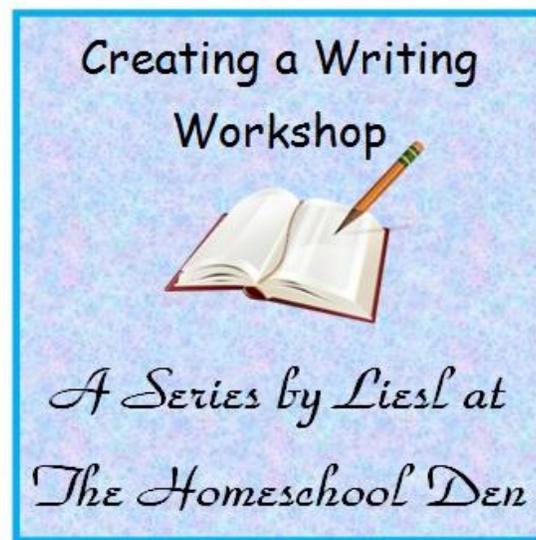
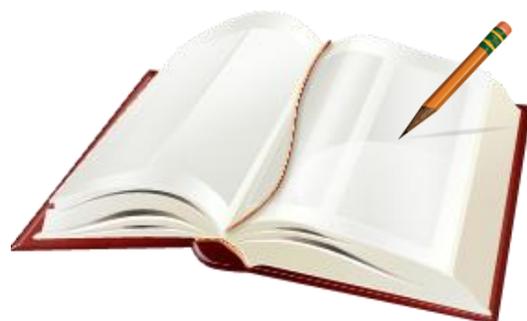


This is a 30-page resource pack
I made for our homeschool
writing workshop.

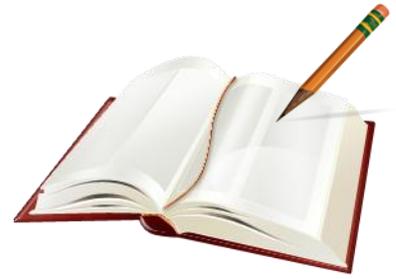


This packet goes along with the series I wrote over on my blog.
Read the series here: [Creating a Writing Workshop](#).

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Writing



What do you like to read? What kind of book is it?

What type of writing do you typically choose to do?

What are some of the different types of writing you've encountered?

Types of Writing



Fiction	Non-Fiction
Adventure	Biography
Fantasy	Letter, email
Realistic Fiction	Journal/Diary
Science Fiction	Memoir, Autobiography
Myth	Guidebook
Fable	Review (movie, book, etc.)
Mystery	Persuasive writing
Historical Novel	Travel Brochure
Comic Book	Speech
Crime Novel	Procedural Writing (How to...)
Graphic Novel	Recipes
Thriller	Magazine Article
Folktales	Drama
Poetry	Play
Dystopia	Paranormal



Writing - Now What?!

Feeling stuck today? See if this list helps an idea come to mind...

- ✧ Pull out your writing notebook. Look over your writing treasure box -- the memories, experiences, opinions, story ideas that you've jotted down. You have your own personal areas of expertise; draw on those.
- ✧ Read a book and see if that reminds you of something or gives you a story idea.
- ✧ Look at your list of the types of writing. Try writing in a different genre (write a science fiction story, a fable, a play, a comic strip).
- ✧ Write a letter to Grandma and Grandpa or to your friend. (Use the correct letter format.)
- ✧ Free write (whatever comes to mind, even if it's nonsense)
- ✧ Create a brochure.
- ✧ Create a poster.
- ✧ Research and animal, creature, event, place you're interested in.
- ✧ Come up with lists.

- ✧ Take a story you've written already - revise it and publish it.
- ✧ Go to the story starter notebook and look through the writing prompts. See if anything sounds like a fun topic.
- ✧ Cut out pictures that you find inspiring to write about and glue them in your writing journal.
- ✧ Throw the Story Cubes and see if you can write a story based on the pictures you roll.
- ✧ Write a poem or a haiku.
- ✧ Create an animal information card.
- ✧ Write a biography -- an article about someone famous.
- ✧ Create an advertisement for a food or toy. Create a funny or catchy phrase.
- ✧ Write a persuasive piece... take a topic and try to convince your reader that you are right.
- ✧ Write a blog entry.
- ✧ Write directions for a game.
- ✧ Write a manual or handbook.
- ✧ Create a recipe.
- ✧ Write something from someone else's perspective. (Write a story written from a kitty's perspective or from a snake's perspective, for example.)

When you Begin Writing

Create an opening that grabs the reader's attention. Make sure your audience wants to read more!



Different techniques for opening a story:

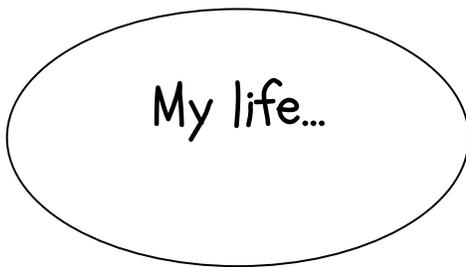
- ❖ Begin with a picture or unusual image. (Describe)
- ❖ Start with dialogue (Think of *Charlotte's Web*.)
- ❖ Action
- ❖ A thought or feeling
- ❖ Start with a question
- ❖ Have an interesting fact
- ❖ Use a sound effect (onomatopoeia)
- ❖ Flashback to an earlier time
- ❖ A strong persuasive statement
- ❖ Set up the action of a story in just a few short sentences.
- ❖ Mislead the reader by setting up certain expectations and then surprising them!

- ❖ A shocking statement.
- ❖ A humorous statement.

Also, remember a story starts as close to the main event as possible.

Start with a small topic, idea or event...

This topic is too big:

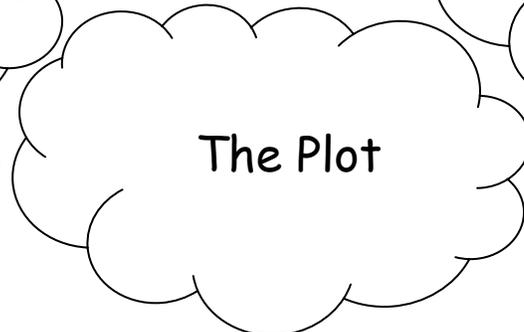
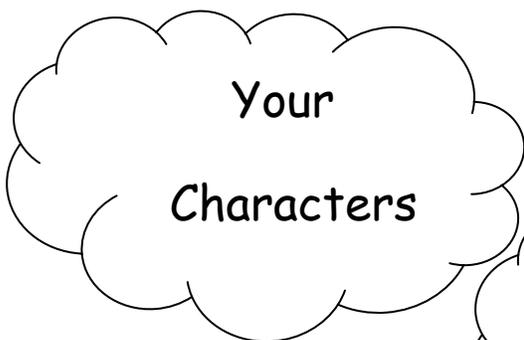


This sounds intriguing:



Make sure you have a manageable topic!

One last thing to think about as you begin writing...



Characters



Think about your Main Character:

What is his/her/its name?

What does he/she/it look like? What does he wear? What does she carry with her? Does it have any special belongings?

How old is he/she/it?

Is it feeling well?

What does he eat? Is she on a special diet?

How does it move? fast? slow?

Is it a happy, sad, funny character?

Where does he/she/it live?

Think about other things you'd want to know about him/her/it and include those details.

Descriptive details make your character more interesting.

Setting



Think about the time and place of your story:

Use your imagination and move around in your setting.

What does your setting look like? What time of day is it? What season is it?

What colors do you see?

Do you smell anything? Are there flowers? Is there something that smells bad?

Is it cold/hot? humid? dry? raining? snowing?

Is it dark? a bright sunny day? breezy? stuffy (like in an attic?)

Do you hear any noises? Are they loud or soft? creepy? beautiful?

Pretend you are touching things in your setting? How do they feel? Are things smooth, rough, wet, slimy, dry, coarse?

Remember to think about all five senses when you're writing: What do you see? hear? smell? taste? feel?

Plot

Stir things up in your story -- create conflict, problems and intrigue that makes your reader want to keep reading. Think about the action and adventure in your story. Make the problems puzzling so your reader wants (needs!) to know how they are solved! Problems pack a story full of adventure.

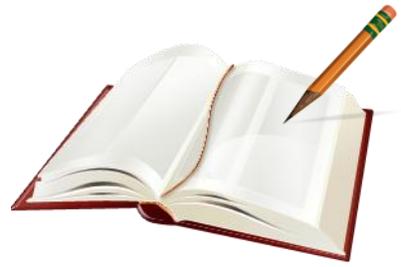
*getting lost, solving a mystery, overcoming a conflict with friends, running into trouble, losing something precious, being injured and/or helpless...

*What would add adventure or mystery to the story?

*Create action in your story.

*Think about your character's emotions (how a character is feeling. Show the character's emotions (stomping if she's angry, jumping in the air if she's happy...). Show how the character's emotion changes over time.

Writing



As you've seen there are lots of types of writing. Let's take a closer look at how some authors have set up their stories.

Our first step is going to look at some of the books we have around the room. (Pick a few and decide on...)

Genre:

Purpose:

How did the author begin the story? Did it grab your attention?

Who is the audience?

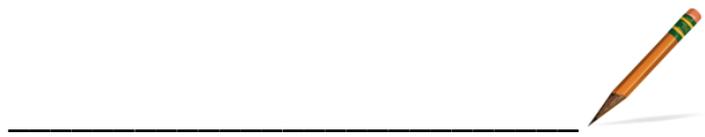
Mini Lessons on Writing

Various Writing Topics to Cover This Year:



- Finding a topic
- Coming up with story ideas
- writer's notebooks (for gathering ideas)
- Limit the topic
- Focus the story (Don't have the story idea too broad and big)
- Favorite Leads -- Opening the Story
- Hooking the reader
- Great beginnings can start with a picture, dialogue, action, question, interesting fact
- Lively, vivid verbs
- Clarity in writing
- Dazzling details -- Add details to one of these sentences to make it more engaging: The room was messy. The storm was huge. The food was good. It was a spooky room.
- Show, Don't Tell -- Don't write he was scared... instead say, "His eyes bulged. His breath caught. He started dancing and hopping around on one foot."
- Avoid boring, overused words (said, went)
- Elaborative Detail - describe things using the various senses
- What do feelings look like? Angry -- red in the face, clenched hands (etc.)
- Developing suspense or anticipation in writing
- Story structure - main event
- Get inside the character's head
- Sharpen the picture
 - candy → the green M&Ms
 - dog → a brown and white St. Bernard

- Metaphors
- Similes
- onomatopoeia
- Dialogue
- Story Endings
- Transition words

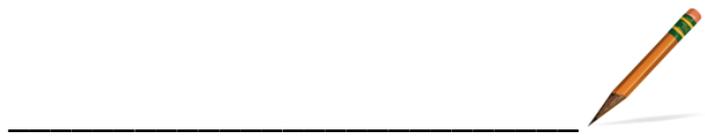


Character/Problem/Solution Narrative

This is a story about _____.
main character's name

The problem was that _____
describe the problem

The problem was solved when _____
tell how the main character solved the problem



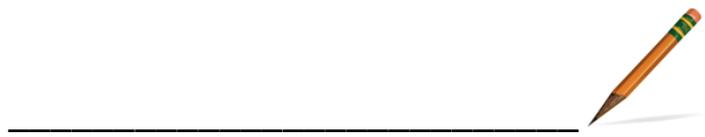
Personal Experience Narrative

This is a story that describes _____.
an experience or place

First, _____
a main idea

Next, _____
another main idea

Next, _____
another main idea



Expository Piece

This is a story gives information about _____
the topic

Including, _____
a main idea

another main idea

and, _____
a main idea

Six Writing Traits +1



Now that we've looked at some different types of writing, we're going to look at some of the traits that make for good writing.

 Ideas	<p>Good writing begins with good ideas and a knowledge of the topic. A good idea is clear, interesting and original. Have a clear point, message, theme or story line backed by carefully chosen details and supportive information.</p>
 Organization	<p>Good writing is organized in a way that helps the reader understand the information and follow what the writer is saying. Logical order/sequence. Story has a beginning, middle and end.</p>
 Word Choice	<p>Good writers choose their words carefully. They use vivid details that help the reader see what you are talking about. The language, phrasing and words help get your point across.</p>
 Voice	<p>Good writers let their personality shine through. Connect with the reader; have a sense of your audience. You want your writing to sound like you. Write honestly and from the heart.</p>
 Sentence Fluency	<p>Good writers make their writing flow by using complete and varied sentences. You want your writing to flow and be easy to follow. Rhythm and flow of the writing.</p>
<p>, " " . ! '</p> Conventions	<p>Good writers follow the rules or conventions of writing -- using proper punctuation, capital letters, spelling, grammar and so forth.</p>
 Presentation	<p>Good writers publish their best pieces and make it look appealing. Pay attention to the form and layout of the text. You may want to do this with a few of your best pieces of writing.</p>

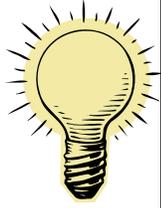
Six Writing Traits +1



Now that we've looked at some different types of writing, we're going to look at some of the traits that make for good writing. Add your own tips below:

 Ideas	
 Organization	
 Word Choice	
 Voice	
 Sentence Fluency	
, " " . ! ' Conventions	
 Presentation	

Six Writing Traits +1



Ideas



Organization



Word Choice



Voice



Sentence Fluency

, " " .

? ! ' "

Conventions



Presentation

Dazzling
Details

Lively
Language

Writing: The Big Picture

Sometimes it really helps to know where your story is going so that it's not just a series of events, actions. It helps to know that many authors rely on a basic pattern or framework.

It's obvious that stories have a beginning, middle and end, right? But there's more to it than that. Good writing has a point or message. Often there is a problem and the tension and anticipation build. Good writers have concrete, vivid details that create a movie in your mind. We want to see the characters grow, change and perhaps learn from their experiences.

Story Diagram

Climax

Rising Action: What's the problem?
What's going on what the conflict going to be? person-vs.-person, person vs. climate, person vs. monster, person vs. himself

Falling Action: How is the problem solved? How are conflicts resolved?

Introduction:

character, setting, time
what kind of world -
where does it take place
when does it take place

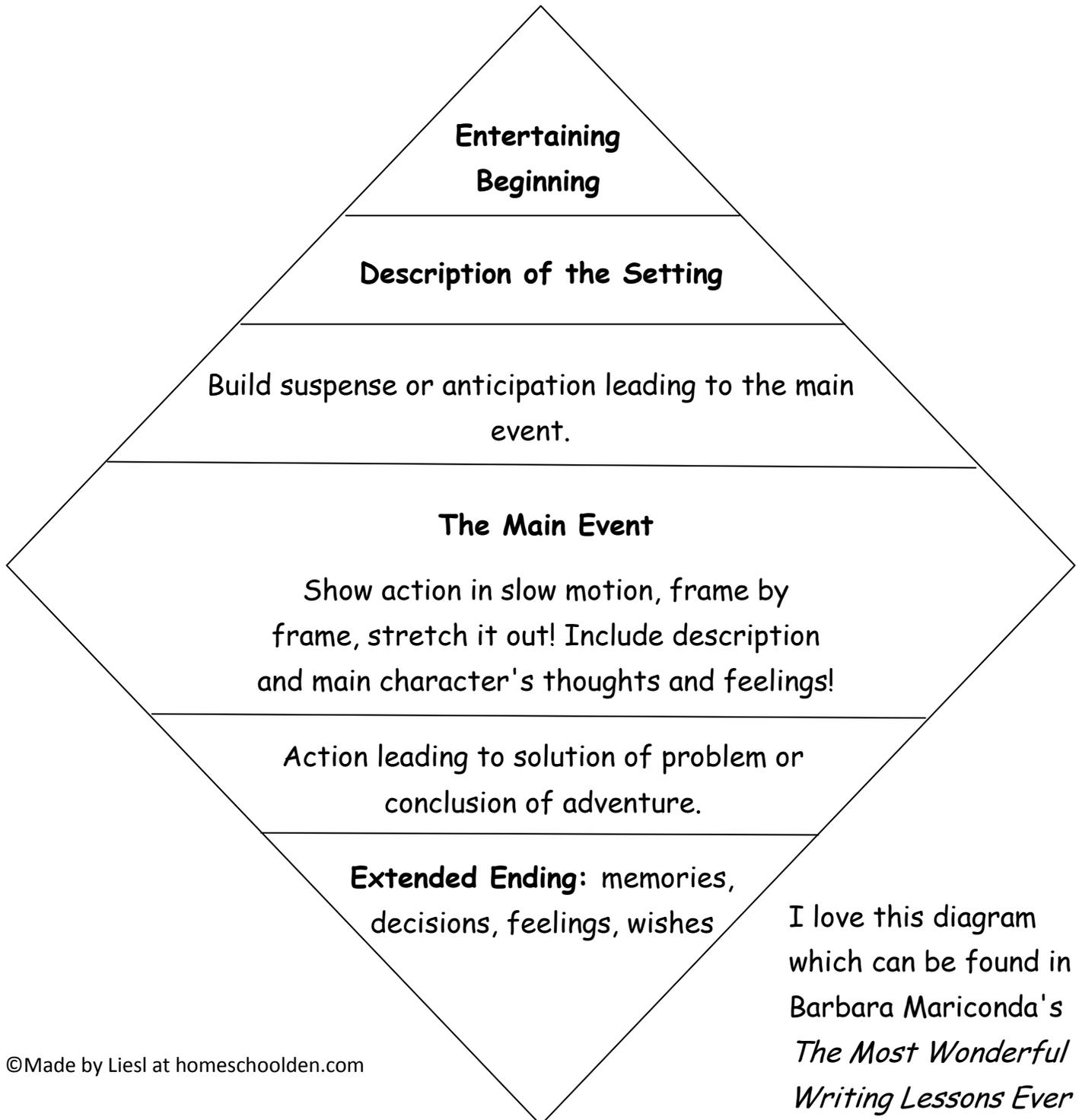
Conclusion/Resolution

Opening: Catchy, fun beginning "hooks" the reader and gets them to read on. If the beginning were not entertaining, the reader would not be interested and might not continue reading.

Make sure there is suspense, momentum or anticipation to keep the reader engaged. If there is conflict or a problem to be solved, we're often drawn in to the story and to see how things are resolved. We want to see the main character grow or change as a result of the main event. The story should be thought-provoking...

Would you make the same choices the character made?

Narrative Writing Diagram



I love this diagram which can be found in Barbara Mariconda's *The Most Wonderful Writing Lessons Ever*



Attention grabbing introductions:



Make a good first impression when you begin your stories! Your goal as a writer is to grab your attention, get you excited and build feelings of anticipation.

Put the character in the setting doing, saying or feeling something interesting. The character might do or say something memorable. The opening might reveal what the character is like. Your introduction could start with...

Dialogue

Action

Question

Thoughts and Feelings

Sound Effects

Show the character with a problem doing something interesting.

Begin your story as close to the main event as possible.

If you're going to write a story about a volcanic eruption, don't begin the story the moment you were born.

State the purpose of your story. The quicker you make what is happening clear, the more likely you'll be able to draw your reader into your story.

Using Descriptive Words and Elaborative Details



Details make writing more interesting.

color	size	material	age
texture	condition	shape	weight
feelings	sounds	facial expression	



See pages 50-52 in *The Most Wonderful Writing Lessons Ever*.

Show Don't Tell

Use details to create a visual image. Specific details allows the reader to experience and observe the fictional world through the main character's five senses. Use elaborative detail to create a movie in the mind of the reader. So rather than telling the reader, "The room was messy," the author might show how trash was spread all around the room. The room smelled like dirty socks... etc.

General vs. Specific Adjectives

Use specific not general adjectives.

Words like these mean very little:

nice	pretty	cool	awesome
fantastic	great	scary	beautiful

Show don't tell... describe a face in detail...

Go over How much to tell (p. 49 in The Most Wonderful Writing Lessons)

Go over Using Description Selectively

- Don't have a laundry list a big, green, scary, sad monster
- Don't just add in words -- a very, very, very hot day

Writing emotions -- don't just tell someone -- Fred was sad.

Show them... Tears streamed down his pink face. He breathed in giant heaving gulps of air.

Make a chart of what feelings look like (pp. 58-59)

Features of Non-Fiction Writing

Types of Print - Highlighted, italics, underlining and/or bold text -

Helps the reader identify important words or concepts

Headlines - Makes important words and concepts stand out

Captions - the words under a picture

Table of Contents - helps the reader identify key topics in the text

Index-an alphabetical listing of the items in a book and their page number

Glossary - an alphabetical list of important words and key terms. It gives the definitions of these terms to help the reader better understand the text

Charts, Table, Graphs - Helps the reader compare information and data by presenting it in a visual way

Lists - Helps organize information in a quick, concise manner

Maps - Helps the reader know where things are in the world

Labels-helps the reader identify the picture and its parts

Diagrams - helps the reader visualize the text

Close ups - Helps the reader see things in small detail

Cutaways - Helps the reader see how something works on the inside

Comparisons - Helps the reader understand the size of something by comparing it to something familiar

Photographs - Helps the reader see exactly what something looks like

Directions - Helps the reader understand the steps to follow in the activity, experiment or game

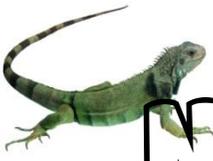


Non Fiction Features

Find an example of each of the following. Write down the book's title and page number.

Feature	Book Title	Page Number
Types of Print		
Headlines		
Captions		
Table of Contents		
Index		
Glossary		
Charts, Table, Graphs		
Lists		
Maps		
Labels		
Diagrams		
Close ups		
Cutaways		

Comparisons		
Photographs		
Directions		



Non-Fiction Writing



Focus: Make sure your topic or subject is small enough that you can tackle it effectively. You wouldn't want to tackle Ancient Egypt, but you might want to write about the Egyptian death masks.

Questions: Spend some time thinking about what you would want to know about your topic. Questioning is at the heart of research. Many authors begin their study with a topic with a question they have. If you ask questions in your writing, you draw the reader in and help place your readers in your writing.

Hook: Make sure you connect with your reader right from the beginning. Draw your reader in perhaps with an unusual fact, a question, an emotion. You might want to "share a secret" ... Many people know that xxx, but did you know that also yyy? Start with a rhetorical question (a question that everyone will answer yes or no to.) Use some of the facts you've learned to create a scene. Set the scene -- describe the environment, place or time period in detail.

Content: As you are writing, build your content by including rich description. Think about your five senses and include some of those details when writing about your topic. Be sure to search for interesting content. Include a few little-known, unusual or fun facts about your topic.

Comparisons: Many times it is useful to compare and contrast something unknown to something known. For example, you might explain that the world's largest flower has petals the size of dinner plates. These comparisons can help make "boring facts" more interesting. Humor can also help make your content more interesting.

Examples and Explanations: Again, by using examples in your writing you help to clarify points that might be new and difficult for your reader to understand. What if your reader doesn't know what the word "omnivore" means? if you offer a quick example of what it eats or explain what the term means, your reader will follow along better.

Anecdotes: Use a brief first-hand accounts to help illustrate a point or explain more about someone's character or experience. If you were writing about tornadoes, it would add a lot to your writing if you were to add in a short description of what happened to your aunt's house during a tornado or to explain how your cousins have to go to a "safe spot" in their house when the tornado warning goes off and to explain where that is.

Supporting features: You may want to include pictures or photos with captions, graphs, charts, diagrams with labels, cutaways, cartoon drawings, time lines, maps and so forth to help your reader visualize things better.

Great Resources for Finding Mentor Texts:

Story S-T-R-E-T-C-H-E-R-S for the Primary Grades: Activities to Expand Children's Favorite Books by Shirley C. Raines and Robert J. Canady

<http://www.primarygraffiti.com/2012/06/clever-school-teacher-sets-and-giveaway.html>

The Clever Teacher:

<http://www.cleverschoolteacher.com/Categories/61TK2Organization/tabid/203/List/1/ProductID/919504/CATReferrer/15/Default.aspx>

Books for teaching the 6 Traits: <http://www.cyberspaces.net/6traits/books.html>