

The Immersion Excursion

Examples of Lessons and Ideas to Help
Students Travel through a Text Type

Grade 4 Unit 1

Launching with Realistic Fiction Stories - Narrative



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BACKGROUND SECTION

The purpose of these lessons is to provide a sense of possibilities for teachers. “Shop around” for ideas to share with students. Pick and choose lessons based on teacher background knowledge and students’ background knowledge and interests. These lessons serve as exemplars for how the study of Immersion might go. Teachers urged (really begged) me to craft lessons to guide newcomers on various ways to explore a text type and mentor texts. The intent is not to simplify the process into formulaic lessons. Instead, these represent samples of possible activities a teacher might include during an Immersion Phase. Immersion is inquiry-based – discussion should revolve around what students notice and want to discuss. Therefore, modify, adjust, delete, and add lessons based on the background knowledge and needs of your students. An on-demand performance assessment is an excellent vehicle to determine what students know and need to learn.

***Good luck being a tour guide for your students as they explore various text types and books. The act of writing opens hearts and minds ---
Dr. Sandy Biondo***

Purpose of Immersion

The purpose of the Immersion Phase is to help students develop a thorough understanding of the text type they will be writing. Immersion will help students to create a vision of how their own texts may be written and possible items to include. The goal is to move students from *explorers* of the text type to *writers* of it. Through studying mentor texts, students will develop a greater understanding of:

- A. Definition and Purpose (What is xxx? Why do people read xxx? Why do people write xxx?)
- B. Characteristics (What makes an effective xxx?)
- C. How these texts tend to go?
 - 1. How does the beginning or lead tend to go? What is included?
 - 2. How does the middle part or body tend to go? What is included?
 - 3. How does the ending or conclusion tend to go? What is included?
 - 4. Author craftsmanship specific to that text type (e.g. narrative: character, plot, heart of the story, details as internal thinking, setting, character action, physical description, dialogue, etc.; information: text structures, text features such as captions, headings, bold face, etc.; details as numbers, names, examples, partner sentences, topic specific words, etc.; opinion – claim, reasons, supporting details as facts, quotes, micro-stories with a slant, interview information, surveys, etc.)

Webster’s dictionary defines a mentor as: “a close, trusted, and experienced counselor or guide” - which perfectly describes the relationship we want our students to have with mentor texts.

Reading Like a Reader, Reading Like a Writer

It is important that students have multiple experiences with a piece or book. Time should be devoted to them first *reading like a reader* – read, enjoy, and discuss. Then, pieces will be *reread* in part or whole through “writerly eyes.” Students will now *read like a writer*. Selections will be *reread* to notice, name, and discuss how and why an author structured things in a particular way or selected specific words. Students will come to learn that authors “intentionally” craft words and text in certain ways to share information and create different types of meaning. Ultimately, reading like a writer means to read with a sense of possibility – ***What did this author do that I could try?*** Subsequently, teachers want students to use mentor texts as resources for when they write.

Inquiry Approach Versus Architecture of a Mini-Lesson

Immersion lessons typically follow an inquiry approach; therefore, they are open-ended and idiosyncratic to the group. They will not follow the typical architecture of a mini-lesson (e.g., connection, teach, active engagement, link and share). Teachers may not have specific lessons for this phase, but instead have general areas of study (e.g., background - definition, purpose, characteristics, how texts tend to go, writing ideas, class shared draft, etc.). Teachers should follow the lead of their students -- notice, restate, negotiate what they say in order to bring meaning and understanding. This is a time for students to notice the characteristics and purposes of a text type. Teachers are assisting students in moving from ➔ EXPLORERS of the text type to WRITERS of the text type.

Text Selection

Text selection should include published work (e.g., literature books, articles), student-authored work, and teacher-authored work. Texts should exemplify the various components that a well written text at that grade level would include. See resource packet per unit for criteria for mentor text selection and possible titles. Additionally, teachers may check out the following resources for possible mentor text: literature/trade book lists for that text type and grade level, websites that include student and teacher-authored work, selections from Reading and Writing Project from Teachers College (www.readingandwritingproject.com), professional resources and recommendations from noted researchers (e.g. Katie Wood Ray, Lucy Calkins, Ralph Fletcher, Tony Stead, etc.), collections from the MAISA website, your district or local intermediate school district, etc.

Tip: When planning, jot notes on what the text has to offer so it can be used as a “cheat sheet.” Affix these notes on the back of the text. Select different texts for different reasons. Variety is the key. Don’t select books/texts that all look and sound the same and have the same features.

Make a list of texts that can be shared beyond Immersion sessions. Include these selections during shared reading or read alouds during the entire unit of study.

Where to Find More Information on Immersion Prior to studying these lessons, it is highly recommended teachers read the supplemental resources on Atlas: Immersion Phase: Creating a Vision for Writing, Part 1 – Background Information and Part 2 – Grade Level Appendices.

LESSON PLAN SECTION – 4th Grade

Three Basic Goals of Immersion (simplifying a complex process)

Goal 1 – Develop Background Knowledge

Goal 2 – Generate Possible Writing Ideas

Goal 3 – Try It – Shared Class Writing – Begin a Class “Flash” Draft

SAMPLE WEEK OF IMMERSION LESSONS

Day 1*	Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge Read, Study, and Discuss How Realistic Fiction Writing Works! (Focus on definition, purpose, general noticings and structure)
Day 2*	Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge A Closer Look at Events
Day 3*	Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge – A Closer Look at Elaboration – Saying More Through Details, Details, Details
Day 4*	Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge Box It and Mark It
Day 5*	Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge – Narrative Scavenger Hunt
Do during WW unit	Goal 2: Generate Possible Writing Ideas Linking Mentor Texts with Writing Ideas
~~~~~	Goal #3: Try It – Shared Class Writing

**Write a Class Narrative Piece. *This may begin anytime during the Immersion phase and/or during shared/interactive writing time.***

- * Depending on students’ background knowledge of narrative writing and a teacher’s experience with Immersion, teachers may spend 1-4 days studying Goal #1: Develop Background Knowledge. If some of this work is done during reading components, then less writing workshop time is needed. Adjust Immersion plan accordingly.

## STUDYING MENTOR TEXTS – AN IMPORTANT NOTE

### **Mentor Texts**

Check your students' understanding of what a "mentor" is and how mentor texts help writers. If needed, add a lesson or verbiage to this unit. For more detailed information and ideas, please see:

Immersion Phase: Creating a Vision for Writing, Part 1: Background Information by Sandra M. Biondo. This may be found on the MAISA website. Check out this section: Develop Background Knowledge - What is a Mentor? How Will Mentor Texts Help Us? (pp. 7-8).

### **Reading Like a Reader, Reading Like a Writer**

Mentor texts should be read, enjoyed and discussed as a reader prior to studying them during the Immersion Phase. Teachers typically set aside several read aloud and/or shared reading sessions to discuss realistic fiction stories. Continue to read realistic fiction selections (e.g., books, teacher-written, student-authored work, and class-shared written pieces) throughout the time the class is studying narrative writing.

During the Immersion Phase, teachers revisit familiar texts to study them from a writing perspective. Students shift from "reading like a reader" to "reading like a writer." Selections will be *reread* to notice, name, and discuss how and why an author crafted certain elements, such as: structure, elaboration through details, specific word choice, etc. Students learn that authors "intentionally" craft words and text in certain ways to share information and create different types of meaning. Ultimately, reading like a writer means to read with a sense of possibility – *What did this author do that I could try?* Subsequently, teachers encourage students to use mentor texts as resources for their authored work.

Make a list of texts to be studied – books, student-authored work, teacher-written selections and class-shared pieces. See Immersion unit for suggestions, but feel free to delete and add selections from your own class, school or district collections. Please see suggested mentor texts list on page 7 and a planning tool on page 9.

For more detailed information and ideas, please see:

Immersion Phase: Creating a Vision for Writing, Part 1: Background Information by Sandra M. Biondo. This may be found on the MAISA website. Check out this section: Reading Like a Reader, Reading Like a Writer (p.4).



Video link: See Video #2 Immersion in Action: Goal #1 Develop Background Knowledge – Noticings Using Specific Lenses from a Narrative Writing Checklist by Dr. Sandy Biondo. To view:

<http://video.oakland.k12.mi.us/show?video=e20231822ac1>

**POSSIBLE REALISTIC FICTION MENTOR TEXT SELECTIONS – Unit #1**

<b>Literature – Trade Book Selections</b>		
<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Notes</b>
The Memory String	Eve Bunting	
The Salt in His Shoes	Deloris Jordan with Roslyn M. Jordan	
Dancing in the Wings	Debbie Allen	
Those Shoes	Maribeth Boelts	
The Summer My Father Was Ten	Pat Brisson	
Too Many Tamales	Gary Soto	
Your Name in Gold	Chicken Soup for the Kids Soul, 1998. By A.F. Bauman	
Knuffle Bunny	Mo Willems	
Ish	Peter H. Reynolds	

<b>Teacher-Authored Work</b>		
<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Gina Faces the Iron Dragon	Mrs. Banton	
The Haunted Trail	Mrs. Cole	
The Scary Walk to School	<u>Writing Pathway</u> by Lucy Calkins, p. 441	Retype or remove side annotations

Student-Authored Work		
Title	Author	Notes
First Day Nerves	Student Work Artifact	See MAISA Atlas, Unit 1, Resource Section
The Hike	Erin	See Appendix
Too Short	Ned	See Appendix
The Trials of the Bathroom Break Ins	<u>Writing Pathway</u> by Lucy Calkins, p. 425	On-Demand Piece
The Trip	Josie	See Appendix
The Tryouts of Terror	Sofie	See Appendix

Class-Shared Written Pieces		
Title	Class/Year	Notes
Together is Better	Mrs. Charron's Class	



Teacher Resource: Fill in with your mentor text plan based on the books you have.

**Unit 1: LAUNCHING WITH REALISTIC FICTION STORIES – MENTOR TEXT SELECTIONS**

Literature – Trade Book Selections		
Title	Author	Notes

Teacher-Authored Work		
Title	Author	Notes

Student-Authored Work		
Title	Author	Notes

Class-Shared Written Pieces		
Title	Class/Year	Notes

## **IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge**

### **Day 1 – Read, Study and Discuss How Narrative Writing Works!**

#### **(Focus on Definition, Purpose, General Noticings and Structure)**

**Read as a Reader:** Select 6 or more realistic fiction selections that you will share with students during read aloud with accountable talk and/or shared reading. These selections should be a combination of published text, teacher-authored work, student-authored work and/or a class-shared writing piece from a previous class. Read, enjoy and discuss these books. Teachers may need multiple reading sessions to accomplish this. This should be done prior to the start of the Immersion Phase. **Discuss how realistic fiction is different from personal narratives they studied in 2nd and 3rd grades.**

**Read as a Writer:** Teachers may study Goal #1: Develop Background Knowledge during writing workshop and reading time. Therefore, the study of this goal may occur over different days or during different literacy components. Below is a sample of how a teacher may plan to address Goal #1. During this time, revisit these 6 familiar pieces and guide students in noticing a pattern of what a realistic fiction piece is, its purpose and how it tends to go.

#### **Sample of possible Day 1 texts:**

1. Student-authored text: ____ Too Short _____
2. Literature book with easily identifiable text structure: ____ Those Shoes _____
3. Teacher or class-authored text: ____ Together is Better _____

#### **Sample of possible Day 2 texts (or to be studied during a reading component):**

1. Student-authored text: ____ The Trip _____
2. Literature book with easily identifiable text structure: ____ Dancing in the Wings _____
3. Teacher or class-authored text: ____ The Haunted Trail _____

#### **Sample of possible texts if additional time is needed:**

1. Student-authored text: ____ The Tryout of Terror _____
2. Literature book with easily identifiable text structure: ____ Salt in His Shoes _____
3. Teacher or class-authored text: ____ Gina Faces the Iron Dragon _____

Please see appendix for copies of some of these selections.

## Possible discussion points:

1. **Class discussion to access prior knowledge of text type** – Today we will begin the study of writing realistic fiction stories. As young writers, you've authored small moment or personal narrative stories in kindergarten through 3rd grades. What do you remember about narrative writing?  
Please note: It may be helpful to review anchor charts with noticings from third grade. Ask third grade teachers to share their completed Immersion charts.
2. **Revisit the concept of narrative writing** – As young writers, you will learn to author realistic fiction pieces. You will write narratives by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator or characters with the events unfolding naturally. The story will have an important message or heart of the story. These stories **could** have actually occurred to people in a time and setting that is possible. The characters and events are true to real life, yet drawn from the writer's imagination.
3. **Revisit and discuss selections. After reading and studying a few texts, generate discussion to explore the following questions:**

A. *Definition: What is a realistic fiction story?*

Realistic Fiction Stories are... (definition)

Example: ...made up stories that could be real. They focus upon an important message or heart of the story.

B. *Purpose: Why do people write realistic fiction stories?*

*Why do people read realistic fiction stories?*

People read them... (Reading purpose)

Example: ...to be entertained and to make connections to other people.

People write them... (Writing purpose)

Example: ...to share stories of their lives and to entertain others.

C. *Characteristics: What makes an effective realistic fiction story?*

Elaborate on how each part tends to go –

- General noticings
- How does the beginning or lead tend to go? What is included?
- How does the middle part or body tend to go? What is included?
- How does the ending tend to go? What is included?

**See next page for more specifics.**

4. **Make an anchor based on discussion points.**

## **SAMPLE ANCHOR CHART CATEGORIES AND POSSIBLE NOTICINGS – TEACHER RESOURCE**

The following is a teacher resource of possible noticings and discussion areas. Modify to fit how your students describe things - put in student friendly terms. It is not expected that students will notice each item listed. This is a list of possibilities. Continue to add noticings to the class anchor chart as the Immersion Phase progresses and as Writing Workshop unit lessons are taught. See sample anchor charts from 3rd grade classrooms at the end of this lesson.

After discussion, create a chart that represents student thinking. The following are possible categories that may be included.

### **Anchor Chart Part 1: Definition and Purpose**

- Realistic Fiction Stories are... (definition)  
*Example: ...made up stories that could be real. They focus upon an important message or heart of the story.*
- People read them... (Reading purpose)  
*Example: ...to be entertained and to make connections to other people.*
- People write them... (Writing purpose)  
*Example: ...to share stories of their lives and to entertain others.*

### **Anchor Chart Part 2 Categories: Noticings (see next page for possible noticings):**

- **General Noticings**
- **Structure Noticings**
  - **Beginning or lead**
  - **Middle or body**
  - **Ending**

## General Noticings

- Stories about ordinary everyday things
- Stories that are made up but could have really happened
- Stories about one time a person did something
- Contains strong emotions
- Main character - Contains character development – shows their motivations and struggles through events
- Main character has a problem that must be solved or an understanding they must learn
- Characters are human
- Characters share their thoughts and feelings
- Characters talk – revealing dialogue: shows traits of characters and/or moves story forward
- Event sequence unfolds naturally - Stories have a beginning, middle and ending
- There is a main event – turning point – where character faces biggest challenge and learns/changes heart and/or mind
- Includes use of details (e.g., internal thinking, physical description, dialogue, setting, and character action)
- Stories have strong feeling attached to them
- Stories contain a heart of the story – lesson learned, realization, etc.
- Uses a storyteller’s voice – told story “bit by bit”, tells as if it is happening right now (presence tense, not past tense)
- Transition words to signal sequence of events
- May include sensory details, figurative language (simile, metaphor, and personification) to bring story to life
- 

- Continued, see next page

## **Structure Noticings**

Through studying various samples, help students discover that narrative texts tend to follow a certain structure. There are 3 main parts – beginning or lead, middle or body, and ending. (Use hand to show: thumb = beginning or lead, middle 3 fingers = middle or body, pinky = ending).

### **Elaborate on what is included in these three parts.**

#### **Sample discussion areas:**

- **Beginning or Lead**
  - Hooks the reader
  - Types of hooks: action, dialogue, setting (list items based on mentor texts studied)
  - Introduces storyline: who the characters are and what they are doing or what was happening
  - Introduces the setting (time and place) and character
  -
- **Middle or body**
  - tells story “bit by bit” or with a storyteller’s voice (as if story is happening right now/present tense)
  - tells story in order through events; an event is what the character did; events go in order: what happened first, what happened next, what happened after that, etc.
  - uses phrases to signal events, such as a little later, after that, ...
  - uses paragraphs to separate events or different parts or times of the story or to show when a new character is speaking
  - Elaborates on the heart of the story by including action, dialogue and thoughts and feelings
  - There is a main event – turning point – where character faces biggest challenge and learns/changes heart and/or mind
  -
- **Ending**
  - concludes or wraps up the story by linking to the beginning or middle of the story
  - connects to the heart of the story
  - types: action, dialogue, or feeling, (list types based on mentor texts studied)
  -

Please note: The next two lessons address events and elaboration through details, details, details.

Teacher Resources:



Video link: See Video #1 Immersion in Action: Goal #1 Develop Background Knowledge – Using a Notice/Name/Why Chart by Dr. Sandy Biondo and Nancy Hatalsky. To view:

<http://video.oakland.k12.mi.us/show?video=52d74bd9ee94>



Video link: See Video #2 Immersion in Action: Goal #1 Develop Background Knowledge – Noticings Using Specific Lenses from a Narrative Writing Checklist by Dr. Sandy Biondo. To view:

<http://video.oakland.k12.mi.us/show?video=e20231822ac1>

## Realistic Fiction Writing

**We are learning to identify the traits of a realistic fiction piece.**

**Definition:** A genre consisting of stories that could have actually occurred to people or animals in a believable setting. These stories resemble real life, and fictional characters within these stories react similarly to real people.

**Purpose:**

- To entertain
- To show how people learn, grow, and solve problems

Notice	Name	Why?
Story happened over a few minutes	Small moment/seed size topic	Detailed story
White spaces between parts of the story	paragraphs	To separate parts of the story
Then After Next	Transition words	Show order/sequence
Quotation marks	Dialogue or people talking	Makes the story interesting
Beginning	introduction	Hook the reader and introduce the story line
middle	Body	tells the story; events
end	conclusion	Wraps up story
"It was big and fierce, with sharp looking teeth."	Sensory language	So, the reader can make a movie
Character shared thoughts	Inner feelings; internal thinking	Gives the reader clues about struggles
Conventions (capitalization, indenting paragraphs, spelling, etc.) Onomatopoeias (sounds words)	Conventions	Makes the writing easy to read



## Realistic Fiction Writing

**We are learning to identify the traits of a realistic fiction piece.**

**Definition:**

A story that could really happen (characters, setting, problem, solution)

**Purpose:**

- To entertain
- To show how people learn, grow, and solve problems
- 

Notice	Name	Why?
Taught a lesson	Lesson learned Heart of story	Entertain the reader Teach a lesson
More than one character	Characters	To make it interesting
Get readers attention	Hook and introduction	Grab reader and make them want to keep reading
middle	Body: 3 events	Makes a story exciting The reader can make a movie in their mind
problem/solution		Tells a lesson or how to handle a problem
introduction	Hook the reader and tell what the story is about	Gets the reader's attention, tells them what the story will be about
conclusion	Wrap up the story, share solution, tells the lesson	Leaves the reader with a certain feeling or thought

Characters are talking	dialogue	Adds detail
Shows how the character is feeling and what they are thinking	Character thoughts and feelings	Adds detail (shows struggles/lesson learned)
Gives details about where they are	Setting	Adds detail

Sample anchor chart

Narrative Noticings Chart			
Text Example	Notice It!	Name It!	Why is It Important?
<p>"This is my second day in the new school in the new country. There are to be no lessons today because we are going somewhere. Other days will not be like this one."</p>	It's at the beginning of the story and gets our attention.	Hook or Lead	A writer includes a strong lead to grab the reader's attention, so s/he wants to keep reading!
<p>Anna calls and waves to me to come slide her. A boy makes a place for me on the handle between them. I am pleased. I push and push. It is hard, but we are working together and we can do it. The juice drips down, drip drip drip.</p>	The writer is telling the story using active verbs. These are action words that tell the story like it's happening right now.	Storyteller's Voice	The author creates a 'movie in our minds' as we read the story. We can see, feel, and hear exactly what the character is doing as if we were right there in the story.
<p>"App-ell," I say. Anna dips. I smile and smile and smile. It is my first outside-speech word. There will be more.</p> <p>Farah learns to be confident in herself and knows that her new friends like her for who she is. The lesson is that it's important to be yourself.</p>	The story has a lesson in it the author wants you to remember.	Heart of the Story	An author includes an important message in the story so you can learn something to use in your own life.
<p>In the <b>BEGINNING</b> of the story, the class goes to the orchard.</p> <p>In the <b>MIDDLE</b> of the story, they are making the cider.</p> <p>At the <b>END</b> of the story, Farah tries her first English word and makes new friends.</p>	The story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.	Structure	The writer tells the story with the events in order, so it makes sense to the reader and is easy to understand.
<p>She held one apple and ran and slide down a hill. The apple fell and fell. There were blue backpacks, backpacks, and backpacks.</p> <p>The girl who often went to the orchard and picked apples for her family. "Farah" she says. She points to the "Farah" I read and says, "Farah" looks like my name. Then I look across the field where you grew.</p> <p>Old apples have fallen in the grass. The wind dips are eating them. CRACK! CRACK! CRACK! Their crumbles sound like thunder.</p> <p>The teacher lives in the. The boy and me pick our apples from the basket.</p> <p>I hang back, get some if I could be with the others. Making the cider must be hard. They are against it and grow. I am strong. I am not.</p>	The story has descriptions, action words, sound words, dialogue, and thoughtshots.	Details	The writer includes many different kinds of details in the story to make the writing exciting for the reader.

## **IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge**

### **Day 2 – A Closer Look at Events**

The purpose of this lesson is to revisit familiar mentor texts to add to existing knowledge. Select 2-3 selections for this lesson (number depends on length of text and time allotted). These pieces will be studied in-depth, looking specifically at *how* the author told the story of what happened “bit by bit” through events. Also, study how the plot line follows a story mountain format.

- A. Revisit and discuss students’ noticings about the middle or body of a realistic fiction story from previous work. For example:**

#### **Middle or body –**

- tells story “bit by bit” or with a storyteller’s voice (as if story is happening right now/present tense)
- tells story in order through events; an event is what the character did; events go in order: what happened first, what happened next, what happened after that, etc.
- uses phrases to signal events, such as a little later, after that, ...
- uses paragraphs to separate events or different parts or times of the story or to show when a new character is speaking
- Elaborates on the heart of the story by including action, dialogue and thoughts and feelings
- There is a main event – turning point – where character faces biggest challenge and learns/changes heart and/or mind
- 

- B. Discuss what an event is. An event is what happens in the story or what the character does (e.g., what happened first, what happened next, what happened after that, what happened last, etc.). This is called the body or middle of the realistic fiction story.**
- C. The author maps out the events by creating a story mountain that builds up to the most important event or turning point. This is where the character faces the biggest challenge and learns a lesson or has a change of heart and/or mind about something.**
- D. An author gets a picture in his/her mind of the events, then the writer thinks about it “bit by bit” or event by event.**
- E. Events are shared through a storyteller’s voice. Help students notice *how* a storyteller’s voice is achieved – present tense; as if happening right now; active verbs. Elaborate on the benefits of a storyteller’s voice. Provide examples of passive voice vs. storyteller’s voice.**

**F. The author often separates events by paragraphs.**

**G. Revisit a familiar text and study through the lens of events.**

**Two options for mapping out events:**

**1. make a story mountain using sticky notes for each event, or**

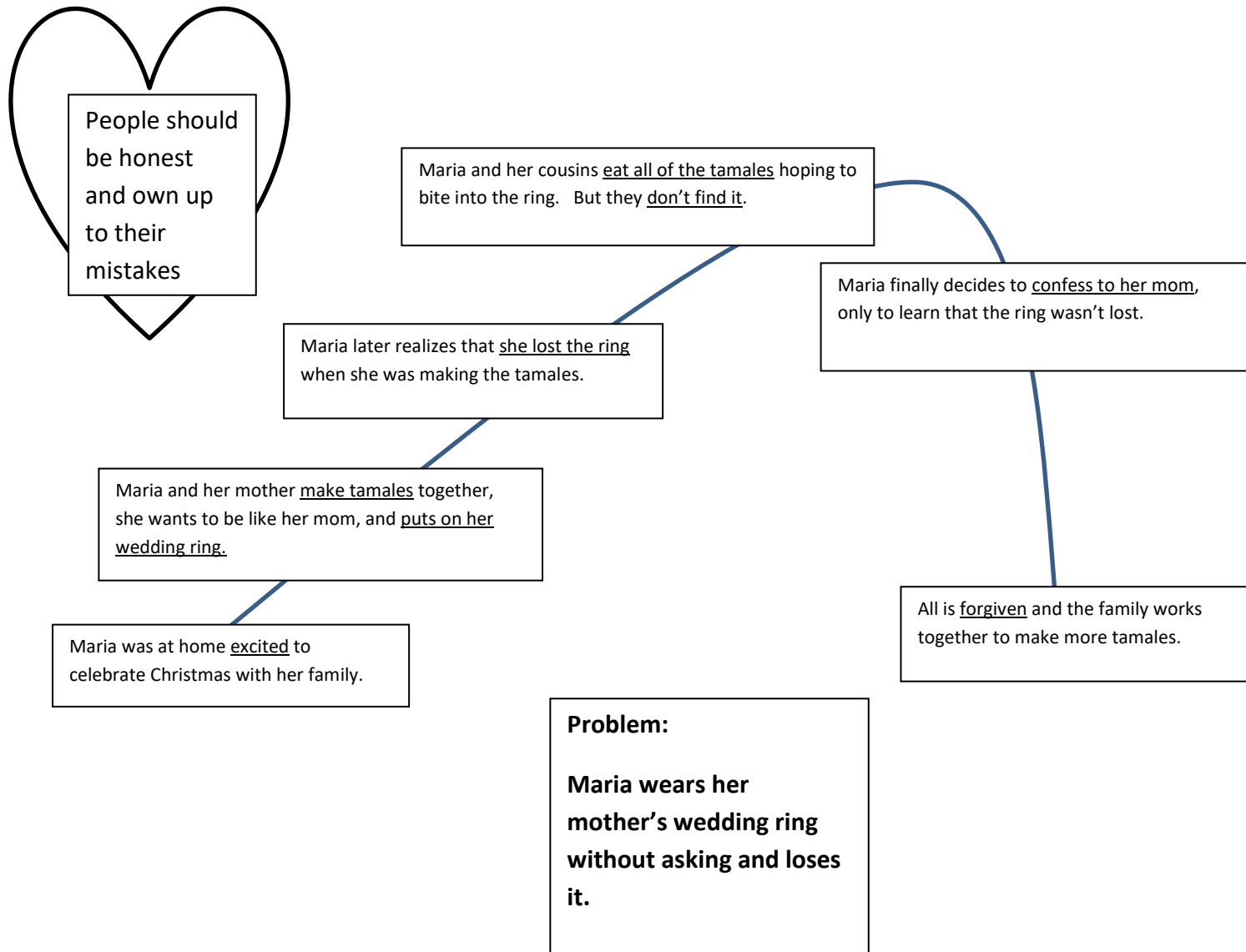
**2. identify events right in the text. Affix a sticky note on each page naming the event (e.g., Event: tell what the character did on that page/s). For example, walked up the ladder (easiest to start with an action word or verb).**

- **Use event-type prompting language, such as: What happened next? or What did the character do after that? Etc.**
- **Identify the heart of the story or turning point event. Use a heart sticky note to denote that event.**

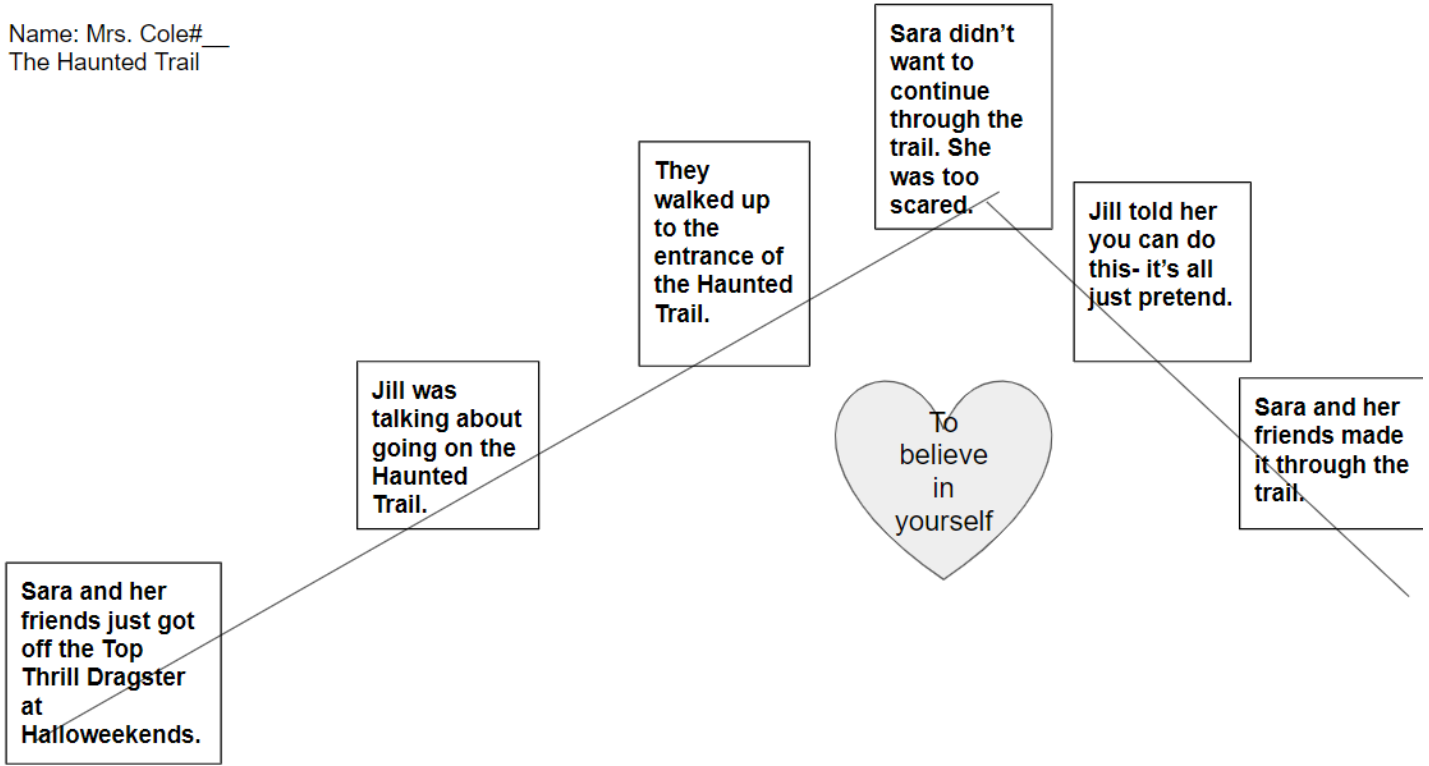
**H. Repeat with other mentor texts.**

**See samples next couple of pages.**

# Story Arc using Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto



Name: Mrs. Cole#____  
The Haunted Trail



## IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

### Day 3 – A Closer Look at Elaboration – Saying More through Details, Details, Details

This lesson focuses on the concept of “Saying More.” It helps students notice how authors elaborate on events through the use of details. Modify this lesson to meet the needs of your students.

#### Background Information

1. Select 2-3 previously read and discussed realistic fiction selections for this lesson (number depends on length of text and time allotted). These familiar pieces will be studied in-depth through writerly eyes, looking specifically at details. The five details highlighted at the elementary level are dialogue, setting, internal thinking, character action and physical description. Check with third grade what details were studied last year during narrative units. The goal is for fourth graders to use a storyteller’s voice to share a story bit by bit. We want to teach them how to bring a story to life by painting a picture in a reader’s mind through the use of specific details. This lesson helps them to **recognize and name details**. It does not teach them how to craft them per se. Lessons during the writing workshop unit, teaches young writers *how* to add details, details, details to their own work. This is an awareness lesson only.
2. It is suggested to use the detail hand graphic. Many teachers enlarge to poster-size and keep on display. Some teachers also give students a mini copy to keep in their writing folders. See resource section.  
Tip: When discussing details, teachers often say, “Remember to add details, details, details.” While saying this, they do the gesture of touching index finger to thumb (details), middle finger to thumb (details), and ring finger to thumb (details).



## Lesson Steps:

### A. Review learnings from Days 1-2.

### B. Introduce/Review, Define and Discuss Purpose of Details

Discuss how and why authors try to paint pictures in readers' minds. Since the reader wasn't there, the author has to provide information so the reader can feel like s/he was there. One way to do this is through elaboration. Explain that when an author shares an event they often "say more" about that event through elaboration. Authors elaborate through what we call details. Details help readers to see, feel, hear and experience what the writer did. Details are like playing a movie or DVD in the reader's mind. Details may be included in pictures and/or words.

There are several ways an author shares narrative details. Define and explain the details that will be the focus of this lesson (e.g., dialogue, setting, internal thinking, character action and/or physical description). Show detail hand graphic.

### C. How do authors share details?

Typically, authors at this level share details through words and sentences. Authors may include details right there in the same sentence that tells the event or they may "say more" by adding additional sentences. (Teacher may replace examples with excerpts from mentor texts studied.)

#### 1. **Word Sample:** I bent down, reached out and petted the furry, brown bunny.

Underline the words: bent down/reached out/petted and furry/brown

I bent down, reached out and petted the furry, brown bunny.

Sample teacher talk:

*Notice the difference between these two sentences:*

*I petted the bunny.*

*I petted the furry, brown bunny.*

Sample teacher talk: *Notice how the writer helped you picture in your mind what the bunny looked like. The author added the words "furry" and "brown" to the sentence. If he just wrote – I petted the bunny – you wouldn't have a good picture in your mind of what the bunny looked like. This kind of detail is called physical description. It tells what a person, place or thing looks like. It helps the reader get a picture in his/her mind of the one time the author did something.*



Sample teacher talk:

*Notice the difference between these two sentences:*

*I petted the furry, brown bunny.*

*I bent down, reached out and petted the furry, brown bunny.*

*Let's discuss these words: bent down, reached out and petted. The author is creating a picture in the reader's mind of what the character did through describing action. When we talk about character action, we are thinking about what the character did with his/her hands, feet, or face. We can also discuss how the character moved from place to place.*

**2. Sentence Sample:** I burst through the door. I shouted, "Time to go!"

Sample teacher talk: *Sometimes after an author tells an event, he thinks, "How can I say more about that event?" So, in this case, the author might have thought – how can I say more about bursting through the door? Could I add what I was thinking or what I said (dialogue)? The author put a picture from his mind onto the page. He added the detail of dialogue or what he said by adding another sentence of what he shouted at that moment: "Time to go!"*

**D. Share more examples through studying familiar mentor texts through the lens of details. Share samples of all five types of details.**

Tip: Underline the detail words that are included in the sentence and name the detail. Explain how details paint a picture in the reader's mind so s/he can see, feel, hear and experience more of what the author did. If the detail is in another sentence, model what the author may have been thinking with respect to saying more.













Example: The roller coaster went fast. *How can I say more about the roller coaster? Or how can I say more about how I felt about going fast?*

Sentence with detail:

The huge twisty roller coaster went fast (physical description).

Or

The roller coaster went fast. My heart was beating so fast. I was so scared! (Internal thinking).

Picture or sketch of item from text*	Notice	Name	Why
•	One event/Short period of time	Zooming in/Small Moment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make connections</li> <li>• Entertain reader/keep reader interested</li> </ul>
• 	Shows how characters act and feel and didn't just tell us	Show, not tell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps us picture what happened</li> </ul>
• 	Time words such as and, then, so, after, next, first, finally	Temporal/time words (CCSS vocabulary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signals new idea or event</li> </ul>
• 	Tells how things look, feel, smell, hear, sound	Physical Description  *Use your 5 senses to build your details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps us picture what is happening</li> </ul>
• 	Characters talking	Dialogue  *Use your 5 senses to build your details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps us picture/hear what is happening</li> </ul>
• 	Where the story happens	Setting  *Use your 5 senses to build your details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps us picture where the character is</li> </ul>
• 	What the character is thinking inside his/her head	Internal Thinking  *Use your 5 senses to build your details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps us picture what the character is thinking and feeling</li> </ul>
• 	What character is doing with his/her body	Character Action  *Use your 5 senses to build your details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps us picture what the character is doing with feet, hands, and face</li> </ul>

Sample of analyzing a text for details. Have students identify the exact lines/words that correspond to the detail.

## Together Is Better

### Teacher/Student Piece

As Gavin and his friends walked through the gates of the new waterpark, his stomach was in his throat! He couldn't believe his eyes! The slides were the tallest he had ever seen! They were as tall as skyscrapers! (physical description, internal thinking)

His friends were so excited they were jumping up and down and started to high five each other. Gavin just stood there; his feet felt like lead. "I heard the Demon Drop is the wildest of them all. Let's hit that water slide first!" Scott yelled. Everyone agreed and took off. Reluctantly, Gavin followed them, wishing that he would get lost or twist an ankle on the way there. (character action, internal thinking, dialogue)

The truth was Gavin liked water parks, but as he was petrified of heights. He didn't want his friends to think he was a wimp, but he didn't want to plunge to his death either. (internal thinking)

Before he knew it, they were in line. Gavin was trying so hard not to panic, that he was caught off guard when Scott asked, "Gavin are you okay? You are as white as a ghost?" (dialogue, physical description)

Gavin stammered, "Um . . . yea . . . I'm just. . . never mind." Then the line moved, and up they climbed. (dialogue...)

Gavin felt trapped. There was a sea of people in front of him and a sea of people behind him. With each step, the ground became smaller and smaller. He could barely hold onto the rail because his hands were so sweaty. The sound of the people screaming as they flew down the slide was causing his heart to stand still. The panic was rising inside of him like a volcano ready to explode. They were now just a few steps away from the platform. He didn't know what to do. (internal thinking, physical description, character action)

No, there was no way he could do this he thought to himself as they reached the platform. So, Gavin went over to the lifeguard to ask if he could go back down the stairs. The lifeguard kindly said, "No dude, safety rules. No going back down the stairs. The only way down is the tube." Scott must have noticed them talking because he came over to Gavin and whispered "Hey bud, don't worry. You've got this. Sit on the tube next to me. I will be right there if you need me." (internal thinking, character action, dialogue)

A small wave of relief washed over Gavin. There was something about the way Scott said the words that started to melt Gavin's worries away. He sounded so calm and confident. That and the fact that Gavin was stuck, there was no other way down but the slide. (internal thinking)

Gavin looked down the stairs, then over to the slide. Finally, he looked at Scott and said, "I don't know if I can do it." (character action, dialogue)

Scott patted him on the back and said, "YOU might not be able to do this, but WE can." He was so thankful to have such a great friend that he couldn't help but smile. He nodded at Scott and said, "Ok, let's do this, together." (character action, dialogue, internal thinking)

As they piled onto the giant tube, everything happened so fast that Gavin didn't have time to rethink his decision. Before he knew it, the lifeguard gave their tube a hard push and off they went. (character action)

Swoosh, Swoosh! The giant tube flew up the left side of the slide, and then the right. His eyes were squeezed shut, and he was holding held onto the straps so hard that his knuckles were white. Splash! Waves of water splashed over them as they zoomed down the slide. (physical description, character action)

And then it happened. Gavin slowly started to feel something in his tummy. A tickle, a small tickle that started to grow, and grow! It spread through him like a warm ray of sunshine and before he knew it, he was smiling and laughing! (internal thinking)

As they plunged into the pool at the bottom of the slide, everyone was laughing, including Gavin. He turned to Scott and smiled, "Let's do it again, together!" (character action, dialogue)

## I can show not tell.

TELL	SHOW
<b>CHARACTER ACTION</b>	Margaret dashed down the street running faster than a cheetah.
Margaret ran down the street.	
<b>CHARACTER DIALOGUE (WORDS)</b>	"I can't wait to get candy!!!" Margaret shrieked.
She wanted candy.	
<b>CHARACTER FEELINGS</b>	Margaret's eyes lit up and a massive smile stretched across her face.
Margaret was excited.	

## IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

### Day 4 – BOX IT AND MARK IT

1. Select a familiar realistic fiction piece, preferably a student-authored, teacher-authored or class-shared writing piece from a previous class. As a class, Box It and Mark It Up. See next page for specifics.
2. Provide students with a different realistic fiction piece, preferably a student-authored, teacher - authored or class-shared writing piece from a previous class. Have them in partnerships Box It and Mark It Up.
3. Class Activity Example - Read, Study and Discuss: Sarah Walking to School p. 440, *Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*, Grade K-8 by Lucy Calkins (2015, Heinemann). Suggestion – Remove side annotations before duplicating.
4. Partner Activity Example - Read, Study and Discuss: First Day Nerves by student. See Appendix.

If the selections noted above are not available or better alternatives are found, list texts to be used below:

Read, Study and Discuss: List text plan to use - _____ (class activity)

Read, Study and Discuss: List text plan to use - _____ (partner activity)

Teacher Notes:

- The anchor chart, Characteristics of an Effective Realistic Fiction Story, may be helpful in facilitating discussion. See chart developed on Day 1.
- Replace sample pieces in this packet with ones from your school – student written, teacher written or class shared pieces.
- Facilitate a class discussion based on discoveries from activity. Add new information to anchor chart.

## BOX AND MARK IT ACTIVITY – REALISTIC FICTION

1. Box It:      **Lead** **Body** **Ending**

2. Mark Up these items:

### Lead/Introduction

- A. Lead – Where the author hooks the reader      (try to name the type)
- B. setting – time and place
- C. Character – introduces the character/s

### Body*

*Do for each paragraph

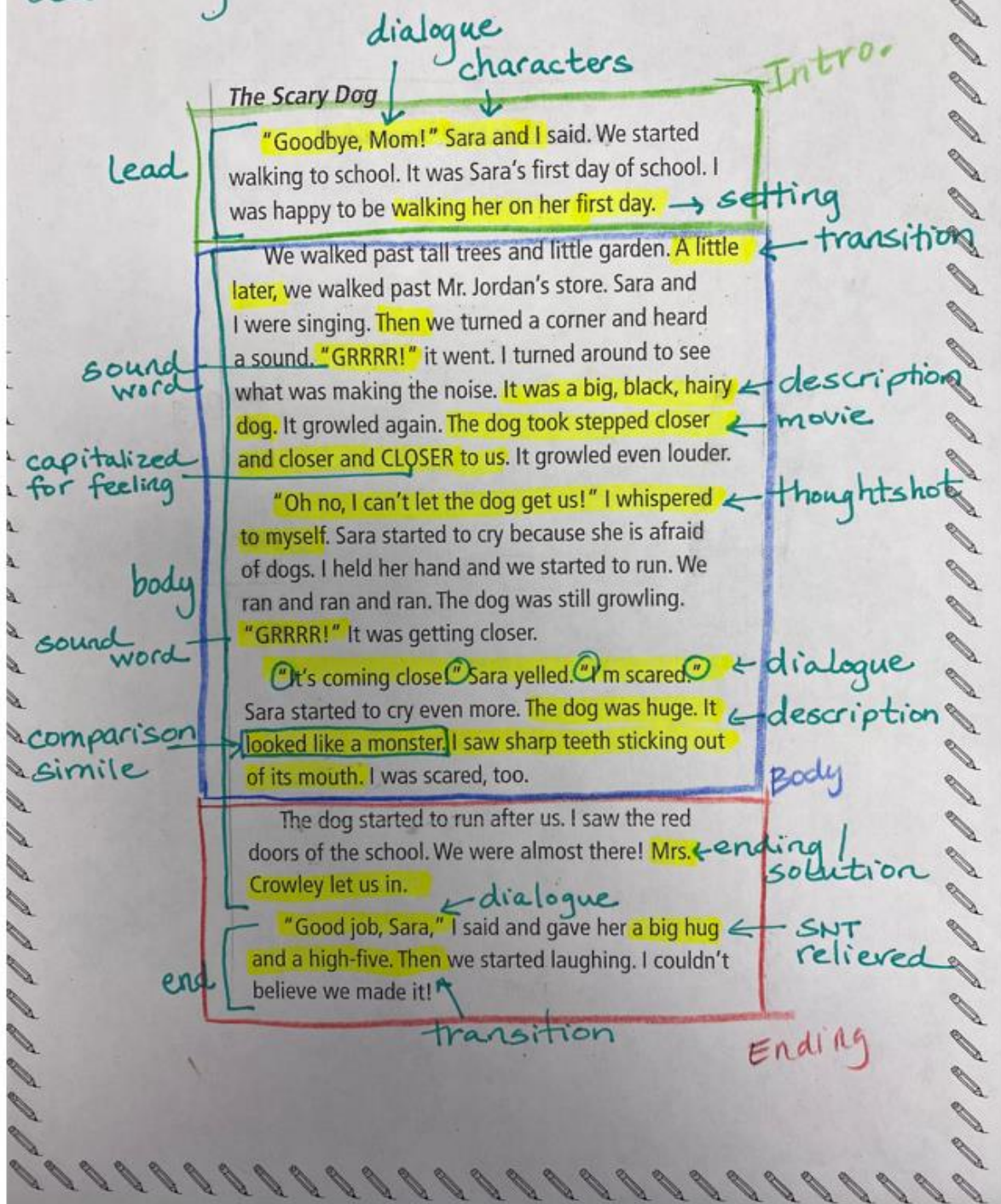
- A. Transition word or phrase – circle (types: signals event, shows how much time went by, shows when things happened, etc.)
- B. Identify each event (e.g., Event #1, Event #2, etc.)
- C. Identify the turning point event with a heart.
- D. Identify details (e.g., dialogue, internal thinking, character action, setting, physical description).
- E. Identify sensory details, similes, and metaphors.
- F.

### Ending /Conclusion

- A. Use arrow to show how the ending links to the beginning or middle of the story.
- B. Identify type of ending (e.g., action, dialogue or feeling) that brings the story to a close and connects to the heart of the story.

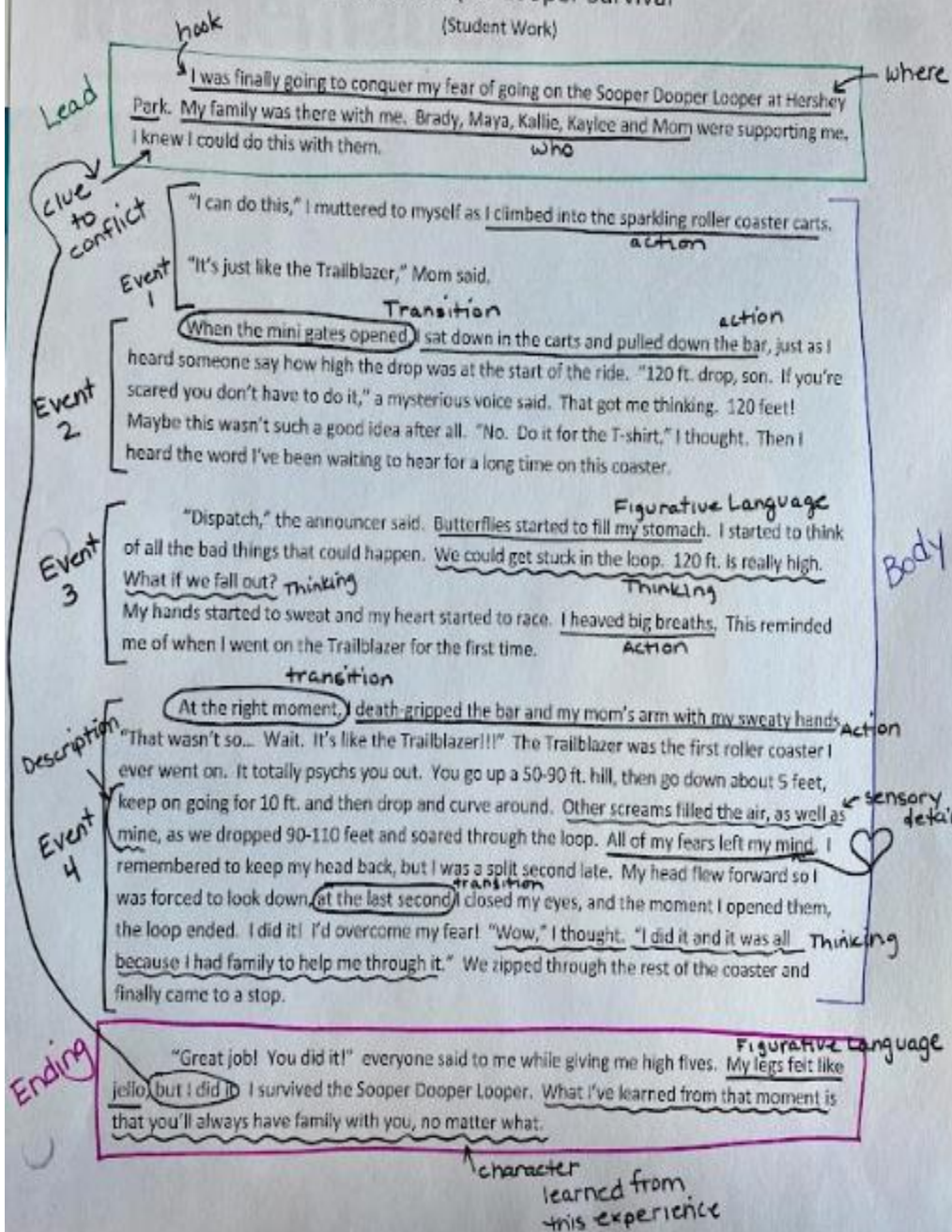


# Seed story - small moment



# Sooper Dooper Looper Survival

(Student Work)





## IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

### Day 5 – Narrative Scavenger Hunt

This lesson focuses on students applying what they have discovered to recognize narrative features in sample texts. It is a fun and engaging way for teachers to determine how well students understand and can locate and describe narrative characteristics.

#### Steps

1. Select multiple narrative texts for this activity (e.g., literature books, student-authored work, teacher-written pieces and class-shared pieces). Each student pair should have 1-3 selections.
2. Make a list of narrative features that students have identified through this Immersion study. See sample list. Tip: Use district assessment tool, such as ***Writing Pathways*** by Lucy Calkins, to determine essential items.
3. Using template provided, insert a name/descriptor and icon for each feature. Consider using icon examples such as those in ***Writing Pathways*** checklists or district checklists.
4. Make a copy of the scavenger hunt for each partnership.
5. Provide 1-3 narrative texts to each group.
6. Set a timer and ask partnerships to find and place a sticky note on the items in the book that are on the scavenger hunt grid. Write the name of that item on the stick note.
7. When time is up, ask partnerships to show what they found and where in the text they found that feature. If possible, have students place their text on a document camera as they are talking about it.
8. Have partnerships count the number of features they found. Challenge them to “beat their score” with another text.

**Possible Scavenger Hunt Items: (modify items and descriptors to match discoveries from Immersion)**

1. Dialogue
2. Internal Thinking
3. Setting
4. Character Action
5. Physical Description
6. 1st person narrative
7. Metaphor or simile – figurative language (4th and 5th)
8. Symbolism (5th)
9. Sensory Details
10. Introduces the characters (lead 3rd)
11. Introduces the setting (lead 3rd)
12. Lead shows what was happening and where (lead 4th & 5th)
13. Lead shows clue of what later becomes problem for main character (5th)
14. Uses transitions for events (3rd)
15. Transitions to show time went by (4th and 5th)
16. Flashback (5th)
17. Flashforward (5th)
18. Action, talk, or feeling ending (3, 4, 5)
19. Ending connects to beginning or middle of story (4th and 5th)
20. Ending where character said, did or realized something (5th)
21. Paragraphs for events and dialogue (3,4,5)
22. Heart of Story
23. Specific, precise verbs
24. Specific, precise nouns
25. Personification (4th and 5th)
26. Shares lesson learned
27. Gets readers predicting
28. Varied sentence structure (5th)
- 29.

## Scavenger Hunt


SAMPLE

Storyteller voice	Figurative Language	Physical description of person, place or thing
Transitions- showing passage of time	Dialogue	Internal thinking
Lead	Ending with heart of the story	Precise word choice

## IMMERSION Goal #2 – Generate Possible Writing Ideas

### Linking Mentor Texts with Writing Ideas

Please see Writing Unit of Study lesson plan packet for lessons on Goal #2: Generating Possible Writing Ideas (i.e., Sessions 1 and 2). Teachers may choose to move one or both those lessons here or do them once the writing unit of study begins. Tip: Select different texts during Immersion that addresses different strong emotions or problems or conflicts. This will help students think of various possible writing topics for their pieces. See column 2 for examples.

#### Sample Anchor Chart - Collecting Story Ideas

Book/Selection	Strong Emotion or Problem or Conflict	My writing ideas...
Grandpa's Face	Strong emotion: Afraid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Afraid of the dark</li><li>- Afraid to walk to friends alone</li><li>-</li></ul>
The Marble Champ	Strong emotion: Determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Determined to be the best hockey goalie</li><li>- Determined for 1st place - gymnastics</li></ul>
Dancing in the Wings	Strong Emotion: Embarrassment – too tall Struggle - learning to do something well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Embarrassed too small at basketball</li><li>- Struggling make the soccer team</li></ul>
The Memory String	Struggle - loss (mom and button from mom) – starting over with stepmom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Loss of grandma or special item from grandma</li><li>- New family member</li></ul>
Too Many Tamales	Strong emotion Ashamed – Didn't tell mom about trying on her ring – lost it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Took brothers medal without asking</li></ul>

Note: The class chart may only be columns two and three. This sample includes column one, book/title, to show teachers how to go from a sample text to a generalized area.

Teacher Resource:



Video link: See Video #3 Immersion in Action: Goal #2 Generating Ideas – Developing Writing Ideas from Studying Literature by Dr. Sandy Biondo. To view:

<http://video.oakland.k12.mi.us/show?video=e5e43b5cea21>

POSSIBLE WRITING IDEAS		
Text	Strong emotion/struggle/conflict	My Writing Ideas...

## Sample Anchor Charts

# Collecting Story Ideas

Book or Mentor Text	Struggle/Problem/Conflict	My writing ideas...
Dancing in the Wings	Too tall (got teased) and she wants to make the audition	Too short for a roller coaster Getting teased for an early curfew
Those Shoes	Everyone else gets something you want/make the right choice	Everyone has a phone but I don't Cheating on a test
Salt in His Shoes	Has to learn to trust himself/work hard	Make a basketball team Want to spelling bee champion

# Mrs. Cole's Story Ideas

- A kid who wants to be the Spelling Bee champion
- A kid who cheats on homework
- A kid's trip to Florida
- A kid who is teased about her hair
- Nervous: A girl who is scared on roller coasters
- Scared: to go in a haunted house
- A kid on Christmas day

### **Goal #3: Try It – Shared Class Writing**

**May begin anytime during the Immersion Phase.**

#### **General Background Information**

It is recommended that Shared Writing be included as part of a balanced literacy program. Shared Writing is defined as a process whereby the teacher acts as a scribe for a group of children, with the emphasis being placed on the composing process and constructing a text that students can read and study later. It may take place during Immersion time and/or during a designated shared writing time. The piece that is co-constructed as a class will be revisited throughout the unit and revised. This piece will serve as a model. Therefore, it is not the intent to have this be a “polished” product, but rather a “rough” draft that has missing elements. Intentionally, don’t create a finished product. A ‘bare bones’ piece drafted quickly in a short period of time is just fine. Lucy Calkins often refers to this piece as a “flash” draft, meaning it was drafted quickly or in a “flash” to get a shared class piece started. Teachers scaffold students in writing the various parts.

Lucy Calkins advocates volume - having students write lots of drafts of whatever type of writing they are studying, even having students begin drafting during the Immersion Phase. During this phase, get students to write “flash” drafts – quickly write a draft knowing writers can go back later and make them better. These early pieces help teachers to see where students are, thus enabling teachers to coach students along based on their needs. Students will be encouraged, if not required, to go back to earlier drafts and apply new learning. For example, after a teacher does a lesson on describing words, students would go back to earlier drafts and add (or revise) descriptive language.

Depending on the text type and form, a class-shared flash draft may be completed in one setting or over the course of a few days. Typically, a narrative story with lots of pages takes days. Model going through the writing process as the class piece is written: Generate Ideas, Rehearse, Plan, and Draft. Revision work can be done later in the unit.

**Highly recommend the following resource book:** Roth, Kate & Dabrowski, Joan. (2016). *Interactive writing across grades: A small practice with big results, PreK-5*. Stenhouse Publishers - [www.stenhouse.com](http://www.stenhouse.com)



## Class Shared Writing – Realistic Fiction Story

It is suggested that the class piece *be done during the Shared Writing component* of a Balanced Literacy Program. Plan to spend a few days during shared writing working on the class piece. As the unit progresses and students learn more about realistic fiction writing, go back and revise based on their new knowledge. Encourage students to do the same – go back to earlier pieces and revise, just like the class did with the shared writing piece.

- The following is a sample sequence of shared writing lessons. Adjust based on time available and students' needs. Some days may be combined.
- Generate some possible story ideas ahead of time to expediate the process. Put on a chart.

### Day 1

1. Discuss possible story ideas. Select one.
2. Start the writing process: Generate Ideas – discuss story idea and the conflict the main character may experience. Brainstorm possible events and the turning point of the story. What could be the heart of the story?
3. Rehearse - Discuss how to create a picture in their minds of events and how to put them into words.
4. Model and engage in rehearsal steps: tell across your hand, tell a partner, etc.
5. Have various students model telling the story across their hands.

### Day 2

1. Revisit rehearsing the story.
2. Plan: Make a story mountain of events (suggestion: use a verb to help name events, use heart symbol for turning point)
3. Focus on the lead: Paragraph 1 – Sample teacher talk: *Beginning – What did we learn about the lead of a realistic fiction story? What should we include in ours? How should it go?*
4. Draft.

### Days 3+4

1. Review previous day's work.
2. Rehearse and plan the body of the piece. Sample teacher talk: *What did we learn about the middle or body of a realistic fiction story? Let's get a picture in our minds again of the events. What happened first, what happened next, what happened after that, then what happened, etc. Let's keep in mind the heart of the story.*
3. Draft as many events as time allows.

### Day 5

1. Review previous day's work.
2. Focus on the ending. Sample teacher talk: *What did we discover about the ending of a realistic fiction story? How should ours go?*
3. Draft.

**As the unit progresses, go back and revise by adding details to each event and especially the heart of the story.**

## Together Is Better

### Class Shared Writing – final copy

As Gavin and his friends walked through the gates of the new waterpark, his stomach was in his throat! He couldn't believe his eyes! The slides were the tallest he had ever seen! They were as tall as skyscrapers!

His friends were so excited they were jumping up and down and started to high five each other. Gavin just stood there; his feet felt like lead. "I heard the Demon Drop is the wildest of them all. Let's hit that water slide first!" Scott yelled. Everyone agreed and took off. Reluctantly, Gavin followed them, wishing that he would get lost or twist an ankle on the way there.

The truth was Gavin liked water parks, but as he was petrified of heights. He didn't want his friends to think he was a wimp, but he didn't want to plunge to his death either.

Before he knew it, they were in line. Gavin was trying so hard not to panic, that he was caught off guard when Scott asked, "Gavin are you okay? You are as white as a ghost?"

Gavin stammered, "Um . . . yea . . . I'm just. . . never mind." Then the line moved, and up they climbed.

Gavin felt trapped. There was a sea of people in front of him and a sea of people behind him. With each step, the ground became smaller and smaller. He could barely hold onto the rail because his hands were so sweaty. The sound of the people screaming as they flew down the slide was causing his heart to stand still. The panic was rising inside of him like a volcano ready to explode. They were now just a few steps away from the platform. He didn't know what to do.

No, there was no way he could do this he thought to himself as they reached the platform. So, Gavin went over to the lifeguard to ask if he could go back down the stairs. The lifeguard kindly said, "No dude, safety rules. No going back down the stairs. The only way down is the tube." Scott must have noticed them talking because he came over to Gavin and whispered "Hey bud, don't worry. You've got this. Sit on the tube next to me. I will be right there if you need me."

A small wave of relief washed over Gavin. There was something about the way Scott said the words that started to melt Gavin's worries away. He sounded so calm and confident. That and the fact that Gavin was stuck, there was no other way down but the slide.

Gavin looked down the stairs, then over to the slide. Finally, he looked at Scott and said, "I don't know if I can do it."

Scott patted him on the back and said, "YOU might not be able to do this, but WE can." He was so thankful to have such a great friend that he couldn't help but smile. He nodded at Scott and said, "Ok, let's do this, together."

As they piled onto the giant tube, everything happened so fast that Gavin didn't have time to rethink his decision. Before he knew it, the lifeguard gave their tube a hard push and off they went.

Swoosh, Swoosh! The giant tube flew up the left side of the slide, and then the right. His eyes were squeezed shut, and he was holding onto the straps so hard that his knuckles were white. Splash! Waves of water splashed over them as they zoomed down the slide.

And then it happened. Gavin slowly started to feel something in his tummy. A tickle, a small tickle that started to grow, and grow! It spread through him like a warm ray of sunshine and before he knew it, he was smiling and laughing!

As they plunged into the pool at the bottom of the slide, everyone was laughing, including Gavin. He turned to Scott and smiled, "Let's do it again, together!"

## **APPENDIX OF SAMPLE MENTOR TEXTS**

**Please feel free to replace sample narrative pieces in this packet with ones from your school – student written, teacher written or class shared pieces.**

## Gina Faces the Iron Dragon

Teacher Piece

By Mrs. Banton

"I see it! I see it!" Oliver yelled as he stretched his head out the open car window. Suddenly, a big blue track came into view and stretched so high up it seemed to disappear into the clouds. It was Millennium Force, one of the highest roller coasters at Cedar Point.

"And there's the Dragster and Gatekeeper and the Blue Streak," Gina said. Gina, a small, dark blonde girl with a contagious laugh, and her brother Oliver, knew each and every ride at Cedar Point by heart. They had been visiting the theme park every summer since they were babies. This would be Gina's tenth trip and she was determined to make it different than the others.

All of Gina's family members, including her 65-year-old grandmother, were coaster enthusiasts. They rode everything, even the highest and fastest ones. Gina, on the other hand, was much more cautious. The biggest coaster she'd tried so far was the Jr. Gemini. Embarrassingly, it was for kids much younger than 10. Gina's goal this year was to ride a real roller coaster and she had her eyes set on the Iron Dragon. She had gotten close once, but chickened out in line.

Meanwhile, as they unpacked their bags, Gina's family discussed the day's plans.

"Can we please start with the Power Tower, Mom?" Oliver begged.

"That's up to Dad, honey. I'm going to stick with Gina this afternoon and I'm pretty sure she doesn't want to do the Power Tower." Mom shot Gina a questioning look from across the room. It was a 200-foot straight drop. Gina wished she had the courage to say yes, but she just couldn't.

"Yeah, I don't think so," Gina said quietly.

"That's alright, sweetie. We'll do whatever you want to do."

Plans were made. Oliver, Gina's dad, and her grandmother would spend the afternoon on the big rides. Gina and her mom would head to the midway and ride some of the smaller rides.

An hour later, Gina and her mom arrived at the Midway. Gina looked around at the small rides but could only think about the rest of her family enjoying the big coasters. She saw the rides that spin and twirl. These kinds of rides still made Gina's stomach feel funny but in a good sort of way. When Gina spotted the Scrambler, she pointed it out and she and her mom got in line. While they were waiting, Gina was excited but quiet.

"You know honey," her mom said, "this is one of Grandma's favorite rides." Gina knew this. Her grandma loved the rides that spun around and around. They made a lot of people sick but her grandmother could ride them all day. "Yeah, when I was a kid," her mother continued, "I wouldn't go near these rides, or any rides for that matter. They all scared me. My mom was so cool because she would ride all of these rides all day, but I just couldn't get myself to do it." Gina was surprised to hear this. She always figured that her mom was a born rider and she couldn't believe there was a time when she was afraid.

“What happened?” Gina asked, “I mean, you love even the biggest rides now. Why did you change your mind?”

“Well,” her mom said, “my mom gave me some good advice.” She smiled a knowing smile when she said this. “Just ride. She told me that even if I was scared, I should try to ride just once. If I really hated it, I wouldn’t ever have to go on another one again. And of course, I didn’t hate it. I loved it! And that’s how it all started for me.”

Gina thought about this for a long while before she said, “Okay mom, let’s do it. Let’s go to the Iron Dragon.”

After a while, they turned the corner, the big red track loomed over Gina’s head. She stared for a moment and was then startled when the hanging coaster train barreled through. Gina and her mom got in line. They waited in the turnstiles for 25 minutes, listening to the rumbling track and the screaming passengers. Finally, it was their turn. Gina stepped into the car first and her mom behind her. The Cedar Point employee brought down the harness over her head and buckled her in. The train moved up slowly until it reached the top of the first hill. Gina kept her eyes fixed on the track. She didn’t dare look over the side at the ground below. At the top, there was a small pause and then down, down, down. Gina lost her breath and couldn’t scream. Her mouth made an O shape but not a sound escaped it. A second later, they were flying around a turn. Then another. Gina realized she was actually enjoying herself. It was exhilarating! After a few more dips and turns, the ride began to slow down. She looked over at her mother in the next seat and a big grin crept over her face.

“Whoa, that was awesome,” she said, “I want to ride it again!”

“You loved it? I’m so glad to hear that!” Mom replied still strapped into the coaster.

“Yes, it was way better than the Jr. Gemini!” Gina had finally ridden her first real roller coaster and she had actually enjoyed it. She was in the coaster enthusiast club now!

When the family returned to the room that afternoon, Gina told them the story of her first real coaster. They smiled as she recounted every detail. That night as she tried to fall asleep, Gina made plans for next year’s trip.

## The Haunted Trail

By Mrs. Cole

Teacher Piece

The hot sun was beating down on the pavement, almost radiating heat. The sun was beginning to disappear behind the horizon. Sara, Jill and Andy just got off the top thrill dragster ride at cedar point. But they weren't just there for the roller coasters.

"Wow! That was the best ride of the day!" shouted Sara after she got off the top thrill dragster ride. Her knees were shaking from the huge drops on the rollercoaster. Sara, Jill and Andy were at cedar point for hallo weekends. They were enjoying as many roller coasters as possible.

Then, Jill stated, "The haunted trail opens in 30 minutes. It is going to be awesome!" Immediately Sara thought to herself, how can I get out of this? I never should have agreed to come here. Sara started to shiver. She reluctantly followed her friends while walking at a snail's pace. "Hey guys, maybe we should check out the Raptor ride next." said Sara attempting to delay the haunted trail. Jill and Andy responded in unison, "NO WAY! It's Haunted Trail time!!!!"

All of a sudden, the path became dark and spooky. There were fluttering wings off in the distance. As Sara continued walking, she felt chills cover her body. Just then a layer of fog rolled in. Suddenly they couldn't see more than 4 feet in front of them. Dramatic organ music blared - sounding like a nightmare. There was a scarecrow with bloodshot eyes and blood on its hat. Sara thought to herself, I want to abort this mission immediately.

Next, Sara saw a giant tarantula pop out of the bushes. She started to scream, "get me out of here!!!!" Then a man dressed in all black started following Sara, Jill and Andy. He was breathing down their necks and making clicking noises with his nails. It just kept getting worse and worse. Things were happening that were worse than a nightmare.

Jill turned to Sara and said, "This is all just smoke and mirrors. It is all pretend. You can do this Sara!" Sara took a deep breath in and just kept repeating to herself, "You can do this, it's all fake." Then instead of walking timidly, Sara strutted through the haunted trail.

Sara finally reached the end of the haunted trail. She felt a wave of relief rush over her body. She was so happy that she made it through.

Finally, Sara saw the end of the haunted trail. The fog seemed to disappear and it became instantly brighter. Sara couldn't believe that she made it through. She turned to Jill and said, "WOW! I am so surprised that I did it! It didn't seem so scary once I believed in myself." Then Sara said, "How about we head to the Raptor ride now?" "Sure!" Jill and Andy shouted.

## First Day Nerves

Fin and mama snuggled on the couch, with blankets tucked neatly around them, making sure their toes were covered and their bodies were warm. They were watching Curious George just like they always did in the morning. But today, Fin wasn't paying attention to his favorite cartoon. He was thinking about school. Actually, he was worrying about school.

He knew his lazy care free days of summer vacation were almost over. School would be starting next week and Fin wasn't looking forward to it! "Mama," Fin whispered in his quiet voice. "Do I have to go to school next week? I just want to stay home with you." Mama sat up and looked into Fin's eyes and gently rubbed his hands. "Fin, school is a wonderful place where you'll meet new friends, learn new things and have lots of fun. Why don't you want to go to school? Last week you were excited."

There were so many things rushing through Fin's mind that he just didn't know where to start. "Well, a ... I... um... oh mama I just want to stay home." Tears welled up inside his eyes he buried his head into his mama's lap and just began to cry. Mama rubbed Fin's back for a while searching for the right words to say when suddenly she had an idea. "Fin, stay here! I'll be back I think I know just the thing to take your worries away."

Mama turned on the light in the attic being careful not to bump her head on the nails protruding from the ceiling. Carefully she pulled the tattered chest out of the darkness and opened the lid. The chest had been in her family for centuries and was filled with heirlooms that were hundreds of years old. Gently mama began to dig around looking for the tiny object to ease Fin's worries. "I know it's in here somewhere," mama panted as she frantically searched her hope chest. "Ah ha, found it!" she smiled. Running back down the stairs mama flew around the corner and snuggled up next to Fin on the couch again.

"Close your eyes and hold out your hand," mama said encouragingly. Fin knew mama was up to something and whenever she had acted this way in the past it had usually turned out good, so he trusted her. She gently laid the object in Fin's hand and told him to feel it without looking at it. Fin felt the smooth, flat object glide between his fingers. In one spot it felt like there was a divot. Then at the other end it felt rough like sand paper. Fin liked the size most of all. It was the perfect size to fit in the palm of his hand as he closed his fingers around it. "Are you ready to open your eyes?" Mama whispered. "Yes!" Fin blurted out.

A brilliant blue color sparkled from the reflection of the light. Clear specks kept blinding Fin's eyes as he looked at it more closely. He had never seen anything so unusual and couldn't find the right words to say. Fin was speechless! After a few quiet moments of looking, it over he quietly asked, "Is it magical?" "Well," mama said. That depends on you. It has worked wonders on our family for many generations. "Where is it from? How did they find it? Did it help you? How will it help me? Can I keep it? Is it mine?" A flood of questions kept pouring out of Fin's mouth. He still couldn't believe his eyes. The colors were so brilliant, almost blinding and the shape so unique.

Mama and Fin snuggled on the couch for several minutes as Fin continued to examine this unique new treasure his mom just placed in his hands. After a while he finally looked up at his mom and said, "Can I take this with me to school? I think it will make me feel more brave and then I won't be afraid to leave you anymore." "I was hoping you would say that," said his mama. Before she could say another word, Fin hurried off to his bedroom and put his new treasure in the secret pocket of his backpack where it would stay till he needed it.

### *The Hike by Erin*

One sunny afternoon, Kate slowly walked around her house packing her backpack. “Are you ready?” her dad yelled.

She moaned. “Almost.” The last thing she wanted to do was go on a boring hike with her dad. She would much rather stay home and watch TV. She reluctantly walked to the door. It was then that she realized she forgot her camera. *Oh, only half battery left, eh*, Kate thought. She grabbed the camera anyway and slowly walked to the car and got in the back seat.

They drove for what felt like an hour. Finally, they arrived. They got on a thin trail with big leafy trees and they began to walk. *Snip, snip* went Kate’s camera. “You’re going to run out of battery taking all those photos of yourself,” warned her dad.

“I will be fine,” Kate said. Kate was not paying attention to anything but her selfies. That was until she heard something in the bushes. The bush was shaking! “D-d-dad, what is that?” she stuttered.

“An amazing fox,” her dad said.

“WHAT!” she yelled, “I missed it.”

After that Kate decided that she didn’t want to miss anything so she stopped taking selfies. As they continued to hike, she noticed so many amazing things that she never would have noticed before. She saw flowers in every color! Some as red as fire, and others as bright yellow as the sun. She looked down to see a bright green fern shake, and then a fluffy bunny darted out of it. “Snip, snip” went her camera. She took so many amazing pictures. Pictures of nature, not herself!

“Wow these photos are beautiful,” her dad said.

“Thanks,” she said proudly.

They continued walking and taking photos. Kate saw many more amazing things like butterflies and an eagle. *Snip, snip* went her camera. She smiled from ear to ear. She was having the best time exploring.

Sadly, it became dusk and their hike was over. When they got home her mother was home from work.

“Oh, hi honey. I got you a surprise,” her mom said.

“What is it?” Kate asked.

“A photo album for all your photos,” her mom said. Kate grabbed the photo album and *zoomed* as fast as a race car up the stairs and to her room.

“THANKS,” she yelled downstairs. She slipped her photos into the pages and smiled. Then she got her paper and cut it into little squares and drew the things she missed, like the fox.

She had learned an important lesson today – Sometimes you need to put the technology down and notice the world around you. Kate proudly showed her parents her photo album, and as she did, she thought to herself, *I love nature and can’t wait to hike again tomorrow.*



## Too Short

*By Ned*

My name is Ben, I'm 9 years old, and I'm very short. I'm 5 inches shorter than my average height. I never get teased about it though. But one week, that is about to change.

It is Monday. I'm practicing football in my big backyard with Dad. I play on a football team called the Warriors and I have lots of friends there. But while I am practicing, Dad says something that makes my jaw drop all the way to the freshly mowed grass.

"I heard that the coach of the Warriors is not coaching anymore, so the Warriors are no longer a team. But as a replacement, there is a new team called the Knights. I would like you to join but it's up to you."

I don't want to join, but I also don't want to upset Dad. So, I say, "That sounds g...great dad. Heh, heh, heh."

"Wonderful!" exclaims Dad, "We can sign you up on Wednesday evening."

Before I know it, it is Friday-the day of the first practice. I slowly put on my gear and slump into the car

"Aren't you excited?!", Dad asks.

"Sure...D...Dad," I stammer. But I don't really mean it. When I get there, I drag my feet to join everyone else. My palms are sweating, and my knees are shaking like a rattlesnake's tail.

As were doing warm-up drills, I feel a tap on my shoulder. It is the school bully named Carson and he says, "Hey shrimp!"

"Yeah, hey shrimp!" says Carson's friend Derrek.

"Hahahaha!", laughs Carson's other friend named Sean.

"You know you're too short to be a wide receiver!" Carson says. So, I just decide to walk away, so I won't cry.

Later that day at practice, it is time for scrimmage. After the kickoff, I line up in my spot. The quarterback gets the ball and throws an easy pass to me. But I can't think of anything but the bullies, so the ball bounces right off of my fingertips.

"C'mon looser!" shouts the quarterback.

"Yeah!" says Carson. Before I know it, there is a huge crowd around me saying mean things. I start to feel salty tears streaming down my face and my face feels like a fire pit.

Finally, coach Burrow tells everyone to knock it off. He takes me off the field and replaces me with someone else named Ted.

After what feels like 10 years, Coach Burrow blows the final whistle of scrimmage. I grab my football bag and head to dad's car.

"How was practice son?" Dad asks as I get into the car.

"It was alright I guess," I said. As soon as I get home, I run to the safety of my bedroom and start to cry. About 10 minutes later, Dad comes in.

"What's wrong son? I heard you crying." says Dad.

"There was this group of guys who were teasing me because I'm short." I sob. "They said that I was too short to be a wide receiver, and they called me a shrimp."

Dad sighs, "Look, you love football. And you can't let those bullies take that love away from you. Besides, there are some good things about being small. For one thing, most of the time, the smaller you are, the faster you run. You have to stand up to those guys"

"Yeah, I guess I do run pretty fast," I say. "But what if after I stand up to them, they tease me even more?"

"At least they'll know how you feel." Dad says. I agree and thank Dad as he walks out of my room.

Two days later, it is the day of the first game. I put on my gear a little bit faster than I did on the first practice. I hop into the car, and Dad drives me to practice.

Once I get there, I leap out of the car, and run to join everyone else. I feel a tap on my shoulder. It's Carson and his two friends.

"Well, well, well. Lookie who's back. It's the cry baby shrimp." Derrek and Sean chuckle.

I remember what Dad had said a week ago. "Leave me alone!" I shout. "I love football and you can't take that love away from me! The three bullies look at me like I have worms coming out of my nose. They look at each other, then back at me. Carson opens his mouth to say something, but then closes it again. I run off, and Coach Burrow keeps me on the field the whole time.

We play a team called the Cougars. They score a touchdown, then another, then another. We were losing 0-21. But I have confident that we can turn things around. Today, I have something to prove to myself and my teammates.

Finally, in the 2nd half, we score! Now it's 7-21. We score again, 14-21. Then we score one more time, 21-21! Nobody scores again. It's time for overtime!

We win the coin toss, so we get the ball. I line up in my spot. The quarterback gets the ball. I sprint with all my might to the endzone. The quarterback throws the ball to me!

The next thing I know, I am in the air, sitting on my teammates' shoulders. I had caught the ball! I had done it! The fans are screaming like a bunch of monkeys in the wild. I feel like a hero. I am a hero. I walk to the sideline, and I see Carson.

"You may be a shrimp but you can sure run." He smiles.

"Thanks," I say. And for the first time, I don't feel too short. For anything.

Maisy and Maya were walking around Disney for a long time. Maya said "Can we please go on a roller coaster." Maisy replied "No way! You know that I hate rollercoasters." Maya suddenly stopped where all the rollercoasters were. Maya really wanted to get on one of the rollercoasters. It was the Mine Shack from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Maisy did not want to get on though because she was afraid of rollercoasters.

Just then Maya was so excited! Maya's face looked like a cartoon character whose smile is wider than their face. Then Maisy saw the look. The look she was fearing all day. The rollercoaster look. Maya really wanted to get on. Maisy's heart was racing so hard she thought it might burst out. Maya said "Let's go on the Mine Shack!" Maisy said in a really soft voice "Ok," And they walked to the line. Maisy looked back as little kids were getting in line. Maisy whispered to herself "Maisy you should not be scared you need to calm down."

Suddenly Maya and Maisy got seated in the first seat! Maisy was so scared. "I can't do this!" Maisy said. "Yes, you can!" Maya said. Maisy's face was so red and she had sweaty palms. She couldn't breathe. She could not do it, she had to get out. But it was too late because just then the rollercoaster started moving. Maya saw the look on Maisy's face. She knew she was scared. Maya held on to Maisy's hand and said "Let's go!" And down they went into the Mine Shack of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

After that Maisy was going crazy! Maisy was shifting everywhere like she got the worst job in America. Maya said "It is ok Maisy, you got this." It kept going and going and going. Finally, Maisy was brave enough to put her hands up. "There you go Maisy!" Maya said cheerfully. Maya was so proud of her friend. Maisy was proud of herself.

Once Maisy put her hands up, she felt like she was in a dream. It was so hot but the breeze cooled her down. Maisy opened her eyes and said "This is great!" Maya replied back and said "I know!" Maisy was so happy she got on. All of those butterflies flew out of her stomach. Maisy screamed, "This is awesome!"

Just then the rollercoaster ended and Maisy and Maya got off with a smile on their faces. The smile Maya had when she saw the Mine Shack. Maya kept talking on the way back from the Mine Shack. Maya said things like 'I can't believe you did it!' or "Maisy you did it!" and "Maisy you faced your fear isn't that awesome!" Maisy was thinking that to herself. All she knows now is to always believe in herself.

## The Tryouts of Terror

By Sofie

"Today's the day!" I yelled as I raced down the stairs. Today was the day I had been waiting months for! Today was the day of the school musical tryouts. I had been practicing for the part of Madison Braveheart for a long time and was sure I would get the part, but deep down I was worried that I might fail.

I yelled bye to my mom and I ran onto the bus. "Bye sweetie, get the part!" she yelled back smiling proudly at me. Then the bus doors closed and I sat down in the front.

A little while later a sassy girl wearing a pink dress and a lot of makeup walked up to me and said, "You're trying out for the play? What part do you want to get?"

"I want to get the part of Madison Braveheart," I said proudly

"Ha!" she laughed, "Everyone knows I get all the main roles in the plays. You don't stand a chance!"

"You don't know that!" I yelled, feeling tears rolling down my cheeks.

"Actors don't cry, little baby" she said, laughing even harder than before.

I couldn't take it anymore. I ran to the back of the bus and slumped down next to the window, tears streaming down my face. *Was I really that bad? Would I not get the part and just make a fool of myself?* Thoughts raced around in my mind like a tornado, a tornado that I wished would disappear.

When we arrived at the school, I ran off the bus and into the school, I walked to the theater room doors but I didn't go in. *If I did, would I make a fool of myself? Or would I mess up and get ordered off the stage?* Just then a girl spotted me and ran over to me, "I saw what happened on the bus, and I think that **you'll** get the part." she said smiling. "And even if you don't, I'll bet anything you'll get the second-best part." Then she walked through the theater doors and I decided to follow.

She and I sat down next to each other and watched as people climbed onto the stage to sing. Suddenly I saw the girl who had bullied me proudly climb onto the stage smiling. The lights dimmed and as she began to sing. I knew that I wouldn't get the part, her voice was one of the prettiest I had ever heard. Finally, after what seemed like forever, she climbed off the stage and I heard the judge call my name but I didn't move. I just lowered my head down hoping they would think I was absent. But I felt someone grab my hand and yank me up, it was the girl from the hallway. She pulled me to the stage steps, "You got this, now go up there and get the part."

I slowly walked up the stairs and onto the stage, I turned and faced the audience. Everyone was silent, the lights dimmed. I took a deep breath and sang the best that I could, finding the notes and pulling them from my heart. The judges picked up their pens and wrote the score. "You may sit down" one of them said.

I found my seat and waited, for what felt like hours. Finally, they started to announce the rolls. "And the person playing Madison Braveheart is... Julie!"







“That's you!” the girl from the hallway yelled and everyone clapped, everyone except the girl from the bus. She stomped up the aisle glaring at me and left the theater.

I had done it. I had gotten the part, and it was all because of the girl from the hallway, if it wasn't for her, I would have never even walked into the theater. I ran over to her, “Hey, I just wanted to say thanks, you helped me a lot today” I said smiling at her.




She smiled back and said, “Your welcome, I just couldn't let you hide your talent, and by the way, my names Lilly.” then she waved and said bye.

“See you at rehearsal Lilly.” I yelled running out of the theater. When I got home that night I ran to my room and jumped on my bed, feeling happier than ever. I didn't fail to get the part, I got it.

# RESOURCES

Narrative	Opinion	Information
Introduction	Introduction	Introduction
 Hook the reader  Introduce the Storyline	 Hook the reader  Introduce the Opinion	 Hook the reader  Introduce the Topic

Body	Body	Body
 <div>Event</div> <div>Event</div> <div>Event</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reason</li> <li>• Reason</li> <li>• Reason</li> </ul>	<div>1. Subtopic</div> <div>2. Subtopic</div> <div>3. Subtopic</div>

Ending/Conclusion	Ending/Conclusion	Ending/Conclusion
 Conclude Story	 Restate Opinion	 Restate Topic

# Details



*** Use your 5 senses to build your details**



# Details



* Use your 5 senses to build your details

# Details



* Use your 5 senses to build your details

# Details



* Use your 5 senses to build your details

# Details



* Use your 5 senses to build your details

## Character's Actions

How a character  
moves from one  
place to another



What a character is  
doing with his/her  
hands



What a character is  
doing with his/her  
face



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