the things in the scene**.

You can be assured of having more action-driven descriptions if you **use action verbs as much as possible and avoid using being and linking verbs**.

For example, instead of saying, *The window pane **was** glossy*, say *The window pane **glistened** in the rain*.

You will avoid using being and linking verbs better if you learn to recognize this category of verbs by learning CI's BHL (Be a Helper, Link) verb song/rhyme.

<> **C-2**. Optional: Memorize the Be, a Helper, Link (BHL) verbs song (to the tune of the Alphabet Song):

BHL Verb Song

ABCDEFGH

Be, a Helper, Link verbs,

HIJKLMN

Is, Are, Am, Was, & Were.

QRSTU

Be, & Being, Been, Become,

WXYZ

Has, & Had, & Have are ones.

Now I said my ABC's

Can, Could, Shall, Should—they are fun

Next time won't you sing with me?

Will, Would, Do, Did, Does, & Done

ABCDEFGH

May, Might, Must—they are some as well,

HIJKLMN

Appear, Look, Seem, Remain, Taste, Feel, & Smell

Box for C-2

The second key is to **be picky about what you spend time describing** and what you do not.

The point of descriptive fictional writing is to put images into the mind of the reader and put emotions into his or her heart. Some things need to be described in more detail than others.

↔ **C-3.** Write a new sentence beneath each sentence given below, changing the description to action-verb-generated description rather than adjective-generated description.

Hint: Go through the sentences and highlight all of the BHL verbs in them. Then consider if each of these can be removed/replaced.

Example: He was woken up by the cold water.
The cold water woke him up.

1. The new elephant was calmly gazing back at Edgar.

2. He was expecting to discover a sneaky monkey.

3. Edgar was splashing over to Fred.

4. The pool was now half-empty.

5. He was shifting his gaze back and forth between the water and Fred.

6. There it was again, an unmistakable crunching and chewing noise.

7. Fred was quiet and then asked a question.

8. Edgar was beginning to munch some leaves.

9. Fred was unable to remember what the problem was with eating leaves.

10. Fred was explaining that he had just woken up in the enclosure.

<> **C-4.** Choose five objects in the room you are sitting in right now. Write a sentence using action describing each one.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Sample Action Descriptions for <> C-3

1. The new elephant calmly gazed back at Edgar.
2. He expected to discover a sneaky monkey.
3. Edgar splashed over to Fred.
4. Water now only filled half of the pool.

Sample Action Descriptions for <> C-4

1. Edgar's lecture confused Fred, who thought the zookeepers refilled the pool every night.
2. Edgar loved each tree and branch in his enclosure.
3. Edgar thundered over to Fred, ready to explode in anger.

Lesson D. Dialogue Writing: Quotation Review

You probably remember that a paragraph should have at least three sentences in order to be a paragraph, yet you have probably also noticed instances in which a paragraph only contained a sentence or two—or even just a word or two.

Whenever you are using dialogue (the written conversation of two or more people) **or whenever you are quoting people in your writing, begin a new paragraph each time the speaker changes.**

When you write dialogue, unlike other writing you do, you should focus on sentences more than paragraphs:

1. **Dialogue is comprised of sentences.**
2. The **paragraph breaks in dialogue are not there to show a unit of thought** like most paragraphs are.
3. The **paragraphs in dialogue are there to show when a new speaker speaks.**
4. **Plan for a new paragraph each time the speaker changes**, just like the sample did.

If you have ever written quotes in an essay or report, you probably remember the two first quote rules:

1. **Periods always go inside** closing quotation marks--never on the outside.
2. **Commas always go inside** closing quotation marks--never on the outside.

<> **D-1.** In the Dialogue Box provided (Box D-1), highlight the name of each person who is speaking.

Dialogue Box

“Who are you?” demanded Edgar. **(Paragraph 1)**

“I think my name is Fred, but I'm not sure,” the trespasser replied, looking confused. **(Paragraph 2)**

“Really?” **(Paragraph 3)**

“I'm sorry, but my memory is not the best.” **(Paragraph 4)**

Edgar rolled his eyes and retorted, "If you don't know your name, why don't you tell me why you are here then?" **(Paragraph 5)**

Box D-1

Did you find the following:

1. In **Paragraph 1**, the speaker is Edgar.
2. In **Paragraph 2**, the speaker is the trespasser (Fred).
3. In **Paragraph 3**, no name is given (though we know it is Edgar, don't we?).
4. In **Paragraph 4**, no speaker is given, but we know it is Fred.
5. In **Paragraph 5**, doubtful Edgar is talking.

The words that tell who is speaking are called the speech tag.

The speech tags in the paragraphs you studied above include the following:

- Paragraph 1: demanded Edgar.
- Paragraph 2: the trespasser replied, looking confused.
- Paragraph 5: Edgar rolled his eyes and retorted,

Do you see how the **speech tag tells who is speaking?**

Do you see how you can skip the speech tag sometimes if there are only two speakers--and you can clearly see who is talking?

You will be using dialogue soon!

To begin with, you should learn just a few dialogue rules:

1. **Each time the speaker changes, a new paragraph is started.**
 - a. This means that **the person switched.**
 - b. Do not change paragraphs if the same person is saying more than one sentence.
 - c. All of **one person's words at that given moment go in one paragraph** (until another person begins speaking).
 - d. When a different speaker talks, a new paragraph is started (even if the “new speaker” spoke earlier).

2. When a speech tag comes at the beginning of the sentence, do the following:

- a. **Start the speech tag with a capital letter** since it is the first word of your sentence.
- b. Put a comma after it, then begin your quote with a quotation mark-capital letter:
Doubtful Edgar rolled his eyes and retorted, "If you don't know your name, why don't you tell me why you are here then?"

3. When a speech tag comes at the end of the sentence (following the words that were spoken), do the following:

- a. **If your quote is a statement, put a comma then quotation mark** at the end of it:
"I think my name is Fred, but I'm not sure," the trespasser replied, looking confused.*
- b. **If your quote is a question or exclamatory sentence, put that end mark (? !)** inside the quotation mark (since it is part of your sentence): "Who are you?" demanded Edgar.
- c. **Start the speech tag with a lower case letter** (since it is not a new sentence but part of the sentence you are now writing): demanded Edgar.

*** Note: A sentence may only contain one period used as an end mark. Thus, when you have a beginning speech tag, follow it with a comma--not a period. The entire sentence will end with a period--one period as an end mark for the entire sentence.**

<> D-2. Rewrite four (**Extension:** six) of the quoted sentences from the Dialogue Box with speech tags in different positions with different wording, etc.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. **Extension--** _____

6. **Extension--** _____

Lesson E. Write On: Story Action

This week you will be writing a short story about an elephant.

There are some elements that your story should contain. We will look at last week's example to see some of those elements.

Stories are more than just an assortment of description. A story must, well, tell a story. While there are many types of stories, most, from mysteries to romances to action to an animal escaping from another, follow a similar pattern.

Opening→*Calm*

Most stories begin with an opening. This is when the author gives background and introduces the characters. **In the sample story, this is when it describes** Edgar waking up, wading and splashing in the pool, and munching leaves.

The opening is when you can give lots of details that help the reader feel like they are really in your world. It should not be very long, however, since nothing exciting really happens.

Inciting Incident→*Less Calm/Beginning Action*

The inciting incident is when the story really begins. It is when your character's world is turned upside down. In the sample story, this is when Edgar hears someone else eating in his enclosure.

Progressive Complications→*Fast/Even Less Calm*

This step is the biggest difference between a short story like the example and a four hundred page novel. Long stories have lots and lots of complications while you will just have a few.

This is an important step though. If Edgar just accepts that someone else is in his enclosure and continues eating, it isn't much of a story.

The main character, the elephant, must face obstacles. **In the story example, those complications (or obstacles) are when Edgar discovers that the intruder is the elephant Fred and Edgar realizes that Fred is also wasting his water.**

When you are writing your own story this week, try to think of any things that could be obstacles for your elephant.

Climax→*Edge of Seat/No Calmness*

The climax is the last obstacle your main character will face. It is the moment of greatest danger. Obviously, **in the sample, this is when Edgar discovers the next morning that Fred has eaten even more leaves.** This moment should be more important and more dangerous than anything that has gone on before.

Resolution→*Calm Again/ Solution*

This is the end of the story after the climax. It is usually very short. In fact, **in the sample story, it is only a couple of sentences in length.**

<> E-1. What is the setting (the zoo, the forest, the plains, etc.)?

<> E-2. What will you include in your opening? How will you set the stage for your story?

<> E-3. What will be your inciting incident?

<> E-4. What progressive complications will the main character have?

- a. What obstacles will make it harder for the main character?
- b. Choose at least three

<> E-5. What will be the climax?

<> E-6. How will your story be resolved?

Lesson F. Write On: SSS5

<> F. In the second paragraph of the passage, highlight the sentence *He had heard something behind him*.

Short sentences are probably the first type of sentences you learned to read and write. Many of you may have learned to read using a beginning reader containing sentences like *Matt sat*. As you learned more and more about writing, your sentences got longer and more complex. By the time you reach high school, the vast majority of the sentences you write should be longer and more complex than *Matt sat*.

But that doesn't mean you should never use short sentences. In fact, in Character Ink's Checklist Challenge, we often assign writers to include what we call SSS5 (Super Short Sentence of Five Words or Fewer).

You don't want to just randomly have SSS5s anywhere in your story. You want to use them to make your story more interesting. Using an SSS5 at the right time can add a lot of drama to your story. Here, we will show you how.

Using SSS5 for Emphasis

The first way to use an SSS5 is to emphasize something that is really important. You don't use a highlighter to tell the reader what the important parts are, and you shouldn't use all capital letters in most types of writing.

Imagine you have ten Skittles. Nine of them are red and one is yellow. If you lay them on a table, which Skittle would stand out? Probably not any of the red ones. You would notice the yellow one first. It is different.

The same thing happens when you write. If most of your sentences are long and complex, then you have one that is super short, which sentence will stand out to the reader? You guessed it: the short one. It is different.

If you put the most important information in short sentences (and if most of your sentences are long and complex), you will emphasize whatever is in the SSS5.

Using SSS5 for Excitement

The second use for an SSS5 is to create excitement. This use for SSS5 will really help you this week.

Long sentences take longer to read. They are great for providing lots of information and details, but all that information can slow the reader down.

Short sentences, on the other hand, have only a minimal amount of information (and a few words!). But **you can read a short sentence really quickly. This gives the impression that the action is speeding up.**

Your story this week will be about someone trying to escape from a villain. That is about as exciting as it gets. As a general rule, **when the excitement level rises, sentences should get shorter.**

Using SSS5 as a Change of Pace

A great way to keep a reader interested in whatever you are writing is to mix up your sentence structures. This is why you want to use a lot of different types of sentence openers and different types of compound sentences.

But **the most obvious way to make your sentences sound different from one another is simply to vary the length.** Instead of a paragraph with five sentences that are **long, long, long, very long, long**, you can have **medium, long, long, super short, very long**. You still want more long sentences since they contain more information, but mixing it up helps the reader stay engaged no matter what you are writing.

Lesson G. Sentence Structure/Advanced Checklist Challenge: Adverb Openers

All Start one or more of your sentences with an **adverb** (*ly* word or other adverb) (or more than one, according to your level). ***If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the adverb in your paper as directed by your teacher.***

Examples

- Adverb opener: **Consequently**, there is no way for the creature to get loose.
- Adverbial clause or phrase opener: **Directly assailing their victims**, courageous predators attack and eat.

☞ **The comma may be directly after the adverb or shortly after it, depending on where you “hear” it. Do not use a comma if the adverb phrase or clause is actually a subject *Directly assailing their victims is what they do* (no comma).**

One common sentence opener is that of the adverb opener. As the box above indicates, there are two ways to handle adverb openers:

1. **One word adverb opener:** *Bitterly, Edgar refused to stand in the half-empty pool for the rest of the day.*
2. **Adverb phrase or clause opener:** *Bitterly considering how to inflict as much pain as possible on Fred, Edgar refused to stand in the half-empty pool for the rest of the day.*

It is important to pay close attention when you are using an adverb opener. **You must read the entire sentence and “listen” carefully for where the opener ends and the real sentence begins.**

If you remember your grammar lessons, you will likely recall that **a sentence is a sentence even without a sentence opener.** That is one of the interesting things about **sentence openers: they are attached to the front of real sentences.** And—you can remove the sentence opener and a complete sentence would still stand.

With the adverb opener, if you are not careful, you can end up with a phrase or clause rather than a real sentence.

For example, in the sample above (#2), if you do not read the whole sentence as you write, you could write a clause rather than a real sentence after the opener: *Bitterly, considering how to inflict as much pain as possible on Fred.*

Do you see what happens if you do not read it slowly and listen for the “realness” of the sentence? **That entire “sentence” is really just an adverb clause opener—you still need a real sentence.** And you need the comma following the adverb clause: *Bitterly considering how to inflict as much pain as possible on Fred,...*

<> **G.** Write four sentences with adverb openers. Write two with one word adverb openers and two with adverb phrase or clause openers.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Lesson H. Write On: Research For Your Story

If you have done reports in the past, you are familiar with researching. Researching for a story is similar. You will look up the main character you will be writing about in a book, an encyclopedia, or an online source.

Instead of writing a generic report, however, you will be looking for information you can weave into your story. **Using facts is another way to keep your reader interested without slowing down your story.**

For example, if I were writing a story about Edgar the elephant, and I wrote a sentence about his reaction to hearing someone eating leaves in his enclosure, I could say, *He turned and charged toward the direction of the sound.*

But, with a little research, I learned that elephants trumpet when they are angry.

Now my sentence would read *With a trumpet of indignation, he turned and charged toward the direction of the sound.* **It is the same basic action, but with more real-life detail.** This allows the reader to both enjoy the plot of the story and enjoy learning new things.

You would not want to take an entire paragraph to describe the sounds elephants make when they experience different emotions; all you need is little details in a story of this length.

In addition to these little details, you want to **pay close attention to the types of things you will be describing in your story**, such as the following:

1. How does an elephant **act**?
2. What **unique abilities or characteristics** (using its trunk to eat and spray water, having large ears, etc.) does an elephant have?
3. How would an elephant most likely experience obstacles?
4. Where would the scene you are describing most likely take place?

This may be your own story, but you want the readers to feel like they are witnessing it happening in the world of an elephant.

<> **H-1.** Look up information on the elephant in an encyclopedia or an online source and write ten facts you may be able to include in your story on the lines provided. You won't have to use all of the facts, but you want to have them available.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Lesson I: Showing Off With “Structure”

All Use one set of **sequencing words** (or more than one, according to your level). *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the set of sequencing words in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- **First things:** First, initially, originally, at first, primarily, to begin with, in the beginning
- **Second or middle things:** Second, next, then, secondarily, progressing, progressively, following that
- **Third and final things:** Eventually, thirdly, ultimately, finally, consequently, lastly, in the end
- **General:** Then, next, later, after, sometime, etc.

Sequencing words are words that show the sequence, or order, of something. They are words like *first, secondly, after that, consequently, ultimately, finally, etc.*

The point of sequencing words is to show progression. They are usually used in stories (to show the order in which events happened) and instructional writing (to show the order in which a person should take actions).

However, sequencing words can also be used in stories. This is because **sequencing words can be used to show a logical progression.**

Most sequencing words need to be set off with commas. Usually, sequencing words are at the beginning of a sentence. Always listen carefully to where you hear the pause, but normally, it will come right after the sequencing word.

First, Edgar drank cold water.

After that, Edgar splashed himself with water.

Finally, Edgar sat and munched on leaves.

Sometimes the only way your arguments work together in a story is in order (first, second, third, etc.) This makes choosing the right sequencing words relatively easy. However, if your three arguments build on each other, you will want to use a sequencing word that shows that dependence. For example, when one thing leads to another, the word *consequently* works well.

Fred emptied half of the pool consequently, Edgar angrily lectured him about not wasting water.

Always pay close attention to make sure you choose the right sequencing word.

<> I-1. Study the list of sequencing words provided.

Sequencing words to show first things:

1. First
2. Initially
3. Originally
4. At first
5. Primarily
6. To begin with
7. In the beginning

Sequencing words to show second or middle things:

1. Second
2. Next
3. Then
4. Secondly
5. Progressing
6. Progressively
7. Following that

Sequencing words to show third and final things:

1. Eventually
2. Thirdly
3. Ultimately
4. Finally
5. Consequently
6. Lastly
7. In the end

<> I-2. List at least ten more sequencing words.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 10. _____ |

<> I-3. On the lines provided, write ten sentences using sequencing words.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Transition Words and Phrases

For transition sentences, you will often use transition words. Consider the following words and phrases for introducing continuing paragraphs--as well as for showing chronology, comparisons, contrasts, cause/effect, and more in sentences within a paragraph.

To Indicate Time or Order

- after
- next
- second, etc.,
- another
- for a minute
- to begin with
- previously
- simultaneously
- afterward
- last
- at first
- finally
- during the morning
- afterwards
- in the meantime
- before
- at last
- formerly
- soon
- most important
- generally
- immediately
- then
- at length
- rarely
- meanwhile
- later
- in order to
- eventually
- once
- first
- usually
- at the same time
- ordinarily
- subsequently
- concurrently

To Show Addition or More

- and
- than
- equally important
- last
- next
- consequently
- thus
- in addition to
- too
- first
- finally
- likewise
- in the same way
- therefore
- furthermore
- also
- second, etc.,
- not only-but also
- similarly
- for example
- otherwise
- moreover
- both-and
- again
- as well as
- in fact
- for instance
- besides
- another
- further
- in the second place
- as a result
- however

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

To Indicate Space or Directions

- at the left
- on top
- above
- surrounding
- beside
- beyond
- across
- at the right
- below
- over
- opposite
- behind
- in the forefront
- under
- in the center
- beneath
- straight ahead
- at the rear
- next to
- in the foreground
- nearer
- on the side
- under
- at the top
- at the front
- nearby
- within sight
- adjacent
- along the edge
- around
- at the bottom
- in front of
- in the distance
- out of sight
- in the background

To Emphasize

- above all
- surely
- also
- indeed
- in fact
- furthermore
- truly
- in truth
- in addition
- of course
- again
- certainly
- besides

To Give an Example or Illustration

- for example
- as an illustration
- for instance
- in particular
- to illustrate
- thus
- in other words

To Give Details or Specific Example(s)

- specifically
- to enumerate
- especially
- in detail
- in particular
- namely
- to explain
- including
- to list

To Show the Results of or Consequences of Something

- so that
- accordingly
- since
- with the result that
- for this reason
- due to
- thus
- therefore
- as a result
- consequently
- so
- in other words
- hence
- because
- then

Lesson J. “Story” Writing: Outline Rough Draft

Now you are ready to outline your story. Your story will be five or six paragraphs in length. You will simply write a very short story about an elephant. He/she will face obstacles--and will either overcome these and succeed or not overcome them and fail.

<> **J-1.** Read the **Original Animated Elephant Sample Story** (Box C-1) provided earlier in this project.

<> **J-2.** What is the goal of your character?

<> **J-3.** What will the setting of your story be?

<> **J-4.** List your characters

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

<> **J-5.** List at least three obstacles your character will face.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

<> **J-6.** Outline your story on the lines provided following these steps:

1. Move to the notetaking section provided in these instructions and **write your paragraph topics, in the order you think you will want them, on the "Topic of Paragraph" lines.** Since you will have dialogue, and **you might have short paragraphs sometimes, you might think of the paragraph lines as more of "scene" lines rather than paragraph ones.**
2. Once you have all of your paragraph topics designed, **fill in the lines beneath with notes to indicate what you want to include in each paragraph.** You should do this Sentence-by-Sentence unless you have your teacher's permission to do it by listing several key points for each paragraph.
3. If, while you are taking sentence notes, you think of more paragraph topics or see that a paragraph will need divided in two paragraphs, just mark this. **Your outlining space is for you! You may add, subtract, or divide however you desire.**
4. You may write down too much information and omit some of it later when you are writing, if needed, but **do not write down too little information.**
5. **You may or may not use all of the sentence lines,** according to the number of sentences assigned to you.
6. Be sure you include at least a little dialogue.

Note: You may or may not use all of the outlining lines. Remember that when you use quoted dialogue, you will change paragraphs each time a different speaker (than the one currently speaking) begins speaking. Be sure to indicate when a new speaker begins speaking right here in your outline.

All--Paragraph One of Body

Topic of Paragraph A _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Sentence 9 _____

Sentence 10 _____

All--Paragraph Two of Body

Topic of Paragraph B _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Sentence 9 _____

Sentence 10 _____

All--Paragraph Three of Body

Topic of Paragraph C _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Sentence 9 _____

Sentence 10 _____

All--Paragraph Four of Body

Topic of Paragraph D _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Sentence 9 _____

Sentence 10 _____

All--Paragraph Five of Body

Topic of Paragraph E _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Sentence 9 _____

Sentence 10 _____

Extension--Paragraph Six of Body

Topic of Paragraph F _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Sentence 9 _____

Sentence 10 _____

Lesson K. Story Writing: Write Story

<> K. Write your story in your notebook on every other line or key it on the computer.

Lesson L. Composition and Editing: Edit and Revise Using the Checklist Challenge

<> L. Use the Checklist Challenge located after this week's lesson to edit your story.

- (1) Complete **each revision for each paragraph, as indicated.**
- (2) Insert revisions with pen or pencil into your rough draft paper.
- (3) **Highlight (or code) each revision on your story** as suggested in the *Teacher's Guide* or as directed by your teacher.
- (4) **Check off (or code) each item's check box on the Checklist Challenge** for this week.

Note: If you are not familiar with CI's Checklist Challenge, and you feel that you need more

Note: If you are not familiar with CI's Checklist Challenge, and you feel that you need more help on it than this Character Ink book provides, you may desire to secure a first semester MC book for levels four through nine or the Checklist Challenge Quick Kit (video and downloadable book) or Really Writing: Tricks and Tools e-book at any level--all of which contain detailed lessons on the How To's of the Checklist Challenge. Also, see the Checklist Challenge Coding box provided. (There is also a new downloadable product with a video available called "How to Complete the Checklist Challenge.")

Note: Notice that after several tasks of the Checklist Challenge, the items start to contain words like "If you have already done this, highlight the word or sentence in your paper and highlight the check box(es) as directed by your teacher." When you start to see these words, you may just locate the items in your paper and code them for your teacher rather than adding more of them. Be sure you code the items in your paper and in the task check boxes of the CC Chart.

Lesson M. Composition: Final Copy of Your Story

<> **M-1. Edit your story** with your teacher or another "editor."

<> **M-2. Write the final copy of your story.**

Checklist Challenge (CC) Coding

Your teacher may desire for you to code your CC for her so that she can grade it/check it more easily. The following steps will help you learn to code your CC for your teacher.

1. Use **colored pencils** or **colored pens** or **highlighters**.
2. **Print off your** double spaced **rough draft report or essay** (or use your handwritten rough draft).
3. **With your CC on one side and your paper on your dominant side** (right hand side for right handed students), complete the first CC task.
4. **Place a check mark in the check boxes for the items that say "read" or "look for errors,"** etc., with a pen as you complete them.
5. For items that involve inserting things or omitting something and adding something else, code in one of two ways:
 - a. **Insert the change or addition with a pen or pencil on your paper and use a highlighter to mark it in your paper** in a distinguishing way--highlight the addition with an orange highlighter, circle the change with a blue highlighter, double underline the title with a pink highlighter, etc. (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). **OR**
 - b. **Insert the change or addition with a colored pencil or colored pen** (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). (In this method, you will eventually need to add the change AND circle it or underline it so that your exact same marking is not repeated. For example, you might add verbs with a blue pen but add the title with a blue pen and underline the title with that same blue pen--two different markings, one written in blue pen and one written in blue pen *and* underlined with a blue pen.)
6. **Whatever you do to the insertion on your paper should be done to the CC check boxes for that item.**
 - a. For example, if you highlight your new verbs with an orange highlighter in your paper, you will color in the check box with an orange highlighter.
 - b. If you underline your title with purple highlighter in your paper, you should underline the check box with purple highlighter.
 - c. If you write your new verbs in green colored pencil in your paper, make a check mark in the check box with that same green colored pencil.
7. **If your teacher gives you permission to skip a CC task** (or you and she do not think a change will improve a paragraph), **place an NC (no change) in the check box for that paragraph**, so your teacher will not look for it.
8. If you skip a task altogether (without your teacher's permission), place an X in the task box(es), so your teacher will know not to search for the revisions. Obviously, it is always preferred that you do all of your assignments, but it would be better to indicate that you skipped something than to leave the box(es) blank.

The point is that **the coding you put into the paper copy of your composition should be identical to what you do to (or above, beneath, around, etc.) the CC check boxes for that task.** This method will allow your teacher to have your CC chart on one side and your "colorful paper" (with the CC revisions inserted with colors) on the other. She can check at a glance to find your new insertions, title, Thesis Statement, and more.

Note: Some students prefer to do the CC on their paper on the electronic document on the computer with the colored shading tool provided in word processing programs. This is fine, too, but the student should still do the same marking/coding on the CC chart as he did on the electronic document--or write beside the tasks what color each task is. For example, if the student shades the verbs he replaced in pink shading, he should write PINK beside the CC task for the verbs on the chart. Then when he prints this "colorful" version, the teacher can still check his revisions easily.

Box M

Checklist Challenge for Projects 3 & 4: Original Animated Elephant Story

The Very Short Story: Goals, Obstacles, and Description

Complete the Checklist Challenge by using these guides:

- Determine which check boxes apply to your level.
- Each box will indicate the number of changes that need to be completed (normally one box for each paragraph).

ALL LEVELS

BASIC LEVEL only

EXTENSION only

OPTIONAL -- Your teacher will decide whether you should complete this task or not, based on your grammar/usage level.

(Upper Level or Advanced Writing students should complete the ALL and E tasks.)

ALL ALL ALL ALL
 ALL E

Read your story to your teacher or an older sibling. Together, listen for sentences that sound unclear. **Be sure to read aloud.** You will “hear” errors you would otherwise not find. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

☞ **Focus on content errors at this time.**

ALL ALL ALL ALL
 ALL E

Circle each **verb** with a light colored highlighter. This will make it easier to change your verbs and to add adverbs (*ly* words and others) as further directed. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your located verbs in your paper.**

Be sure to circle all of the following verbs:

- Action verbs--show what the subject *does*
- Be, a Helper, Link verbs (BHL)--being, helping, and linking verbs (is, are, am, was, were, has, had, do, does, etc.)
- Infinitives--to + verb (to +action verb or to + BHL verb)

☞ **Be sure you circle the verbs in your writings as this step is crucial later in the Checklist Challenge. However, do not get discouraged if you miss some. You do not need to labor over each word, fearful of missing a verb. The more you look for the verbs, the better you will get at finding them--and the better you will get at the verb-related CC items.**

ALL ALL ALL ALL
 ALL E

Change one of the “**boring**” verbs in each paragraph to a “**strong**” verb. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added verbs in your paper.**

| <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| found | discovered | looking | appearing | run | sprint |
| coming | visiting | sit | recline | talk | communicate |
| go | hasten to | asked | interrogated | lay | recline |
| said | announced | write | pen | lie | deceive |
| look | examine | answered | responded | play | frolic |
| walk | saunter | lie | stretch out | talk | proclaim |
| list | enumerate | become | develop | work | toil |
| look | scan | see | determine | add | enhance |
| help | assist | teach | instruct | | |

☞ **Be sure you add or delete words in the sentence when inserting your new verb, as needed for clarity.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| E | E | E | E |
| E | E | | |

Highlight one weak **existing** adverb in each paragraph. Remove each of these adverbs, and change the word each one modifies to a **stronger word** so that the adverb you have highlighted is no longer needed. “Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added adverbs in your paper.

Examples

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> |
| softly spoke | whispered | stood tall | straightened | very pretty | beautiful |
| joyfully said | exclaimed | surprisingly found | discovered | quite alone | isolated |
| very fast | rapidly | looked closely | peered | very much | significant |
| studied deeply | investigated | very nice | gentle | badly broken | deteriorated |
| sat back | reclined | walked slowly | sauntered | very good | outstanding |

☞ **Some professional writers consider adverbs to be “inefficient tools of the weak mind.” Adverbs can be useful, especially those telling *how* or *when* something is done. However, strong verbs are even more helpful than adverbs. Careful writers eliminate much adverb use--and give their writing more forward motion--as strong verbs are utilized.**

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| All | All | All | All |
| All | E | | |

Add one descriptive **adjective** to each paragraph. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. “Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added adjectives in your paper.

Examples:

| | | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| stringent | gracious | lengthy | trusted | courteous | infallible |
| meek | meager | valiant | understanding | trustworthy | horrendous |
| courageous | fulfilling | preoccupied | terrible | incapable | presumptuous |

☞ **An adjective is a describer that describes a noun or pronoun. It tells *whose*, *which one*, *how many*, or *what kind*. You should add descriptive adjectives--those that tell *what kind*.**

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| All | All | All | All |
| All | E | | |

From the **Banned Words List** below, select one word (or form of that word) that you have in one of your paragraphs, omit it, and substitute a similar, but stronger, word. ***If you do not have any Banned Words, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher (or place a check mark in each one that represents a paragraph with no Banned Words).***

Banned Word List

| | | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|------|-------|------|--------|
| very | big | really | good | great | fine | slow |
| say | bad | little | want | see | look | such |
| ask | lot | find | walk | said | go | become |
| sit | think | soft | fast | many | | |

*like (*Like* is only banned when it is a verb. When used as a preposition, *like* often creates a simile--and is not a Banned Word.)

☞ **Advanced students should omit as many Banned Words as possible throughout all paragraphs.**

All

Create a **title**, and put it at the top of the your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the title in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Consider the following ideas:

- Something catchy: “Edgar the Exasperated Elephant”
- Something comical: “Who Stole my Snacks?”
- Something bold: “Intruder!”
- A song title or line: “Feel the Heat”
- A Scripture: “Love Those Who Persecute You”
- Something biblical: “Give to Others”
- Something about character: “The Power of Sharing”
- Something informative: “Edgar Learns His Lesson”
- Other: “The Pool”

☞ **Tips:**

- **Center your title at the top of the first page of your composition.**
- **Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word.**
- **Capitalize all the words within the title that are important--but not three-letter-or-fewer articles, pronouns, or prepositions.**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

All

Add a sentence to the very end of your writing that **restates your Thesis Statement** in some way. This is called the **Thesis Statement “Reloaded”** and should conclude your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement “Reloaded” as directed by your teacher.*

☞ You may choose to include Thesis Statement “Reloaded” that restates the title of your paper rather than the Thesis Statement.

B

Add one **SSS5—Super Short Sentence** of five words or fewer. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the SSS5 in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- They display extraordinary stealth.
- Then, they are trapped!
- And soon it happened.

E

Add one **SSS5 x 3** (Three Super Short Sentences of Five Words or Fewer) in a **row** for emphasis. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the check box and the SSS5 x 3 in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- They are subtle. They are sneaky. They are predators!
- They set traps. They devise snares. They trap their prey.

All All All All

All E

Using a thesaurus, if needed, change one word in each paragraph to a **more advanced or distinct word**. *If you and your teacher feel that your vocabulary is advanced enough, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the advanced words in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Instead of:

tree
kind
grass

Use:

maple
compassionate
blades

Instead of:

deep
turn
loud

Use:

bottomless
swerve
obnoxious

☞ This may be any type of word--noun, verb, describer, etc. When choosing the new word, select one that paints a more vivid picture, gives better detail, is more distinct, etc. Do not just randomly select a word. Your new word choice should be *intentional*.

All All All All

All E

Choose a word (or forms of a word) that you used more than one time within each paragraph. If the word sounds **redundant**, change that word, at least once, to a word with a similar meaning. **If you do not have any redundancy, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- If *joyful* is redundant, substitute *elated* the next time.
- If *drove* is redundant, substitute *careened* the next time.
- If *answered* is redundant, substitute *retorted* the next time.

Note: Advanced level students should omit as much redundancy as possible throughout all paragraphs.

☞ **Do not change insignificant words such as *was, it, and, etc.***

All All All All

All E

Add different sentence openers (also known as **introductory material or non-essential information**). **If you have already done these, you should still “code” the CC check boxes and the sentence openers in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- A subordinate clause opener: **When the spider’s victims are in these challenging positions**, those critters are dinner for sure! (Sub Clause + Subordinator + subject + verb)
- A prepositional phrase opener: **From these traps and snares**, their prey seldom escape.
- An *ing* opener: **Acting via traps and snares**, spiders trap prey easily.
- An *ed* opener: **Designed individually for each family of spider**, a web is truly a work of art.
- A short PP that requires a comma: **From this**, the prey cannot get loose.
- A transition word or phrase: **Next**, the spider designs a temporary spiral of non-sticky silk to act as basting.
- An *ly* word (adverb): **Amazingly**, the spider produces silk threads from special glands in its abdomen.
- An *ly* phrase or clause followed by a comma: **Slowly backtracking**, the spider creates a spiral of sticky silk.
- A conjunctive adverb: **Henceforth**, the victim cannot escape.
- An interjection: **Yes**, the spider is a stealthy creature.
- Other non-essential material of your choice: **Once there**, the “dinner” has no way of escape.

☞ **Upper level students should choose various ones -- preferably without much repeating.**

E

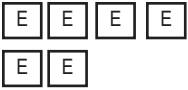
Add a **double or triple adjective**. **If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the double or triple adjectives in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- Double: The **intricate, amazing** web does its job well. (Or **amazing, intricate** web.)
- Triple: The **creative, awesome, and sneaky** spider is quite the predator. (Or **awesome, creative, and sneaky** spider.)

☞ **Separate items in a series with commas, placing the final comma before the *and*.**

☞ **Double and triple adjectives need *and* or a comma between them if they can be placed in reverse order and still sound correct.**



Combine two sentences (or one sentence and one [or more] phrase/clause) into one complete sentence using the **conciseness technique** of your choice. ***If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the sentence in your paper as directed by your teacher.***

Examples:

• **Appositive:**

Two sentences: A spider's web is an intricate trap. It seldom releases its victims.

One sentence: A spider's web, **an intricate trap**, seldom releases its victims.

☞ **An appositive is a phrase dropped into a sentence--and surrounded by commas--that renames or restates the words before it.**

• **Compound verbs:**

Two sentences: It traps its victims. It ensnares its victims.

One sentence: It **traps and ensnares** its victims.

☞ **Subject + verb + verb**

• **Subordinate clause placement:**

Two sentences: The spider secures the center of the bridge with a vertical silk strand.

Then it constructs a frame.

One sentence: **Once the spider secures the center of the bridge with a vertical strand**, it constructs a frame.

☞ **Sub Clause opener (subordinator + sub + verb) + CS**

• **Another non-essential opener:**

Two sentences: They are far more subtle in their methods. They act via traps and snares to put their victims in challenging positions.

One sentence: **Subtle in their methods**, they act via traps and snares to put their victims in challenging positions.

☞ **Phrase + CS**

• **Subordinate clause placement mid sentence:**

Two sentences: Orb webs are the ones seen by people most often. They are created by two families of spiders.

One sentence: Orb webs, **which people see most often**, are created by two families of spiders.

☞ **A subordinate clause (subordinator + Sub + verb) dropped into a sentence--and surrounded by commas--that gives more information.**

• **Conjunctive adverb:**

Two sentences: A spider sits patiently in the center of the web. It waits for its victim.

One sentence: A spider waits for its victim; **moreover**, it sits patiently in the center of its web.

☞ **CS; CA, CS**

• **Conjunctive adverb within a sentence:**

Two sentences: They are far more subtle in their methods. They act via traps and snares to put their victims in challenging positions.

One sentence: **They are far more subtle, however, acting via traps and snares**

☞ **CS, CA, CS**

• **Dash preceding clause or phrase:**

Two sentences: Some predators do not catch their prey by assailing them directly. They are far more subtle in their methods.

One sentence: Some predators do not catch their prey by assailing them directly--**they are far more subtle in their methods.**

☞ **CS--CS**

• **Coordinating conjunction (cc) between two complete sentences (CS):**

Two sentences: Each of the twenty-five families of spiders has its own design for a web.
Orb webs are the ones most often seen by people.

One sentence: Each of the twenty-five families of spiders has its own design for a web,
but orb webs are the ones most often seen by people.

☞ CS , cc CS

• **Semicolon between two complete sentences:**

Two sentences: Spiders create intricate webs. Victims seldom escape from them.

One sentence: Spiders create intricate webs; **victims seldom escape from them.**

☞ CS ; CS

• **Colon usage:**

Two sentences: There are two crafty predators. These include the spider and the Venus' fly trap.

One sentence: There are two crafty predators: **the spider and the Venus' fly trap.**

☞ CS : CS

☞ **Upper level students should choose various ones -- preferably without much repeating.**

E

Include one **simile or metaphor** (or more than one, according to your level). ***If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the simile or metaphor in your paper as directed by your teacher.***

Examples:

- Simile--Comparison *using* like or as: The Venus' fly trap is as insidious **as the steel jaws of a hunter's snare.**
- Metaphor--Comparison *without* using like or as: The Venus' fly trap **is a hinged prison.**

All All E E

Add one **word you have never used before in writing** (or more than one, according to your level), if you and your teacher think it is appropriate. ***If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and these words in your paper as directed by your teacher.***

☞ **A word you have never used in writing might be one you use in speaking but not in your compositions. Do not be afraid to use words you cannot spell! Use spell check on the computer or a dictionary to spell these challenging words (or ask your teacher for spelling help).**

All All All All

All E

Edit each paragraph with your teacher, and correct any usage or spelling errors. Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.

Appendix A: Editing and Revising

It is recommended in this curriculum that students be taught from the beginning of their writing days how to edit and proofread their compositions using proofreaders' marks. It will be laborious at the beginning, but these marks ensure consistency in editing, as well as efficiency in marking. When students devise their own systems for marking errors, they are often long and indistinguishable markings that are different each time. Then when the teacher edits a paper for her student, her markings will be different too. By teaching proofreaders' marks, everyone who edits will mark errors in the same way. (This also encourages peer editing, which is valuable for both those who are editing and those being edited.)

Obviously, young students will not learn all the proofreaders' marks the first year of writing, but when used consistently, everyone will begin using the same markings and these markings will take on immediate meaning for anyone who sees them in writing. Begin with the simplest, most commonly-used markings and continue adding new markings as your student matures as an editor.

The author has used proofreaders' marks with hundreds of students over the years, and even the youngest students enjoy learning proofreaders' marks and catch on rather quickly. Editing often becomes a challenge--a game, of sorts--for analytical students, and even those without superb editing skills enjoy the thrill of finding errors and recommending changes.

Proofreader's Marks

Symbol

Meaning



Capitalize a letter



Make a capital letter into a lowercase letter.



Delete (take out)

He went to town. 

Insert punctuation

When he left,  he went to town.

He went  town.

Insert

He  went town.

Reverse

He went  town.

Insert space

He went  town.

Leave as it was before the mark was added.

He town went to. 

Move



Make a new paragraph

Teacher Tips & Free Resources

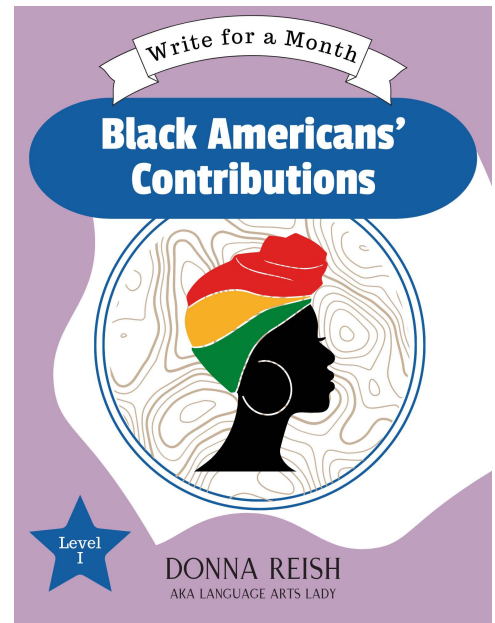
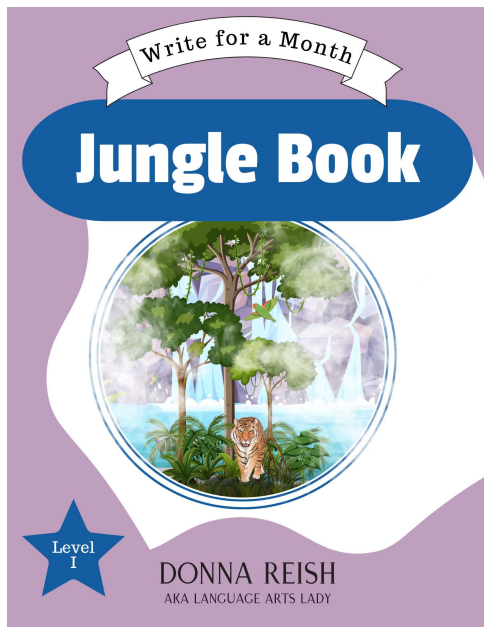


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Write-for-a-Month Series Titles

Write for a Month

Toy Room



Level II

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write for a Month

Fairy Tales




Level III

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write for a Month

Peter Pan



Level IV

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write for a Month

Twice-Told Tales



Level V

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Click on My TPT Products

Bug on a Log
Preposition practice

Ladybug Dan™ Preposition Sentences

in blanks with prepositions:

from over above
within behind below

Student Sheets and Answer Keys

Grades
4th, 5th,
6th, & 7th

Tricky Tricks to Help II Stick
Posters

5 Parts of a
Sentence
TO HELP IT
STICK

Reference Ring

Beauty and the Beast

Preposition Practice

8 Parts of Speech Posters

Grades
4th, 5th,
6th, & 7th

Articles

Articles: Indefinite
an a the

Article =
NOUN MARKER
an a the

Articles: Definite
the

Using a or an

Using an

Using an

Articles Poster Set

Fairy Tale Writing

Fairy Tales:
How to Create and Write Using
Writing Boxes

Little Red Riding Hood
Level I

Sentence and Paragraph Writing
for Beginning Writers

Christmas Writing
Twice - Told Tale

Grades
6th, 7th
& 8th

Christmas: Original Creative Writing - Twice-Told Tale

Twice-Told Tale: The Elves and the Shoemaker - Level III

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Elves and The Shoemaker

Grades
3rd, 4th,
5th & 6th

Beginning Think Fast Grammar Quiz

Grammar Quiz and Answer Key

Christmas Writing

Grades
6th, 7th
& 8th

Three Holiday Traditions Essay -
Level III

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Three Holiday Traditions

Color and Read,
Mowgli!

the
ABC
Sounds Song
Packet

Aa Bb Cc

Baby Shark Plays
by Donna Reish

Twice-Told Tales

Classic Stories
With Spin Off Versions for Read
Aloud or Read Alone Fun!

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Teaching Services



Donna Reish, mother of seven grown children, Nonna to ten lovies, and thirty-two year homeschool veteran, is a prolific curriculum writer, blogger, and teacher from Indiana. She graduated from Ball State University with a degree in Elementary Education and did master's work in Reading Specialist following that. Donna began writing curriculum for a publisher out of Chicago specifically for homeschoolers twenty-five years ago. Following the completion of those thirty books over ten years, she and her husband started a

small press publishing company writing materials for homeschools and Christian schools. With the surge of digital products, Donna now writes curriculum books that are digital downloads (both secular and faith-based products), bringing her total curriculum products to 120 books of 50,000+ pages. Donna tests all of her books with 50-80 in-person students each year locally before they are published--and this is her real love: Seeing the faces of students who achieve language arts goals that they never thought were possible using her creative, incremental approaches and materials. Donna teaches parents, teachers, and teaching parents about grammar, language arts, writing, reading, learning, and more at her teaching website, *Language Arts Lady Blog*, and through her videocasts/podcasts, *How I Teach & 10 Minute Grammar*.

Want daily grammar, writing, & teaching tips? Follow me
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