

GRADE 7

Composition Practice

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1.1 Writing About What's Important to You

Key Information

When you do personal writing, you are free to focus on whatever is important to you. Personal writing offers you a way to examine and understand your innermost thoughts and feelings.

■ A. Writing About Myself

Write your thoughts and feelings about each of the following statements. You may write formally or informally. Let your feelings lead the way.

Accomplishments or personal qualities that I'm proud of _____

People or situations that make me laugh _____

Events that I hope will happen someday _____

Situations that make me feel nervous _____

Things that make me sad sometimes _____

■ B. Writing About What's Important

Choose one of the topics you listed in Part A. Write a paragraph telling about the topic and explaining why you feel the way you do. Try to include words and images that reflect your unique personal outlook. Use additional paper if necessary.

1.3 Writing to Celebrate

Key Information

Personal notes, letters, cards, and invitations are important links between you and your friends. When you take the time to write personal messages, you share a little bit of yourself with the important people in your life.

A. Getting Started

Did you ever put off writing a note or letter that you knew you should write? Sometimes getting started is the hardest part. Practice getting off to a good start by writing a first sentence for each of the following kinds of personal messages. Try to make your mood clear through your choice of words.

1. an invitation to a surprise party

2. a letter to a friend who moved away

3. a note to an adult family member, thanking him or her for a gift

4. an invitation to a school concert in which you'll perform

B. Writing a Personal Message

Finish one of the personal messages you began in Part A. Think about who will be reading your message. That will help you select the best words to use. If you choose the invitation, you'll need to include information about the time, date, and place of the event.

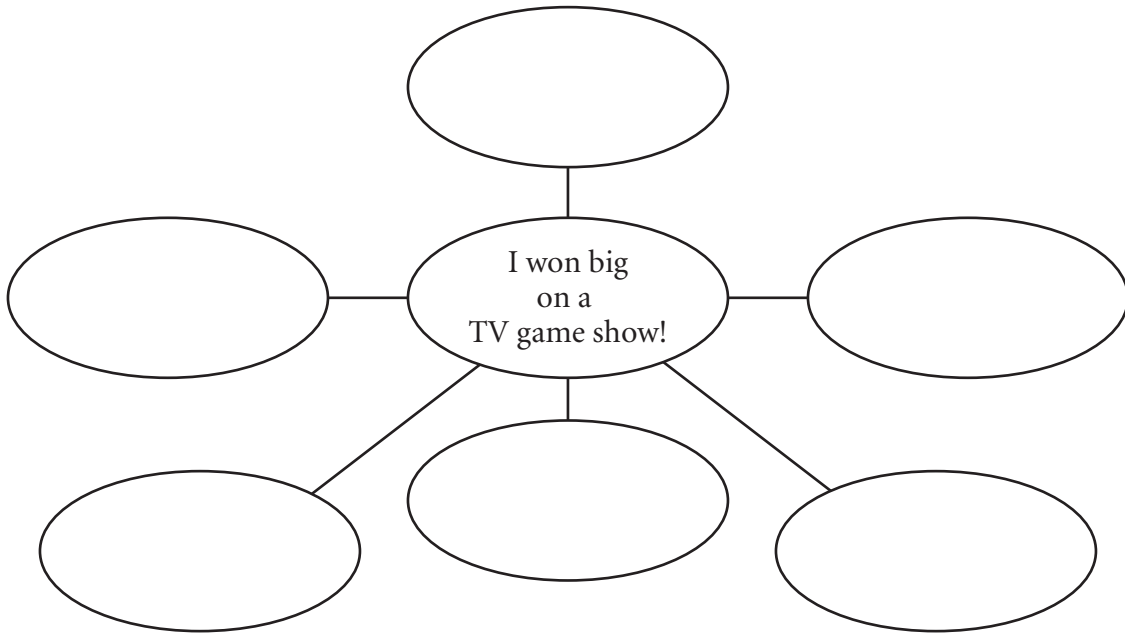
1.4 Writing About Yourself

Key Information

Sometimes you experience something so unusual or memorable that you want to describe it to a wide audience. In this case your writing must be more formal than other kinds of personal writing. Word choice and sentence structure should follow the accepted rules.

■ A. Planning Your Writing

Imagine that you have just appeared on a TV game show where you won prizes galore. You want to write about what happened to you as a contestant. Fill in the cluster diagram below with details of the experience and your feelings about it. Include details about what you saw, heard, and felt.



■ B. Writing About a Personal Experience

Think of a time when you felt a strong emotion such as joy, fear, or surprise. Write a short paragraph describing what happened and how you felt about it. Begin with a sentence that clearly shows the emotion you experienced.

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1.5

WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Responding to a Character

Key Information

Characters in stories you read often seem as real as your family and friends. As you learn about them, you form opinions about them and their actions.

■ A. Learning About a Character

Read the following excerpt about a girl who is determined to tame a wild horse. As you read, think about whether or not you would follow the same course of action that she takes.

I started to walk slowly toward the pony. I expected him to shy off to the far end of the corral. Instead he ran straight at me.

I was too surprised to move. . . . He charged right at me and bit my arm. I had on a heavy jacket, so it wasn't too bad, but it made me mad. I didn't have a rope so I grabbed his mane and jerked his head down. . . . After a minute he quieted down, but I got a look at his eyes, and I knew he was figuring what to do next.

Barbara Corcoran, *The Cherub and My Sainted Grandmother*

How would you have felt if you had been the girl?

Would you have acted the same way, or would you have done something else?

■ B. Writing a Response to a Character

Write a paragraph telling what you think about a character in a book or story. Select an important incident from the plot, and explain why you believe the character did the right thing in that situation. Be sure to tell who the character is and what story he or she appears in. Use additional paper if necessary.

1 Writing Process in Action

Key Information

Personal writing communicates your experiences and feelings. You can give your writing more impact by including details that make the experience or feeling come alive for your reader. Your writing should fit your intended audience.

A. Recording Details

Imagine that you have experienced each of the following situations. Think of three details that communicate what happened and how you felt about the experience. Record the details in the space provided.

1. a trip downtown _____

2. a day at the beach _____

3. a meal at a fast-food restaurant _____

4. a walk through the park _____

B. Writing for Your Audience

Write two paragraphs about an important moment in your life. The first paragraph should be written for only you or a good friend to read. The second should be written for a wider audience, such as the readers of the school newspaper. Use additional paper to jot down possible ideas for your paragraphs. When you have selected the important moment you plan to share, draft several sentences for each paragraph to help get yourself started. Be sure to keep each audience in mind as you write. Revise and edit your work, and write your finished paragraphs below or on another sheet of paper.

2.1 Using the Writing Process

Key Information

When developing a piece of writing, most writers go through a series of stages called the writing process.

Recognizing the Stages in the Writing Process

Review the writing process. Then answer questions about two writing projects.

Prewriting	Decide on a topic, an audience, and a purpose. Find information and organize the ideas.
Drafting	Put your thoughts down on paper in sentences and paragraphs.
Revising	Review the draft and change it to make the ideas clearer.
Editing/Proofreading	Correct errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
Publishing/Presenting	Share your writing with an audience.

1. Julie lost her cat. She hurriedly wrote a description of it and posted it on the bulletin board of a neighborhood store. Later, when she saw her sign, she noticed some spelling errors and unclear numerals in her phone number.

Was the prewriting stage hard or easy for Julie? Give reasons for your answer.

Julie did not write her notice for school, and it was not graded. Did her skipping the editing stage matter? Tell why or why not.

2. Chou's task was to summarize a twelve-page chapter in his textbook. His teacher challenged him to state all the important ideas in half a page. His first version took three pages. His fourth version, finally, met the challenge.

To which stage of the writing process did Chou give the most time? Explain.

Other students in Chou's class also summarized the chapter in less than half a page. Do you suppose all the papers were exactly the same? Why or why not?

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2.2 Prewriting: Finding and Exploring a Topic

Key Information

Keeping a notebook and brainstorming are two ways to find ideas to write about. Clustering can help in developing a topic. When you cluster, you write down the topic and any related ideas, drawing links to discover connections and areas of special interest.

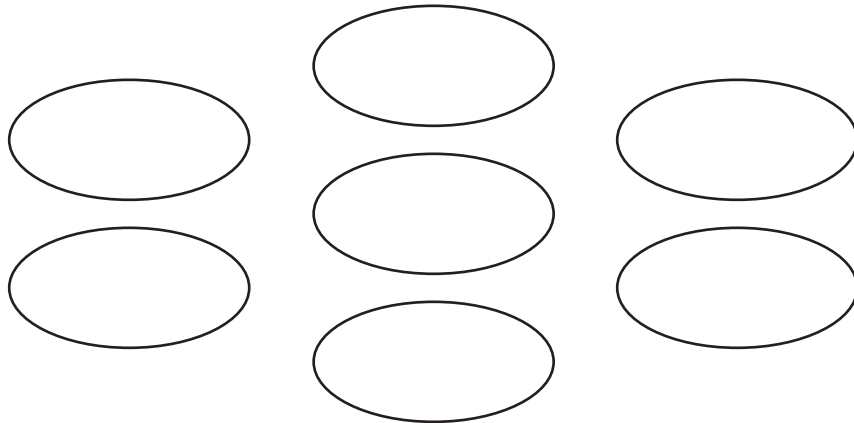
■ A. Brainstorming

Choose one of the general topics below. Circle your choice. In two or three minutes write ten ideas related to the topic. Do not work out connections or decide how strong a new idea is. Just write down a word or phrase about it.

plants wild animals pets sports movies music transportation

■ B. Clustering

Choose one idea you wrote in Part A. Write it in the center oval below. In the other ovals write names or phrases describing ideas, things, places, or people related to that idea. Draw lines between the ovals to show connections.



■ C. Making Connections

Choose one line you drew above. In what way or ways are the ideas in the two ovals connected? Write a sentence explaining the connection you had in mind.

2.3 Prewriting: Determining Purpose and Audience

Key Information

Most writing accomplishes one of these four purposes: telling a story, describing, informing, or persuading. A writer makes decisions about form, length, and style based on the purpose for his or her writing and the audience for whom the writing is intended.

A. Considering Purpose

Use the following questions to develop four different ideas about dogs. For each purpose describe an essay or story you might write.

- 1. Telling a Story: Have you ever had a pet dog? Has a dog ever given you a problem? What personal experiences have you had with dogs?

- 2. Describing: Is there a particular dog you could describe? A breed of dogs? Can you create a word picture of yourself with a certain dog?

- 3. Informing: Have you ever done research on dogs before choosing one as a pet? What do you know about training a dog or keeping it healthy?

- 4. Persuading: Could you persuade your parents to let you own a dog? Should new regulations be passed to protect dogs or to protect people from dogs?

B. Considering Audience

Choose one of the purposes for writing about dogs from Part A, and describe an audience for which you could write. Discuss the age of the audience, its attitude toward dogs, and anything else that would help you make your writing appealing to that audience.

2.4 Prewriting: Ordering Ideas

Key Information

After choosing your topic, purpose, and audience, you must decide what main ideas to cover. Then list reasons, events, or other details that you will use to develop each main idea. Finally, arrange your main ideas and your supporting details in an order that makes sense.

■ A. Stating Main Ideas

For each of these writing assignments, list three main ideas that you would use to achieve the purpose. Use complete sentences.

1. Describe the most interesting store you know.

2. Tell what happened during your first lesson in swimming (or sewing or another skill).

3. Explain how to play a game of your choice.

4. Persuade someone to join a certain hobby club.

■ B. Putting Ideas in Order

Review the main ideas you wrote for the four topics in Part A. Number the main ideas in the order in which you would cover them in a piece of writing.

2.5 Drafting: Getting It in Writing

Key Information

Strong prewriting notes often ease you into writing or drafting. Other techniques that help include imagining that you are writing as if to a friend, beginning at the easiest part, and concentrating on one step at a time. During drafting you should try to get all your ideas down quickly.

Turning Notes into Paragraphs

Below are notes for an explanatory essay about Elijah McCoy, followed by the essay's introduction. Use the notes to write the next two paragraphs of the essay. Use additional paper if necessary.

McCoy's life

- Born about 1844 in Canada
- Parents escaped from slavery
- Studied engineering in Scotland
- Worked as fireman-oilman for railroads in Michigan
- Invented automatic lubricator in early 1870s
- Success of lubricator made him wealthy

McCoy's invention

- Lubricator oiled locomotive parts continuously.
- Stops for oiling were no longer necessary.
- Trains could run on schedule.
- McCoy adapted lubricator for other machines to make them run steadily.
- McCoy's lubricators worked better than copies made by other people.
- Machinery owners wanted only McCoy's original lubricators and asked for "the real McCoy."

Have you ever heard the phrase "the real McCoy"? It means "the real thing" or "the best of its kind," not a substitute or imitation. Many people who study language believe the phrase originally referred to Elijah McCoy, an African American engineer.

2.6 Revising: Evaluating a Draft

Key Information

When evaluating a first draft, identify the main idea, and decide how well the writing supports that idea. Determine whether the writing accomplishes its purpose, and look for both good points and weaknesses. As a peer reviewer, suggest possible improvements.

■ A. Criticizing Politely

As Catherine's peer reviewer, you noted that her rhyming story for kindergarten children is very engaging. However, some of the vocabulary is too hard for little kids, and the rhymes get in the way of the plot. Make suggestions to help Catherine improve her paper, and point out any strengths. Remember that you should offer your comments respectfully.

■ B. Reviewing a Draft

Here is a first draft of a report for a social studies class. Read the draft, and evaluate it by answering the questions that follow on a separate sheet of paper.

Think of the Netherlands (Holland), and you think of windmills, canals, dikes, and wooden shoes. The Netherlands is known for these things because of the history of the land. You see, almost one-half of the Netherlands was made by humans. These areas are called polders. Polders are made by pumping out the water in a vast area of water. A dike is built around the area to be drained. The water is then pumped into a network of canals that drain into the sea. Windmills were used to provide the power to pump the water from an area and to keep the water pumped out. The canals also served as waterways. Dikes also help to keep water out and keep water from flooding the polders. The network of canals in the Netherlands serves to drain or channel the water to the sea. The famous wooden shoes developed because these wooden shoes protect the feet from damp or wet earth better than leather ones. Much of the culture or spirit of the Netherlands is deeply rooted in the creation of polders. The people of the Netherlands have continuously battled the sea by "building" land and keeping it from flooding. The Netherlands is densely populated.

1. What do you understand the main idea to be? Does it come across clearly?
2. Do the details in the paper support the main idea?
3. What is the writer's purpose? Does the writer achieve his or her purpose?
4. Which parts, if any, seem unnecessary, confusing, or out of place?
5. Suggest possible improvements.

2.7 Revising: Making Paragraphs Effective

Key Information

When revising, give special attention to main ideas. You may wish to change paragraph breaks or rearrange sentences to put all the details about a single main idea in the same paragraph. You may also choose to link main ideas by adding transitions, such as *later*, *for example*, and *as a result*.

Improving a Paragraph

Examine the following paragraph, and answer the questions about it.

My grandmother’s embroidery is the most beautiful stitching you can find anywhere. My mother can sew pretty well, but she doesn’t have time for it. All the women in Grandma’s village sewed clothes for themselves and their families. Grandma learned how to embroider when she was growing up in Vietnam. As a young girl, she learned to make tiny stitches and to sew beautiful designs. My stitches aren’t tiny at all. She had a good reason to practice hard.

1. Is the main idea of the paragraph stated in a topic sentence? If so, write the topic sentence below. If the main idea is not stated, write a phrase or sentence identifying it.

2. Do all the sentences support the main idea? If not, which sentence(s) should be deleted? Identify any such sentence by its first three words.

3. Are all the details in the best possible order? Would adding (or deleting) a topic sentence improve the paragraph? Revise the paragraph and write your revision in the space provided.

2.8 Revising: Creating Sentence Variety

Key Information

Improving individual sentences makes your writing clearer and more lively. When you revise a draft, change fragments into sentences, and combine short, choppy sentences that express closely related ideas. Break run-ons and over-long sentences into shorter, simpler sentences. To avoid monotony, vary the length of your sentences and the order of your words and phrases.

■ A. Improving Sentences

Answer the questions, and combine the sentences where possible.

1. This recipe is for pancakes. It is an easy recipe. It uses canned pumpkin.

Are the sentences on the same topic and closely related? _____

If so, combine them in one sentence. _____

2. Beethoven was born in 1770. Shakespeare was born in 1564.

Are the sentences on the same topic and closely related? _____

If so, combine them in one sentence, using the word *and*. _____

3. Some breeds of hunting dogs are very old. The Salukis are one example.

Are the sentences on the same topic and closely related? _____

If so, combine them in one sentence, using the words *such as*. _____

■ B. Improving a Paragraph

Revise this paragraph according to the directions. Write the improved paragraph on a separate sheet of paper.

The story of Cinderella appears in many cultures. The heroine in the Native American version was called Little Burnt Face. The Chinese Cinderella relied on a talking fish instead of a fairy godmother. The version best known in America is from Europe. The French writer Charles Perrault included it in his collection of fairy tales. The book was published in 1697.

1. Move the phrase “in the Native American version” to the beginning of the second sentence.
2. Move the phrase “instead of a fairy godmother” to the beginning of the third sentence.
3. Gain variety in sentence length by combining the last three sentences in one sentence that includes “from a collection of fairy tales by.”

2.9 Editing/Proofreading: Making Final Adjustments

Key Information
Your last review of your writing is a time to look for errors in spelling, grammar, usage, punctuation, and capitalization. You should indicate corrections with proofreading symbols. Finally, make a clean copy of your work.

A. Identifying Errors

In the following paragraph decide what, if anything, is wrong with each underlined word or phrase. In the space provided explain what the error is and how to correct it. If nothing is wrong, write *correct as is*.

It is the year (1) 400 the kingdom of Ghana is the most powerful in western Africa. It (2) controls rich mines of salt and gold, and caravans of merchants cross the (3) sahara (4) evry few weeks with goods to trade for these (5) resource. Cities are growing (6) wear the traders meet, with jobs for many (7) poeple. The (8) taxs collected on trade (9) supports the army and the (10) kings court.

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

B. Using Proofreader's Marks

Copy this sentence exactly as it appears. Then, with a pen or pencil of a different color, mark it with proofreader's symbols for needed corrections.

my brother his best freind and i went DOWntown to see a mvie

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2.10 Publishing/Presenting: Sharing Your Writing

Key Information

There are many ways to present your finished writing. Depending on your purpose and audience, you may choose from such written forms as a typewritten paper, a handwritten message, and a poster or such oral forms as a skit, a reading, and a song.

Planning To Present

For each of the following situations, tell how you would change or add to the writing to present it effectively in the new form.

1. For English class you wrote an essay on fire safety. Now you want to submit it to an essay contest sponsored by the local newspaper.

2. You wrote a story for your little brother, and he wants to share it with his friends at nursery school. You decide to make it into a picture book.

3. For home economics class, you wrote directions for using the new microwave oven. Your teacher asks you to present the directions to two other classes. You decide to get everyone's attention by presenting your directions in rhyme form.

4. Everyone in science class had to do a project for the school science fair. You won a prize and have been asked to present your project and its report to parents at a PTA meeting.

2 Writing Process in Action

Key Information

By working through the steps in the writing process, you can find a topic you will enjoy writing about and produce a work that your readers will enjoy reading.

■ A. Prewriting: Brainstorming

For each topic use brainstorming to come up with at least three related ideas.

1. jokes _____

2. creatures that live in water _____

3. travel _____

4. things people wear on their heads _____

■ B. Prewriting: Choosing Purpose and Audience

Choose one of the ideas above—or combine two—about which you could write a short story. Write a sentence or two describing what your story will be about. Indicate whether the story will be about an actual or imagined event. Name your purpose and your audience.

■ C. Drafting

Draft the first paragraph or two of the story you described in Part B. Use additional paper if necessary.

■ D. Revising and Editing/Proofreading

Using your original draft in Part C, revise and edit your story. Use proofreader's marks as needed to make your corrections.

3.1 Writing to Show, Not Tell

Key Information

Descriptive details help your readers see, hear, smell, taste, and feel the things you are describing. Details allow your readers to create clear images in their minds.

A. Using Your Senses

For each of the following persons, places, or things, think of three details you could use to describe it. Then record the sense to which each detail appeals most strongly.

1. a warm spring day

Detail 1: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 2: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 3: _____ Sense: _____

2. a zoo

Detail 1: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 2: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 3: _____ Sense: _____

3. a busy city street

Detail 1: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 2: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 3: _____ Sense: _____

4. a bus station or airport

Detail 1: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 2: _____ Sense: _____

Detail 3: _____ Sense: _____

B. Using Details in a Description

Choose one of the subjects in Part A, and write a descriptive paragraph. Begin with a topic sentence that identifies the main idea. Write a sentence for each of the details you listed. Make sure you appeal to your reader's senses. Use additional paper if necessary.

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3.2 Combining Observation and Imagination

Key Information

You use your senses to gain information about the world around you. When you write, you include details your senses have gathered to describe things you know well. These same details can also help you describe things you can only imagine.

A. Describing an Imaginary Creature

Imagine a new creature—one that only you can see. Once you have a clear image of the creature in your mind, describe it. For each sense list at least two details.

Sight What does the creature look like? Describe its size, color, shape, or movements.

Hearing Does the creature make any sounds? Do the sounds resemble any familiar sounds made by real animals, machines, or people?

Smell Do you associate any smells with the creature? Are they pleasant or unpleasant?

Taste Does the creature eat anything tasty? Do you taste something in the air when the creature is near?

Touch Does the creature have fur? Is it covered with feathers or scaly skin? Use details from real animals or even machines to describe how it feels.

B. Writing a Description

Write a paragraph describing your imaginary creature for a young child. Include at least one detail for each sense.

3.3 Choosing Details to Create a Mood

Key Information

When you write a description, the details you choose determine how your reader will feel about your subject. Depending on the details you include, you can create a feeling of excitement and happiness or a mood of anxiety and fear. Be aware of the mood you want to create when you decide which details to include.

A. Appreciating the Power of Word Choice

Each of the following can be described in different ways. For each item think of details that would help to create the suggested moods.

1. a shopping mall
cheerful, happy _____
confusing, unfriendly _____
2. a museum
intriguing, educational _____
mysterious, weird _____
3. a forest path
scary, forbidding _____
peaceful, welcoming _____

B. Creating Moods in Descriptions

Choose one of the settings from Part A, or think of one of your own. Write two short paragraphs, each with a different mood. Include details that make your intended mood clear. Use additional paper if necessary.

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3.4 Organizing Details in a Description

Key Information

When you describe something, arrange details in an order that makes sense. Explain where objects are in relation to one another, and lead readers from one thing to the next. In this way you help your readers see a clear and logical mental picture.

■ A. Using Transition Words and Phrases

Below is a list of transition words and phrases. Your challenge is to use as many of them as you can in describing your classroom. You may also use other, similar words or phrases not on the list. When you are finished, exchange descriptions with a classmate to see how he or she completed the assignment.

behind	surrounding	below	leaning against
above	on top of	inside	at the top of
beside	in front of	outside	just before

■ B. Arranging Details

Decide on the most appropriate way to arrange details to describe an object. For example, if you were describing a tree, would you start from the top and work your way to the roots? Would you do the opposite? Would you start with the trunk and go to the branches? Think of an object to describe. List six details, and then decide on the order of your presentation. Finally, number the details in order.

3.5 Describing a Person

Key Information

How do you get to know people? Usually you see them first. You notice details such as their height, their age, their eyes, and what they are wearing. Very soon you start paying attention to how they act, too. When you write a description to introduce readers to characters, you include details about the same things. You describe not only how the characters look but also how they act.

■ A. Describing How a Person Looks

Imagine the following kinds of people. Create a picture of each person in your mind, and then list five details to describe how this person looks.

1. a bus driver

2. a toddler with his or her mother at the supermarket

3. an elderly woman doing gardening

4. a waiter at a restaurant

5. a television newscaster

■ B. Describing How a Person Acts

Choose a person you know well, such as a friend or a family member. Think of five things the person does that would help a stranger understand what kind of person he or she is. Briefly list the details in the space below. Then write a topic sentence for a descriptive paragraph about that person. Your topic sentence should include an adjective that the details will support.

3.6 Relating a Poem to Your Experience

Key Information
A poet shares a thought or experience with the reader through the precise choice of words. Often a poet uses sensory details that you, the reader, can relate to your own experience.

A. Feeling What the Poet Experienced

The image a poet suggests often communicates the poet’s feelings. Read the following stanza from “The Star-Spangled Banner,” and answer the questions that follow.

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe’s haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o’er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning’s first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream:
‘Tis the star-spangled banner! Oh long may it wave
O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

1. Upon seeing the flag still flying, the poet expresses relief and joy. What does this detail suggest about the speaker’s attitude toward the flag and the country it represents?

2. Recall a time when you were eager or anxious for something to happen. Was it a stressful time or a calming time? What were you aware of? Describe how you felt.

B. Expressing What You Experience

What emotion or attitude does each of these activities suggest to you? Choose two of them. Write at least three sensory details that indicate whether you enjoy, dislike, fear, or have other feelings about the activity.

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| swimming | walking in snow/rain | eating radishes/broccoli |
| washing dishes | touching velvet/leather | hearing traffic sounds |

1. Activity: _____
Sensory details: _____

2. Activity: _____
Sensory details: _____

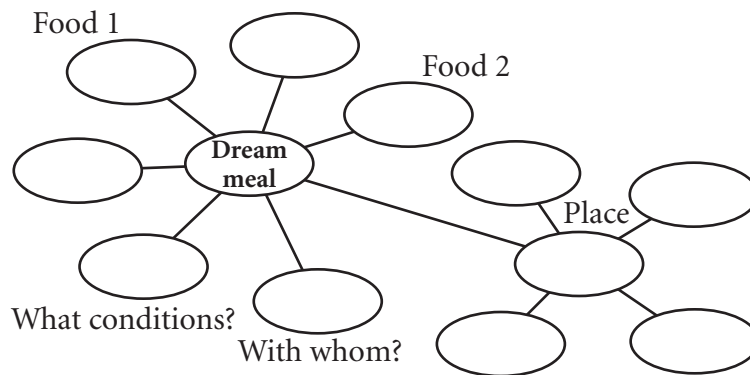
3 Writing Process in Action

Key Information

When writing a description, include precise nouns and modifiers that let the reader know both the facts about the thing and a particular feeling or mood you relate to it.

A. Prewriting: Clustering

What do you like best to eat? Where? With whom? Under what conditions? For example, would you prefer pizza with a crowd of friends in a pizza parlor blasting rock music, or would you prefer a quiet breakfast at home with your family? Writing a description of your dream meal is more than a simple listing of foods. Copy this cluster diagram on a separate sheet of paper, and add to it all the nouns, adjectives, and adverbs you can think of to describe the experience. Be sure to include details about everything you would see, hear, taste, smell, and touch during your dream meal.



B. Ordering Information

Review your cluster diagram. In writing your description, do you want to discuss each topic—such as Food 1, Food 2, and Place—separately, as indicated on the diagram? Or would you use time order, discussing each person or thing as it came on the scene? Perhaps you would choose order of importance, with a description of the main people and things first and the optional ones last. In a sentence or two describe the order you think will work best.

C. Drafting

The food editor of your local newspaper has asked readers to write in about their idea of the perfect meal. Choose one of the main ideas you intend to cover. On another sheet of paper, write one paragraph based on your cluster diagram and your organizational plan.

4.1 Telling a Good Story

Key Information

A good story involves these elements: characters that the reader can care about, a plot (series of events) that keeps the reader wanting to see what happens next, and a setting (place and time) that fits well with the characters and the events.

■ A. Identifying Who, When, and Where

Think of three stories you remember well from books or movies. For each story tell the most important character and the time and place of the action.

1. Title _____

Main Character _____

When _____

Where _____

2. Title _____

Main Character _____

When _____

Where _____

3. Title _____

Main Character _____

When _____

Where _____

■ B. Determining What Happens

Choose one of the stories above, but change the time and place.

Title _____

New Time of Action _____

New Place of Action _____

Now think about how changing the time and place might affect the main character and the events. Write a paragraph about how the story would change. Use additional paper if necessary.

New Plot _____

4.2 Exploring Story Ideas

Key Information

Most good stories involve some kind of problem and then show how the characters in the story solve the problem. Various events in the story either make the problem worse or help bring it to an end.

Developing an Adventure Story

You are planning an exciting adventure full of dangers and narrow escapes. The main character is a student like you, and the setting at the beginning of the story is a town like your own. Choose one of the problems sketched below. Then use the questions that follow to outline your story.

- A master thief thinks that an old cane in the main character's attic is hollow and holds the key to a treasure chest in a distant land. The main character sees the thief break into the house to steal the cane.
- When a time traveler from the future tries to steal the cat belonging to the main character, he or she learns that in the future there are no cats, and the people of the future want them.

1. What has happened before the story begins? _____

2. What will happen next . . . and after that . . . and after that? Describe at least three events that lead to the solution. (Some events may make the problem worse.) _____

3. What is the solution to the problem? _____

4.3 Using Time Order in a Story

Key Information

It is easy for your reader to follow your story if you tell about events in time order, the order in which they occurred. Transition words are a way to show time relationships between events. Some examples are *before*, *after*, *until*, *then*, *next*, *first*, and *finally*.

A. Using Transition Words

Change the order of the sentences below so that the narrative makes sense. Revise or combine the sentences to make the action clearer. Add any necessary words, including transition words. Copy the sentences in your new order.

Mixed-Up Order

Juan looked up at the night sky. Quickly he turned. He heard footsteps. They hid the moon. They revealed it again. There was George. He stood there, wondering about the darkness of the night. The clouds rolled by. George quietly handed Juan a letter. Juan grabbed George's arm. George turned to leave. "Is there any message?" Juan inquired desperately.

Revised Order

B. Writing a Series of Events

Think about a possible setting for the event described in the first sentence below. Brainstorm about events that might come before it and others that might come after it. Turn your ideas into a story by completing the other sentences.

Jake barked and woke me up.

Before _____

he started growling menacingly.

While _____

I turned quickly.

Then _____

Much later, _____

Composition Practice

Name Class Date

4.4 Writing Dialogue to Develop Characters

Key Information

Dialogue—the exact words that characters say—shows the characters’ personalities. When writing dialogue, have each character say things that suggest what he or she is like. Set off the exact words with quotation marks. You also can describe how the character says the words.

Putting Words into Characters’ Mouths

You are writing a story with two characters. Here is what you have planned so far:

A teenage girl is walking along the bank of a creek during a rainstorm. She is lost. Finally she sees a house and stops there for help. An elderly man opens the door, but he doesn’t want to let the girl in. As they talk, the creek suddenly overflows its banks and rushes toward them.

First, think about and describe the personality you want to show for each character.

Now write what the girl and the elderly man say as they meet and as they see their danger. Remember that dialogue should suggest what a character is like.

Composition Practice

Name Class Date

4.5 Drafting a Story

Key Information

Most writers find it easier to draft a story after they first plan the most important details about plot, characters, and setting. Then, as they draft, they concentrate on one element and bring others into the story as they are needed. Many writers try to write a first draft without pausing to correct punctuation, grammar, or spelling until the draft is complete.

A. Using a Plan

Using the plot, characters, and setting described in the chart, add your own details.

Plot: A kindergarten boy constantly tags after his older brother, who keeps trying to escape him. One day the little boy disappears while trailing his brother, and the older boy has to find him.

Characters: Five-year-old Nelson admires everything his older brother does. Thirteen-year-old Enrique is irritated and embarrassed by Nelson's attention but is still very concerned about him.

Setting: A high-rise apartment building in a big city

B. Drafting Your Story

Now draft a story, using the details from the chart. Use additional paper if necessary.

Composition Practice

Name Class Date

4.7 Responding to a Story

Key Information

When you read a story that affects you or excites your imagination, you can choose to respond to it in writing. You can use any form of writing for your response, including poetry, an essay, your own story about the situation or characters in the original story, a letter to a character, or a play telling the story.

■ A. Advising a Character

Choose one of your favorite stories. Imagine that one of its characters decides, during the action, to write to a newspaper for advice. Newspapers have columns on such topics as household repairs, social graces, personal problems, cooking hints, money matters, and travel tips. You might look at a local paper for ideas. Choose a column, and write your character's letter requesting advice. Briefly explain the character's dilemma.

■ B. Writing a Response

Now write the columnist's reply.

4 Writing Process in Action

Key Information

Before you begin to write a story, form a clear mental picture of your main characters. Get to know them. Decide how they will look and what they would be likely to say or do. If you know your characters well, the story will be easier to write than you think.

■ A. Predicting How a Character Would Act

How would one of your favorite characters from books, movies, or television shows react if he or she were a student at your school? Choose a fictional character who appeals to you. Follow him or her through a typical day in your classes. What would the character do and say? Would he or she fit in? How would others react to the character? On another sheet of paper, write details and thoughts about what might happen. Also jot down notes from conversations you might hear on this unusual day.

■ B. Writing a Story

On your own paper write a story about the chosen character and what happens to him or her during a day at your school. Use the notes, details, and dialogue you developed in Part A.

■ C. Checking Your Story

Ask a friend to read your draft of the story. Have your friend comment on whether he or she could picture the story events and where more realistic details could be added. You may want the story to be funny. If so, exaggerate the character's actions and others' reactions to the character. Revise your story as necessary.

■ D. Making One More Check

Reread your story. Is it clear and vivid? If you have used dialogue, make sure you have used quotation marks and commas correctly. Also, make sure it is clear who is speaking and when. Check for any errors in grammar and spelling.

■ E. Publishing/Presenting

You may want to share your story with a friend.

Composition Practice

Name Class Date

5.1 Giving Information and Explanations

Key Information

Writing that explains or informs is called expository writing. Some kinds of expository writing explain how to do something or how something works. Other kinds of expository writing explain what something is, how things are alike or different, or what has happened.

A. Getting Ready to Write

If you were asked to write an explanatory report about each of the following topics, what would you need to know before you started to write? List two questions you would try to answer. Then think of two possible sources for that information.

1. How to program a VCR

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

Source 1: _____ Source 2: _____

2. What life was like in the United States during World War II

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

Source 1: _____ Source 2: _____

3. How your city or town government works

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

Source 1: _____ Source 2: _____

4. A comparison of mountain bikes and racing bicycles

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

Source 1: _____ Source 2: _____

B. Beginning to Write

Choose one of the topics you thought about in Part A. Consult one of the sources you listed and try to find the answers to your questions. If you cannot find the answers consult the other source. Record your answers in the space provided.

Topic you chose: _____

Answer to question: _____

Sources consulted: _____

5.2 Organizing Informative Writing

Key Information

In expository writing, you should organize information so that the reader can follow what you are saying. You can organize information in several ways, depending on your topic. For example, events can be organized in the order they happened. Facts in explanations can be organized in order of importance. Places can be described in order of location or position.

■ A. Deciding on the Best Order

Read the following topics. Decide on the best way to order information for each topic. Three ways of organizing information are presented below. List the topic under the appropriate organizing method. Then suggest an original topic best suited to each method of organization.

Topics:

- What happened each day of the Battle of Gettysburg
- Reasons why the United States should continue the space program
- A visitor's guide to the attractions in Yellowstone National Park
- Why everyone should recycle cans and glass
- The story of the Pilgrims' first winter in America
- A description of items stored in a stockroom

Order in Which Events Happened

Your Topic: _____

Order of Importance

Your Topic: _____

Order of Position or Location

Your Topic: _____

■ B. Arranging Information in Order

Decide on a topic you know well. First, write a topic sentence introducing your topic to the reader. Then choose one of the orders above, or think of another logical order for your information. Think of at least three details about the topic and number the details in the order that makes the most sense. Use a separate sheet of paper.

5.3 Writing About Similarities and Differences

Key Information

To explain something more clearly, it sometimes helps to compare it or contrast it with something else. When you compare things, you point out the similarities, or likenesses, between them. When you contrast things, you point out the differences between them.

A. Seeing Likenesses and Differences

Think about the following pairs of things. The members of each pair are similar in some ways and different in others. Write down two ways in which they are alike and two ways in which they are different.

- 1. dog and cat
Similarities: _____
Differences: _____
- 2. buses and trains
Similarities: _____
Differences: _____
- 3. newspapers and magazines
Similarities: _____
Differences: _____
- 4. television and radio
Similarities: _____
Differences: _____
- 5. a tree and a bush
Similarities: _____
Differences: _____

B. Writing a Comparison or a Contrast

On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph comparing or contrasting two things. Begin with a topic sentence that explains whether you see these things as more alike or more different. Include at least two supporting details. You may refer to Part A for ideas for your topic.

5.4 Explaining How Something Works

Key Information

When you explain a process, pay special attention to the order of the steps. Your readers depend on you to help them understand the sequence in which the steps take place—what comes first, second, next, and last.

■ A. Analyzing a Process

You may not realize it, but you follow many sequences, or series, of steps when you perform familiar daily tasks. List at least three steps that are involved in the following familiar processes. Write the steps in the correct order.

1. Checking a book out of the library: _____

2. Preparing a salad: _____

3. Seeing a movie at the theater: _____

4. Brushing your teeth: _____

■ B. Writing About a Process

Write an explanation of one of the processes in Part A. Select an audience for the topic. Be sure to use transition words such as *first*, *next*, *then*, *while*, and *finally* to help your readers follow the sequence of the steps. Use additional paper if necessary.

Topic: _____

Audience: _____

Explanation: _____

5.5 Identifying Cause and Effect

Key Information

A cause is an identifiable condition or event. An effect is something that happens as a direct result of the condition or event. When you write, be sure that you accurately identify cause and effect.

■ A. Seeing Possible Effects

Each of the following events could be the cause of something else happening. For each cause, write a possible effect.

1. Lightning strikes an electrical power station.

Effect: _____

2. The musical group practices every night before the concert.

Effect: _____

3. The store advertises a 50-percent-off sale on popular shoes.

Effect: _____

4. The football team loses its star quarterback.

Effect: _____

5. Bus fares increase by 50 cents today.

Effect: _____

6. Rainfall has been well below average for three straight years.

Effect: _____

■ B. Writing About Cause and Effect

Your family has planned a reunion picnic today, but you wake up to a steady down-pour of rain. Write a paragraph explaining at least two possible effects the rain can have on your day. Make sure that the rain is the cause of what happens next.

5.6 Reports: Narrowing a Topic

Key Information

A research report is a kind of expository writing that requires a great deal of planning. First you must select a topic that interests you. Then you must narrow the topic so that you can cover it adequately. Thinking ahead about sources for the information you need in order to write your report may help you narrow the topic.

A. Narrowing Topics

Read the broad topics listed below. For each broad topic think of four narrower, more specific, topics. Write them on the lines.

- Forms of transportation _____

- Events in the news _____

- Popular pets _____

- Occupations _____

- Pop music _____

B. Narrowing a Topic Further

Choose one of the narrowed topics you wrote in Part A. Narrow it even further. Think of two possible topics that are even more specific than the first one. These topics should be aimed at particular audiences.

First Topic: _____

Narrower Topic 1: _____

Audience: _____

Narrower Topic 2: _____

Audience: _____

5.7 Reports: Turning to Helpful Sources

Key Information

Research reports should present accurate details about a topic. Before you begin to write a report, you need to gather details from a variety of sources. To be sure you will remember the details correctly, you need to take good notes.

■ A. Locating Sources

Visit the school or local library. Find a book or an encyclopedia article from which you can gather information on each of these topics. For each book write down the title and the author. For each encyclopedia article, write down the title of the encyclopedia, the volume number, and the pages of the article.

1. Solar energy

Book title: _____

Encyclopedia article: _____

2. The art of quilting

Book title: _____

Encyclopedia article: _____

3. The Great Pyramid of Egypt

Book title: _____

Encyclopedia article: _____

4. The life of Maria Tallchief

Book title: _____

Encyclopedia article: _____

5. Any topic that interests you: _____

Book title: _____

Encyclopedia article: _____

■ B. Taking Notes

For one of the topics listed in Part A, find a piece of information that you can use in a report. Create a sample note card on another sheet of paper or on an index card. Begin with the topic you are researching. Include the source's title, publication date, and name of author. Be sure to write your notes in your own words. Copying other people's words exactly without giving them credit is unfair and illegal.

5.8 Reports: Conducting an Interview

Key Information

Sometimes people are your best source of information for a research report. An interview with an expert can give you facts and a personal view of your topic. When you interview someone, prepare carefully. Ask open-ended questions that require more than a yes-or-no answer. After the interview look over your notes, and add information you might not have had time to record during the interview.

■ A. Interviewing an Expert

Imagine you are preparing a report on a health or fitness issue. Plan an interview with a doctor, a nurse, or another medical professional. Write six questions that you would ask that person.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

■ B. Writing About an Interview

Ask a friend to pretend he or she is a medical professional while you conduct an interview. Use your questions from Part A. Now write a paragraph reporting on the interview. Begin with a topic sentence that lets readers know that your interviewee is an expert in the area of your chosen topic. Imagine that you are writing this report for the school newspaper.

5.9 Reports: Organizing and Drafting

Key Information

When you have completed your research, it is time to write a thesis statement, organize your information, and write a first draft. A thesis statement is a sentence that states the report's central idea. An outline is a good way to arrange your details in an order that makes sense. The draft is your first attempt to present your information in a clear and entertaining way.

■ A. Writing a Thesis Statement

Write a possible thesis statement for each of the following topics. Remember that a thesis statement tells what you want to show, prove, or explain about the topic.

1. Endangered species _____

2. Special effects in movies _____

3. School assemblies _____

4. Your home town _____

■ B. Writing an Introduction

Choose one of the topics in Part A. Write an introduction that will catch the reader's interest. Your introduction should also show where you stand on the topic. Do you find the topic complex or interesting? Does the topic remind you of an issue you feel strongly about? Do you know much about a certain aspect of the topic? Write your introduction in the space provided.

5.10 Reports: Revising and Presenting

Key Information

After your report is written, look it over as if you were reading it for the first time. Remember that inaccurate statistics and details can ruin your report. Unclear or boring writing can cause your readers to become confused or make them lose interest. When you are satisfied that your report is the best work you can do, share it with others in an attractive form.

■ A. Revising a Report

Below are notes and a body paragraph of a report that was written from them. Check the paragraph for accuracy. Make sure all details are correct and all quotations are accurate. Mark any changes.

Notes:

- Graduated from University of Texas in 1968
- Taught in Germany for two years
- Has taught grades 3, 4, and 5
- Knows three languages—English, Spanish, and a little German
- Is volunteering to tutor students after school

Paragraph:

Mrs. Garcia has dedicated her life to the profession she loves. After graduating from the University of Tennessee in 1969, she taught in Germany for three years. There she learned her third language—German. She also speaks French and English. Mrs. Garcia has taught many grades including first, second, third, and fourth grades. This fine educator is now volunteering her free time to tutor students after school.

■ B. Writing the Final Draft

Rewrite the paragraph you revised above. Make sure that all the changes you noted in revising are included.

5.11 Comparing Two People

Key Information

Characters you read about, either fictional or real, can be compared and contrasted to other characters. You can use details from your reading to spot similarities and differences between characters.

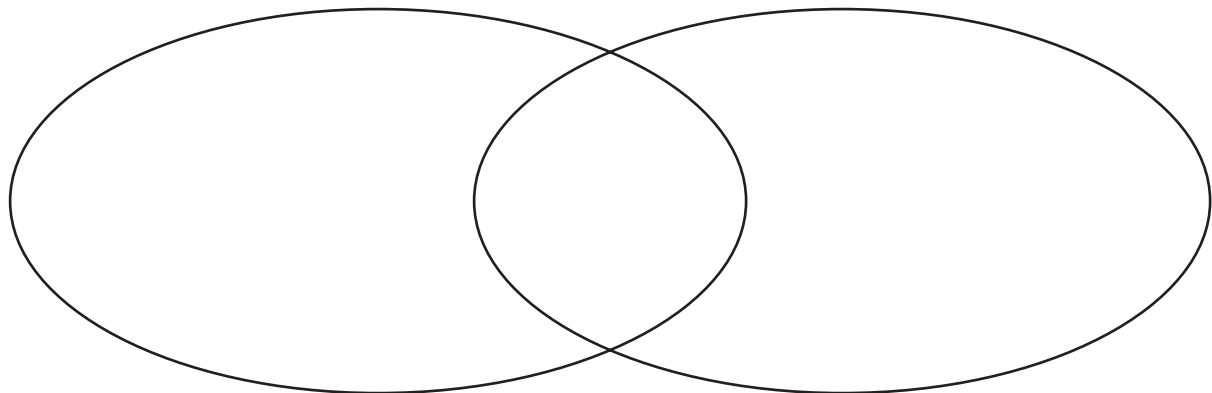
A. Looking for Similarities and Differences

Read the following paragraphs. Then fill in the Venn diagram to show how Soda and Darry are alike and how they are different.

Soda . . . never cracks a book at all, and my oldest brother, Darrel, who we call Darry, works too long and hard to be interested in a story or drawing a picture. . . .

Soda tries to understand, at least, which is more than Darry does. But then, Soda understands everything, almost. Like he's never hollering at me all the time the way Darry is, or treating me as if I was six instead of fourteen. I love Soda more than I've ever loved anyone, even Mom and Dad. He's always happy-go-lucky and grinning, while Darry's hard and firm and rarely grins at all.

S. E. Hinton, *The Outsiders*



B. Writing a Comparison-and-Contrast Paragraph

Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting the characters you read about in Part A. Begin with a topic sentence that tells which character you would rather have as a friend.

5 Writing Process in Action

Key Information

Preparation and careful, hard work are needed for writing good research reports. First select a narrow, specific topic on which to focus. Then consult a variety of sources in order to get information about the topic. Take good notes, and organize your ideas in an order that makes sense. Keep your focus in mind as you draft the report. Consider any changes or corrections during the revision stage. After the report is edited, decide how to present it best.

■ A. Prewriting: Selecting and Narrowing a Topic

Science is a part of our daily lives. The many aspects of science include the study of weather, rocks, stars and planets, animals, and plants. Think about these branches of science, and narrow each topic until it can be covered in a short research report. Then think of one adjective for each topic that could start your ideas flowing.

Weather Narrowed Topic: _____

Adjective: _____

Rocks Narrowed Topic: _____

Adjective: _____

Stars and Planets Narrowed Topic: _____

Adjective: _____

Animals Narrowed Topic: _____

Adjective: _____

Plants Narrowed Topic: _____

Adjective: _____

■ B. Drafting an Introduction

Choose one of the topics you thought about in Part A. Keeping the guiding adjective in mind, write an introduction that lets readers know your attitude toward your topic and gives readers an idea of the type of information you will be presenting.

6.1 Using Persuasive Writing

Key Information

Persuasive writing tries to get readers to agree with a certain opinion and often to take action supporting that opinion. The writer selects words that are likely to affect the reader's feelings about a subject. Persuasive writing appears in many forms, such as magazine ads, radio announcements, and newspaper editorials.

A. Selecting Effective Words

For each of the following situations, write at least three words that might be persuasive.

1. In a poster to sell your old bike, you want to stress how rugged it is.

2. In an election speech you want to ask your classmates to vote for you as class treasurer because you are good at keeping track of money and finding things at good prices.

3. In a letter to the editor asking for contributions to a pet shelter, you want readers to think about how much their own pets mean to them.

4. In a separate letter supporting the pet shelter, you want to stress the helplessness of abandoned puppies and kittens.

5. You plan to distribute a flyer asking that neighborhood residents write letters to City Hall demanding a traffic light at a nearby intersection. You want to stress how dangerous the intersection is.

B. Writing a Persuasive Paragraph

Select a situation described in Part A. Write a paragraph to persuade readers to share your opinion and to take the desired action. Use the persuasive words you wrote for Part A.

Composition Practice

Name Class Date

6.2 Forming an Opinion

Key Information

In persuasive writing you should choose a topic important to you. The following questions will help you identify a valuable topic for persuasive writing: Is this a topic about which I feel strongly? Is this a topic that has more than one side? Is it one on which people disagree? Could I say enough to persuade others to accept my position?

■ A. Looking at Both Sides

Read the following statement:

We could solve traffic problems by using tax money to support an excellent bus system charging low fares.

Now work with a partner to complete these three steps:

1. Decide which of you will support the above statement and which will oppose it. Circle your choice, *For* or *Against*, over the left column.
2. In the left column write at least three reasons to support your side of the issue.

For / Against

Against / For

3. Exchange papers. Next to each reason your partner listed in the left column, write an answer in the right column. You may use reasons you listed on your sheet if they are appropriate. Otherwise, you must come up with additional reasons. When both of you have finished, take back your own papers.

■ B. Choosing Sides

Review the reasons on both sides of the issue in Part A. Check off the three strongest reasons for supporting either side. Which side could you write about more effectively? Why?

6.3 Gathering Evidence

Key Information

In persuasive writing you can back up your position with different kinds of evidence: facts, statistics, examples, opinions, and reasons. The choice depends on your audience and purpose.

A. Recognizing Types of Evidence

Decide which type of evidence is illustrated by each example. Write *fact*, *statistic*, *example*, *opinion*, or *reason*.

1. To prove what a danger deer can be, let me tell you about my cousin in New Hampshire who barely missed hitting a deer with his car. _____
2. Computers work very quickly. If you use this computer program, you may speed up your record keeping. _____
3. In 1992 the youth center began to offer courses in baby-sitting and bike safety. _____
4. A total of 63 percent of our customers preferred the new store hours. _____
5. Tall people watching parades should let short people stand in front. _____

B. Selecting Types of Evidence

Of the five types of evidence, name one or two that you would use to persuade your audience in each situation below. Explain why you would choose that type.

1. You want a part-time job at a neighborhood store, but your parents think that you're too young and that your studies will suffer. You must ask your parents for permission.

2. You are on a school committee responsible for bringing in speakers on various careers. You want to invite the administrator of an area hospital but are afraid she will be too busy to come.

C. Developing Evidence

Choose one situation described in Part B. State your position, and write two statements you could use to support it.

Position: _____

Evidence: _____

6.4 Developing an Argument

Key Information

The first paragraph in a piece of persuasive writing often presents its main idea in a topic sentence. The topic sentence is usually either first or last in the paragraph. A piece of persuasive writing has three parts: the introduction, stating the topic and the writer's opinion; the body, presenting evidence; and the conclusion, summarizing and sometimes suggesting action.

■ A. Turning a Problem into Persuasion

The paragraph below describes a problem. Follow the directions to change it into a piece of persuasive writing.

My grandmother had a stroke a few months ago. Now she has trouble walking, and sometimes her hands shake so badly that she drops things. She's in a nursing home, but she wants to be on her own more. Since she can't cook or shop, she doesn't want to live alone in her house. She thinks she'll be in the way if she lives with us or my cousins. She's looking for a group home or apartment building where she can have her own rooms but join other people for meals. With staff members nearby, she could get help if she needed it. She's called several group homes, but none of them have openings.

1. Many people face the problem described. State an opinion that people in the community might have about the situation.

2. Can you think of any ways to solve this problem? Suggest a solution.

3. What specific action could you ask your readers to take?

■ B. Writing a Topic Sentence

Think of how you would revise the paragraph in Part A to change it into persuasive writing. Using one of the ideas you suggested in Part A, write a topic sentence for the revised paragraph. The topic sentence will come first in the paragraph.

■ C. Writing a Persuasive Paragraph

Now write your persuasive paragraph, using a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to move from introduction to evidence (example) to conclusion.

6.5 Polishing an Argument

Key Information

Before presenting your persuasive writing to the public, review it. Ask yourself whether you have stated your position clearly, whether your introduction grabs attention, and whether you have presented the best evidence in the best order. Make any improvements you can. Also, try to replace vague or weak words with strong, precise ones.

■ A. Grabbing Attention

Rewrite each opening sentence to make it more likely to get attention.

1. There should be more buses on the route that serves the school.

2. In the contest for school mascot, vote for the hawk.

3. The movies should give more roles to minorities.

4. July is the most boring month.

5. Any restaurant that offers a buffet should put the buffet in the nonsmoking section.

■ B. Keeping Attention

In the paragraph below replace at least three dull words or phrases with stronger, more vivid ones. Rearrange the details for greater impact.

The only good thing you can say about February is that it isn't very long. The skies are usually gray, and by then the snow is dirty and gray. There aren't any big holidays to break up the boredom.

6.6 Writing Publicity

Key Information

When you write publicity, you must include all the necessary information about an event, product, or campaign. You should present this information in an attractive way to persuade people to attend the event, buy the product, or support your candidate or cause. Publicity can take such forms as flyers, posters, and radio and newspaper ads.

■ A. Assembling the Information

You and your friends have formed a rock band that will play in public for the first time at a block party in late summer. You need to write an announcement for the community newsletter. Use these questions to identify what you will include.

1. Who will be most interested in hearing your band play? _____

2. Who else might be persuaded to come? _____

3. What qualities of your group, music, or staging might appeal to each audience? _____

How can you describe your group in a way that grabs interest? _____

4. What information will your audience need about time and place? _____

■ B. Writing the Announcement

Write an announcement about your band's appearance at the block party, using the facts and ideas in Part A. Keep your audience in mind, including anything that will catch their interest and persuade them to come. Try to choose words and images that fit the event.

Name Class Date

6.7 Writing a Letter of Complaint

Key Information

A letter of complaint uses business-letter form, including a heading, inside address, greeting, body, closing, and signature. It should state a problem in calm, businesslike language that will persuade someone to help, and it should suggest a reasonable solution.

Asking for Action

In your history class you and your classmates have enjoyed a computer game called *Time Warp*, but when you reach a certain level of play, the program always crashes. Write a letter of complaint to the software company, Fun'n Games, located at 14 Main Street in your town. Clearly state the problem and what you feel is an acceptable solution. If you need help with business-letter form, refer to *Writer's Choice*, page 287.

Dear _____:

Composition Practice

Name Class Date

6.8 Writing a Movie Review

Key Information

The writer of a movie review does more than state a personal opinion about the movie. The reviewer describes and evaluates specific elements, such as characters, plot, acting, and visual effects. An effective movie review helps readers decide whether or not to see the movie.

■ A. Looking at the Parts

Select a movie you have seen recently, at the theater or on television. Use the following questions to focus on its elements.

Movie Title: _____

Characters: Identify the most important characters in the story. Which characters seemed like real people? Why? _____

Plot: Briefly discuss the major action in the movie. For example, was the character pitted against an enemy? Was the plot a string of funny events? _____

Acting: Did each actor move and talk and look as the character would? Did the actor seem too serious for a funny role or too silly for a serious role? _____

Visual Effects: If the movie was set in a different time period or in a special part of the world, did the scenery reflect that time or place accurately? If the movie used special effects to suggest such things as space battles or erupting volcanoes, did it make you believe, for the moment, that you were seeing those things?

■ B. Writing a Review

Write a review of the movie you analyzed in Part A. Organize your review according to the four elements you have analyzed. Feel free to discuss any additional elements unique to that movie. Use another sheet of paper.

6 Writing Process in Action

Key Information

The purpose of persuasive writing is to swing readers over to your way of thinking. Even though you may feel strongly about your topic, you must base your argument on more than your own feelings. Persuasive writing must include evidence. In other words, you need to use reasons, facts, statistics, examples, and the opinions of others to support your position.

■ A. Prewriting: Selecting a Topic

We often feel most strongly about issues that affect everyday life. Since you spend several hours in school every day, you probably have opinions about school issues. For example, do you think that the school should schedule more programs and assemblies? Do you feel the dress code is fair? Would you like to see more magazines about your sport or hobby in the library?

List four issues you feel are facing your school today. Write a sentence that expresses your opinion about each issue.

Issue 1: _____

Issue 2: _____

Issue 3: _____

Issue 4: _____

■ B. Drafting: Writing Persuasively

Write a persuasive essay about one of the issues you listed in Part A. Choose the one that you care the most about. Before you begin to write, assemble all your evidence. Then organize your evidence, and draft your persuasive essay below. Use additional paper if necessary.
