

The “Write” Stuff: Strategies and Conventions for Imaginative Writing

Grade Level: Fifth Grade

Written by: Cyndie Stanley and Rebecca Welch, Jefferson Academy, Broomfield, CO

Length of Unit: Five lessons (the first four lessons can be done in 45- minute time blocks, the fifth lesson can be done over five 45- minute time blocks)

I. ABSTRACT

The focus of this fifth grade unit is imaginative writing while integrating content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence* in fifth grade literature, history, and science. Students will develop an understanding of the writing process while learning strategies and conventions involved in forms of imaginative writing. The imaginative writing lessons will address the creation of different story elements to produce and effectively written story. Writing topics will provide a means by which teachers can review and reinforce Core Knowledge content areas.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives (Jefferson County, CO Language Arts Content Standard: JCLAS)

1. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication. (JCLAS 3,5)
2. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing. (JCLAS 8)

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. Imaginative writing (page 109)
2. Balance creativity and correct use of conventions in writing (page 109)

C. Skill Objectives

1. Students will produce an effectively written story. (JCLAS 3.3)
2. Students will explore and express imaginative ideas creatively. (JCLAS 3.4)
3. Students will convey meaning using a variety of literary devices, conventions, and strategies. (JCLAS 3.5)
4. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly. (JCLAS 5.1)
5. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing. (JCLAS 5.2)
6. Students will examine and improve their writing. (JCLAS 8.1, 8.2)

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

A. For Teachers

1. Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. *Writers Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners*. Burlington, WI: Write Source Educational Publishing House, 1994. 0-939045-93-1 (soft cover)

2. *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6
 3. *Writer's Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996. 0-13-828773-2
- B. For Students
1. Students will have produced written work with a beginning, middle, and end. (Grade 3)
 2. Students will have made reasonable judgments about what to include in their written work. (Grade 3)
 3. Students will understand the literary terms plot and setting. (Grade 4)
 4. Students will have produced a variety of types of writing – with a coherent structure with guidance. (Grade 4)
 5. Students will have acquired the skills necessary for competent spelling, and usage of a dictionary to check and correct words that present difficulty. (Grade 4)
 6. Students will have the understanding of how to use a topic sentence, how to develop a paragraph with examples and details, as well as the mechanics of the writing process. (Grade 4)

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. *Writers Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners*. Burlington, WI: Write Source Educational Publishing House, 1994. 0-939045-93-1 (soft cover)
- B. *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6
- C. *Writer's Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996. 0-13-828773-2

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Point of View

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Imaginative writing
 - b. Balance creativity and correct use of conventions in writing
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will explore and express imaginative ideas creatively.
 - b. Students will convey meaning using a variety of literary devices, conventions, and strategies.
 - c. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.

- d. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - e. Students will examine and improve their writing.
- B. *Materials*
- 1. Overhead projector
 - 2. Characteristics of First-Person Point of View – as an overhead transparency (Appendix A{1})
 - 3. Characteristics of First-Person Point of View – one per student (Appendix A{1})
 - 4. Characteristics of Third-Person Point of View – as an overhead transparency (Appendix A{2})
 - 5. Characteristics of Third- Person Point of View – one per student (Appendix A{2})
 - 6. Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix A{3})
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- 1. Point of View – who is telling the story
 - 2. First-Person – one of the characters is telling the story
 - 3. Third-Person – someone outside of the story is telling it
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- 1. Go over the Key Vocabulary with the students on the board.
 - 2. Using the overhead of Appendix A(1) have a volunteer read it aloud. Make sure to keep the characteristics of first person hidden.
 - 3. Ask the students who is narrating or telling this part of the story. If necessary, ask them whether the narrator is a character in the story or not, and have them look at the bold typed pronouns.
 - 4. Explain that this is written from a first person point of view.
 - 5. Show students the characteristics of first person section of the overhead.
 - 6. Go over when first person is a good choice with the students. Stress to students that the first person is often easier for young writers because it lends itself readily to personal experiences.
 - 7. Also stress that the author's powers are restricted in the first person. The author cannot know, for example, what another character is thinking unless that character tells the author. Further, the author cannot describe and event unless he or she has experiences it or heard about it.
 - 8. Hand out student copies of Appendix A(1).
 - 9. Repeat steps two through seven using the third person overhead and handouts (Appendix A{2}).
 - 10. When going over when third person is a good choice with students, stress that in the third person, the author takes a position outside the story, relating the events as an observer. The author can choose how much information he or she will tell. Caution students that this can be a problem if they tell too much information. Their material then becomes burdensome and they lose control of their stories.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
- 1. Using the Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix A{3}), or any other text, have students find examples of first and third

person point of view. List these on the board under the appropriate titles. Reinforce the characteristics of both first and third person point of view by having the students explain why they decided the text was first or third person.

2. Using the Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix A{3}), have students rewrite a selected passage from a first person view point to a third person view point or rewrite a selected passage from a third person view point to a first person viewpoint.

Lesson Two: Characterization

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Imaginative writing
 - b. Balance creativity and correct use of conventions in writing
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will explore and express imaginative ideas creatively.
 - b. Students will convey meaning using a variety of literary devices, conventions, and strategies.
 - c. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.
 - d. Students will follow conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - e. Students will examine and improve their writing.

B. *Materials*

1. Overhead projector
2. Techniques of Characterization – one per student (Appendix B{1})
3. Techniques of Characterization – as an overhead transparency (Appendix B{1})
4. Characterization Worksheet – one per student (Appendix B{2})
5. Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix B{3})

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Characterization – what your characters are like by telling what they do, say, think, and feel
2. Character – person in a story

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Go over the Key Vocabulary with the students on the board.
2. Ask students to recall fictional characters with the following character traits: courageous, adventurous, kind, generous, funny. List these headings on the board.
3. Under each heading, put student responses of characters and why they fit under the heading.

4. Using the overhead Techniques of Characterization (Appendix B{1}), point out that authors create characters with specific traits by showing readers what the characters do, say, think, and feel. They also show how other characters react to them.
 5. Also, point out that characters who do, say, think, and feel things like real people are interesting, lifelike characters. The reader must be able to form individual pictures and impressions of each character.
 6. Finish reading all of the listed techniques of characterization to the students.
 7. Pass out the Techniques of Characterization (Appendix B{1}) to each student. Tell the students that these are for them to refer back to when dealing with characterization.
 8. Pass out the Characterization Worksheet to students (Appendix B{2}).
 9. Using the Characterization Worksheet (Appendix B{2}), have students fill in the worksheet with their personal information. Explain that writers paint visual pictures of their characters in the minds of their readers and that they should use as much detail as possible. When everyone is finished, collect the papers and read a few to the class.
 10. Let the class guess who fits the characterization.
 11. You could use the Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix B{3}) for characterization and have students give one trait that describes the character and then details in the text/story that show this.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Collect the Characterization Worksheets from the students.

Lesson Three: Setting

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Imaginative writing
 - b. Balance creativity and correct use of conventions in writing
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will explore and express imaginative ideas creatively.
 - b. Students will convey meaning using a variety of literary devices, conventions, and strategies.
 - c. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.
 - d. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - e. Students will examine and improve their writing.

B. *Materials*

1. Overhead projector

2. Elements of Setting – as an overhead transparency (Appendix C{1})
 3. Elements of Setting – one per student (Appendix C{1})
 4. Setting Worksheet – one per student (Appendix C{2})
 5. Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix C{3})
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Setting – the time and place in which events of the story occur
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Review Key Vocabulary with students on the board. They should remember this from fourth grade.
 2. Ask students to recall and then write down a description of when and where a favorite story takes place. Suggest that they include any details about the time and place that they can recall.
 3. Have several students share their descriptions. Point out that what the students have described is the setting of the story.
 4. Using the overhead transparency Elements of Setting (Appendix C{1}), go over the elements with the students. Have students check their own written settings for these elements.
 5. Pass out the Elements of Setting (Appendix C{1}) to each student. Tell the students that these are for them to refer back to when dealing with setting.
 6. Pass out the Setting Worksheet (Appendix C{2}) to each student.
 7. Using the Setting Worksheet (Appendix C{2}), have students give examples of settings they have read about or ones they want to write about. (You could use Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix C{3})).
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Collect the Setting Worksheets from the students.

Lesson Four: Plot

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Imaginative writing
 - b. Balance creativity and correct use of conventions in writing
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will explore and express imaginative ideas creatively.
 - b. Students will convey meaning using a variety of literary devices, conventions, and strategies.
 - c. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.
 - d. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.

- e. Students will examine and improve their writing.
- B. *Materials*
1. Overhead projector
 2. Elements of Plot (Teacher) – as an overhead transparency (Appendix D{1})
 3. Elements of Plot (Student) – one per student (Appendix D{2})
 4. Plot Worksheet – one per student (Appendix D{3})
 5. Plot line diagram for teacher only (Appendix D{4})
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Plot – the action or chain of events in a story from beginning to end
 2. Plot line – diagram that shows the action in the story
 3. Climax – the turning point in the action of a story
 4. Resolution – end of the story when the problems are resolved
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Go over the Key Vocabulary with students on the board.
 2. Using the overhead of Elements of Plot –Teacher (Appendix D{1}), go over the development of plot in a story. Remember this should be review from fourth grade.
 3. Draw an unlabeled plot line on the board. See Appendix D(4) for example of plot line.
 4. Invite the students to fill this out orally together from the example just given on the overhead. Ask them to tell about the problem the character had, how they struggled with it, how they solved it, and how the story ended.
 5. As students answer each question, add their responses to the appropriate spot on the plot line diagram. See Appendix D(4) for locations.
 6. When the plot line is completed, encourage students to tell where the highest point in the story occurred. Ask them if they remember what this kind of diagram is called. If no one can provide the answer, point out that it is the climax.
 7. Pass out Elements of Plot – Student (Appendix D{2}) to each student. Tell the students that these are for them to refer back to when dealing with plot.
 8. Read over the handout with the students. Explain to the students that they will use this sheet to help them fill out the Plot Worksheet. (Appendix D{3}).
 9. Pass out the Plot Worksheet (Appendix D{3}) to each student. Have the students fill the worksheet out for a story they have read or one they would like to write about. (The only Core Knowledge content that works well with this is from the literature section, any of the short stories listed.)
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Collect the plot worksheets form the students.

Lesson Five: Story Structure – Putting It All Together

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Imaginative writing
 - b. Balance creativity and correct use of conventions in writing
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will explore and express imaginative ideas creatively.
 - b. Students will convey meaning using a variety of literary devices, conventions, and strategies.
 - c. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.
 - d. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - e. Students will examine and improve their writing.
 - f. Students will produce an effectively written story.

B. *Materials*

1. Overhead projector
2. Imaginative Writing Outline – as an overhead transparency (Appendix E{1})
3. Imaginative Writing Outline – one per student (Appendix E{1})
4. Imaginative Writing Checklist – one per student (Appendix E{2})
5. Imaginative Writing Grading Sheet – one per student (Appendix E{3})
6. The Basic Structure of Stories – background for teacher (Appendix E{4})
7. Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations (Appendix E{5})

C. *Key Vocabulary*

None

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Using the overhead of Imaginative Writing Outline (Appendix E{1}), go over with students the outline. Explain that the outline is a blueprint. Also, explain that the outline promotes thinking through the details and situations of a story before writing.
2. Emphasize that outlines should be a prewriting activity of every story.
3. Be sure to explain to your students that outlines are flexible. A story can change as it is written. Sometimes the final version of a story will be quite different from its original outline.
4. Read over each part of the outline to students answering any questions they may have. (Refer to Basic Structure of Stories – Appendix E{4} for more in depth descriptions of story parts.)
5. Pass out copies of Imaginative Writing Outline (Appendix E{1}) to each student. Tell students that these are for them to refer to when writing a story.

6. Have students then begin their first story by making an outline using the Imaginative Writing Outline as their guide. (You could use one of the Core Knowledge Content Area Recommendations – Appendix E{5})
 7. Pass out copies of Imaginative Writing Checklist (Appendix E{2}) to each student. Explain to them that they will use this checklist after they write their rough drafts of their stories. This checklist is to help them examine and improve their writing before a final copy is made.
 8. Using the Imaginative Writing Grading Sheet (Appendix E{3}), fill out one for each student’s story.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Collecting and grading the student’s stories using the Imaginative Writing Grading Sheet (Appendix E{3}).

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. Give students the opportunity to share their stories with classmates, other grades, and parents at an Author’s Tea. You might need to do more than one depending on the length of the stories.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendices A(1-3): all dealing with point of view
- B. Appendices B(1-3): all dealing with characterization
- C. Appendices C(1-3): all dealing with setting
- D. Appendices D(1-4): all dealing with plot
- E. Appendices E(1-5): all dealing with putting a story together

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. A Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. *Writers Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners*. Burlington, WI: Write Source Educational Publishing House, 1994. 0-939045-93-1 (soft cover)
- B. *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6
- C. *Writer’s Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996. 0-13-828773-2

APPENDIX A(1) – THE WRITE STUFF

FIRST PERSON

I walked up to Nat, Aldo, Jimmy, and Ben and said, “Can somebody teach **me** to ride?”

“Why don’t you stay indoors and learn to cook and sew and wash clothes?” Jimmy said.

I grinned. “I know all that already,” I said...”Can you cook and sew and wash clothes, Jimmy? All I want is to learn to ride. I want you to teach **me**,”...

Taken from *Writer’s Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996. 0-13-828773-2

Characteristics of First-Person Point of View

- The story is told by a character in the story.
- The narrator uses the first-person pronouns *I, me, my, we, us, and our*.
- The story gives the thoughts and feelings of only one character – the one who is narrating.

First-Person Point of View is a Good Choice if

- you want to go into detail about the thoughts and feelings of one character
- you want to create a strong character with an interesting voice to narrate your story

Taken from *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6

APPENDIX A(2) – THE WRITE STUFF

THIRD PERSON

After school, Andre did not catch the bus home. Instead he took a bus the other way, into town.... When he got to the power station he was faced with an enormous high fence of iron staves with spiked tops and a tall steel gate, locked fast....

Andre's heart was pounding good and fast. He could hear the humming sound strongly and it seemed to come from everywhere, not so much a sound as a feeling under his feet.

Taken from *Writer's Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996. 0-13-828773-2

Characteristics of Third-Person Point of View

- The story is told by an outside observer or character who is not involved in the story.
- The narrator uses the third-person pronouns *he*, *she*, *they*, *him*, *her*, and *them*.
- The narrator may reveal the thoughts and feelings of one or more of the characters, or simply report the characters' speech and actions.

Third-Person Point of View is a Good Choice if

- you want to describe the thoughts and feelings of more than one character
- you do not want your narrator to be one of the characters

Taken from *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6

APPENDIX A(3) – THE WRITE STUFF

**CORE KNOWLEDGE CONTENT AREA
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Literature

The excerpt “The Red Headed League” found in E.D Hirsch’s *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 14 – 18

The excerpt “The adventures of Don Quixote” found in E.D Hirsch’s *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 19 – 23

History

Chief Joseph’s “I will fight no more forever” found in E.D Hirsch’s *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 45 – 46

Abraham Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” found in E.D Hirsch’s *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 46 – 47

Science

The stories of Scientists found in E.D Hirsch’s *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 384 – 386. You could look for autobiographies of Scientists also.

**Listed selections are simply recommendations that lend themselves to show point of view. Any selection of reading can be adapted to emphasize point of view.

APPENDIX B(1) – THE WRITE STUFF

TECHNIQUES OF CHARACTERIZATION

Techniques of Characterization

- Show the way the character acts
- Show what the character says and how she or he says it
- Show what the character is thinking
- Show how the character feels
- Show what other characters say and think about her or him

Taken from *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6

APPENDIX B(2) – THE WRITE STUFF

CHARACTERIZATION WORKSHEET

Name _____

List the following information about your character:

Name: _____

Age: _____

Color hair: _____

Color eyes: _____

Height: _____

Weight: _____

Clothing: _____

Positive traits: _____

Negative traits: _____

Background: _____

Goals: _____

Special traits (beauty, great strength, scars, handicaps, etc.): _____

Additional notes: _____

APPENDIX B(3) – THE WRITE STUFF

**CORE KNOWLEDGE CONTENT AREA
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Literature

Any of the stories listed in the *Core Knowledge Sequence* page 110.

The drama *Mid Summer Night's Dream* listed in the *Core Knowledge Sequence* page 111.

History

Columbus found in E.D Hirsch's *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 120 – 123.

Da Gama and Cabral found in E.D Hirsch's *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 124 – 125.

Henry VIII found in E.D Hirsch's *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 142 – 143.

Science

Science Biographies found in E.D Hirsch's *What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know*, pages 384 – 386.

**Listed selections are simply recommendations that lend themselves to characterization. Any selection of reading can be adapted to emphasize characterization.

APPENDIX C(1) – THE WRITE STUFF

ELEMENTS OF SETTING

These are the elements to remember about the setting of a story:

- The setting of a story is when the events occur. A story can be set in the past, the present, or the future. Sometimes the setting can be very specific, such as “next Saturday at midnight.”
- The setting of a story is also where the events take place. The setting may be general, such as the North, or specific, such as “the parking lot at the Jiffy Mart.”
- A story may include more than one setting. If it does, the writer has to let the reader know about each new setting.
- A writer makes the setting interesting for the reader by describing how a place looks, sounds, feels, and smells.

Taken from *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6

SETTING WORKSHEET

Name _____

Selection: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Details about the setting (Don't forget to include how it looks, sounds, feels, and smells.) _____

Selection: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Details about the setting (Don't forget to include how it looks, sounds, feels, and smells.) _____

APPENDIX C(2), PAGE 2 – THE WRITE STUFF

Selection: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Details about the setting (Don't forget to include how it looks, sounds, feels, and smells.) _____

APPENDIX C(3) – THE WRITE STUFF

**CORE KNOWLEDGE CONTENT AREA
RECOMMENDATIONS**

History

Describe the setting for a character listening to Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address

Describe the setting for a character on the European Explorers ships

Describe the setting for a character on the pioneer wagon trains

Science

Describe the setting for a character inside a cell

Describe the setting for a bee inside a flower

Describe the setting for an electron inside an atom

**Listed selections are simply recommendations that lend themselves to setting. Any selection of reading can be adapted to emphasize setting.

APPENDIX D(1) – THE WRITE STUFF

ELEMENTS OF PLOT (TEACHER)

Elements of Plot

- Every good story has a beginning, middle, and an end.
- A problem that one or more main characters have is introduced at the beginning of the story.
Greta is walking in the fog in her hometown. She discovers a secret world—a fishing village called Blue Cove that appears only when it is foggy.
- In the middle of the story, the characters go through one or more conflicts as they try to solve the problem. Excitement occurs when the conflicts take place.

Greta befriends a girl in her secret world, but her new friend’s mother reminds her that every time the sun comes out, the secret fishing village disappears. When Greta tells her father of her secret world, he hints that he has been there too. It will soon be her twelfth birthday, and Greta hopes that it will be a foggy day.

- The highest point of interest in the story takes place when the problem begins to be resolved. This is called the climax.

It is a sunny day on Greta’s twelfth birthday, but toward evening it turns foggy and Greta returns to her secret world. There, her friend’s mother gives her a kitten and wishes her well in the coming years. Greta realizes she will never return to Blue Cove.

- After the climax, the resolution occurs. The resolution finishes telling how the problem is solved.

Greta walks sadly from her secret world and meets her father who is waiting for her. He shows her a little knife he received on his twelfth birthday in the secret world.

Taken from *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6

APPENDIX D(2) – THE WRITE STUFF

ELEMENTS OF PLOT (STUDENT)

Elements of Plot

- Every good story has a beginning, middle, and an end.
- A problem that one or more main characters have is introduced at the beginning of the story.
- In the middle of the story, the characters go through one or more conflicts as they try to solve the problem. Excitement occurs when the conflicts take place.
- The highest point of interest in the story takes place when the problem begins to be resolved. This is called the climax.
- After the climax comes the conclusion. The conclusion finishes telling how the problem is solved.

Taken from *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6

APPENDIX D(3) – THE WRITE STUFF

PLOT WORKSHEET

Name _____

Characters: _____

Main Problem or Conflict: _____

Climax: _____

What happens to the problem:

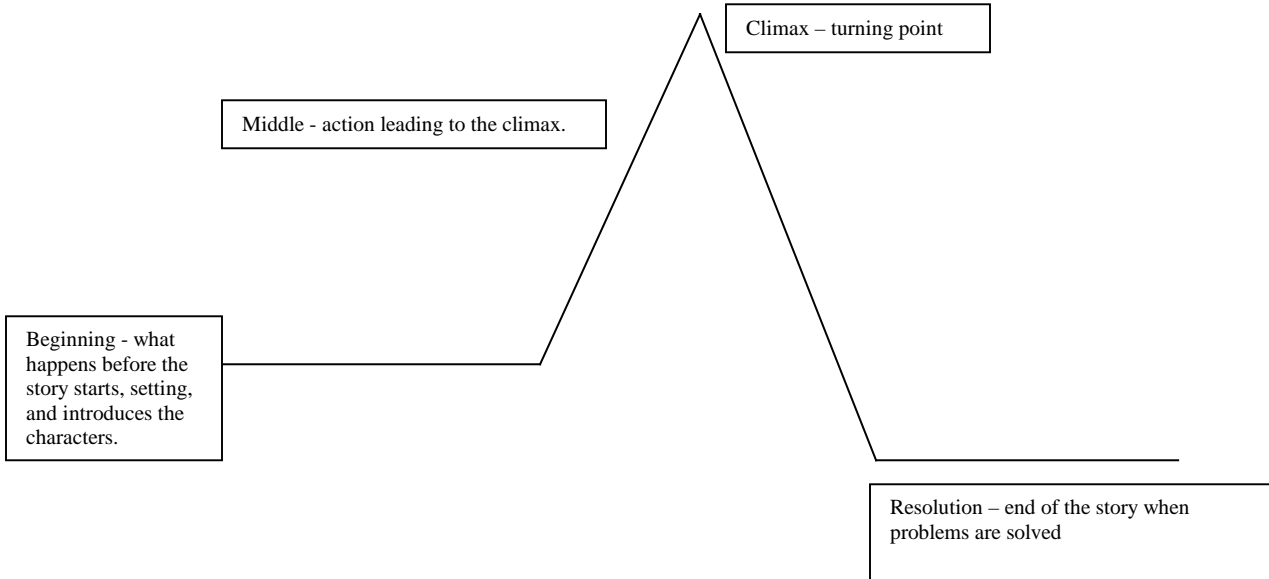
At the beginning? _____

In the middle? _____

At the end? _____

APPENDIX D(4) – THE WRITE STUFF

PLOT LINE DIAGRAM



APPENDIX E(1) – THE WRITE STUFF

IMAGINATIVE WRITING OUTLINE

Imaginative Writing Outline

TITLE

A. Opening

1. Main characters (include names, ages, brief descriptions)
2. Description of scene (setting, time)
3. Problem(s) the characters have
4. Action caused by the problem
5. Result of the action

B. Middle Scenes

1. Scene One
 - a. Characters
 - b. Description of scene
 - c. Problem the characters have
 - d. Action caused by the problem
 - e. Result of the action

2. Scene Two
(The number of middle scenes depends on the length of the story.)

C. Climax

1. Characters
2. Description of scene
3. Problem the characters have
4. Action caused by the problem
5. Result of the action; solution of the problem

D. Ending

1. Characters
2. Action

APPENDIX E(2) – THE WRITE STUFF

IMAGINATIVE WRITING CHECKLIST

- | Yes | No | |
|-----|-----|--|
| ___ | ___ | The title fits my story. |
| ___ | ___ | The beginning is interesting; my readers will want to read on. |
| ___ | ___ | I described my characters – their appearance and personality. |
| ___ | ___ | The point of view is the same throughout. |
| ___ | ___ | There is a central problem. |
| ___ | ___ | The problem is solved. |
| ___ | ___ | I have a good conclusion to my story. |
| ___ | ___ | I am proud of my story. It reflects my best effort. |
| ___ | ___ | My ideas are in logical order. |
| ___ | ___ | My sentences are clear and to the point. |
| ___ | ___ | My piece would be better if I added more details. |
| ___ | ___ | My piece would be better if I used more descriptive words. |
| ___ | ___ | I have used capitalization rules correctly. |
| ___ | ___ | I have used correct spelling. |
| ___ | ___ | I have used commas, periods, and other punctuation correctly. |

If you answered “no” to any of the above checklist items, you need to revise your writing. Do not complete your final draft until you are able to answer “yes” to all checklist items.

APPENDIX E(3) – THE WRITE STUFF

IMAGINATIVE WRITING GRADING SHEET

Imaginative Writing Grading Sheet

Format/Process

1. Used the Imaginative Writing Outline	1	2	3	4	5
2. Used colorful, interesting words	1	2	3	4	5
3. Neat, easy to read, well formed	1	2	3	4	5
4. Followed directions on this assignment	1	2	3	4	5
5. Title is appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
6. Includes an interesting beginning	1	2	3	4	5
7. Includes a well developed middle	1	2	3	4	5
8. Includes a good conclusion	1	2	3	4	5

Total Format/Process: _____

Content of Piece

1. Characters are described fully	1	2	3	4	5
2. Settings have good details	1	2	3	4	5
3. Problem is clear	1	2	3	4	5
4. Plot is well developed	1	2	3	4	5
5. Sentences are clear and focused	1	2	3	4	5
6. Good flow of ideas or sequence	1	2	3	4	5

Total Content: _____

Mechanics

1. The point of view is the same throughout	1	2	3	4	5
2. End marks and capitals are correct	1	2	3	4	5
3. Complete sentences	1	2	3	4	5
4. Other punctuation marks are correct	1	2	3	4	5
5. Variety of sentences in paragraphs	1	2	3	4	5
6. Spelling is correct	1	2	3	4	5

Total Mechanics: _____

Total Paper _____/100

Letter Grade _____

BASIC STRUCTURE OF STORIES

Every story can be divided into four main parts: opening, middle, climax, and end. These parts are composed of scenes. For students to write good stories they need to know what goes into them.

The Opening

The opening of any story must capture the reader's attention. If it does not, it is unlikely that the reader will finish the story. Explain to your students that one of the easiest ways to seize the interest of their readers is to introduce the main characters and show them facing a problem or challenge. Tell your children to indicate the ages of their characters and offer brief descriptions, for this helps to bring their characters to life, making them seem like real people. The time and place that the story occurs should also be indicated in the opening. This helps the reader to visualize the action. Does the story take place in the past, present, or future? Does it take place in a log cabin, a school, or on a moon base? Further, the mood of the story should be set. Is the story humorous, serious, or frightening? Finally, the opening should lead smoothly into the next scene. Emphasize to your children that the purpose of any beginning is to make the reader want to find out what is going to happen next.

The Middle

In the middle of the story, the main characters are developed. We learn more about them and the problem they face is expanded and explained. The characters try to solve the problem, but the problem gets worse because stumbling blocks keep getting in the way. This is how suspense is built into a story. The middle of a story can consist of many scenes.

The Climax

As things seem to be hopeless for the characters, the story comes to its climax. This is where the characters solve their problem. Students frequently have difficulty with climaxes, because they do not appreciate the essential ingredients. For a climax to be satisfying to the reader, the problem cannot be solved through coincidence or a lucky accident. A good wizard who has not been mentioned in the story cannot suddenly appear and save the main characters from the trap the evil prince has sprung. Nor can the school bully abruptly become the friend of the children he has threatened simply because he has decided to change his ways. These types of climaxes leave the reader frustrated and dissatisfied. The story crumbles.

For a climax to work, the problem must be solved in some way through the resources of the main character. The main character must do something to force the climax. Further, the main character must realize what he or she has done, and from this understanding comes personal growth. The main character changes, he or she has learned something from the experience. Students often have trouble grasping this. While some students will continue to have trouble here, the concept should be introduced for those who are able to understand.

The story, in which there is no change, no growth, leaves the reader with a letdown feeling. The reader is cheated.

APPENDIX E(4), PAGE 2 – THE WRITE STUFF

The End

Following the climax is the ending of a story. The ending should be brief. While the climax is the dramatic scene where the problem is resolved, the ending is the aftermath in which all the loose ends are tied up. The young hero saves the princess in the climax, and they are shown to live happily ever after in the ending.

The degree to which you explain the importance of the opening, middle, climax, and end of stories will depend on the abilities of your children. For some, just being aware that a story must have these four parts will be sufficient. For advanced students, it might be appropriate to go into each section with great detail. A basic understanding of the major parts of stories is helpful to children for it encourages them to focus their efforts on one section at a time, making the overall writing of the composition easier.

APPENDIX E(5) – THE WRITE STUFF

**CORE KNOWLEDGE CONTENT AREA
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Literature

Write a sequel to the *Secret Garden*, beginning with when the father finds the children playing in the garden and his son walking.

Write a story using the Saying “Catch forty-winks” to convey its meaning.

History

Write a story about being Abraham Lincoln, preparing for and standing in front of all the people to give the Gettysburg Address. Be sure to include the address in your story.

Write a story about being an early explorer. Talk about where you discovered and any hardships that you face.

Science

Pretend you are suddenly miniaturized and transported into a cell. Write a story about what you find there. (The parts of a cell)

Pretend you are a seed. Write a story about what happens to you as you develop into a flower. Don't forget to name the parts.

**Listed selections are simply recommendations that lend themselves to writing a story. Any selection of reading can be adapted to emphasize a writing prompt for a story.