

# Appendix of Resources



## **Unit of Study:** *Small Moments that Matter – Personal Narrative*

Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District  
Elementary Language Arts Department, Grades 2, 3, & 4

*Updated June 2012 with Crunchtime Strategies for STAAR*

# Your Story Matters Slide Show

## Grade 2



# *Your Story Matters Slide Show (cont.)*

## **Grade 4**



# Literature Suggestions

In this unit, it is especially important to choose engaging, high-quality mentor texts for children to study. Ideally, the texts chosen would represent first-person narrative texts; however, teachers may integrate an *occasional* fictional story explaining that although the text is really fiction, it is written as a narrative and can therefore demonstrate the narrative craft.

The list below represents a sampling of narrative texts. These texts are either written in the first-person narrative style or are narrative texts that depict childhood experiences. Teachers may certainly venture away from this list. We encourage teachers to look to familiar texts that were used as read-alouds during the Launching Writing Workshop. We encourage teachers to find texts that meet the unique needs and interests of the students in their classrooms.

Text	Author
<i>Fireflies</i>	Brinckloe, Julie (Grade 2)
<i>The Memory Box</i>	Bahr, Mary
<i>The Memory String</i>	Bunting, Eve
<i>The Wall</i>	Bunting, Eve
<i>Shortcut</i>	Crews, Donald
<i>Boy</i>	Dahl, Roald
<i>Owl Moon</i>	Fox, Mem
<i>Wilfrid Gordon MacDonald Partridge</i>	Fox, Mem
<i>Marshfield Dreams</i>	Fletcher, Ralph
<i>Family Pictures</i>	Garza, Carmen Lomas
<i>In My Family</i>	Garza, Carmen Lomas
<i>She Come Bringing Me That Little Baby Girl</i>	Greenfield, Eloise
<i>Tight Times</i>	Hazen, Barbara Shook
<i>Come On, Rain!</i>	Hesse, Karen
<i>Beekeepers</i>	High, Linda Oatman
<i>Camping</i>	Hundal, Nancy
<i>Saturdays and Teacakes</i>	Laminack, Lester (Grade 4)
<i>The Ugly Vegetables</i>	Lin, Grace
<i>"Maybe a Fight" (from Hey World, Here I Am)</i>	Little, Jean
<i>The Relatives Came</i>	Rylant, Cynthia
<i>Bedhead</i>	Palatini, Margie
<i>My Live in Dog Years</i>	Paulsen, Gary
<i>Chicken Sunday</i>	Polacco, Patricia
<i>Knucklehead</i>	Scieszka, Jon
<i>Guys Write for Guys Read</i>	Scieszka, Jon (editor)
<i>Too Many Tamales</i>	Soto, Gary
<i>Knots in My Yo-Yo String</i>	Spinelli, Jerry
<i>Carwash</i>	Steen, Sandra & Steen, Susan
<i>Knuffle Bunny</i>	Willems, Mo

# *Eating the World*

by Ralph Fletcher

Jimmy didn't like following the rules, but Tommy took the rules and shredded them into little pieces. From the moment he could walk, he was the Tasmanian devil of the family, pulling books off shelves, whacking the little kids, and stealing toys.

One time he yelled during church.

"Quiet!" Mom told him. "The priest doesn't want to hear you."

"I hate the priest," Tommy said loudly. With that, Mom grabbed his arm and rushed him out of church.

Whenever he got into trouble, Mom made him sit under the kitchen table so she could keep an eye on him. This happened a lot.

One morning Tommy wandered away from our house and walked down Acorn Street. He was four years old, and, somehow, got the crazy-fool idea to start eating things. He munched dandelions. He gobbled grass, chewed sticks, and swallowed dirt. Tommy pried some used gum off the street and chewed it. He found a discarded cigarette, broke it in half, and gobbled that down too.

Pretty soon Tommy staggered into the house, his face white as a piece of Wonder Bread. He was crying and holding his belly. When Mom found out what he'd been eating she let out a yelp. She asked Lainie to watch the baby and keep an eye on the other kids. Then she put Tommy into the back seat of the car and drove straight to the hospital. I went with her.

"What's going to happen to him?" I asked.

"He might have to get his stomach pumped," Mom said. I could tell she was upset; she had the steering wheel in a stranglehold.

"Really? How do they do that?" I pictured some kind of suction on the outside of his belly.

"They take a skinny hose and stick it down your throat," Mom explained, using a low voice so Tommy wouldn't overhear. "They vacuum up whatever's in your stomach. Believe me, it's not a pleasant experience."

"Ugh!" I wanted to throw up just listening to the description.

It turned out that Tommy didn't have to get his stomach pumped after all. The doctor gave him a special kind of medicine that made him vomit all the junk he'd eaten. I stayed in the waiting room, so I missed those fireworks. When Mom finally brought my brother out he looked a lot better, even though he was crying.

"You're lucky you didn't kill yourself," Mom said on the way home. I turned to look at Tommy, but he had already fallen asleep.

Next day at breakfast, Jimmy asked him, "Why'd you do something dumb like that?"

"I was hungry," Tommy replied.

"Why didn't you eat some regular food?" Jimmy demanded.

"I didn't have any," Tommy explained.

"That's the stupidest excuse I've ever heard," Jimmy said, rolling his eyes.

What Tommy did *was* stupid, but for a long time the idea of it - trying to eat the world - stayed in my mind. Once, when I was alone in the woods, I pulled a leaf off a maple tree, folded it into my mouth, and started to chew. It was bitter. Later I nibbled on a piece of pine bark and spit it out. I knelt down, peeled off the layer of pine needles, and put my tongue against the bare ground. Dirt tasted different from what I expected. It was almost clean, almost sweet.

Excerpt from Marshfield Dreams: When I Was a Kid

# ***Car Trip***

## by Jon Scieszka

- 1** *Of all the Scieszka brother memories, I believe it was a family car trip that gave us our finest moment of brotherhood. We were driving cross-country from Michigan to Florida, all of us, including the family cat (a guy cat, naturally), in the family station wagon. Somewhere mid-trip we stopped at one of those Stuckey's rest stop restaurants to eat and load up on Stuckey's candy.*
- 2** *We ate lunch, ran around like maniacs in the warm sun, then packed back into the station wagon – Mom and Dad up front, Jim, Jon, Tom, Gregg, Brian, Jeff, and the cat in back. Somebody dropped his Stuckey's Pecan Log Roll on the floor. The cat found it and must have scarfed every bit of it, because two minutes later we hear that awful ack ack ack sound of a cat getting reading to barf.*
- 3** *The cat puked up the pecan nut log. Jeff, the youngest and smallest (and closest to the floor) was the first to go. He got one look and whiff of the pecan-nut cat yack and blew his own sticky lunch all over the cat. The puke-covered cat jumped on Brian. Brian barfed on Gregg. Gregg upchucked on Tom. Tom burped a bit of Stuckey lunch back on Gregg. Jim and I rolled down the windows and hung out as far as we could, yelling in group-puke horror.*
- 4** *Dad didn't know what had hit the back of the car. No time to ask questions. He just pulled off to the side of the road. All of the brothers – Jim, Jon, Tom, Gregg, Brian, and Jeff – spilled out of the puke wagon and fell in the grass, gagging and yelling and laughing until we couldn't laugh anymore.*
- 5** *What does it all mean? What essential guy wisdom did I learn from this?*
- 6** *Stick with your brothers. Stick up for your brothers. And if you ever drop a pecan nut log in a car with our five brothers and the cat... you will probably stick to your brothers.*



# Eleven

by Sandra Cisneros

What they don't understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you're eleven, you're also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two, and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don't. You open your eyes, and everything's just like your yesterday, only it's today. And you don't feel eleven at all. You feel like you're still ten. And you are - underneath the year that makes you eleven.

Like some days you might say something stupid, and that's the part of you that's still ten. Or maybe some days you might need to sit on your mama's lap because you're scared, and that's the part of you that's five. And maybe one day when you're all grown up maybe you will need to cry like if you're three, and that's okay. That's what I tell Mama when she's sad and needs to cry. Maybe she's feeling three.

Because the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one. That's how being eleven years old is.

You don't feel eleven. Not right away. It takes a few days, weeks even, sometimes even months before you say Eleven when they ask you. And you don't feel smart eleven, not until you're almost twelve. That's the way it is.

Only today I wish I didn't have only eleven years rattling inside me like pennies in a tin Band-Aid box. Today I wish I was one hundred and two instead of eleven because if I was one hundred and two instead of just sitting there with that look on my face and nothing coming out of my mouth.

"Whose is this?" Mrs. Price says, and she holds the red sweater up in the air for all the class to see. "Whose? It's been sitting in the coatroom for a month."

"Not mine," says everybody. "Not me."

"It has to belong to somebody," Mrs. Price keeps saying, but nobody can remember. It's an ugly sweater with red, plastic buttons and a collar and



sleeves all stretched out like you could use it for a jump rope. It's maybe a thousand years old and even it belonged to me I wouldn't say so.

Maybe because I'm skinny, maybe because she doesn't like me, that stupid Sylvia Saldivar says, "I think it belongs to Rachel." An ugly sweater like that, all raggedy and old, but Mrs. Price believes her. Mrs. Price takes the sweater and puts it right on my desk, but when I open my mouth nothing comes out.

"That's not, I don't, you're not...Not mine," I finally say in a little voice that was maybe me when I was four.

"Of course it's yours," Mrs. Price says. "I remember you wearing it once." Because she's older and the teacher, she's right, and I'm not.

Not mine, not mine, not mine, but Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four. I don't know why but all of a sudden I'm feeling sick inside, like the part of me that's three wants to come out of my eyes, only I squeeze them shut tight and bite down on my teeth real hard and try to remember today I am eleven, eleven. Mama is making a cake for me tonight, and when Papa comes home everybody will sing Happy birthday, happy birthday to you.

But when the sick feeling goes away, and I open my eyes, the red sweater's still sitting there like a big, red mountain. I move the red sweater to the corner of my desk with my ruler. I move my pencil and books and eraser as far from it as possible. I even move my chair a little to the right. Not mine, not mine, not mine.

In my head I'm thinking how long till lunchtime, how long till I can take the red sweater and throw it over the schoolyard fence, or leave it hanging on a parking meter, or bunch it up into a little ball and toss it in the alley. Except when math period ends, Mrs. Price says loud and in front of everybody, "Now, Rachel, that's enough," because she sees I've shoved the red sweater to the tippy-tip corner of my desk, and it's hanging all over the edge like a waterfall, but I don't care.

"Rachel," Mrs. Price says. She says it like she's getting mad. "You put that sweater on right now and no more nonsense."

"But it's not-"

"Now!" Mrs. Price says.

This is when I wish I wasn't eleven, because all the years inside me - ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one - are pushing at the back of my eyes when I put one arm through one sleeve of the sweater that smells like cottage cheese, and then the other one through the other and stand there with my arms apart like if the sweater hurts me, and it does, all itchy and full of germs that aren't even mine.

That's when everything I've been holding in since this morning, since when Mrs. Price put the sweater on my desk, finally lets go, and all of a sudden I'm crying in front of everybody. I put my head down on the desk and bury my face in my stupid clown-sweater arms. My face all hot and spit coming out of my mouth because I can't stop the little animal noises from coming out of me, until there aren't any more tears left in my eyes, and it's just my body shaking like when you have the hiccups, and my whole head just hurts like when you drink milk too fast.

But the worst part is right before the bell rings for lunch. That stupid Phyllis Lopez, who is even dumber than Sylvia Saldivar, says she remembers the red sweater is hers! I take it off right away and give it to her, only Mrs. Price pretends like everything's okay.

Today I'm eleven. There's a cake Mama's making for tonight, and when Papa come home from work, we'll eat it. There'll be candles and presents and everybody will sing Happy birthday, happy birthday to you, Rachel, only it's too late.

I'm eleven today. I'm eleven, ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one, but I wish I was one hundred and two. I wish I was anything but eleven, because I want today to be far away already, far away like a runaway balloon, like a tiny o in the sky, so tiny-tiny you may have to close your eyes to see it.

Excerpt from Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories

# Additional Conferring Points

## *Helpful Questions for Interpreting Life Narratives*

*These questions are intended to serve as a teacher tool and are not intended to be used verbatim. The phrasing of many of the questions are not developmentally appropriate for all grade levels. Please adapt these questions into a student-friendly language that your children will understand.*

### **Possible Questions to Evoke Conversation about Personal Narratives**

- What kind of person does the “I” seem to be? shy? courageous? etc.
- Do you believe the stories and memories that the author is telling you? What things help you believe the author? What makes you doubt the author?
- What kinds of evidence does this author give you to help you believe the memories?
- What does this author use to help you remember his or her life—objects, photographs, names of people/ places, etc.?
- How does the author organize this story? Does he/she tell the story in chronological order, or does it skip around?
- Where does the story begin and end?
- What artifacts are used—objects, photographs, drawings, letters? How do these artifacts affect the story?
- What does the author learn about himself/herself in the narrative? What does the author learn about the world?
- What can the person reading this story learn?

## **Some Purposes for Writing** *(as They Relate to Personal Narrative Writing)*

- To celebrate an important person or event in your life
- To persuade someone to think like you do on an issue
- To show how fascinating a subject is
- To make someone laugh
- To learn something about yourself or a subject
- To be understood by others for who you are
- To teach a moral or lesson
- To complain about something
- To tell what happened
- To share a passion with others
- To explore an idea
- To imagine how your life could be different
- To imagine what it would be like to be someone else
- To share how you feel about someone
- To remember
- To heal
- To leave something of yourself behind for others
- To reveal something important about yourself and your life
- To leave something behind of you for others
- To learn something about yourself
- To celebrate an important person or event in your life

# Revealing the Story Behind the Picture





## Obvious (External)

- My family and I are about to ride a roller coaster.
- I'm holding on for dear life. (See me - I'm the second from the front.)
- Mom's reaching over to check on me.
- Dad and two brothers (Sam and John) aren't really nervous about riding.

## Hidden (Internal)

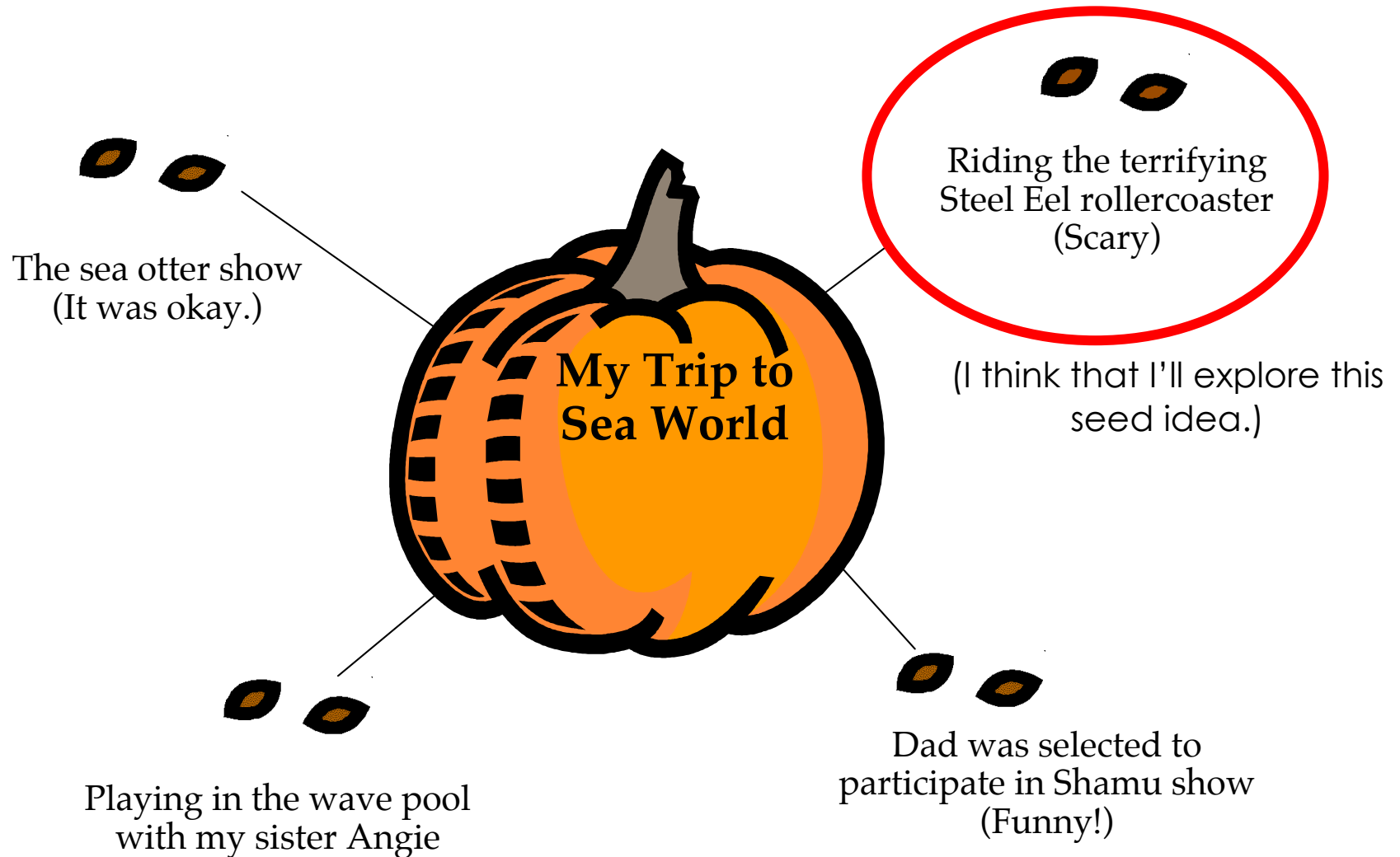
- We're riding Space Mountain at Disney World.
- This is the third year that my family and I went to Disney World, but this is the first time that I was able to join my dad and my brothers on the ride.
- I was finally tall enough to ride.
- Mom always stayed behind with me. I felt like such a baby.
- Terrified.
- I'm praying that I don't die!
- My heart is pounding.

## *Examples of Pumpkin Ideas vs. Seed Ideas with a Common Thread*

<b>Pumpkin Ideas</b> 	<b>Seed Ideas</b> 
What if I planned to write about my trip to Sea World? I could tell about all of the stuff that I did there!	What if I planned to write about my terrifying thirty seconds of riding the Steel Eel rollercoaster at Sea World?
What if I wrote about the candy store in my old neighborhood?	What if I wrote about the time when I was your age, and I snuck away from the playground during recess to buy candy only to get caught by my mother?
What if I wrote about my classroom field trip to Nature Trails?	What if I wrote about watching a butterfly emerge from its cocoon at Nature Trails?
What if I wrote about fun times I have with my dog?	What if I wrote about the time when I first saw my dog in the cage at the SPCA, and I knew he was the one for me?
What if I wrote about my best friend?	What if I wrote about the time when my best friend and I hid in my older sister's closet and scared her so badly that she almost went her pants?

# Example of Using Webbing to Pull Seed Ideas from Pumpkin Ideas

Please note that students should not be expected to transition directly from webbing activities to drafting. This example has been provided solely for the purposes of demonstrating how seed ideas might grow from pumpkin ideas. This is not intended for use as a graphic organizer for writing personal narratives. Students should be given the opportunity to nurture, reflect upon, and rehearse seed ideas before drafting.



# Growing Stories from Seed Ideas

Good writers pick a small memory to write about in detail instead of telling a series of connected events. We call this a “seed story” because it is just one tiny piece of the big, juicy pumpkin that is your life. Brainstorm two pumpkin topics and then look closer for a few seeds to write about.





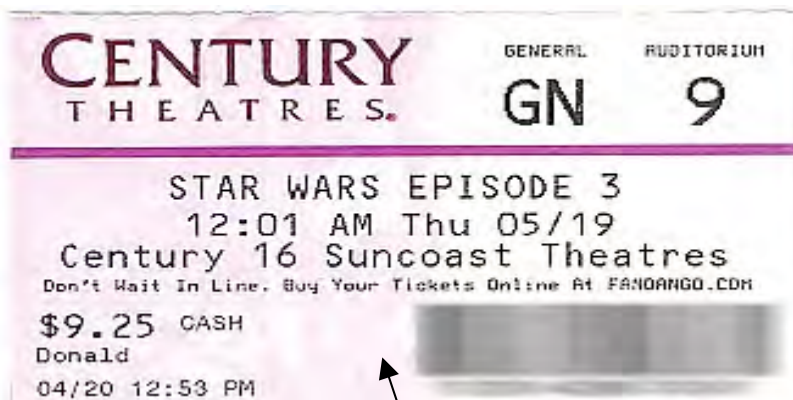
# Objects and Artifacts Notebook Collection

## August 15, 2006

Got lost riding my tricycle when I was 4



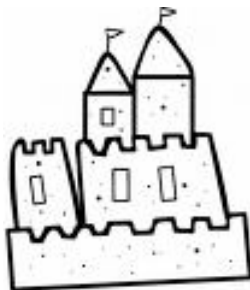
Got two peanuts stuck up my nose  
(age 7)



Getting to stay up until midnight to see the new Star Wars movie



Stopped by Wal-Mart last weekend on the way to Galveston. Bought sunglasses w/ my own \$\$\$



How I thought my sandcastle would look

# A Paper-Weaving Craft

## *Intertwining Personal Experience and Belief Together in Our Writing*

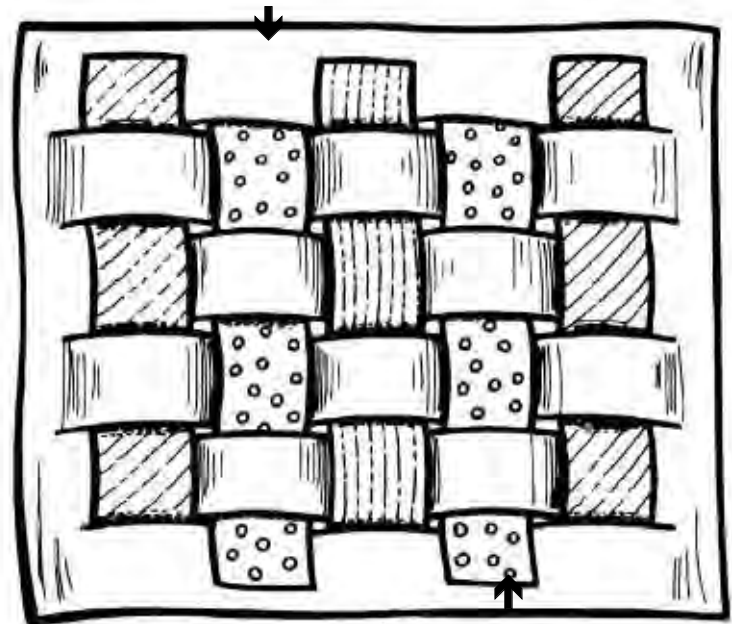
### Materials You'll Need:

- Manila construction paper (1 per student)
- 1" Lengthwise strips of colored construction paper (5 – 8 per student)
- Blunt scissors
- Rulers
- Crayons, markers, and/or pencils
- Craft glue (optional)

### How to Make a Paper Weaving Craft:

- Step 1:** On manila construction paper, draw a picture illustrating a personal experience.
- Step 2:** On the 1" strips of construction paper, write ideas, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about the experience.
- Step 2:** Fold the illustrated piece of manila construction paper in half.
- Step 3:** Starting at the fold, cut straight, zigzag, or curvy lines about 1 inch apart to 1 inch from the edge of the paper.
- Step 4:** Open the paper, and weave each paper strip over and under each cut. If desired, alternate colored strips as you weave.
- Step 5:** Continue weaving until the paper is full. Trim the strips.

Illustration of  
Memorable Experience



Thoughts, Feelings, &  
Beliefs

Directions adapted from <http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/family/paper-art-crafts10.htm>

# Two-Hands Approach to Writing



## Levels of Experience

### Level 1: Ordinary Experiences that Happen to Everyone



**Getting a Present**

- Every day things that happen to everyone in a similar way
- The kind of things you would tell anyone
- Probably more interesting to you than others
- “Been-there-done-that” events that are predictable and boring to read about

### Level 2: Memorable Moments that are Unique \*



**Taking a Dare**

- More personal experiences that happen differently for each individual
- The kind of things you would tell a group of friends
- Less common events that are interesting to others and not so predictable
- Often a life lesson is learned from the experience

### Level 3: Personal and Private Experiences \*



**Facing a Bully**

- Very personal and more private
- The kind of things you might share in a diary or only tell your best friend
- Something you would only share with someone because you need that extra support
- Extremely interesting because it is private, and it takes courage and honesty to write about

### Level 4: Difficult or Sensitive Private Experiences






**Tough Holiday**

- Highly personal and private experiences that are difficult to deal with
- The kind of things that happen in your life that you do not want to discuss, think about, or write about
- These experiences are usually too private to share

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>My Levels of Experiences</b>	<b>Someone who made a difference in your life</b>	<b>Something important you lost</b>	<b>A time someone hurt you or you hurt someone</b>	<b>Something unexpected that happened</b>	<b>An important or favorite memory</b>	<b>Something you'll never forget</b>
<p><b>Level 1:</b> <i>Ordinary Experiences that You Would Tell to Anyone</i></p> 						
<p><b>* Level 2:</b> <i>Memorable Moments that You Share with a Group of Friends</i></p> 						
<p><b>* Level 3:</b> <i>Personal and Private Experiences that You Share with a Best Friend</i></p> 						



## Extended Quicklist for \_\_\_\_\_



A special place you enjoy visiting	An embarrassing moment	Favorite memories about a sport, game, or activity you enjoy
1.	4.	7.
2.	5.	8.
3.	6.	9.

A time you were daring or brave	An unforgettable teacher or coach	A funny school memory
10.	13.	16.
11.	14.	17.
12.	15.	18.

Memorable "first" moments	Bad haircuts or bad hair days	Fun times with a friend
19.	22.	25.
20.	23.	26.
21.	24.	27.

# Story Beginnings Slide Show

## Strong Beginnings



Peace  
out!



Toot!

**Active Beginnings:** Place your character in the setting and have them do something relevant to the story.

**Exciting Dialogue:** Add exciting dialogue that makes the reader wonder what's going to happen next.

**Thoughts and Feelings:** Show, don't tell, the character's thoughts or feelings by the way they look and how they act.

**Onomatopoeia - Lively Sounds:** Start with an attention-grabbing sound that is connected to the ideas in the story.

## An Active Beginning

Ralph Fletcher's Beginning for "Eating the World"

Jimmy didn't like following the rules, but Tommy took the rules and shredded them into little pieces. From the moment he could walk, he was the Tasmanian devil of the family, pulling books off shelves, whacking the little kids, and stealing toys.



2

## Key Points for Reflection

1. Writers think about their audience. They choose topics that appeal to them.
2. Writers think about the message they want their readers to understand.
3. Writers pull readers in with a strong beginning. They can start a composition by showing their character in action, adding dialogue that makes the reader wonder, showing the character's feelings, and using lively sounds.

3

# Story Endings Slide Show

## An Ending with Punch

Ralph Fletcher's Ending for *Eating the World*

What Tommy did was stupid, but for a long time the idea of it - trying to eat the world - stayed in my mind. Once, when I was alone in the woods, I pulled a leaf off a maple tree, folded it into my mouth, and started to chew. It was bitter. Later I nibbled on a piece of pine bark and spit it out. I knelt down, peeled off the layer of pine needles, and put my tongue against the bare ground. Dirt tasted different from what I expected. It was almost clean, almost sweet.



1

## Emotional Endings



An emotional ending leaves the reader with a feeling that matches the kind of story you have created. Stories have different moods. Some stories are funny. Other stories may be happy or sad. If you are telling a story that happened to you, try helping the reader experience the same strong feeling.

**Ending:** That night I laid awake in bed, reliving my close escape. When that arrow brushed past my ear it made a soft hissing sound, as if my ancestors were trying to whisper to me.

Source: *Fletcher* by Ralph Fletcher



2

## Circular Endings



A circular story circles back to the way it began. A circular ending makes a connection back to the story beginning. It balances the beginning and end by pulling the piece together. To create a circular ending, select just the right detail or sentence from the beginning.

**Beginning:** It all started the day my friend Casilda dared me.

**Ending:** After all was said and done, I had won the dare. My new found clean conscience remained my secret.

Source: *Taking a Dare* by Nicholasa Mohr



3

## Key Points for Reflection

1. Endings matter. They leave readers with a lasting impression.
2. Authors use an emotional ending when they want their reader to experience a strong feeling that matches the mood of their mood and/or the experiences of the main character.
3. Authors use a circular ending when they want to make an important connection back to the story beginning.

4



# Connecting Beginnings & Endings Slide Show

## Connecting Beginnings & Endings


"I want my readers to feel, to think, sometimes to laugh. But most of all I want them to enjoy a good read."  
Avi



Author of *Poppy*, *The Magic Shell*, *Felita*, *Crispin*, and *Sings Mom*

## Taking a Dare

by Nicholasa Mohr



**Beginning**

It all started the day my friend Casilda dared me.


**End**

After all was said and done, I had won the dare. My new found clean conscience remained my secret.

Author of *The Magic Shell*, *Felita*, and *Sings Mom*

## Words

by Ralph Fletcher



**Beginning**

*Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me. That's what everyone said, but was it true? Words were tricky. They seemed to have a secret life of their own.*


**End**

With that, Dad grabbed my arm, angrily swatted my bottom, and sent me into the house. My bottom hurt, but my feelings hurt even worse. Maybe words couldn't hurt you, but they sure could get you into trouble.

Author of *Mansfield Dreams*, *Flying Solo*, and *Holly + Ivy's Moon*

## Eleven

by Sandra Cisneros



**Beginning**

What they don't understand about birthdays and what they don't tell you is that when you're eleven, you're also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two, and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don't. You open your eyes and everything's just like yesterday, only it's today. And you don't feel eleven at all. You still feel like you're ten. And you are - underneath the year that makes you eleven.

**End**

I'm eleven today. I'm eleven, ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one, but I wish I was one hundred and two. I wish I was anything but eleven, because I want today to be far away already, far away like a runaway balloon, like a tiny *o* in the sky, so tiny-tiny you have to close your eyes to see it.

Author of *The House on Mango Street*

# Connecting Beginnings & Endings Slide Show



## Scout's Honor

by Avi

**Beginning**

Back in 1946, when I was nine, I worried that I wasn't tough enough. That's why I became a Boy Scout. Scouting, I thought, would make a man of me.

**End**

Horse said, "Only thing is, we have to promise not to tell Mr. Brenkman."  
Grinning with relief, we simultaneously clasped hands. "No matter what," Max reminded us.  
To which I added, "Scout's Honor."

Author of *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, *S.O.B. Luzzes*, *We Liked But the Truth*



## Why I Never Ran Away from Home

By Katherine Paterson


**Beginning**

"Guess what?" That's all my nine-year-old sister Lizzie had to say to get me excited.  
"What?"  
"You'll never guess," Lizzie said. And I wouldn't. Lizzie was too smart for me. She'd skipped second grade, the one I was stumbling through.

**End**

Lizzie really grabbed me now. She whirled me around, and although it was nearly night, I could see fire in her eyes. "You can't run away. I won't let you. And if you even try, I will never speak to you again as long as you live."  
Since that night, many people have told me that they loved me, but perhaps never quite so effectively. I thought about running away off and on for several years after that, but I would immediately discard the notion. After all, I couldn't run away. Lizzie wouldn't let me. It was a very comforting thought.

Author of *Bridge to Terabithia*, *Jacob Have I Loved*, and *The Secret Siddy Hopkins*



## Everything Will Be Okay

by James Howe

**Beginning**

The kitten is a scrawny thing with burrs and bits of wood caught in its hair, where it still has hair, and pus coming out its eyes and nose. Its big, baby head looks even bigger at the end of such a stick of a body. I found it in the woods at the end of my street where I play most days with my friends. This time I was alone. Lucky for you I was, I think to the kitten. Otherwise, David or Claude might have decided you'd be good practice for their slingshots.

**End**

I feel all alone and small and frightened. And then all of a sudden I don't feel any of those things. All of a sudden it's as if Paul has already left and I am on my own and I know some things so clearly that I will never have to ask an older brother to help me figure them out.  
I will never work for Dr. Milk.  
I will not go hunting with my father.  
I will decide for myself what kind of boy I am, what kind of man I will become.

Author of *Barnicula: A Rabbit Tale of Mystery and Suspense* and *Big*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## A Memory Text Structure for a Personal Narrative

Where You Were



Moment It Started



Next Moment



What You Thought



Final Moment



Name: Lost in Sam Houston National Park



## A Memory Text Structure for a Personal Narrative

My friends and I were lost on a 16-mile trail ride in Sam Houston National Park.

### Where You Were

Loud, buzzing four wheelers suddenly appeared on the trail and surprised the nervous, dancing horses.

### Moment It Started

Galloping to keep up with the group, Jimmy tripped on a tree root sticking up in the trail, and we both fell.

### Next Moment

I was worried Jimmy might roll onto me, and I was grateful when we both survived with just a few scraps and cuts.

### What You Thought

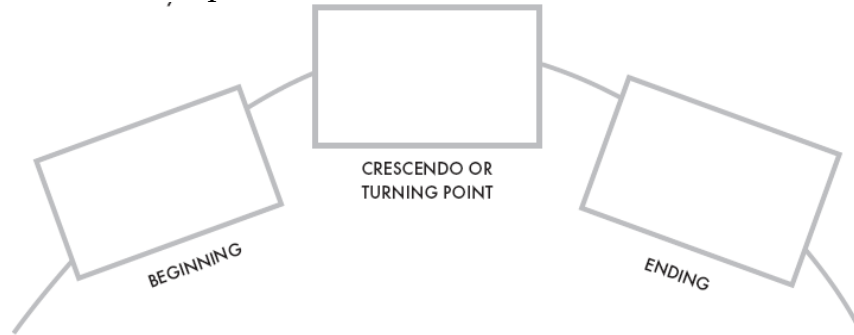
Eventually, my friends and I found our way back to the trailer and headed home.

### Final Moment

# Narrative Text Organizational Structures

## Problem/Solution:

These texts are structured in a traditional linear style. Soon after the characters and setting are introduced, readers learn of a problem that the main character faces. This problem (positive or negative) sets all other events into motion. The main character works to solve the problem throughout the text. Eventually the main character solves the problem, and the author wraps up the story giving it a sense of completeness.

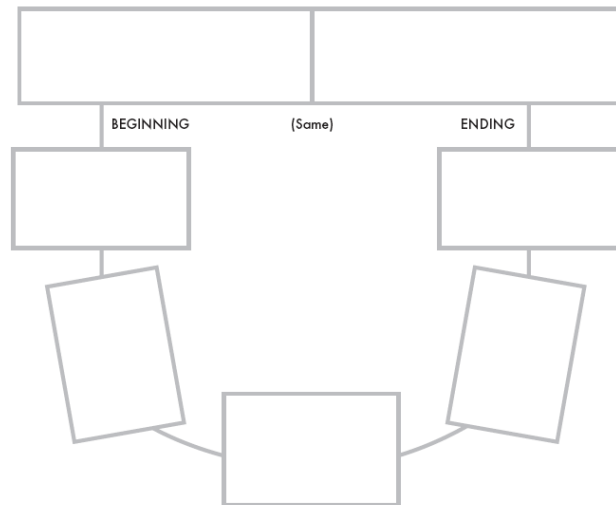


## Examples:

*Thundercake* by Patricia Polacco

## Circular:

These texts have beginnings and endings that are linked. Typically, many of the same words or ideas are used to show the relationship between the beginning and end. Often, some small changes occur in the ending to show that the text has progressed.

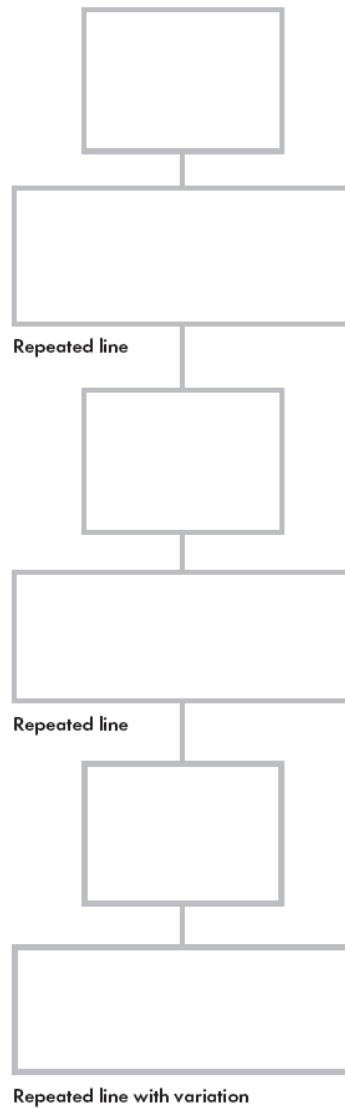


## Examples:

*The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant

## **Repetitive Line/Phrase:**

A repeating line or phrase is used to tie together smaller scenes that make up the entire story. The repeating line or phrase generally serves to capture the connection common to all of the vignettes.



### **Example:**

*When I Was Young in the Mountains* by Cynthia Rylant

(adapted from Davis, J. & Hill, S. (2003). *The No-nonsense Guide to Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. &

Ray, K. W. (1999). *Wondrous Words*. Urbana, IL: National Council on Teachers of English Press.)

# Story Beginnings

To capture your reader's attention, the beginning of your story must be interesting and lively enough to make your reader want to keep reading.

**First Draft:** One rainy day I went to the mall.



**Active Beginnings:** One way to start your story is to begin with an action. Place your main character in the setting and have the character do something relevant to the story.

**Revision:** *I splashed across the parking lot, yanked open the tall glass door, and, dripping wet, stepped into the mall.*

Peace  
out!



**Exciting Dialogue:** One way to begin a story is with exciting dialogue that leaves your reader wondering what's going to happen next. Think about what your main character might say. Remember to use quotation marks around what is being said.

**Revision:** *"I'm soaked!" I yelled as I reached for the large, glass mall entrance doors.*



**Thoughts and Feelings:** One way to start a story is to begin by showing the main character's thoughts or feelings.

**Revision:** *As I approached the mall, I nervously glanced at my watch and wondered what my first day on the job would be like.*

Toot



**Onomatopoeia – Lively Sounds:** One way to begin a story is to use attention-grabbing sounds. Authors may use onomatopoeia - words that imitate the sound that they name.

**Revision:** *Splish! Splash! My boots sloshed through the puddles as I ran to the mall entrance.*

Adapted from Super Story-Writing Strategies & Activities (Scholastic Professional Books)

# Story Endings

Endings matter. They leave a reader with the final impression of your writing. Good endings make a reader feel satisfied. Authors have different ways of ending their writing. Here are two ways to end a story.



## Circular Ending

A circular story circles back to the way it began. A circular ending makes a connection back to the story beginning. It balances the beginning and end by pulling the piece together. To create a circular ending, select just the right detail or sentence from the beginning.

**Beginning:** *It all started the day my friend Casilda dared me.*

**Ending:** *After all was said and done, I had won the dare. My new found clean conscience remained my secret.*

Source: *Taking a Dare* by Nicholasa Mohr



## Emotional Ending

An emotional ending leaves the reader with a feeling that matches the kind of story you have created. Stories have different moods. Some stories are funny. Other stories may be happy or sad. If you are telling a story that happened to you, try helping the reader experience the same strong feeling.

**Ending:** *That night I laid awake in bed, reliving my close escape. When that arrow brushed past my ear it made a soft hissing sound, as if my ancestors were trying to whisper to me.*

Source: *Fletcher* by Ralph Fletcher

Adapted from Craft Lessons: Teaching Writing K-8



# F. I. T. Chart

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Prompt: \_\_\_\_\_

Truism (Life Lesson): \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Feelings</b> 	<b>Ideas</b> 	<b>Thoughts/Speech</b> 
	<b>Lead:</b>	
	<b>Problem or Topic:</b>	
	<b>Detail or Event 1:</b>	
	<b>Detail or Event 2:</b>	
	<b>Detail or Event 3:</b>	
	<b>Conclusion:</b>	

# Where's the BEEF? Quick Guide

**Elaboration-Where's the BEEF!!!!!!!!!!!!!!?**  
*(Brain, Ear, Eyes, Feet)*



*What would your brain be thinking?*



*What would you be hearing?*



*What would you see?*



*What are your feet doing?*

**Elaboration-Where's the BEEF!!!!!!!!!!!!!!?**  
*(Brain, Ear, Eyes, Feet)*



*Describe what your brain was thinking.*



*Describe what you would be hearing.*



*Describe what you would see.*



*Describe what your feet are doing.*

Have students place a copy of this handout in their writing journal and in their homework folder for a quick revising guide.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reviser's Toolkit: Where's the BEEF? Graphic Organizer

**Thoughts**



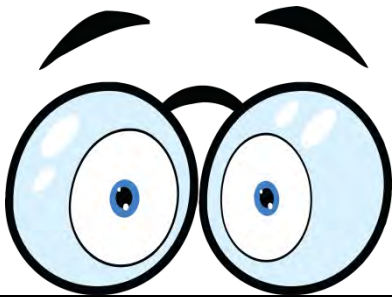
What is your **B**rain thinking?

**Dialogue & sounds**



What are your **E**ars hearing?

**Visual Images**



What are your **E**yes seeing?

**Action**



What are your **F**eet and body doing?

# ***SHOW, Don't Tell!***

Examples of General Sentences	Examples Rewritten: SHOW, DON'T TELL
"One nice pretty day I was playing with my friends..."	"I threw the ball hard at Chrissy..."
"On December 13, 2005, I was sitting in class doing my work..."	"I looked at the topic on the history test..."
"On one winter afternoon I was in south Texas hunting..."	"My dad was sitting behind me in the deer blind..."
"One day I was getting ready for school..."	"I picked up my blue shirt and put it on..."
"It was September 11, 2001..."	"The calendar on the wall declared that today was September 11, 2001..."
"It was Christmas Eve..."	"The Christmas tree was sparkling in the corner of the room..."
"It was four or five years ago when..."	"The last day of third grade was only two days away for me..."

# Truisms PowerPoint – Slides 1 - 6

## Truisms

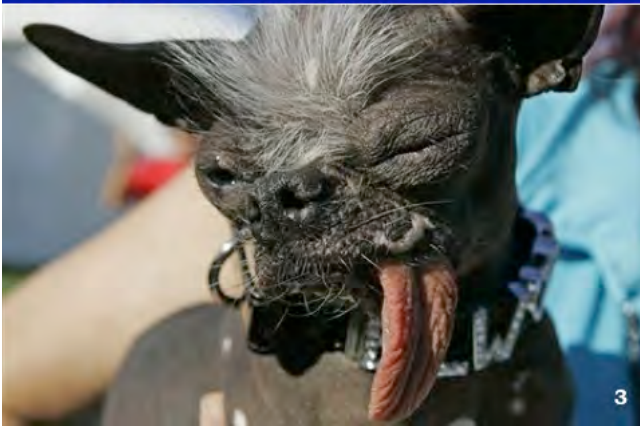
*Universal Thoughts  
and Feelings*

1

*Sharing is caring.*



*Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.*



*Opposites attract.*



*No rain....no rainbows.*



*The best things in life aren't always things.*



# Truisms PowerPoint – Slides 7 - 12

*You can't trust a dog to watch your food.*



*Two heads are better than one.*



*What you see is not always what you get.*



*Never judge a book by its cover.*



*Freedom has a price.*



*We are all the same underneath.*



# Truism PowerPoint – Slides 13 – 18

*Friends come in all shape and sizes.*



13

*Everyone has a dream.*



14

*Good friends stick with you no matter what.*



*Don't let the giants get in your way.*



Week of June 8, 2007

*No one can lock up your spirit.*



*Stay calm. Don't lose your head!*



# Ba-da-bing Challenge

1. Look at your sentence.
2. Write one ba-da-bing! sentence for that moment, with these three parts.

**BA**

—

**DA**

—

**BING**



**Where your FEET  
were right then**



**What your EYE saw  
right then**






**What you thought  
right then**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

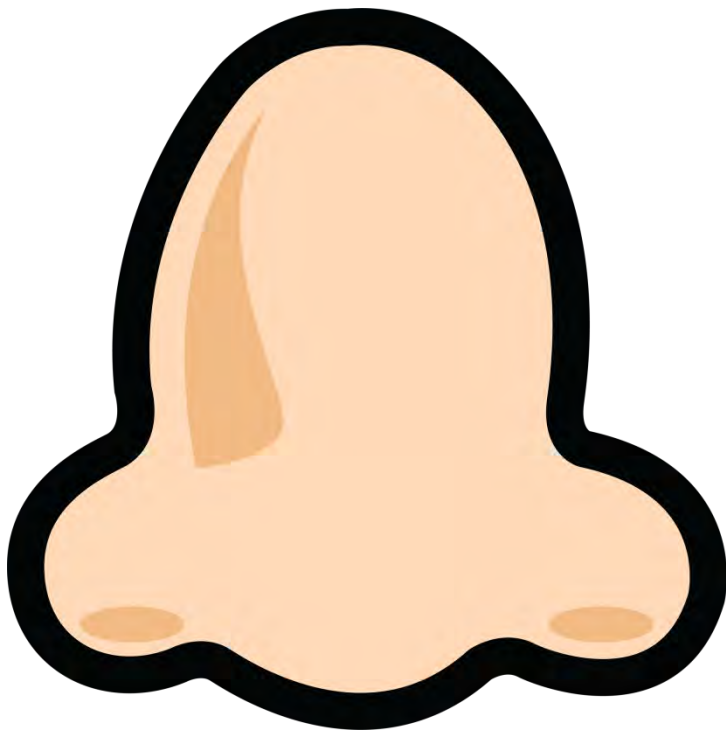
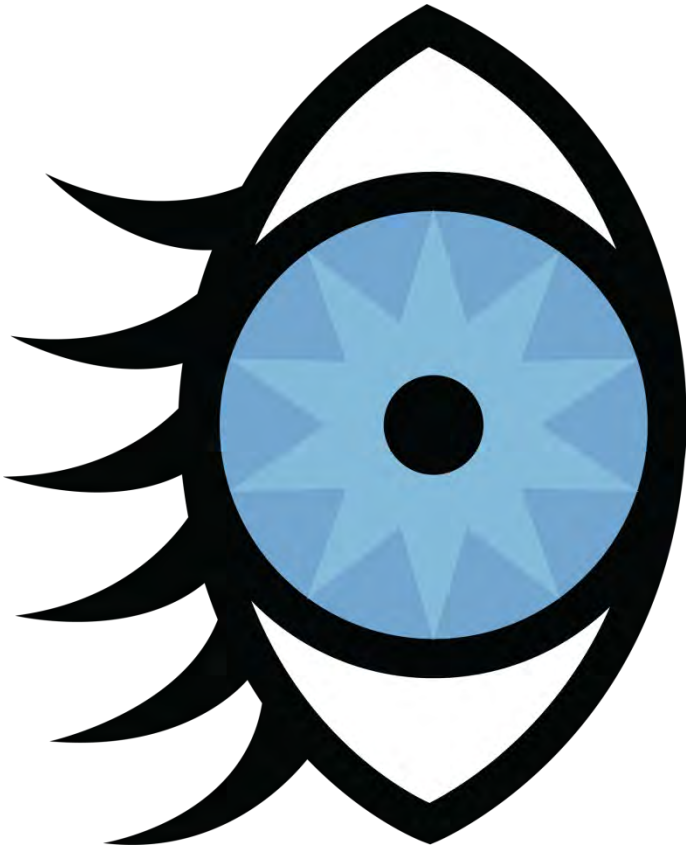
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Ba-da-bing Sentences Graphic Organizer

<b>Where You Were</b> 	<b>What You Saw</b> 	<b>What You Thought</b> 

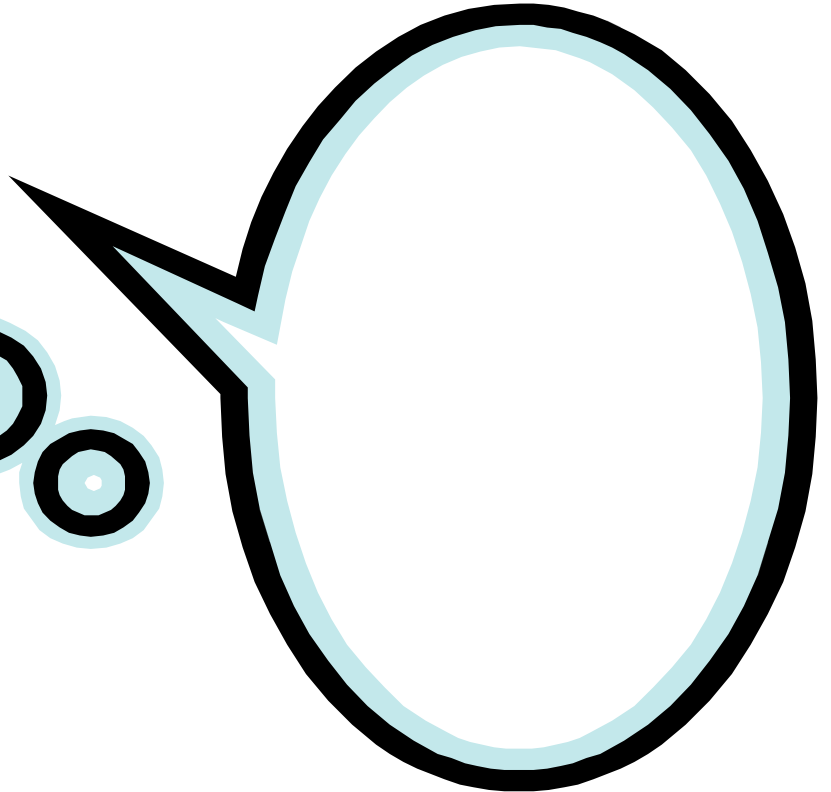
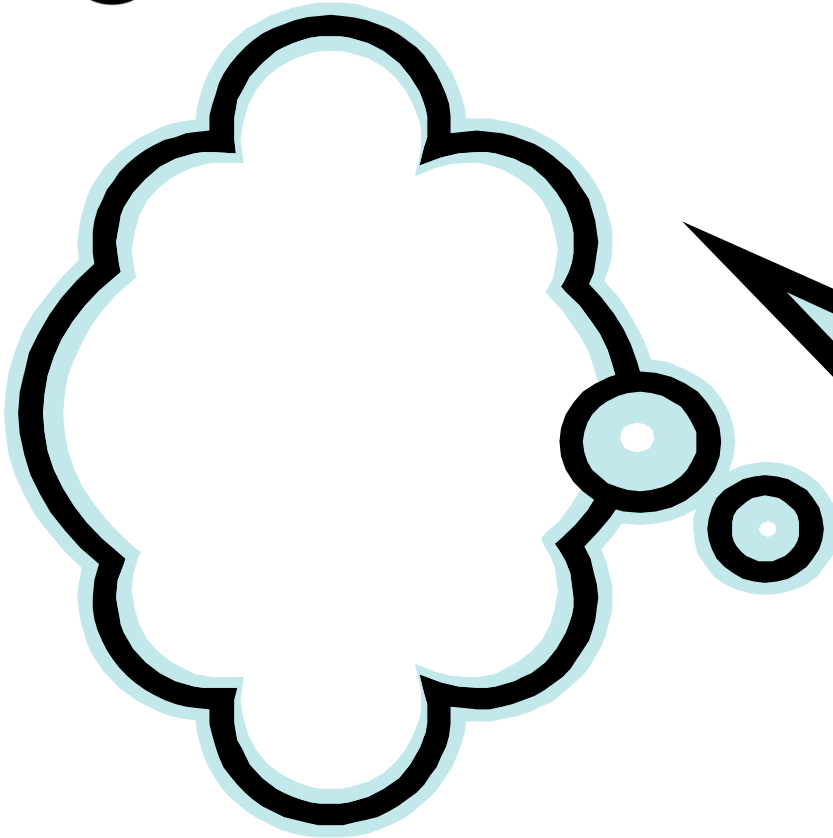
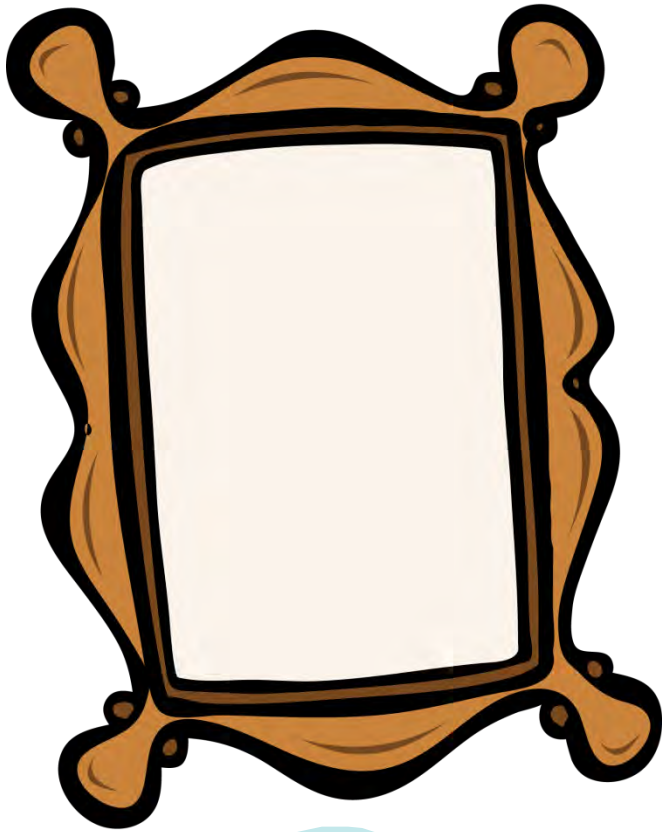
## Revision Bling Wands – Senses – Page 1

**Directions:** Print colored copies of the icons representing the different revision strategies found on the *Revision Stations* handout. Laminate and cut each icon out. Attach the icons to 12" dowel rods. The revision “bling” wands can be used to reinforce the use of the strategies during minilessons and during writing conferences.



# Revision Bling Wands – Senses, Thoughtshot, Dialogue, &

## Snapshot – Page 2



# *“Tuning” from The Winter Room by Gary Paulsen*

If books could be more, could show more, could own more, this book would have smells...

It would have the smells of old farms; the sweet smell of new-mown hay as it falls off the oiled sickle blade when the horses pull the mower through the field, and the sour smell of manure streaming in a winter barn. It would have the sticky-slick smell of birth when the calves come and they suck for the first time on the rich, new milk; the dusty smell of winter hay dried and stored in the loft waiting to be dropped down to the cattle; the pungent fermented smell of the chopped corn silage when it is brought into the manger on the silage fork. This book would have the smell of new potatoes sliced and frying in light pepper on a woodstove burning dry pine, the damp smell of leather mittens steaming on the stove top, and the acrid smell of the slop bucket by the door when the lid is lifted and the potato peelings are dumped in—but it can't.

Books can't have smells.

If books could be more and own more and give more, this book would have sound...

It would have the high, keening sound of the six-foot bucksaws as the men pull them back and forth through the trees to cut pine for paper pulp; the grunting-gassy sounds of the work teams snorting and slapping as they hit the harness to jerk the stumps out of the ground. It would have the chewing sounds of cows in the barn working at their cud on a long winter's night; the solid thunking sound of the ax coming down to split stovewood, and the piercing scream of the pigs when the knife cuts their throats and they know death is at hand – but it can't.

Books can't have sound.

And finally if books could be more, give more, show more, this book would have light...

Oh, it would have the soft gold light—gold with bits of hay dust floating in it—that slips through the crack in the barn wall; the light of the Coleman lantern hissing flat-white in the kitchen; the silver-gray light of a middle winter day, the splattered, white-night light of a full moon on snow, the new light of dawn at the eastern edge of the pasture behind the cows coming in to be miled on a summer morning—but it can't

Books can't have light.

If books could have more, give more, be more, show more, they would still need readers, who bring to them sound and smell and light and all the rest that can't be in books.

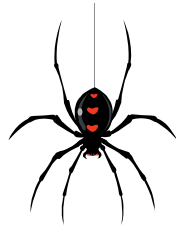
The book needs you.

# *Fun Ways to Revise*



## *Sticky Notes*

One revision tool we can use is sticky notes. We stick a note where we want to add a few words or sentences and write the text on the note.



## *Spider Legs*

Or we can use “spider legs.” That’s a cool name, right? A “spider leg” is a strip of paper that we tape to the side of the draft, next to the place where we want to add text. We call them “spider legs” because after we have added a few strips to the draft, it looks like it has lots of legs like a spider.



## *Add a Carrot*

We can also add using “carrot add ons.” An “add on” is a letter or number that shows us where in the draft we want to add text.



## *Story Surgery*

Completely revising or editing a piece.  
Cutting out a paragraph and taping or you can glue a new piece.

# Process for Introducing Truisms

**Note:** These strategies are described in Gretchen Bernabei's *Reviving the Essay*, pgs. 2-3. It is recommended that teachers introduce truisms with photos and truism statements in a minilesson and then provide practice identifying and composing truisms over multiple days to allow students to develop an understanding of truisms.

## Step 1: Get familiar with truisms with photo

(Put a prompt with photograph on the overhead. Cover the photograph.)

*"Look at this sentence. Do you think it's true?"* (Uncover the photograph.)

*"How does the picture relate?"* (Let them comment.)

(Put another prompt with photograph on the overhead. Cover the photograph.)

*"Read this statement. What picture could be there?"*

(Repeat the process a few more times.)

## Step 2: Write truisms from photo

(Show photo with prompt covered.)

*"What do you see going on in this photo?"* (Let students share what they notice.)

*"What's one true thing about the world that this photo shows?"* (Describe true things about the world, or about people. Share orally at first, then ask students to write them down.)

*"Excellent! Let's put some of these around the room."* (Display truisms.)

## Step 3: Write truisms from prompts

*"This time I'm not going to give you a truism or a picture. I'm going to put some plain words up. You look at the words and then make a two-minute drawing of whatever the words made you think of. Ready?"*

(Write something on the overhead like "something exciting" or "something surprising" or something equally wide-open.)

*"Read those words and draw whatever comes to mind. Even stick figures will be okay."* (Let two minutes pass.)

*"Now stop. Look at your picture the same way we looked at the photos on the wall. Think up a truism that you believe is true about the world or about people."* (Share and debrief.)

## Debriefing Questions

- If a statement is true to me, is it going to be true for everyone?
- The truisms that you wrote are so much better than the original statement with the photograph. Do you agree? How do you explain that? How can you tell they're better?
- If everyone used the same prompt, would their essays all be very similar?
- Would most people's essays be almost the same if everyone used their own truism?
- Once you have a truism you really like, and you want to use it to write your essay, what might be your next step?

# ***Brother-sitting***

## by Jon Scieszka

1 *Baby sitters were always kind of a challenge for us. Or maybe we were more of a challenge for them.*

2 Mom and Dad tried putting Jim and me in charge a couple of times. But that didn't work out so well.

3 Jim and I saw it mostly as a chance to make a little money on the side. So we charged Gregg twenty-five cents for an extra cookie after bedtime. We charged Brian ten cents to have the dog sleep in his room. We generously offered to let Tom stay up an hour later for only fifty cents, but he wouldn't pay. But he kept getting up.

4 Which is why we tied him up. In his bed. With my dad's ties.

5 When Mom and Dad found out, they were not too thrilled.

6 "What if there had been a fire?" said Mom, almost hysterical.

7 "It would have burned off the ties," said Jim.

8 "Then Tom would have escaped," I added.

9 That pretty much ended our babysitting careers for a while. Though it's probably good that we never told Mom or Dad some of our other babysitting techniques. We might have been banned for life.




- 10** One of our best tricks was the “Bad Boys’ Home” phone call. If Gregg was being a nut, or Tom was whining, or Brian and Jeff were annoying us, Jim or I would say, “That’s it. We’re calling the Bad Boys’ Home.”
- 11** We would pick up the phone, dial a random number, wait a second or two, then say, “Hello? Bad Boys’ Home? We’ve got another one for you. Come and pick him up.”
- 12** We didn’t even have to give the address. Because nine times out of ten, a siren would start wailing somewhere in the city. Then everyone would run to bed.
- 13** Mom and Dad did try a couple of “outside” babysitters. Like the teenage girl down the block. She was nice. And a lot of fun. She offered to play Cowboys and Indians with us, and even let us tie her up and put her in the closet.
- 14** *She never babysat for us again.*
- 15** *We were never sure why. But now I realize that two hours tied up in a closet might have been just a little too long.*

Source: Knucklehead (2005, 2008)



## Truisms Defined Slide Show

**Truisms**



*Truisms are statements that teach important truths or life lessons about our world and its people.*


*They provide stories and essays with a unifying message that links all the details together.*

*A truism is the message a writer shares with readers.*



**Babysitting is an adventure! You never quite know what to expect.**

**Truisms Add**

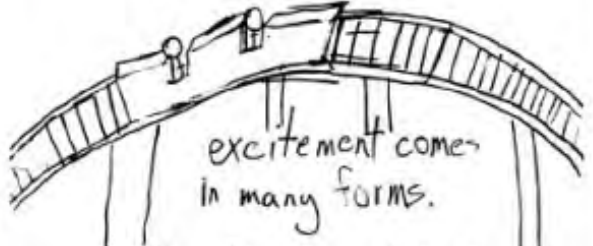


**To Our Writing**

**Lead:**  
*"Baby sitters were always kind of a challenge for us. Or maybe we were more of a challenge for them."*

**Ending:**  
*She never babysat for us again. We were never sure why. But now I realize that two hours tied up in a closet might have been just a little bit too long.*

Fiesta Texas



excitement comes in many forms.

*I thought of something fun and a picture of a rollercoast popped in my head then I thought of thrills.*

# Exploding a Moment Slide Show

character thoughts & feelings

metaphors & similes

dialogue

5 senses - taste, touch, smell, hear, & see

1

Eleven - The Big Moments

how it feels to be 11

classmate says sweater belongs to Rachel

Rachel feels sick inside

Rachel forced to wear sweater

how 11 feels after bad day

2

**In Slow-Mo**  
**Slipping on the Sweater**

This is when I wish I wasn't eleven, because **all the years inside me** - ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one - are **pushing at the back of my eyes** when I **put one arm through one sleeve of the sweater that smells like cottage cheese**, and **then the other one through the other and stand there with my arms apart** like if the sweater hurts me, and it does, all **itchy and full of germs** that aren't even mine.

3

**In Slow-Mo**  
**The Bubble Bursts**

That's when **everything I've been holding in** since this morning, since when Mrs. Price put the sweater on my desk, finally **lets go**, and all of a sudden **I'm crying in front of everybody**. I **put my head down on the desk and bury my face in my stupid clown-sweater arms**. **My face all hot and spit coming out of my mouth** because I **can't stop the little animal noises from coming out of me**, until there **aren't any more tears left in my eyes**, and it's **just my body shaking like when you have the hiccups**, and **my whole head just hurts like when you drink milk too fast**.

4

**Key Points for Reflection**

Exploding a short moment in time emphasizes an important part of story.

Authors use different techniques to explode a moment:

- showing, not telling, how a character feels or thinks
- descriptive details using the 5 senses (taste, touch, smell, see, & hear)
- dialogue between characters
- metaphors & similes that compare something or someone to something or someone else

5

# Editing Tips Slide Show

## Reading Aloud to Ourselves



La

One way to check for errors in usage is to read aloud your writing. When we read aloud our writing we hear the way the words play to the reader's ear. We hear when words are missing or repeated.


## Kinds of Usage Errors

Subject-Verb Agreement	The teacher <b>enjoy</b> writing stories.
Verb Tense	She <b>writes</b> a good story about her pet.
Pronoun Use	The teacher and <b>we</b> both like cats.
Adjective Use	Fluffy is one of the <b>ridiculous</b> cats of all.
Adverb Use	Fluffy pounced <b>wild</b> on a fake mouse.
Double Negative	Fluffy <b>doesn't</b> like <b>no</b> catnip in her toys.
Article Use (a, an, the)	Fluffy eats <b>a</b> anchovy for a tasty treat.

## CUPS Memory Trick

Editing or proofreading your writing is a courtesy to readers. Fixing convention and usage errors makes it easier for readers to focus on your message. Each letter of the acronym CUPS stands for a different part of writing that needs to be checked to make it "picture-perfect" for an audience.

- C**apitalization
- U** sage
- P** unctuation
- S** pelling



## Editing Marks

- Delete**: We have lots ~~and lots~~ of work.
- Insert**: We went to <sup>the</sup> library.
- Add or move**: We have every week a TEST.
- Capitalize**: Miss Smith's room is fun.
- Make lower case**: There are <sup>2</sup> projects each week.
- Fix Spelling**: We are learning to sing harmies.
- Indent Paragraph**: At 2:30, it's time to go home.

## Editing Checklist

**C**  
**U**  
**P**  
**S**

- Did I capitalize my sentence beginnings?
- Did I capitalize the names of people, places, and things?
- Do my words sound right?
- Did I use the right punctuation - periods, exclamation marks, question marks - at the end of my sentences?
- Did I use commas to separate a series of words?
- Did I use apostrophes in words that are contractions (don't) or show possession (boy's hat)?
- Did I place quotation marks around the speaker's words?
- Is it easy to read my spelling?

## Key Points for Reflection

- Editing for convention and usage errors makes it easier for a reader to focus on a writer's ideas.
- Reading aloud a composition to ourselves helps us hear how the writing sounds, and it helps us find errors in usage.
- CUPS is an acronym that helps us remember to edit a composition for errors in capitalization, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

## Ba-Da-Bing Sentence Photos Slide Show

As Stump sat next to his trophy, he smiled and wagged his tail at the admiring crowd. He barked, "I'm top dog! Yeah, that's me."



When the First Lady stepped into the spotlight, she drew her arm's up into a boxer's pose and said, "You wanna piece of me?"



At the start of the gun, I heard the thunder of the crazy bridezillas as they raced down the turf towards Macys. "Oh no, stampede!" I thought.



# Publishing Decisions Slide Show



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# Dialogue Tags

acknowledged

admitted

agreed

answered

argued

asked

barked

begged

bellowed

blustered

bragged

complained

confessed

cried

demanded

denied

giggled

hinted

hissed

howled

inquired

interrupted

laughed

lied

mumbled

muttered

nagged

pleaded

promised

questioned

remembered

replied

requested

retorted

roared

sang

screamed

screeched

shouted

sighed

snarled

sobbed

threatened

wailed

warned

whimpered

whined

whispered

wondered

yelled

# CUPS Revision/Editing Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Reread your piece carefully. Check off each item as you correct any errors or revise your work. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are revision skills.

## Capitalization - Use a green colored pencil.



- I capitalized the first word in every sentence.
- I capitalized the pronoun "I."
- I capitalized the names of people, places, or things (proper nouns).

## Understanding / Usage - Use a purple colored pencil.



- \* *I read my story to myself, and it makes sense.*
- \* *I used details that tell about my topic.*
- \* *My story has a beginning, middle, and ending.*
- I use correct subject-verb agreement.
- I wrote in complete sentences.
- I indented the first sentence in each paragraph.

## Punctuation - Use a red colored pencil.



- I ended each sentence with the correct punctuation mark ( . ? ! ).

## Spelling - Use a blue colored pencil.



- I circled all of the words I wasn't sure how to spell.
- I used a dictionary to correct all of the misspelled words I could find.

- 
- I peer conferenced with \_\_\_\_\_ and revised and edited my work.
  - I met with a teacher for a final conference.