

SCHOOL LAUNCH • COMPOSITION & CREATIVE WRITING

GRADE 10 COMPOSITION & CREATIVE WRITING: THESIS II AND THE PROPOSAL OF LAW

The eighth year of classical writing: sharpen the thesis under the clock, argue for or against a law with the last of the progymnasmata, persuade an audience with Lincoln at Cooper Union, write a historical short story and poems in fixed forms, read a Shakespeare sonnet closely, and profile a working man or woman in your own town.

First edition

*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.
Proverbs 14:34 (KJV)*

COURSE GUIDE

Grade 10 finishes the progymnasmata, the “first exercises” of the Greek and Roman schools described by Theon, Hermogenes and Aphthonius. Unit 1 reviews the heads of the thesis and trains you to write a strong essay in timed conditions, like those on college entrance tests, with evidence drawn from history. Unit 2 brings the last exercise, the introduction of a law: you will argue for or against a law under the heads of clarity, justice, expedience, possibility and custom, study clause 39 of Magna Carta (1215) and the Northwest Ordinance’s ban on slavery (1787), and write a proposal for a local ordinance about a park or a road. Unit 3 turns argument into speech with Lincoln’s Cooper Union Address (1860), the canons of delivery and memory, and preparation for the Optimist International Oratorical Contest.

The creative track teaches the historical short story (research, period voice and scene drafting, with models from Stevenson, Dickens and Defoe), poetry in fixed forms (the villanelle, the Petrarchan sonnet with Milton and Wordsworth, and George Herbert’s shaped poems such as “Easter Wings”), and the profile, in which you interview a local tradesman or business owner and tell the story of his or her work. A literary analysis unit teaches close reading, the analytical paragraph, quoting and citing, and an essay on a Shakespeare sonnet. The year closes with revision, a portfolio, a debate and a final timed essay. Each lesson has a model passage, a picture study of fine art (Stearns, Rembrandt, Hogarth and Sargent), a writing project, worked examples, practice, a Style Clinic and a verse from the King James Bible.

WHO IT IS FOR

Written for high school students in grade 10 (about ages 15–16) who can write a full essay on their own. A parent reads along, listens to speeches and helps with revision. There is no separate Grammar course at this level: a short Style Clinic in each lesson reviews one skill from Grammar Level 3 and applies it to your own sentences. Grade 9 Composition is helpful but not required; Lesson 1.1 reviews the heads of the thesis.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

1. **The weekly rhythm.** One lesson a week in two or three sessions of 45–60 minutes. Session 1: warm-up, video, teaching, model passage and picture study. Session 2: worked examples, practice and the Style Clinic. Session 3 (or homework): the writing project.
2. **Copy, imitate, invent.** Each unit opens with a model to copy by hand, then an imitation that borrows its shape, then a piece of your own. The models come from the classics: the King James Bible, Cicero, Plutarch, Shakespeare, Milton, Lincoln, Washington and others.
3. **The quarter path.** Short on time? The ten ★ lessons (1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1 and the final timed essay in 8.4) make a one-quarter course that still covers the law, the speech and the timed essay.

4. **The Style Clinic.** Every lesson names the Grammar Level 3 skill it reviews (🔗), such as parallel structure, subordinate clauses or the semicolon, and asks you to find it in the model and use it in your project. The revision checklist asks only for skills the Style Clinic has covered.
5. **Speaking.** Rhetoric is meant to be heard. You will read every model aloud, deliver a persuasive speech from memory in Lesson 3.4, and argue both sides of a proposed law in the Unit 8 debate.
6. **Contests.** These dated summaries were checked in October 2026; rules change, so get the official form and rules from each sponsor before you enter. *Optimist International Oratorical Contest* (Lesson 3.3): students under 19 as of October 1, 2026 who have not finished high school; the 2026–27 topic is “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me”; you enter through a local Optimist Club, which sets its own date, usually in spring. *Bennington Young Writers Awards* (Lesson 4.4): grades 9–12, a short story of up to 1,500 words, a teacher or mentor must sponsor the entry, deadline November 1, 2026. *Scholastic Art & Writing Awards* (Lessons 4.4 and 5.4): grades 7–12, age 13 or older; each region sets its own deadline, from December 1, 2026 to early January 2027. *Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest* at Hollins University (Lesson 5.4): young women in grades 10–11, one or two unpublished poems, deadline October 31, 2026. *Foyle Young Poets of the Year* (Lesson 5.4): ages 11–17, one poem of up to 40 lines for entrants outside the UK; the 2026 contest closed July 31, 2026, so watch for the 2027 call. Several deadlines fall in the fall, before Units 4 and 5, so a student may do those lessons early or enter next year. Every sponsor forbids writing done with AI tools.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Unit 1: Thesis Review and Timed Essays (1–4)

Grade 10 opens by sharpening the thesis, the general argument that is the foundation for this year’s final progymnasma, the proposal of a law. You will review the four heads (lawful, just, expedient, possible) with Solomon’s four-verse thesis in Ecclesiastes 4. Then you will learn to plan and write a complete essay in forty minutes for the ACT, the CLT or any on-the-spot prompt, build a checked file of historical examples from Hamilton’s method in *The Federalist* No. 6, and learn to give and receive criticism by Pope’s rules in *An Essay on Criticism*. The faith thread for the year is Proverbs 14:34: “Righteousness exalteth a nation.”

Unit 2: Law (Introduction of a Law) (5–8)

The last of the fourteen classical exercises: the introduction of a law, a speech for or against a particular measure. You will read Washington’s counsel to the First Congress on amending the Constitution, learn the five heads by which every law is tested (clarity, justice, expedience, possibility, custom), try them on the decree of Darius in Daniel 6, follow clause 39 of Magna Carta and Article 6 of the Northwest Ordinance through history, and finish by researching, drafting and arguing a real ordinance for your own town. The year’s verse, “Righteousness exalteth a nation” (Proverbs 14:34), runs through the whole unit.

Unit 3: The Persuasive Speech (9–12)

Having argued for and against laws on paper in Unit 2, you now take an argument to the platform. You will study Lincoln's Cooper Union Address (1860) to see how careful research and fair treatment of an opponent persuade, turn your ordinance proposal into a speech, and learn the last two canons of rhetoric, memory and delivery, from Hamlet's advice to the players and Demosthenes' training. Then you will draft an original oration for the 2026-27 Optimist International Oratorical Contest, learning economy from the Gettysburg Address, and deliver it before a real audience, adapting to your hearers as Paul did on Mars' Hill.

Unit 4: Story: The Historical Short Story (13-16)

In this creative-writing unit you will write a historical short story: invented people set in a real time and place, with the history kept true. You will research a moment from the past as Hawthorne researched Puritan Boston for "The Gray Champion," learn a believable period voice from Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, draft living scenes after Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, and finish a complete story of 1,000-3,000 words with an author's note, shaped for the Bennington Young Writers Awards or the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

Unit 5: 🦋 Poetry: Forms (17-20)

Fixed forms are a trellis, not a cage. In this unit you will read, copy, imitate and then invent in four forms: the villanelle, with its two circling refrains (Edwin Arlington Robinson's "The House on the Hill"); the Petrarchan sonnet, with its octave, turn and sestet (Wordsworth's "London, 1802"); the shaped poem, in which line lengths draw the meaning (George Herbert's "Easter Wings"); and the rondeau (John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields"). The unit ends with one finished form poem prepared for the Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest (young women in grades 10-11) or the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award (ages 11-17).

Unit 6: Literary Analysis (21-24)

For nine years you have learned to write by imitating great writers; now you learn to explain how they did it. You will read closely with John Ruskin as he unpacks two words of Milton ("Blind mouths"), build analytical paragraphs on the pattern of Samuel Johnson's praise of Shakespeare as "the poet of nature," learn to quote and cite honestly by correcting William Hazlitt's loose quoting in his essay on Macbeth, and write a full literary essay and a 40-minute timed essay on a Shakespeare sonnet. Careful reading is a form of truthfulness: we listen to what an author actually said before we speak. The Bereans "searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11), and the year's verse, "Righteousness exalteth a nation" (Proverbs 14:34), reminds us that a people who read honestly and speak truly are a stronger people.

Unit 7: Personal Narrative: The Profile (25-28)

The profile joins two exercises from Grade 8, the encomium and the description, and turns them toward the people who keep a town running. You will read profiles in verse and prose (Longfellow's village blacksmith, Goldsmith's village schoolmaster, Steele's merchant Sir Andrew Freeport), learn from Luke's preface how an honest writer works from eyewitnesses, and study working men and women in paintings by Rembrandt, Matsys, Vermeer and

Holbein. Then you will do what reporters and oral historians do: observe someone at work, prepare and conduct an interview, arrange your material into lead, nut paragraph, background, work, turn and close, and write a true, fact-checked profile of 1,200–1,800 words of a tradesman or business owner in your own town.

Unit 8: Review (29–32)

The last unit gathers the year. You will revise one major piece in three passes using Franklin's method of comparing your work with a master's (8.1), set the year's finished writing in order as a bound portfolio with a preface and answer for it aloud (8.2), argue a local law face to face in a formal debate using the heads of law (8.3), and write a final timed essay on the question beneath the whole year, whether good laws or good character do more to keep a people free (8.4). The models are Franklin's *Autobiography*, Ecclesiastes, Milton's *Areopagitica* and Paul's speech on Mars' Hill.

MATERIALS

- **A writing notebook (composition book)** One for the whole year, for copywork, imitations and drafts.
- **A KJV Bible** For every lesson's verse and the faith thread, Proverbs 14:34.
- **Shakespeare's Sonnets (any complete edition, or a printout from Project Gutenberg)** For Unit 6 and the essay in Lesson 6.4.
- **A timer** For timed essays (1.2, 8.4), speech practice (Unit 3) and the debate (8.3).
- **Index cards and a way to record audio or video** For memorizing and rehearsing your speech in Unit 3.
- **A folder for the portfolio** For each unit's portfolio piece and the Unit 8 portfolio.

GRADING

Grades come mostly from the writing projects, judged with each lesson's checklist (invention, arrangement, style and mechanics), and from the speech and the timed essays. Praise first, then fix one thing at a time.

- Writing projects: 45%
- Writing notebook and Style Clinic: 15%
- Timed essays and unit reviews: 20%
- Speech, debate and portfolio: 20%

A 90–100, B 80–89, C 70–79. Below 70: revise with help and resubmit.

- Mechanics are graded only on Grammar Level 3 skills the Style Clinic has reviewed.
- Timed essays in Lesson 1.2 and Lesson 8.4 are scored on the same rubric, so the two show the year's growth.
- For a transcript, this course may be listed as one credit of English 10 (Composition) when paired with the literature your family reads this year.

A NOTE TO PARENTS

You do not need to be a writer to teach this course. Read the model aloud with your student, listen to the speech, and use the checklist. Praise specific things before asking for one change. In Unit 7 your student will interview a tradesman or business owner; please help arrange the visit and go along.

Each lesson has a *For families* note with background, sources and cautions. Public-domain model passages were copied from downloaded Project Gutenberg texts (never typed from memory), and Scripture was checked against the King James Version. Models written for this course are labeled. Modern copyrighted works are summarized, not quoted. Arguments about laws are practiced on historic cases and local matters such as parks and roads, never on Scripture or current party quarrels, and the wrongs of the past, such as slavery, are named plainly as wrongs.

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★ quarter path (10 lessons) ·  creative writing track ·  ends with a piece for a contest in the School Launch directory ·  Style Clinic in every lesson

THESIS REVIEW AND TIMED ESSAYS

Grade 10 opens by sharpening the thesis, the general argument that is the foundation for this year's final progymnasma, the proposal of a law. You will review the four heads (lawful, just, expedient, possible) with Solomon's four-verse thesis in Ecclesiastes 4. Then you will learn to plan and write a complete essay in forty minutes for the ACT, the CLT or any on-the-spot prompt, build a checked file of historical examples from Hamilton's method in *The Federalist* No. 6, and learn to give and receive criticism by Pope's rules in *An Essay on Criticism*. The faith thread for the year is Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation."

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written at least one thesis essay (Grade 9) or a full persuasive essay with reasons and an objection.
- Writes multi-paragraph essays independently and can identify the four sentence structures.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell a thesis from a hypothesis and argue a thesis by the four heads, with objection and answer.
- ☐ I can plan in five minutes and finish a complete essay in forty (or thirty) minutes.
- ☐ I can test a historical example for truth, relevance, fairness and specificity, and bridge it to my claim.
- ☐ I can give peer comments that are specific and gracious, and score an essay on the four ACT domains.
- ☐ I can receive criticism, keep a revision log and produce a clean revised copy.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **The Federalist Papers (Project Gutenberg #1404)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1404>): Free. No. 6 is the Lesson 1.3 model; Nos. 1–10 are a good store of historical argument.
- **Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism (Project Gutenberg #7409)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7409>): Free. The Lesson 1.4 model is in Part III.
- **The ACT writing test (official site)** (<https://www.act.org/>): Free official sample prompts and the scoring rubric; check current rules before registering.
- **The Classic Learning Test (official site)** (<https://www.cltexam.com/>): Free practice materials and current information on the optional essay.

1.1 THESIS HEADS REVIEW ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell a thesis from a hypothesis and state a general question as a clear claim.
- Name and use the four heads of the thesis (lawful, just, expedient, possible), with objection and answer.
- Write a full thesis essay of five to seven paragraphs on a perennial question.

Warm-up. Without notes, write the outline of last year's thesis from memory: the question, your answer, and the heads you used. Which head was strongest? Which was weakest, and why?

Video slot. Video coming. The progymnasmata and the classical thesis exercise (Aphthonius, Hermogenes). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

thesis

The thirteenth progymnasma: an argument on a general question with no particular persons or dates, such as “Should a man marry?” or “Is it better to work alone or with others?”

hypothesis

A specific case with named persons, places and times: “Should John marry Mary this June?” A thesis can be argued anywhere; a hypothesis belongs to one situation.

heads

The standard lines of argument used to prove a thesis. Aphthonius names four: lawful, just, expedient and possible.

expedient

Useful or advantageous; the head that asks, “Does this bring good results?”

objection and answer

The part of the thesis that states the best case against your claim fairly and then answers it.

CORE IDEAS

The thirteenth exercise, again. Last year you climbed nearly to the top of the progymnasmata. A thesis argues a *general* question, one that wise people in any age could debate: Should a man marry? Should a young person travel? Is it better to live in the country or the city? The thesis does not name persons or dates. Once it does (“Should my cousin take that job in Denver?”), it becomes a *hypothesis*, a particular case. This year ends the sequence with the last exercise, the proposal of a law, and the thesis is its foundation, so we

begin by sharpening it. The same skills will carry you through every timed essay you will ever write.

The shape. Aphthonius, the Greek teacher whose handbook was used in schools for more than a thousand years, gives the thesis this order: an introduction that leads to the question; a plain statement of your answer; then the four heads; then an objection, stated fairly, with your answer to it; and a short epilogue. In a modern essay each head usually becomes one body paragraph, so a full thesis runs five to seven paragraphs. Notice that the order is fixed, but the weight is not. You do not owe every head the same length.

Four questions. Each head is a question you ask of your claim. *Lawful:* Does the law of God and of the land permit or require it? *Just:* Is it right toward others, giving each person what is due? *Expedient:* Does it bring good results for the person, the family, the community? *Possible:* Can it actually be done by ordinary people with ordinary means? A claim that is lawful and just but impossible is a daydream. A claim that is expedient but unjust is a scheme. The heads guard you from both mistakes.

Choosing your ground. Not every head is equally strong for every question. On “Is it better to work with others?”, the expedient head is rich (more gets done, mistakes are caught) while the lawful head is thin (no law forbids working alone). Good writers spend their words where the argument is strongest and keep weak heads short and honest. A common plan is to put a solid head first, a weaker one in the middle, and your strongest last, so the reader leaves with your best reason still ringing.

The objection. Students often skip the objection because it feels like arguing against yourself. It is the opposite. When you state the best case against your claim in words your opponent would accept, and then answer it, the reader trusts you. Hermogenes’ old example, “Should a man marry?”, is persuasive only if it faces the real costs of marriage and answers them. An objection you invent only to knock down (a straw man) persuades no one.

Solomon’s thesis. The model this week is a thesis in four verses. The Preacher claims, “Two are better than one,” and then proves it almost entirely by the expedient head: two get a better reward for their labor, two can lift each other up, two keep each other warm, two can stand against an attacker. Each reason is concrete and quick. He ends with an image that works as an epilogue: “a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” Copy it, then notice how much argument fits into so few words.

Righteousness and the heads. This year’s verse is Proverbs 14:34: “Righteousness exalteth a nation.” It is a reminder that the lawful and just heads are not decoration added after the “real” practical argument. In Scripture, what is right is also, in the long run, what is wise. Your thesis this year should show that you have weighed what is good, not only what works.

The model. *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (KJV), the Preacher’s argument that “two are better than one”*

Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone ? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

PICTURE STUDY



The Angelus, Jean-François Millet, 1857–1859 · Oil on canvas · Musée d'Orsay, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Millet painted two farm workers digging potatoes on the plain near Barbizon. The church bell has rung the Angelus, the evening prayer, and they stop work to pray. The man holds his hat; the woman folds her hands. Two people, one field, one prayer, and on the horizon the church that called them: Solomon's "threefold cord" in paint.

Look closely

- Find the church steeple. Where is it, and how small is it?
- Find the tools the two have set down: fork, basket, wheelbarrow.
- Look at the light. What time of day is it, and how can you tell?

Talk about it

1. Write one paragraph using the expedient head for the thesis "Two are better than one," taking every example from this painting.
2. What would be lost from the painting if only one worker stood in the field? Answer in three sentences.

WRITING PROJECT: A FULL THESIS, SHARPENED

Write a complete thesis of five to seven paragraphs (600–900 words) on one of these perennial questions: “Is it better to work alone or with others?”, “Should a young person learn a trade?”, or “Is it better to save than to spend?”

This is untimed. Use it to set your standard; in the next lesson you will learn to do the same thing in forty minutes.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible
- Your best thesis from last year, if you have it

Steps

1. Turn your question into a one-sentence claim: “It is better to ..., because ...”
2. Make a heads grid: four boxes labeled lawful, just, expedient, possible. Write two or three notes in each.
3. Circle your strongest head and your weakest. Plan the order: solid head first, strongest last.
4. Write the best objection a thoughtful opponent would raise, in words he would accept. Then write your answer.
5. Draft: introduction with claim, one paragraph per head, objection and answer, a short epilogue with an image.
6. Read the draft aloud. Mark any paragraph that drifts from its head and fix it.
7. Revise with the checklist.

Check your work

- My question is general (a thesis), not a particular case (a hypothesis).
- My claim appears in one clear sentence in the introduction.
- Each body paragraph argues one head and names it in its topic sentence.
- My objection is stated fairly and answered, not dismissed.
- My heads are listed in parallel form in the introduction (Style Clinic).
- Every sentence is complete; no fragments or comma splices.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 by hand. Label each reason with the head it uses.
2. List ten perennial thesis questions you would be glad to argue. Star the three you like best.
3. Write the four heads as four questions and learn them by heart.

History note. Aphthonius of Antioch wrote his *Progymnasmata* in the late fourth century A.D. It became the standard school text in the Greek East and, through Latin translations, in Renaissance Europe. Millet's *Angelus* was painted between 1857 and 1859 and has hung in the Musée d'Orsay since that museum opened in 1986.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism.** When you preview your heads, put them in the same grammatical form. Weak: "Working together is wise because of the reward, it helps when you fall, and to stay safe." Strong: "Working together brings a better reward, lifts the fallen and guards the weak." Three verbs, three objects. Solomon does the same with his repeated "if ... then" pattern. Check your introduction and your topic sentences for matching forms.

For families. This year completes the progymnasmata with the proposal of a law (Unit 2). Unit 1 reviews the thesis and adds timed writing, since the thesis is the natural shape of a test essay. If your student did not take Grade 9 Composition, this lesson is enough to begin: allow an extra session for the heads grid. The year's faith verse is Proverbs 14:34. Hermogenes' example "Should a man marry?" is the classic thesis; keep any discussion of it to the general question.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Thesis or hypothesis? (a) "Should Abigail take the summer job at the hardware store?" (b) "Is it wise for young people to work in the summer?"

1. Look for named persons, places or dates.
2. (a) names Abigail and a particular store and season; (b) could be argued in any century.

Answer: (a) is a hypothesis; (b) is a thesis. To make (a) a thesis, remove the particulars: "Should young people take summer jobs?"

Example 2. Revise this weak expedient head: "Working with others is good because it is helpful and better and people like it."

1. The sentence repeats itself: "good," "helpful," "better" say the same thing.
2. Ask Solomon's question: what concrete good results? A better reward; help when one falls.
3. Add one specific picture.

Answer: Working with others multiplies the reward of labor. When two men raise a barn wall, one holds while the other nails; alone, neither could set a single beam. And when one falls ill, the other keeps the work moving, so the harvest is not lost.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the four heads of the thesis in Aphthonius' order.
2. **EASY** What is the difference between a thesis and a hypothesis?
3. **EASY** Which head does Solomon use most in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12?
4. **EASY** What question does the possible head ask?
5. **MEDIUM** Turn this hypothesis into a thesis: "Should our family move to the farm next spring?"
6. **MEDIUM** Write a fair objection to the claim "Young people should learn a trade."
7. **MEDIUM** Write a just head (one to two sentences) for "It is better to save than to spend."
8. **CHALLENGE** Rewrite this preview so the heads are parallel: "Learning a trade is lawful, it is fair to your family, and you will profit, and almost anyone can do it."

COMMON MISTAKES

- Arguing a hypothesis ("my brother should ...") instead of a general thesis.
- Giving every head the same length, so the strongest reason is buried among weak ones.
- Skipping the objection, or stating it so weakly that no real opponent would recognize it.
- Repeating the claim in new words and calling it a reason; each head must add a new ground.

Make it a game • Heads Draw. Write the four heads on four cards and ten thesis questions on ten slips. Draw one question and one head. You have sixty seconds to argue that head out loud. A parent or sibling may then draw the same question and a different head. Score a point for every concrete example.

Scripture. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."
(Proverbs 14:34, KJV)

This year's verse reminds you that the lawful and just heads carry real weight: what is right is, in the end, what lifts a people up.

Practice: answers

1. Lawful, just, expedient, possible.
2. A thesis is a general question with no particular persons or times; a hypothesis is a specific case with named persons, places or times.
3. The expedient head: the good results of having a companion.
4. Can it actually be done by ordinary people with ordinary means?
5. Sample: "Is it better to live in the country than in the city?"
6. Sample: Time spent learning a trade is time taken from academic study, and some students will never use the trade they learned.
7. Sample: Saving is just because it provides for those who depend on us; Scripture says a man who will not provide for his own household has denied the faith (1 Timothy 5:8).

8. Sample: Learning a trade is lawful, just to one's family, profitable to oneself and possible for nearly anyone.

1.2 TIMED ESSAY STRATEGY: THE FORTY-MINUTE THESIS ★

OBJECTIVES

- Describe the essay sections of the ACT and CLT and know that the current SAT has none.
- Budget forty (or thirty) minutes into planning, drafting and checking, and use the thesis heads to plan in five minutes.
- Write a complete timed essay that takes a position and answers other perspectives.

Warm-up. Set a timer for five minutes. On the question “Should every student learn to cook?”, write your claim, three reasons and one objection, as notes only. When the timer rings, stop. Was five minutes enough? What slowed you down?

Video slot. Video coming. How to plan and write a timed argumentative essay (ACT writing strategy). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

timed essay

An essay written in one sitting under a time limit on a prompt you have not seen before.

prompt

The question or issue the test gives you. The ACT prompt states an issue and three perspectives on it.

perspective

A point of view on the issue. On the ACT you must state your own and relate it to at least one of the others.

time budget

A plan for dividing the minutes: for forty, about five to plan, thirty to write and five to check.

counterargument

A view that opposes yours; the timed-essay name for the thesis’s objection.

CORE IDEAS

The tests, as of fall 2026. The SAT no longer has an essay; the College Board dropped it in 2021. The ACT offers an optional writing test: forty minutes, one issue with three perspectives, scored by two readers on ideas and analysis, development and support, organization, and language use. The Classic Learning Test (CLT) offers an optional thirty-minute essay that is not scored but is sent to colleges with your results as a sample of your writing. Some colleges and scholarships also ask for an essay written on the spot. Rules change, so check the official ACT and CLT sites before you register.

The budget. Forty minutes is enough if you spend them on purpose. Plan for five minutes, write for thirty, check for five. For a thirty-minute essay, try four, twenty-two and four. Students who skip planning usually run out of ideas in the third paragraph and spend the saved minutes staring. Students who plan for fifteen minutes run out of time to finish. Practice until the budget is a habit and you glance at the clock at the end of each paragraph.

Plan with the heads. You already own the best five-minute planning tool ever devised. Read the prompt twice. Decide your claim. Then run the four questions quickly: Is it lawful? Is it just? Is it expedient? Is it possible? Under time pressure you will rarely use all four. Pick the two or three heads that give you the most concrete material, jot one example under each, and write one line for the strongest objection. That is your outline. It should fit on a third of a page.

The shape on paper. A strong timed essay is usually four or five paragraphs. The introduction (three or four sentences) names the issue and states your claim plainly; do not save your position for the end. Each body paragraph argues one head with one specific example and a sentence that explains why the example proves the point. One paragraph takes up the strongest opposing perspective, states it fairly, grants what is true in it, and answers it. A two- or three-sentence conclusion closes the case. Readers reward clarity over decoration.

Answering the perspectives. The ACT gives you three views, and many students simply summarize all three. That is not an argument. Your claim may agree with one perspective, combine two, or take a fourth position, but it must be *yours*. Use the other perspectives as the objection head: “Some argue that ... This is partly true, because ... Yet ...” One perspective answered well is worth more than three merely restated.

Specific beats general. Under pressure, writers fall back on vague phrases: “in today’s society,” “many people believe,” “throughout history.” Readers have seen them a thousand times. One real example (a named event, a book you have read, a trade you know, a scene from your own work) outweighs three vague ones. The same is true of words: “beneficial” and “impactful” tell the reader little, while “the harvest was in before the frost” shows him the result. Lesson 1.3 will help you stock a supply of historical examples so you never face a prompt empty-handed.

Practice like the test. Write timed essays by hand or on a plain screen without spell-check, as the test will require, with a real clock. Afterward, score your own essay on the four ACT domains, then ask a parent or peer to do the same (Lesson 1.4). Samuel Johnson wrote some of his best essays with the printer’s boy waiting at the door. Deadlines do not make good writing impossible; they make a well-practiced method necessary.

The model. *Written for this course: a sample forty-minute essay (excerpt: introduction, one body paragraph and the counterargument) on “Is memorization still worth the effort?”*

Prompt: Some say memorization is useless now that any fact can be looked up in seconds. Others say memorized knowledge is the material of all thinking. Still others say memorize only what you use every day. Write an essay that gives your

own perspective.

A student today can find the date of the Battle of Hastings faster than he can remember it. It is tempting to conclude that memorizing is a waste of effort. Yet the things we know by heart are the things we can think with, speak from and stand on when no screen is at hand. Memorization is still worth the effort, because it furnishes the mind, serves us when tools fail and is within the reach of any patient student.

First, memorized knowledge furnishes the mind for thought. A carpenter who must look up the length of every board will never build a house; he needs his measurements in his head so that his attention is free for the work. In the same way, a student who knows the multiplication tables can see the shape of an algebra problem instead of stopping at every product. Lincoln, as a grown lawyer, studied Euclid until he had, in his own words, “nearly mastered” the six books, and his speeches show the same habit of reasoning step by step. We think with what we know, not with what we could find.

Some argue that we should memorize only what we use every day. This view is partly right: no one needs to memorize a train schedule. But it assumes we know in advance what we will need. A soldier who memorized a psalm as a boy may not have used it for years, until the night he needed it most. The best things to memorize are not the daily things but the lasting ones: Scripture, great poems, the facts of our history. Those are the ones we cannot afford to be without.

PICTURE STUDY



The Country School, Winslow Homer, 1871 · Oil on canvas · Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Homer painted a one-room school in the country after the Civil War: plank walls, wide windows, long benches and a single young teacher responsible for every age at once. Every child in that room learned to recite, to copy and to write on demand, with no time to wait for inspiration. The painting is quiet, but it is a picture of work being done under a teacher's eye and a clock.

Look closely

- Find the teacher. How does Homer make her stand out from the children?
- Look at the light from the windows. Where does it fall?
- Count the groups of children. How do you think one teacher kept them all at work?

Talk about it

1. Timed practice (ten minutes): Should children of different ages be taught together in one room? Plan with the heads, then write one body paragraph using details from the painting.
2. What does this room have that a modern classroom often lacks? Answer in a paragraph with a clear claim.

WRITING PROJECT: TWO TIMED ESSAYS

Write two timed essays this week, one in each session. Use a real timer and write by hand or on a plain screen with no spell-check.

Session 1 (40 minutes, ACT style): "Should young people be required to do some form of manual work?" Perspectives: (1) Manual work builds character and skill that no classroom can teach. (2) Students' time is better spent on academic study that prepares them for college. (3) Manual work should be encouraged but never required. Session 2 (30 minutes, CLT style): "Is it better to read a few books deeply or many books widely?"

You will need

- Writing notebook or lined paper
- A timer or clock
- Pencils or pens
- The four ACT domains written on a card

Steps

1. Read the prompt twice. Underline the question itself.
2. Plan (5 minutes; 4 for the CLT essay): write your claim, then quick notes under two or three heads, one specific example each, and one line for the objection.
3. Write the introduction with your claim in the last sentence.
4. Write one body paragraph per head. Glance at the clock after each one.
5. Write the counterargument paragraph: state the opposing perspective fairly, grant what is true, answer it.

6. Write a brief conclusion, then use the last minutes to check: fix fragments, run-ons and missing words.
7. Afterward, score yourself 1–6 on each ACT domain and write one sentence on what to change next time.

Check your work

- My claim is stated plainly in the introduction.
- Each body paragraph has one head and one specific example.
- I answered at least one other perspective instead of only summarizing it.
- I finished, with a conclusion, before time ran out.
- My sentences vary in structure: simple, compound, complex and compound-complex (Style Clinic).
- No comma splices or fragments remain.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the time budget for a forty-minute and a thirty-minute essay inside the cover of your notebook.
2. Plan (do not write) three essays in five minutes each: “Is honesty always the best policy?”, “Should students have summer jobs?”, “Is it better to be a leader or a faithful follower?”
3. List five vague phrases to banish from your timed essays (“in today’s society” ...) and a concrete replacement for each.

History note. Samuel Johnson published *The Rambler* twice a week from 1750 to 1752. Hester Thrale (later Mrs. Piozzi) recorded that Rambler No. 134, an essay on idleness and putting things off, was written in haste in Sir Joshua Reynolds’ parlor while the printer’s boy waited to carry it to the press.

 **Style Clinic. The four sentence structures.** Tired writers fall into strings of simple sentences or run every idea together with “and.” Keep all four structures in reach. Simple: “Memorization furnishes the mind.” Compound: “No one needs a train schedule by heart, but everyone needs the multiplication tables.” Complex: “Although any fact can be looked up, the facts we know are the ones we think with.” Compound-complex: “A soldier may not use a psalm for years, but when the night comes that he needs it, it is there.” In your self-check, underline one of each kind.

For families. Test summary as of October 2026, for orientation only: the SAT has had no essay since 2021; the ACT writing test is optional, forty minutes, scored 2–12 by two readers; the CLT essay is optional, thirty minutes, unscored and sent to colleges. Formats change, so check act.org and cltexam.com before registering, and ask your student’s target colleges whether they want the essay. Timed writing is worth practicing regardless: it trains clear thinking under pressure, useful in every job. Grade each practice essay on the four ACT domains; do not mark every spelling slip in a timed draft.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn this five-minute plan into a working outline: Prompt “Should students have summer jobs?” Notes: “yes, money, responsibility, maybe too tired?, learn skills.”

1. State the claim in one sentence: “Students should hold summer jobs because work teaches responsibility, builds skill and is open to almost anyone.”
2. Sort notes into heads: responsibility and skill are expedient; “open to almost anyone” is possible; money supports the expedient head.
3. Turn “maybe too tired?” into the objection: some say students need summer rest. Answer: a part-time job still leaves time for rest, and work is itself a kind of refreshment from books.
4. Add one specific example to each body head.

Answer: Claim; ¶2 expedient: responsibility (showing up at 7 a.m. at a farm stand); ¶3 expedient: skill (learning to run a register and talk to customers); ¶4 possible: jobs available to most teens (mowing, babysitting, stocking shelves); ¶5 objection and answer; ¶6 brief conclusion.

Example 2. Revise this weak timed-essay introduction: “In today’s society there are many different opinions about reading. Some people think one thing and others think another. This essay will discuss both sides.”

1. Cut “In today’s society” and “This essay will discuss.”
2. Name the real issue in concrete terms.
3. State a claim; do not promise to “discuss both sides.”

Answer: A reader can finish a hundred books in a year and remember almost none of them, or read *Pilgrim’s Progress* three times and carry it for life. It is better to read a few books deeply than many books widely, because deep reading forms judgment, builds memory and teaches us to love what is good.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Which major test no longer has an essay?
2. **EASY** How long is the ACT writing test, and how many perspectives does its prompt give?
3. **EASY** Give the time budget for a forty-minute essay.
4. **EASY** Is the CLT essay scored?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the four ACT scoring domains.
6. **MEDIUM** Rewrite as a claim: “There are good and bad things about video games.”
7. **MEDIUM** Make this vague support specific: “Throughout history, many people have succeeded through hard work.”

8. **CHALLENGE** Combine into one compound-complex sentence: “Some say students need rest in summer. That is partly true. Work can be a rest from books.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Starting to write without a plan, then running dry halfway through.
- Summarizing all three perspectives without ever stating your own.
- Saving the claim for the conclusion, where a hurried reader may never find it.
- Leaving the essay unfinished; a short, complete essay scores better than a long one that stops mid-argument.

Make it a game · Five-Minute Plans. A parent reads a prompt from a list of perennial questions. Everyone (parent too) has five minutes to write a claim, heads and an objection. Swap plans. Award a point for a clear claim, a point for each specific example and two points for a fair objection. Play three rounds.

Scripture. “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:16, KJV)

Paul tells believers to buy back their time and spend it well; a timed essay is a small daily lesson in the same stewardship.

Practice: answers

1. The SAT (dropped in 2021).
2. Forty minutes; three perspectives.
3. About five minutes to plan, thirty to write and five to check.
4. No. It is optional and unscored, but the essay itself is sent to colleges with your results.
5. Ideas and analysis; development and support; organization; language use and conventions.
6. Sample: Young people should limit video games to an hour a day, because unlimited play crowds out work, reading and real friendship.
7. Sample: The Wright brothers, two bicycle mechanics from Dayton, tested about two hundred wing shapes in a homemade wind tunnel before their first powered flight at Kitty Hawk in December 1903.
8. Sample: Although some say students need rest in summer, and that is partly true, work itself can be a rest from books.

1.3 EVIDENCE FROM HISTORY

OBJECTIVES

- Explain why examples from history persuade, and test an example for truth, relevance and fairness.
- Analyze how Hamilton uses Sparta, Athens, Rome and Carthage as evidence in *The Federalist* No. 6.
- Build a personal “history file” of ten accurate examples ready for timed essays.

Warm-up. Name three events from history that show “pride goeth before destruction.” For each, write the year (or century) and one sentence on what happened. How sure are you of each fact?

Video slot. Video coming. The Federalist Papers: who wrote them and why (introduction for students). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

example (paradigm)

A particular case offered to prove a general claim; Aristotle called it the rhetorical form of induction.

precedent

Something done before that is cited as a guide or justification for doing the same now.

bridge (warrant)

The sentence that explains *why* an example proves the claim. Without it, the reader sees a story but not an argument.

anachronism

Putting something in the wrong time, such as describing ancient Rome in modern terms, or judging an event by facts no one then knew.

testimony

Evidence from the words of a witness or authority, quoted or cited accurately.

CORE IDEAS

Why history persuades. Aristotle taught that the orator proves things in two ways: by reasoning from principles and by examples. An example is a small induction. If many republics have made war as readily as kings, the reader concludes that the next republic probably will too. History is the great storehouse of examples because it shows what men actually did, not what we imagine they would do. Hamilton calls experience “the least fallible guide of human opinions.” Scripture agrees: “Remember the days of old” (Deuteronomy 32:7).

Hamilton's method. In *The Federalist* No. 6 (1787), Alexander Hamilton answers men who said the American states would live in peace even without a strong union, because republics and trading nations are naturally peaceful. First he asks a string of questions that appeal to human nature: are not republics run by men, with men's passions? Then he turns to history. Sparta, Athens, Rome and Carthage were all republics, and they fought as often as the monarchies around them. One paragraph of reasoning, one paragraph of examples: the principle tells you why, and the history shows that it is so.

Four tests for an example. Before you use an event, ask: (1) *Is it true?* Can you give the right century, the right people and the right outcome? (2) *Is it relevant?* Does it prove your claim, or only sit near it? (3) *Is it fair?* Have you left out the part that cuts the other way? (4) *Is it specific?* "Throughout history" proves nothing; "Carthage, though a commercial republic," proves something. An example that fails any test weakens your whole essay, because a reader who catches one error stops trusting the rest.

Even Hamilton compresses. Look closely at the model. Carthage was indeed blamed for starting the Second Punic War, when Hannibal attacked Saguntum, an ally of Rome, and marched to Italy. Scipio defeated Hannibal at Zama in 202 B.C. But Carthage was not destroyed until 146 B.C., at the end of a *third* war, more than fifty years later. Hamilton folds two wars into one sentence. His larger point still stands, but the lesson for you is plain: check your dates, and do not make an example say more than it can.

Example, then bridge. A historical example does not explain itself. After you tell it, add the bridge: the sentence that ties it to your claim. "Washington resigned his commission in 1783" is a fact. "Because he gave up power when he could have kept it, the new nation learned that its generals served the people, not the reverse" is an argument. In a timed essay, aim for a body paragraph of four parts: claim, example, bridge, return to the claim.

No presentism, no slogans. Treat the people of the past as real men and women who faced real choices with the knowledge they had. Name real wrongs plainly (slavery was a grave evil, and its defenders were wrong in their own day as well as ours), but do not reduce history to modern slogans or use the dead as props for a living quarrel. The best historical evidence is told accurately, in its own setting, and lets the facts carry the weight.

Stock your memory. The ancient rhetoricians called the fourth canon *memory*. For timed writing it means walking into the test with a supply of examples already known and checked. A good history file holds ten or twelve events from different ages that can serve many prompts: courage, perseverance, pride, honesty, work, liberty, faith. Learn each one with its date, its people and one sentence on what it proves.

The model. *Alexander Hamilton, The Federalist No. 6 (1787), Project Gutenberg #1404*

Have republics in practice been less addicted to war than monarchies? Are not the former administered by MEN as well as the latter? Are there not aversions, predilections, rivalships, and desires of unjust acquisitions, that affect nations as well as kings? Are not popular assemblies frequently subject to the impulses of rage, resentment, jealousy, avarice, and of other irregular and violent

propensities? Is it not well known that their determinations are often governed by a few individuals in whom they place confidence, and are, of course, liable to be tintured by the passions and views of those individuals? Has commerce hitherto done anything more than change the objects of war? Is not the love of wealth as domineering and enterprising a passion as that of power or glory? Have there not been as many wars founded upon commercial motives since that has become the prevailing system of nations, as were before occasioned by the cupidity of territory or dominion? Has not the spirit of commerce, in many instances, administered new incentives to the appetite, both for the one and for the other? Let experience, the least fallible guide of human opinions, be appealed to for an answer to these inquiries.

Sparta, Athens, Rome, and Carthage were all republics; two of them, Athens and Carthage, of the commercial kind. Yet were they as often engaged in wars, offensive and defensive, as the neighboring monarchies of the same times. Sparta was little better than a wellregulated camp; and Rome was never sated of carnage and conquest.

Carthage, though a commercial republic, was the aggressor in the very war that ended in her destruction. Hannibal had carried her arms into the heart of Italy and to the gates of Rome, before Scipio, in turn, gave him an overthrow in the territories of Carthage, and made a conquest of the commonwealth

PICTURE STUDY



The Art of Painting, Johannes Vermeer, about 1666–1668 · Oil on canvas · Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

A painter, seen from behind, works at his easel. His model is dressed as Clio, the muse of history: she wears a laurel wreath, holds a trumpet for fame and carries a heavy book, the record of what has been done. Behind her hangs a large map of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands, a reminder of the country's own history of war and division. Vermeer kept this painting all his life.

Look closely

- Find the three things Clio holds or wears. What might each stand for?
- Find the map. Can you see the faint crease running down its middle?
- Look at what the painter has begun on his canvas. Which part of Clio is he painting first?

Talk about it

1. Clio carries both a trumpet and a book. Write a paragraph on the difference between history that makes a noise and history that keeps a record. Which is better evidence?
2. Why might a painter choose the muse of history, rather than a portrait, as the subject of a picture about his own art?

WRITING PROJECT: A HISTORY FILE AND A HISTORY PARAGRAPH

Build a set of ten examples you can carry into any timed essay, then use one in a full argument paragraph.

You will need

- Index cards or a section of your writing notebook
- A reliable history book or encyclopedia
- A KJV Bible

Steps

1. Choose ten events from at least four eras (Bible times, Greece and Rome, the Middle Ages and Reformation, American history, modern times). Possible starters: Nehemiah rebuilding the wall (Nehemiah 4-6); Cincinnatus returning to his plow; the Magna Carta (1215); Washington resigning his commission (1783); Wilberforce's twenty-year fight against the slave trade (1787-1807); the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk (1903).
2. On each card write: the event, the date, the main people, three key facts and the virtues or vices it could prove.
3. Check each card against a second source. Correct any date or name you had wrong.
4. Pick one prompt: "Is perseverance more important than talent?" Write a body paragraph with claim, example, bridge and return.
5. Test your paragraph with the four questions: true, relevant, fair, specific.
6. Read the paragraph aloud and revise with the checklist.

Check your work

- Every date and name in my file was checked against a second source.
- My paragraph states the claim before the example.
- A bridge sentence explains why the example proves the claim.
- I used an appositive or participial phrase to identify a person or place briefly (Style Clinic).
- I did not exaggerate or compress the facts to make them fit.
- Commas set off nonessential phrases and clauses correctly.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Hamilton's sentence "Let experience, the least fallible guide of human opinions, be appealed to for an answer to these inquiries." Circle the appositive.
2. Imitate Hamilton's structure: write a paragraph of three questions about human nature, followed by three historical examples that answer them.
3. Make a timeline across one page of your notebook and place your ten history-file events on it.

History note. *The Federalist* was written in 1787–1788 by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay under the pen name "Publius," to urge New York to ratify the Constitution. No. 6 is Hamilton's. Vermeer's *Art of Painting* stayed with his family after his death in 1675 and is now in Vienna. The Second Punic War ran from 218 to 201 B.C.; Carthage was destroyed in 146 B.C. at the end of the Third Punic War.

 **Style Clinic. Appositive and participial phrases.** Historical evidence needs quick identification. An appositive phrase renames a noun: "Carthage, *a commercial republic*, was the aggressor." "Let experience, *the least fallible guide of human opinions*, be appealed to." A participial phrase describes: "*Having carried the war to the gates of Rome*, Hannibal was at last recalled to defend Carthage." Both let you give the reader context without a separate sentence. Set them off with commas when they are not essential, and keep a participial phrase next to the noun it modifies.

For families. Unit 2 of this grade uses the Magna Carta and the Northwest Ordinance as historic cases; a card on either is good preparation. Help your student check every date in the history file; this is the habit that keeps a persuasive writer honest (Ephesians 4:25). Hamilton's paragraph just before this excerpt repeats an ancient charge against Pericles involving a courtesan; it is left out of the model, and you need not discuss it.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Test this example for the claim “Free peoples can fall through luxury”:
“Rome fell in one day when the barbarians attacked, because everyone was lazy.”

1. True? No. The Western Empire declined over centuries; the date often given for its end is A.D. 476, and its causes were many.
2. Fair? “Everyone was lazy” is a slogan, not a fact.
3. Specific? No names, no date, no detail.
4. Rewrite with a narrower, accurate claim and a cited witness.

Answer: Sample: Roman writers themselves feared luxury. The historian Sallust, writing in the first century B.C., blamed the decline of the old Roman virtues on the wealth that poured in after Carthage was destroyed. Whether or not he was right about every cause, his warning shows that even Romans saw prosperity as a test of character.

Example 2. Add a bridge: “Claim: Great leaders know when to give up power. Example: In December 1783, George Washington resigned his commission as commander in chief before Congress at Annapolis and went home to Mount Vernon.”

1. Ask: why does this prove the claim?
2. He had the army’s loyalty and could have kept power; he gave it back to civil government.
3. Return to the claim in a final sentence.

Answer: Because Washington had the army’s loyalty and could have made himself master of the country, his resignation taught the young republic that soldiers serve the people, not the other way around. His greatness lay as much in what he laid down as in what he won.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does Hamilton call experience?
2. **EASY** Which four republics does Hamilton name?
3. **EASY** List the four tests for a historical example.
4. **EASY** What is a bridge sentence?
5. **MEDIUM** What does Hamilton do in the paragraph of questions before he gives examples?
6. **MEDIUM** Where does Hamilton compress history in the model?
7. **MEDIUM** Add an appositive: “Nehemiah rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem in fifty-two days.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a four-part paragraph (claim, example, bridge, return) for “Perseverance matters more than talent.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Using a vague appeal (“throughout history”) instead of a named event.
- Telling the example but never explaining how it proves the claim.
- Getting a date or name wrong; one error makes the reader doubt everything else.
- Judging the past with modern slogans instead of telling what happened plainly.

Make it a game • Prompt Match. Shuffle your history-file cards. A parent reads a prompt (“Is honesty always the best policy?”). You have thirty seconds to pick a card and give one sentence showing how it fits. A parent may challenge any fact; if the card is wrong, you lose the point.

Scripture. “Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.” (Deuteronomy 32:7, KJV)

Moses tells Israel to argue from history: what God has done in past generations is evidence for what is true now.

Practice: answers

1. “The least fallible guide of human opinions.”
2. Sparta, Athens, Rome and Carthage.
3. Is it true? Is it relevant? Is it fair? Is it specific?
4. The sentence that explains why an example proves the claim.
5. He reasons from human nature: republics are run by men with the same passions as kings, so we should expect them to make war too.
6. He makes the war Hannibal fought sound like the war that destroyed Carthage; Carthage lost the Second Punic War (201 B.C.) but was destroyed only in the Third (146 B.C.).
7. Sample: Nehemiah, cupbearer to the Persian king Artaxerxes, rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem in fifty-two days.
8. Sample: Perseverance carries a cause further than talent. William Wilberforce, a small and often sickly man, first spoke against the British slave trade in Parliament in 1789 and brought motion after motion against it, losing again and again, until Parliament finally abolished the trade in 1807. Many in Parliament were abler speakers, but none kept at the cause so long. Talent may open a door; only perseverance walks all the way through it.

1.4 PEER REVIEW: IRON SHARPENETH IRON

OBJECTIVES

- Read a peer’s essay twice, first for the argument and then for the sentences, and score it on the four ACT domains.
- Write comments that are truthful, specific and gracious: praise, questions and suggestions.
- Receive criticism well and revise a timed essay into a clean final copy.

Warm-up. Think of the best advice anyone ever gave you about something you made or did. Who gave it, and how did they say it? Write three sentences. What made it easy (or hard) to accept?

Video slot. Video coming. How to give helpful feedback on a classmate’s essay (peer review for high school writers). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

peer review

Reading and commenting on the work of a fellow student so that he or she can revise it.

global comment

A comment on the whole argument: the claim, the heads, the examples, the order, the objection.

local comment

A comment on one sentence or word: a fragment, a dangling modifier, a vague phrase.

candor

Frankness joined with fairness; telling the truth without malice. Pope asks critics to let “truth and candor shine.”

revision log

A short list the writer keeps of each comment received and what he or she decided to change.

CORE IDEAS

Why a second pair of eyes. Every writer is partly blind to his own work. You know what you *meant*, so you read that into the page even where it is not there. A fellow student does not know what you meant; he knows only what you wrote. That is why Solomon says, “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend” (Proverbs 27:17). Writers from Pope to the Founders passed drafts among friends before they printed a word. Peer review is not a classroom invention; it is how serious writing has always been made.

Pope's rules for critics. In 1711 Alexander Pope, a young man not yet twenty-five, published *An Essay on Criticism*, a poem full of advice for anyone who judges another's work. In the model he says that knowing what is wrong is only "half a judge's task." The other half is the manner: speak with truth and candor, be modest when you are unsure, admit your own past errors, and teach in a way that does not humiliate. "Men must be taught as if you taught them not." His line "Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do" does not mean you should lie; *nice* here means delicate. He means that truth flung carelessly can do as much harm as error. Paul puts it better: speak the truth (Ephesians 4:25), with grace, seasoned with salt (Colossians 4:6).

Read twice. Read your partner's essay through once without a pen, for the argument. Can you find the claim in the first paragraph? Can you name each head? Is there a specific example in each body paragraph, with a bridge? Is an objection answered? Write two or three global comments. Then read a second time with a pen, for sentences: fragments, run-ons, dangling modifiers, vague phrases, a word used wrongly. Global comments come first because there is no use polishing a sentence in a paragraph that should be cut.

Three kinds of comments. Every helpful comment is one of three kinds. *Praise* names exactly what works and why ("Your Wilberforce example is specific and well bridged"), so the writer knows to keep it. A *question* shows where a reader was confused ("Which perspective are you answering here?"). A *suggestion* offers a way forward ("Try moving the expedient head last; it is your strongest"). Avoid comments that only judge ("boring," "good," "weak") without telling the writer what to do.

Score with a shared rubric. Use the four ACT domains so both of you speak the same language: ideas and analysis (is the claim clear and thoughtful?), development and support (are the examples specific and explained?), organization (does each paragraph have one job, in a sensible order?), and language use (are the sentences clear, varied and correct?). Give each a score from 1 to 6, with one sentence of reason. A number without a reason teaches nothing.

The writer's part. Receiving criticism is a skill too, and a sign of character: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend" (Proverbs 27:6). Listen without defending yourself. Thank your reviewer. Ask questions until you understand each comment. Then decide: you are the author, and not every suggestion must be taken. Keep a revision log of what you changed and why. Pope praises the writer who will "own your errors past, / And make each day a critique on the last."

Who can be a peer. A sibling, a co-op classmate, a friend from church or a parent can all review, as long as the reviewer uses the rubric and the three kinds of comments. Even reviewing a stranger's sample essay helps, because judging another's work trains your eye for your own.

The model. *Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism (1711), Part III, Project Gutenberg #7409*

Learn, then, what morals critics ought to show,
For 'tis but half a judge's task to know.
'Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning, join;
In all you speak, let truth and candor shine:
That not alone what to your sense is due
All may allow, but seek your friendship too.

Be silent always, when you doubt your sense;
And speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence:
Some positive persisting fops we know,
Who, if once wrong will needs be always so;
But you, with pleasure, own your errors past,
And make each day a critique on the last.

'Tis not enough your counsel still be true;
Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do;
Men must be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.
Without good breeding truth is disapproved;
That only makes superior sense beloved.

PICTURE STUDY



The Chess Players, Thomas Eakins, 1876 · Oil on wood · The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Eakins painted his father, Benjamin Eakins, standing and watching while two old friends play chess in a Philadelphia parlor. No one speaks; all three are thinking about the same board.

The watcher sees things the players may miss, because he is not caught up in his own plans. That is the gift a good reviewer gives a writer.

Look closely

- Find the man who is standing. How does Eakins show that he is concentrating?
- Look at the two players' faces and hands. Which one seems about to move?
- Find the small details of the room: the glasses, the table, the dark background. Where does the light fall brightest?

Talk about it

1. Write a paragraph comparing the watcher in this painting to a peer reviewer. What can he see that the players cannot? What must he not do?
2. If the standing man offered advice, which of Pope's rules should he follow? Quote one line of the model in your answer.

WRITING PROJECT: REVIEW, REVISE, RECOPY

Exchange one of your timed essays from Lesson 1.2 with a partner (sibling, co-op classmate or parent). Each of you reviews the other's essay, then revises your own into a clean final copy.

You will need

- Your timed essay from Lesson 1.2
- A partner's essay (or the sample essay from Lesson 1.2 if no partner is available)
- A different-colored pen
- The four ACT domains on a card

Steps

1. First reading, no pen: find the claim, name each head, check for examples, bridges and an objection.
2. Write two or three global comments at the end: at least one praise, one question and one suggestion.
3. Second reading, with pen: mark up to five local problems in the margin (fragment, run-on, dangling modifier, vague phrase, wrong word).
4. Score each ACT domain from 1 to 6 with one sentence of reason.
5. Meet for ten minutes. Reviewer speaks first; writer listens, thanks and asks questions.
6. Writer keeps a revision log: each comment, and "changed" or "kept, because ..."
7. Revise and recopy the essay cleanly (allow twenty minutes).

Check your work

- My comments included praise, a question and a suggestion, each specific.
- I commented on the argument before the sentences.

- I gave a reason with every score.
- My revision log records each comment and my decision.
- My final copy has no dangling or misplaced modifiers (Style Clinic).
- My final copy is clean and complete, with my claim in the introduction.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the six lines beginning “’Tis not enough your counsel still be true” and memorize the couplet “Men must be taught as if you taught them not, / And things unknown proposed as things forgot.”
2. Rewrite three harsh comments as helpful ones: “This is boring.” “Your example is wrong.” “Too long.”
3. Write a short paragraph: the hardest criticism you ever received that turned out to help you.

History note. Alexander Pope (1688–1744) published *An Essay on Criticism* in 1711; many of its lines became proverbs, such as “A little learning is a dangerous thing” and “To err is human, to forgive divine.” Thomas Eakins painted *The Chess Players* in 1876 and gave it to the Metropolitan Museum in 1881.

 **Style Clinic. Misplaced and dangling modifiers.** These are the errors a peer catches most easily, because the writer reads what he meant. Dangling: “*Walking into the test*, the clock seemed to move faster.” (The clock was not walking.) Fixed: “Walking into the test, I felt the clock move faster.” Misplaced: “Washington resigned his commission before Congress *wearing his uniform*.” Fixed: “Wearing his uniform, Washington resigned his commission before Congress.” Rule: put the modifier next to the word it describes, and make sure that word is actually in the sentence.

For families. If your student has no peer, review together as partners: you score their essay and they score a sample essay (or yours). Model the manner Pope describes. Keep comments on the writing, never on the writer. The Pope excerpt uses old words: “fops” (vain, foolish men), “diffidence” (modesty), “nice” (delicate, careful) and “good breeding” (courtesy). Line 10 (“Who, if once wrong will needs be always so”) is printed as it appears in the Gutenberg text.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Improve these peer comments: (a) “Good essay!” (b) “Your second paragraph is bad.” (c) “Add more.”

1. (a) is praise without a reason: name what is good.
2. (b) is judgment without help: say what the problem is, as a question or suggestion.
3. (c) is vague: say what to add and where.

Answer: (a) “Your claim is clear in the first paragraph, and the Wright brothers example is specific: keep both.” (b) “In your second paragraph, which head are you arguing? It seems to switch from expedient to just halfway through; try splitting it.” (c) “Your objection paragraph states the other view but doesn’t answer it. Add two sentences that show why it falls short.”

Example 2. A writer received the comment “Your conclusion just repeats the introduction.” Show how to log and act on it.

1. Ask the reviewer: “Which sentences feel repeated?” (Answer: the whole first sentence.)
2. Decide: the reviewer is right; a conclusion should close the case, not restate it.
3. Log it and revise.

Answer: Log: “Conclusion repeats intro: changed. New ending uses an image and a call to act.” Revised conclusion: “A barn is raised by many hands, and so is a life. Work beside others while you are young, and you will never have to stand alone when you fall.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three kinds of helpful comments.
2. **EASY** Which reading comes first, global or local? Why?
3. **EASY** According to Pope, what is only “half a judge’s task”?
4. **EASY** What does Proverbs 27:17 compare a friend to?
5. **MEDIUM** Explain “Men must be taught as if you taught them not.”
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling modifier: “After reading my essay, several mistakes were found.”
7. **MEDIUM** Fix the misplaced modifier: “Hamilton named four republics in his essay that made war often.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a full set of global comments (praise, question, suggestion) on the sample essay in Lesson 1.2 (“Is memorization still worth the effort?”).

COMMON MISTAKES

- Fixing commas while the argument has a missing head or no objection.
- Comments that judge (“weak,” “boring”) without telling the writer what to do.
- Writers arguing with every comment instead of listening, thanking and then deciding.
- Rewriting a partner’s essay in your own words instead of letting them revise it.

Make it a game · Spot the Dangler. A parent reads ten sentences aloud, some with dangling or misplaced modifiers and some correct. Players hold up a pencil when they hear an error and must give the corrected sentence. Two points for a correct fix; lose one for a false alarm.

Scripture. “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.” (Proverbs 27:17, KJV)

Peer review is iron on iron: friends who tell each other the truth with grace both come away sharper.

Practice: answers

1. Praise, question, suggestion.
2. Global, because there is no use polishing sentences in a paragraph that may need to be cut or moved.
3. To know (what is right or wrong in a work); the other half is the manner and morals of the critic.
4. Iron sharpening iron.
5. Correct people gently, so that they learn without feeling lectured or humiliated.
6. Sample: After reading my essay, my brother found several mistakes.
7. In his essay, Hamilton named four republics that made war often.
8. Sample: Praise: the carpenter comparison makes the expedient head concrete. Question: the introduction promises three reasons; is “serves us when tools fail” really different from “furnishes the mind,” or will those two paragraphs overlap? Suggestion: the soldier example is moving but unnamed; replace it with a real, checkable case to strengthen development and support.

UNIT 1 REVIEW

Parts 1–9 may be answered in writing or orally. Item 10 is a timed essay: set a clock for forty minutes and allow no notes. Score the essay on the four ACT domains (1–6 each) using the unit’s checklists, not for spelling alone.

1. (3 pts) Define thesis and hypothesis, and give an example of each.
2. (4 pts) Name the four heads of the thesis and the question each asks.
3. (2 pts) Which head does Solomon chiefly use in Ecclesiastes 4:9–12? Give two of his reasons.
4. (3 pts) Give the time budget for a forty-minute essay and describe the ACT and CLT essays as studied in this unit.
5. (2 pts) Rewrite as a strong introduction claim: “There are many opinions about whether students should have jobs.”
6. (2 pts) List the four tests for a historical example.
7. (2 pts) What does Hamilton call experience, and which four republics does he cite?
8. (3 pts) Add a bridge sentence: “Claim: Courage is shown in small daily duties. Example: Nehemiah’s builders worked on the wall of Jerusalem with a tool in one hand and a weapon in the other (Nehemiah 4:17).”
9. (4 pts) Fix the modifier errors: (a) “Having checked every date, the history file was finished.” (b) “Pope wrote advice for critics in a poem that is still useful.”
10. (24 pts) Timed essay (40 minutes): “Is it better to be content with what you have or always to strive for more?” Plan with the heads, take a clear position, use at least one specific historical example with a bridge, and answer one opposing view.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A TIMED ESSAY, REVIEWED AND REVISED

Place three pages in your Grade 10 portfolio: your original timed essay from Lesson 1.2 (unchanged, with the time noted), your peer’s review with scores and your revision log, and the clean revised copy from Lesson 1.4. Together they show where you began this year and how you improve.

- **Claim and heads:** A clear claim in the introduction, argued by distinct heads, one per paragraph.
- **Evidence:** At least one specific, accurate historical example with a bridge to the claim.
- **Objection:** An opposing view stated fairly and answered.
- **Revision and style:** The revised copy shows real changes from the review, varied sentence structures and no dangling or misplaced modifiers.

Answer key

1. A thesis is a general question without particular persons or times (“Should young people learn a trade?”); a hypothesis is a specific case (“Should Sam apprentice with his uncle this fall?”).

2. Lawful (does the law of God and the land allow it?), just (is it right toward others?), expedient (does it bring good results?), possible (can it be done?).
3. Expedient. Two of: a better reward for labor; one lifts the other when he falls; two keep warm; two withstand an attacker.
4. About 5 minutes planning, 30 writing, 5 checking. ACT: optional, 40 minutes, one issue with three perspectives, scored by two readers. CLT: optional, 30 minutes, unscored but sent to colleges. (The SAT has no essay.)
5. Sample: Students should hold part-time or summer jobs, because work teaches responsibility, builds practical skill and is open to nearly everyone.
6. True, relevant, fair, specific.
7. "The least fallible guide of human opinions"; Sparta, Athens, Rome and Carthage.
8. Sample: Their courage was not one great charge but a long day's labor done under threat, which shows that bravery is often simply faithfulness that keeps working when it is afraid.
9. (a) Having checked every date, I finished the history file. (b) In a poem, Pope wrote advice for critics that is still useful. (Or: Pope's poem gives advice for critics that is still useful.)
10. Scored on the four ACT domains, 1–6 each: clear claim (ideas and analysis); specific, bridged examples (development and support); one head per paragraph with objection and conclusion (organization); varied, correct sentences (language use). A strong essay might argue for contentment in what one has and diligence in one's work (Philippians 4:11; Proverbs 22:29), with a checked historical example.

LAW (INTRODUCTION OF A LAW)

The last of the fourteen classical exercises: the introduction of a law, a speech for or against a particular measure. You will read Washington's counsel to the First Congress on amending the Constitution, learn the five heads by which every law is tested (clarity, justice, expedience, possibility, custom), try them on the decree of Darius in Daniel 6, follow clause 39 of Magna Carta and Article 6 of the Northwest Ordinance through history, and finish by researching, drafting and arguing a real ordinance for your own town. The year's verse, "Righteousness exalteth a nation" (Proverbs 14:34), runs through the whole unit.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can write a multi-paragraph thesis essay with a stated position, reasons and an answered objection (Grade 9 and Unit 1).
- Knows the progymnasmata sequence through thesis and can use narrative, refutation, commonplace and comparison inside a longer piece.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain how the introduction of a law differs from a thesis.
- ☐ I can name the five heads, ask the question each one puts to a law, and explain why justice ranks first.
- ☐ I can tell the history of Magna Carta clause 39 and Northwest Ordinance Article 6 accurately and argue for either in the voice of its time.
- ☐ I can draft a short ordinance in proper form with clear, active, mandatory language.
- ☐ I can write and deliver a proposal to a local council that argues all five heads from researched facts and answers an objection respectfully.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **United States Presidents' Inaugural Speeches (Project Gutenberg #925)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/925>): Washington's First Inaugural Address (1789), the Lesson 2.1 model, is the first speech in the collection.
- **The Magna Carta (Project Gutenberg #10000)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10000>): Several English versions of the 1215 charter; the Lesson 2.3 model is clauses 38–40.
- **Northwest Ordinance, July 13, 1787 (Avalon Project, Yale Law School)** (https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/nworder.asp): Full text, including the six articles of compact.
- **History of the Ordinance of 1787 and the Old Northwest Territory (Project Gutenberg #61909)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/61909>): A 1937 school history of the ordinance and the settlement of the Northwest; good background for Lesson 2.3.

- **The Constitution of the United States (Project Gutenberg #5)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/5>): Read Article V (amendments) alongside Washington's address.

2.1 ARGUING FOR OR AGAINST A LAW: THE LAST PROGYMNASMA ★

OBJECTIVES

- Define the introduction of a law and tell how it differs from a thesis.
- Read Washington’s counsel to the First Congress on amending the Constitution and name the tests he asks them to apply.
- Write a one-page speech for or against a historic law in the classical order: introduction, statement of the law, heads, objection, conclusion.

Warm-up. Every household has rules nobody wrote down: shoes off at the door, no phones at supper, chores before games. Pick one. Pretend a younger brother or sister has moved to repeal it, and in four sentences argue that it should stay. Then look at what you wrote. Did you reach first for fairness, for usefulness, or for “we have always done it this way”? Those three instincts are three of the five heads you will learn this unit.

Video slot. Video coming. George Washington’s First Inaugural Address (1789) and the origins of the Bill of Rights, from a museum, archive or historic-site channel (e.g., Mount Vernon, the National Archives, Federal Hall). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

introduction of a law

The last of Aphthonius’s fourteen progymnasmata (Greek *eisphora nomou*): a speech that argues for or against a particular proposed or existing law.

statute / ordinance

A statute is a written law passed by a legislature (Congress, a state assembly). An ordinance is a law passed by a local body such as a city council or county board.

heads

The standard questions (topics) a speaker works through. For a law: clarity, justice, expedience, possibility and custom.

deliberative oratory

Aristotle’s name for speech that urges an assembly to do or not do something in the future. Its chief questions are what is just and what is advantageous.

burden of proof

The duty to show that a claim is true. In debates over law it usually rests on the one who proposes a change.

CORE IDEAS

The last exercise. Aphthonius, the Greek teacher whose handbook schooled Europe for more than a thousand years, listed fourteen exercises: fable, narrative, chreia, maxim, refutation, confirmation, commonplace, encomium, invective, comparison, characterization, description, thesis and, last of all, the introduction of a law. You have climbed almost the whole ladder. Every earlier step is needed on this one: narrative tells the history of the problem, refutation and confirmation meet the opponent, commonplace amplifies the evil the law will cure, and comparison sets the new law beside the old.

Thesis and law. Last year and in Unit 1 you argued theses: general questions such as “Should a man marry?” or “Is it better to live in the country or the city?” Aphthonius notes that a law differs from a thesis because it is tied to circumstances: a particular people, a particular measure, a particular time. “Should towns have parks?” is a thesis. “Resolved, that the Town of Millbrook purchase the Harmon lot on Water Street for a public park, at a cost not to exceed \$80,000” is a law. The thesis asks what is wise in general; the law asks whether *this* wording should bind *these* people *now*. That is why the law exercise belongs to what Aristotle called deliberative oratory, the speech of assemblies that decide the future.

The heads. The ancient teachers gave the student a set of questions to put to any law. Theon told him to ask first whether the law is clear; Aphthonius listed the lawful, the just, the expedient, the possible and the fitting. This course gathers them into five heads: *clarity* (can it be understood and applied?), *justice* (does it give each his due and command nothing wrong?), *expedience* (will it do more good than harm?), *possibility* (can it actually be carried out?) and *custom* (does it agree with the laws, constitution and settled practice already standing?). Lesson 2.2 takes them one at a time. Notice now that the same heads serve both sides. The speaker for a law must show it passes every test; the speaker against it needs to show only one fatal failure. An unjust law that is clear, cheap and easy is still unjust.

The order of the speech. Arrange your speech in five movements. (1) *Introduction*: win a hearing and show why the matter is urgent. (2) *Statement of the law*: quote its exact words, or, if you are proposing it, give the exact words you want adopted. Never argue about a law you have not stated. (3) *The heads*, one paragraph or more each, ordinarily ending with your strongest. (4) *Objection*: state the best argument on the other side fairly, then answer it. (5) *Conclusion*: sum up briefly and ask for a vote. The ancients would have called the last part the epilogue; the modern assembly calls it “the question.”

Who must prove it? In most debates over law the burden of proof falls on the one who wants a change. An old law has been tested by use; a new one has not. G. K. Chesterton put the point in a homely picture: if you find a fence across a road and see no use for it, do not tear it down until you have learned why someone put it up. Yet custom is not sacred. Some fences were built to keep out justice, and Lesson 2.3 will show lawmakers who rightly broke with the custom of their age. The honest speaker respects the old law enough to understand it and loves justice enough to change it when he must.

Washington's counsel. On April 30, 1789, George Washington took the oath as the first President at Federal Hall in New York and spoke to both houses of Congress. Many Americans had opposed the new Constitution because it lacked a bill of rights, and Congress had the power under Article V to propose amendments. Washington declined to recommend particular amendments, but in the paragraph below he gave Congress the tests by which to judge them. Avoid any change that would “endanger the benefits of an united and effective government” (expedience) or that ought to “await the future lessons of experience” (custom and possibility); be guided by “a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen” (justice) and “a regard for the public harmony.” Within weeks James Madison proposed amendments; ten of them were ratified in 1791 as the Bill of Rights.

Righteousness and the law. This year's verse is Proverbs 14:34: “Righteousness exalteth a nation.” A law cannot make a man righteous, but it can restrain evil, protect the weak and teach a people what it honors. That is why Christians have always cared how laws are made and argued about. Argue as Washington did: about the measure, not the motives of those who disagree; truthfully (Ephesians 4:25); and with speech “seasoned with salt” (Colossians 4:6). In this unit you will practice on historic laws and on local, nonpartisan ordinances, where you can learn the craft without the heat of present quarrels.

The model. *George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789, in United States Presidents' Inaugural Speeches, Project Gutenberg #925*

Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide how far an exercise of the occasional power delegated by the fifth article of the Constitution is rendered expedient at the present juncture by the nature of objections which have been urged against the system, or by the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations on this subject, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official opportunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the public good; for I assure myself that whilst you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of an united and effective government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience, a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen and a regard for the public harmony will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question how far the former can be impregably fortified or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

PICTURE STUDY



Washington as Statesman at the Constitutional Convention, Junius Brutus Stearns, 1856 · Oil on canvas ·
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Junius Brutus Stearns painted a series of scenes from Washington's life in the 1840s and 1850s: Washington as farmer, as soldier, as Christian, and here as statesman. This picture imagines the Federal Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, where Washington served as president of the delegates who wrote the Constitution. Stearns was born more than twenty years after the Convention and worked from portraits, so this is not a photograph of a moment but a picture of an idea: a nation's highest law made by argument, under a man the delegates trusted to preside.

Look closely

- Find Washington. How has Stearns set him apart from the others: by height, light, color or posture?
- Find the papers and pens. Who is reading, who is writing, and who is only listening?
- Look at the faces of the delegates. Do they all look convinced? Find one who seems to be still weighing the question.

Talk about it

1. Choose one delegate in the painting. Write the introduction (the first movement) of a speech he might give to his home state urging it to ratify the Constitution, using one detail from the room.
2. The Convention met in secret and argued for almost four months. What does the painting leave out about how good laws are made, and why might Stearns have left it out?

WRITING PROJECT: A SPEECH FOR OR AGAINST A HISTORIC LAW

You will speak as a member of a real assembly at the moment it voted. Choose a settled, historic measure, so that you can learn the craft of the law speech without the heat of a present-day quarrel.

Suggested measures: (a) the Oppian Law, a Roman law limiting women's gold and finery, debated for and against by Cato and Valerius in 195 B.C. (Livy, *History of Rome*, Book 34); (b) the Land Ordinance of 1785, which reserved lot 16 of every western township "for the maintenance of public schools"; (c) the question Washington put to the First Congress: should it propose amendments securing the rights of the people? (d) another historic law your parent approves.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The exact text of the law you choose (Avalon Project, Project Gutenberg or a printed history)
- Washington's paragraph (the model) for reference

Steps

1. Read the law and a short account of the debate around it. Write down the exact words of the law, or of its key section, and the date and assembly that voted on it.
2. Decide your side. Write one sentence that states it: "I rise to support (or oppose) ..."
3. On a planning page, write the five heads (clarity, justice, expedience, possibility, custom) and one or two notes under each. Circle the head on which your case is strongest.
4. Draft the speech, 500–700 words, in the five movements: introduction, statement of the law, heads (strongest last), objection answered, conclusion asking for a vote.
5. Write in the voice of the time and place, but do not invent quotations or facts. If you are not sure of a fact, leave it out.
6. Read the speech aloud and time it. Cut until it fits in five minutes.
7. Revise with the checklist, then copy a clean version for your portfolio.

Check your work

- The law is stated in its exact words, with date and assembly, before I argue about it.
- Each head I use has its own paragraph, and I can label each paragraph in the margin.
- I state the strongest objection fairly and answer it; I argue about the measure, not the motives of opponents.
- My motions and resolutions use the subjunctive correctly ("I move that the Senate adopt ...", not "adopts").
- Every fact and date is one I checked; I invented no quotations.
- The speech can be delivered in five minutes or less.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Washington's paragraph by hand, slowly. Underline the phrase that points to justice and box the phrases that point to expedience.
2. Franklin's method: close the book and rewrite Washington's paragraph from memory in two plain sentences of your own. Then compare with the original. What did his long sentence do that your short ones could not?
3. List three rules you live under (home, church, team, job). Beside each, write the head that best defends it.

History note. Washington spoke in the Senate chamber of Federal Hall on Wall Street, just after taking the oath on the balcony outside. On June 8, 1789, James Madison introduced amendments in the House; Congress sent twelve to the states in September, and ten were ratified on December 15, 1791. Stearns's painting hangs in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; prints made from his Washington series were widely sold in the nineteenth century.

 **Style Clinic. Voice and mood: the language of motions.** Laws and motions use two moods you reviewed in Grammar Level 3. The *subjunctive* follows verbs of demanding, moving and resolving: "I move that the Council *adopt* the ordinance" (not *adopts*); "Resolved, that the Town *purchase* the lot"; "It is essential that every citizen *be* heard." The *imperative* and the old enacting formula command: "*Be it ordained* by the Council of the Town of Millbrook ..." Legal drafting also uses *shall* for a duty ("The clerk shall publish the ordinance") and *may* for a permission. Check every motion and resolution in your speech for the subjunctive.

For families. Aphthonius's *Progymnasmata* (about A.D. 400) and Theon's earlier handbook are available in English in George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Society of Biblical Literature, 2003). The model is printed from Project Gutenberg #925. This unit keeps to historic laws and nonpartisan local ordinances on purpose; if your student wants to argue a current national controversy, steer that toward the Unit 8 debate, where both sides are argued in turn. Livy's account of the Oppian Law debate is in Book 34; preview it, since Cato's speech is sharp about women's luxury and will need context.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn this thesis into a law that could be argued: “Should towns have public libraries?”

1. A thesis is general; a law needs a particular body, a particular measure and a particular time.
2. Name the body (Town Council of Millbrook), the action (keep the library open on Saturday afternoons), and the limits (hours, cost, start date).
3. Write it in the subjunctive form of a resolution.

Answer: Resolved, that the Town of Millbrook keep the Millbrook Public Library open from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. each Saturday, beginning January 1, at a cost not to exceed \$9,000 a year from the general fund.

Example 2. Label Washington’s paragraph by heads. Which phrases point to which tests?

1. “rendered expedient at the present juncture” and “endanger the benefits of an united and effective government”: expedience. Will the change help or harm?
2. “await the future lessons of experience”: custom and possibility. Some changes should wait until practice shows they are needed and workable.
3. “a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen”: justice. “a regard for the public harmony”: expedience again, the peace of the whole.

Answer: Washington weighs justice (the rights of freemen) against expedience (an effective government and public harmony), and warns that untested changes should wait on experience. He asks Congress to secure rights without weakening the new government.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the last of Aphthonius’s fourteen exercises, and what exercise comes just before it?
2. **EASY** Name the five heads used in this course for arguing a law.
3. **EASY** What is the difference between a statute and an ordinance?
4. **MEDIUM** Thesis or law? (a) “Is it better to rent or to own?” (b) “Resolved, that the county repave Route 9 between Elm and Ford Streets this summer.”
5. **MEDIUM** Why does the speaker against a law need to win only one head, while the speaker for it must win all five?
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the mood: “I move that the Council approves the new crosswalk and that it is painted before school starts.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write the objection-and-answer movement (one paragraph) for a speech in favor of the Land Ordinance of 1785’s school lot.

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT/SAT style). “A good law should change only when experience has shown that it fails.” Write an argument that takes a position on this claim, using one historic example and one example from ordinary life.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Arguing about a law without ever stating its exact words, so the hearer cannot tell what is being voted on.
- Treating the law as a thesis: talking about “parks in general” instead of this park, this cost, this town.
- Attacking the motives of the other side instead of answering its best argument.
- Piling up expedience (cost, convenience) and never asking whether the law is just.

Make it a game · Motion on the Floor. One player is the chair; the family is the assembly. A player moves a small house law (“I move that the household adopt Saturday pancakes”). Another must second it. Speakers alternate for and against, one minute each, and each must name the head they are arguing (“On the head of possibility ...”). A speaker who forgets to name a head, or who attacks a person instead of the measure, is ruled out of order. The chair then puts the question to a vote.

Scripture. “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Proverbs 14:34, KJV)

This year’s verse is the reason the law exercise matters: the laws a people makes either honor righteousness or bring it reproach.

Practice: answers

1. The introduction of a law; the thesis comes just before it.
2. Clarity, justice, expedience, possibility, custom.
3. A statute is passed by a legislature such as Congress or a state assembly; an ordinance is passed by a local body such as a city council or county board.
4. (a) Thesis: a general question. (b) Law: a particular body, measure, place and time.
5. A law that fails any one test seriously (for example, one that is unjust or impossible) should not be passed, however well it does on the others. The proposer must show it is sound on every count.
6. I move that the Council approve the new crosswalk and that it be painted before school starts.
7. Sample: Some will say that Congress has no money to spare and should sell every acre to pay the public debt. But one lot in thirty-six is a small price, and it costs the Treasury nothing now; it is land, not coin. A township of farmers with no school will in a generation be a township of men who cannot read their own laws. The land we reserve today will repay the nation in citizens.
8. Sample outline: Thesis: experience is the best test of law, but justice cannot always wait for it. (1) Concede: Washington asked Congress to avoid changes that should “await the future lessons of experience”; a family rule or a town’s traffic pattern works best when not changed every month. (2) Limit: some laws fail at once on justice, and to wait would be to keep a wrong; Daniel did not wait thirty days to pray. (3) Conclusion: change for expedience should

wait on experience; change for justice should not. Score for a clear position, two real examples, an answered objection and clean sentences.

2.2 THE FIVE HEADS: CLARITY, JUSTICE, EXPEDIENCE, POSSIBILITY, CUSTOM

OBJECTIVES

- Define each of the five heads of a law and write the question each one asks.
- Test the decree of Darius (Daniel 6) by all five heads and explain why justice outranks the others.
- Write a five-head speech against an unjust decree, conceding what is true in the other side's case.

Warm-up. Read this sign posted at a pool: “Unreasonable behavior is prohibited.” Write down three things a lifeguard might call unreasonable and three a swimmer might not. What is wrong with the rule? Rewrite it in one sentence so that any twelve-year-old would know what is forbidden.

Video slot. Video coming. Daniel in the lions' den (Daniel 6), a Bible overview from a trusted ministry or church. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

clarity

The head that asks whether a law can be understood and applied the same way by the citizen, the officer and the judge.

justice

The head that asks whether a law gives each person his due, treats like cases alike, and commands nothing God forbids or forbids anything God commands.

expedience

The head that asks whether a law is useful: whether its benefits outweigh its costs and what it will actually bring about.

possibility

The head that asks whether a law can be carried out and enforced with the money, people, time and willingness available.

custom

The head that asks whether a law agrees with the constitution, the laws already standing and the settled practice of the people. The ancients called this the lawful and the fitting.

CORE IDEAS

Five questions. In Lesson 2.1 you met the heads as a list. Now learn them as questions you can put to any law, from a royal decree to a sign at the town pool. Is it *clear*? Is it *just*? Is it

expedient? Is it *possible*? Does it fit *custom* and the laws already standing? Memorize the questions, not just the names. In a timed essay or a council meeting you will not have a handbook; you will have only what you carry in your head.

Clarity. A law that cannot be understood cannot be obeyed, and a law that can be read two ways will be read the way the powerful prefer. James Madison warned in *The Federalist* No. 62 against laws “so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood.” The Roman historian Suetonius tells how the emperor Caligula posted a new tax law in tiny letters in a cramped place, so that hardly anyone could copy it, and then punished those who broke it. To test clarity, look for vague words (*reasonable*, *excessive*, *appropriate*), undefined terms, and missing limits of place and time. To argue for clarity, quote the words and show that an ordinary citizen would know what to do.

Justice. Justice asks whether the law gives each his due. Does it treat like cases alike, or favor one man over his neighbor? Does it punish in proportion to the offense? Above all, does it command what God forbids, or forbid what God commands? Augustine wrote that an unjust law seems to be no law at all, and the apostles answered the council that tried to silence them: “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). Justice is the first head in rank, though not always first in order. A law can fail every other head and be merely foolish; a law that fails justice is wicked.

Expedience. Expedience asks what the law will actually do. What does it cost, and who pays? What good will it bring, and to whom? What else will happen that the drafters did not intend? Expedience is where most real debates are won and lost, and it is where evidence matters most: numbers, examples, and the experience of other towns and nations.

Washington told the First Congress that there is “an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness; between duty and advantage.” In the long run he was right. But in a speech you must show both; do not assume that because a law is just it will also work, or that because it works it is just.

Possibility. Can it be done? A law may be just and useful and still fail because there is no money to carry it out, no officer to enforce it, or no willingness among the people to obey it. Plutarch tells that when Solon was asked whether he had given the Athenians the best laws, he answered that he had given them the best they would receive. That is the possibility head. A law that most citizens will openly ignore teaches contempt for all law. To argue possibility, show the means: the budget line, the department, the timetable, the precedent from another place.

Custom. Custom asks whether the new law fits the constitution, the other laws on the books and the settled practice of the people. A town ordinance that conflicts with state law is void; a law that tears up long habit will meet resistance even if it is good. Custom gives a law a presumption, not a final verdict. It is a strong argument for keeping an old law and a fair question to put to a new one, but it can never excuse an injustice, as the next lesson will show.

The decree of Darius. Read the model with the five heads in hand. The decree is perfectly *clear*: no petition to any god or man but the king, for thirty days, on pain of the lions. It is

possible: the den is ready and the officers are eager. Its sponsors present it as *expedient*, a show of loyalty to a new king. It is wrapped in *custom*: “the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.” Yet it fails *justice* utterly, for it forbids what God commands, and it rests on a lie. “All the presidents of the kingdom ... have consulted together,” they say; but Daniel was one of the three presidents (6:2), and no one consulted him. Daniel’s answer was not a speech or a riot. He went home and prayed with his windows open, “as he did aforetime,” and accepted the penalty.

The model. *Daniel 6:6-10 (KJV), the decree of Darius*

Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

PICTURE STUDY



Daniel's Answer to the King, Briton Rivière, 1890 · Oil on canvas · Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester, England

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Briton Rivière was a London painter famous for his animals, and he painted the lions' den more than once. Here it is morning. King Darius has come to the den and called down, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God ... able to deliver thee from the lions?" (Daniel 6:20). Daniel, hands still tied, turns his face up to the light to answer. The painter shows us only his back. The lions, who obeyed a higher law than the decree, fill the dark around him.

Look closely

- Find Daniel's hands. What do they tell you about the night he has spent?
- Follow the light. Where does it come from, and what does it fall on?
- Look at the lions. How has Rivière shown that they are powerful and yet held back?

Talk about it

1. The title says this is Daniel's *answer*. Write the answer he gives in Daniel 6:22 in your own words, then explain how his whole life (6:4, 6:10) was also an answer to the decree.
2. Why do you think Rivière chose to hide Daniel's face? Write a paragraph arguing for or against that choice.

WRITING PROJECT: COUNSEL TO THE KING: FIVE HEADS AGAINST A DECREE

Imagine you are an honest counselor at the court of Darius, a Persian who is not one of the plotters. The decree has been proposed but not yet signed. You have five minutes before the king. Argue against it, head by head, granting what is true in the proposal and striking where it is weakest.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible (Daniel 6)
- Your five-head questions from the sketchbook

Steps

1. Read Daniel 6:1–10 twice. List every fact the chapter gives about who proposed the decree, why, and what it requires.
2. Make a five-column head table. Under each head, write whether the decree passes or fails, and why, in one sentence.
3. Decide your order. Concede the heads the decree passes (clarity, possibility) briefly and early; put justice last and strongest.
4. Draft 700–900 words: introduction (a respectful address to the king), statement of the decree in its exact words, the heads, the plotters' best argument answered ("It will prove the loyalty of the realm"), and a conclusion urging the king not to sign.
5. Speak as a counselor of that time would: no anachronisms, but no invented Scripture either. You may refer to facts in the chapter (Daniel's faithfulness, 6:3–4).
6. Read it aloud and revise with the checklist.

Check your work

- I quote the decree exactly as Daniel 6:7 gives it.
- All five heads appear, each in its own paragraph, and the concessions are honest.
- Justice is argued with a reason, not just a label: I say what the decree forbids and why that is wrong.
- My list of heads, and any series in my sentences, is grammatically parallel.
- I answer the plotters' best argument fairly, without name-calling.
- The speech can be delivered in five minutes.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Write the five heads as five questions, in parallel form, and memorize them.
2. Copy Daniel 6:10 by hand. Underline the phrase that shows Daniel was not making a show but keeping a custom.
3. Find a sign or rule in your town, church or workplace that is unclear. Copy it, then rewrite it so that it passes the clarity head.

History note. Rivière painted *Daniel's Answer to the King* in 1890, nearly twenty years after an earlier picture of Daniel among the lions; it was bequeathed to Manchester Art Gallery in 1937. The phrase "the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not" (Daniel 6:8, 12, 15; compare Esther 1:19) passed into English as a byword for any rule that cannot be changed.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism.** Items in a series should share the same grammatical form. Washington writes of "an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness; between duty and advantage": two *between ... and* phrases, noun matched with noun. Faulty: "The ordinance is clear, just, and it can be afforded." Revised: "The ordinance is clear, just and affordable." Faulty: "We ask whether the law is clear, if it is fair, and its cost." Revised: "We ask whether the law is clear, whether it is fair and what it will cost." When you write your five heads as questions, make them parallel: "Is it clear? Is it just? Is it expedient? Is it possible? Is it customary?"

For families. Theon and Aphthonius list the heads a little differently; this course's five (clarity, justice, expedience, possibility, custom) gather both lists, with "custom" standing for what the Greeks called the lawful and the fitting. The model is from the King James Version. The Madison quotation is from *The Federalist* No. 62; the Caligula story is in Suetonius, *Caligula* 41; Solon's reply is in Plutarch's *Life of Solon*. This lesson teaches that God's law outranks man's, as Scripture does; it is a good place to talk at home about how Daniel disobeyed openly and peaceably and accepted the penalty.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Test this pool rule by the clarity head and revise it: “Unreasonable behavior is prohibited.”

1. Find the vague word: *unreasonable*. Swimmer and lifeguard will read it differently.
2. Ask what the rule is really meant to stop: running, diving in the shallow end, rough play.
3. Name the acts and the place, so the rule can be obeyed and enforced the same way every time.

Answer: Revised: “No running on the pool deck. No diving where the water is less than 9 feet deep. No pushing, dunking or pulling another swimmer under water.” Each act is named, so swimmer, lifeguard and parent all read it the same way.

Example 2. A student’s justice paragraph against the decree reads: “The decree is unjust because it is bad and wrong and no one should have to obey it.” Revise it.

1. The paragraph names the head but gives no reason; *bad* and *wrong* repeat the claim.
2. Say exactly what the decree forbids (prayer to any god but the king) and why that is unjust (it commands what God forbids and punishes the faithful for faithfulness).
3. Add evidence from the chapter: the plotters could find no fault in Daniel “except we find it against him concerning the law of his God” (6:5).

Answer: Revised: “O king, this decree punishes not a crime but a prayer. It forbids your subjects, for thirty days, to ask anything of their God, and so it commands what no king may command. Its sponsors admit as much: they could find no fault in your most faithful servant ‘except ... concerning the law of his God.’ A statute that makes faithfulness a capital offense does not strengthen your throne; it makes your loyal men your victims.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Write the question each head asks.
2. **EASY** Which head ranks first, and why?
3. **EASY** What lie did the plotters tell Darius in Daniel 6:7?
4. **MEDIUM** Which head is at stake? (a) “The ordinance doesn’t say which streets count as ‘downtown.’” (b) “The town has no officer to check the parking meters.” (c) “This conflicts with the state highway code.”
5. **MEDIUM** What did Solon mean when he said he had given the Athenians “the best laws they would receive”? Which head does that answer illustrate?
6. **MEDIUM** Make this sentence parallel: “A good law should be clear, fair, and people should be able to obey it.”

7. **CHALLENGE** Write an expedience paragraph *for* a town ordinance requiring dogs to be leashed in the town park. Use at least one piece of evidence you would gather.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, ACT style). Some people say a law should be judged mainly by its results; others say it should be judged mainly by whether it is just. Write an essay that states your own position and relates it to at least one other perspective.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Naming a head without giving a reason (“This law is unjust”) instead of showing why.
- Treating custom as the last word: “We have always done it this way” is a presumption, not a proof.
- Arguing only expedience, as if a cheap and useful law must also be right.
- Skipping the heads the other side wins; honest concession makes the strong head stronger.

Make it a game • Head Hunt. A parent reads short objections or arguments (“That costs too much,” “Nobody will know what ‘loud’ means,” “It punishes the innocent with the guilty,” “The state already forbids it,” “There aren’t enough officers”). Players race to call out the head. Score a point for the right head and a bonus point for turning the objection into a one-sentence answer from the other side.

Scripture. “Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;” (Isaiah 10:1, KJV)

God holds lawmakers to account for the justice of their decrees, which is why justice is the first head in rank.

Practice: answers

1. Clarity: Can it be understood and applied the same way by all? Justice: Does it give each his due and command nothing wrong? Expedience: Will it do more good than harm? Possibility: Can it be carried out and enforced? Custom: Does it fit the constitution, other laws and settled practice?
2. Justice. A law that fails another head is foolish or useless; a law that fails justice is wicked and should not bind the conscience.
3. That “all the presidents” had consulted together. Daniel was one of the three presidents (6:2) and was not consulted.
4. (a) Clarity. (b) Possibility. (c) Custom (the laws already standing).
5. He made the best laws the people would actually accept and obey, not the best laws imaginable. It illustrates possibility.
6. A good law should be clear, fair and possible to obey.
7. Sample: Last summer the town clerk recorded nine complaints of unleashed dogs in Riverside Park, two of them bites to children. A leash law costs the town almost nothing: two signs and a line in the code. It protects children and the elderly, keeps dogs out of the road on the

park's north side, and lets owners of gentle dogs enjoy the park without being blamed for the few that are not. The cost is small and the benefit is safety for everyone who uses the park.

8. Sample outline: Position: justice must be judged first, results second. (1) The results view is right that a just law that cannot work is useless (possibility, expedience); give a local example. (2) But results cannot justify an injustice: Darius's decree "worked" in exposing Daniel, and that is exactly what was wrong with it. (3) Washington's "union between duty and advantage": over time just laws tend to produce the best results, so the two views meet. Score for a clear position, engagement with the other view, specific examples and controlled sentences.

2.3 HISTORIC CASES: MAGNA CARTA, CLAUSE 39, AND THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE (1787)

OBJECTIVES

- Tell the story of Magna Carta (1215) and trace clause 39 to the “due process of law” of the Fifth Amendment.
- Read Article 6 of the Northwest Ordinance (1787) and test it by the five heads.
- Write a speech for a historic law in the voice of its own time, without inventing facts or quotations.

Warm-up. Write from memory, as nearly as you can, the words of the Fifth Amendment about life, liberty and property. Then guess: how old do you think the idea behind those words is? Fifty years? Two hundred? Eight hundred? Keep your guess; you will check it today.

Video slot. Video coming. Magna Carta 1215 and its legacy (British Library, National Archives or Library of Congress); the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 (an archive, historical society or historic-site channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

Magna Carta

“The Great Charter” sealed by King John of England at Runnymede in June 1215, promising his barons and free men that the king, too, was bound by law.

law of the land

The settled law of the realm, as opposed to the king’s will. Clause 39’s phrase, later restated as “due process of law.”

due process of law

The rule that government may not take a person’s life, liberty or property except by fair, settled legal procedure. It appears in the Fifth Amendment (1791).

Northwest Ordinance

The act of the Confederation Congress (July 13, 1787) that set up government for the territory north and west of the Ohio River and forbade slavery there.

articles of compact

The six articles at the end of the Northwest Ordinance, declared to “forever remain unalterable, unless by common consent,” including religious liberty, trial by jury, schools and the ban on slavery.

CORE IDEAS

Why historic cases. The Greek and Roman students who practiced the law exercise argued about real laws: Solon's, Lycurgus's, the laws of their own cities. Historic cases show the five heads at work in real assemblies, and they show what time does to a law. Today you study two laws, separated by almost six hundred years, that are joined by one idea.

Runnymede, 1215. King John of England had lost his lands in France, taxed his barons heavily, and punished men by his own will. In 1215 the barons rose in arms and captured London. In June, in the meadow of Runnymede beside the Thames, John set his seal to a charter of sixty-three clauses. Many concern feudal matters long forgotten: wardships, fish-weirs, the debts of widows. Within ten weeks the Pope declared the charter void, and war broke out again. Yet after John died in 1216, his son's guardians reissued it, and it was confirmed again and again. Clauses 39 and 40, joined in the version of 1225, are still part of the law of England.

Clause 39 by the heads. Read the model. Clause 38 forbids a bailiff to put a man on trial on his own word without witnesses; clause 39 forbids the king to take, imprison, dispossess, exile or destroy a free man "except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land"; clause 40 promises that justice will not be sold, refused or delayed. Test them. *Clarity:* five verbs name exactly what the king may not do. *Justice:* the king is placed under the law, and a man is judged by his equals, not by his enemy. *Possibility:* the clause asks no new money or officers, only restraint. *Custom:* the barons presented it not as a novelty but as the old law of England restored. Its weakness was its reach: in 1215 "free men" left out the many villeins, the unfree peasants bound to the land. Later generations widened the words. A statute of 1354 restated the promise as "due process of law"; Sir Edward Coke taught it to the lawyers of the 1600s; American colonists claimed it as their birthright; and the Fifth Amendment carries it today.

New York, 1787. While the Federal Convention met in Philadelphia, the old Congress of the Confederation, sitting in New York, passed on July 13, 1787, an ordinance for the vast land north and west of the Ohio River. It promised that from three to five new states would be formed there and admitted as equals. It ended with six articles of compact. Article 2 echoes Runnymede: "No man shall be deprived of his liberty or property, but by the judgment of his peers or the law of the land." Article 3 declares that "religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." And Article 6 reads: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted."

Article 6 by the heads. Three years earlier, in 1784, Thomas Jefferson's plan to forbid slavery in the western lands after 1800 had fallen one state short of the votes it needed. In 1787 Nathan Dane of Massachusetts added Article 6 near the end of the debate, and it passed with the ordinance. *Clarity:* "neither ... nor" leaves no room for evasion. *Justice:* man is made in God's image, and Scripture names man-stealing a capital crime (Exodus 21:16). *Expedience:* the ordinance was written partly to sell land to settlers, many of them New

Englanders who worked their own farms. *Possibility*: it is far easier to keep a wrong out of a new land than to root it out of an old one. *Custom*: here the article broke with the custom of much of the nation, and rightly. The same article also contained a clause for returning runaway servants to their claimants in the original states; that was a real wrong, and it should be named plainly.

What time did to it. The First Congress under the Constitution reaffirmed the ordinance in 1789, and President Washington signed the act. When settlers in Indiana Territory petitioned Congress again and again to suspend Article 6, Congress refused. Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin entered the Union as free states. A clause added late in a long ordinance shaped the map of the nation and, seventy years later, the arguments of Abraham Lincoln.

Writing in the voice of the time. When you argue for a historic law, speak as a member of that assembly would have spoken. Use the facts and reasons available then; do not borrow hindsight (“this will help win the Civil War”). But do not pretend the wrongs of the past were not wrongs. Name them plainly, as Scripture names the sins of Israel’s kings, and let the best men of the time be your guides.

The model. *Magna Carta (1215), clauses 38-40, English translation, in The Magna Carta, Project Gutenberg #10000*

No bailiff for the future shall, upon his own unsupported complaint, put any one to his “law,” without credible witnesses brought for this purpose.

39. No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned or disseised or exiled or in anyway destroyed, nor will we go upon him nor send upon him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.

40. To no one will we sell, to no one will we refuse or delay, right or justice

PICTURE STUDY



King John Assents to the Magna Carta, 1215, Charles Sims, 1925–1927 · Oil on canvas · St Stephen's Hall, Palace of Westminster, London (Parliamentary Art Collection)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Charles Sims painted this picture, ten feet tall, for St Stephen's Hall in the Houses of Parliament, as one of a series of scenes showing how the liberties of Britain were built. Notice the title: John *assents*. Kings did not sign their names to charters; John's great seal was attached to the document. Sims painted seven hundred years after the event and had no portraits to work from, so he painted what the moment meant: a king, unwilling, made to stand under the law.

Look closely

- Find King John. How do his face and posture show what he thought of the charter?
- Look at the men around him. What does their dress and their stance suggest about how the king was persuaded?
- Find the charter or the seal. Where has Sims placed it in the picture, and why there?

Talk about it

1. Write the speech a baron might make to the king just before he seals the charter, arguing for clause 39 on the heads of justice and custom.
2. The painting hangs where members of Parliament walk every day. Why might a nation want its lawmakers to pass this picture on their way to make laws?

WRITING PROJECT: A SPEECH FOR A HISTORIC LAW

Choose one of three assemblies and speak for (or, in the third case, against suspending) a law that shaped the liberty of millions.

(a) A baron at Runnymede, June 1215, urging King John to grant clauses 39–40. (b) A delegate in the Congress at New York, July 1787, urging the adoption of Article 6. (c) A congressman in 1803, answering the Indiana petition to suspend Article 6.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Magna Carta (Project Gutenberg #10000) or the Northwest Ordinance (Avalon Project, Yale Law School)
- A short reliable history of the event (see the unit kits)

Steps

1. Read the full text of your law (all of Magna Carta's clauses 38–40, or all six articles of compact) and a short account of the debate.
2. List what a speaker at that time could know and say. Cross off anything that depends on later events.
3. Make a five-head table for your law. Mark the head on which a speaker of that time would be strongest.
4. Draft 800–1,000 words in the five movements of Lesson 2.1. Quote the law exactly in the statement.
5. In the objection movement, state the strongest argument of the other side as its best speaker would have put it, and answer it.
6. Read it aloud in under seven minutes. Revise with the checklist.

Check your work

- The law is quoted exactly, with its date and the assembly that considered it.
- Every fact is one a speaker of that time could know; nothing depends on hindsight.
- All five heads appear; the strongest comes last.
- Restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses are punctuated correctly, and every modifier sits next to the word it modifies.
- Wrongs of the time are named plainly, without modern slogans.
- I invented no quotations from historical persons.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy clauses 39 and 40 by hand. Then copy the Fifth Amendment's phrase "nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law" beneath them and draw a line from each matching idea.
2. Copy Article 3 of the Northwest Ordinance and memorize it.

3. Make a timeline: 1215, 1225, 1354, 1784, 1787, 1789, 1791, 1803. Write one line for each date from this lesson.

History note. Four copies of the 1215 charter survive: two in the British Library and one each at Lincoln and Salisbury Cathedrals. Pope Innocent III annulled the charter in August 1215; it was reissued in 1216, 1217 and 1225, and confirmed by later kings many times. The Northwest Ordinance was passed by the Confederation Congress in New York on July 13, 1787; the First Congress adapted it to the new Constitution by an act signed by Washington on August 7, 1789.

 **Style Clinic. Modifiers and clauses in law.** In law a misplaced modifier can cost a man his liberty. In clause 39 the phrase “except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land” modifies all five verbs before it (taken, imprisoned, disseised, exiled, destroyed); it must come after the whole series. In Article 6, “whereof the party shall have been duly convicted” is a *restrictive* adjective clause: it limits *crimes* to those proved in court, so it takes no comma. Compare: “The territory, which lay northwest of the Ohio, was surveyed” (nonrestrictive, commas) with “Land that lay northwest of the Ohio was closed to slavery” (restrictive, no commas). Check every *which* and *that* clause in your speech.

For families. The Magna Carta translation is printed from Project Gutenberg #10000 (the file contains several versions; the model is from “The Text of THE MAGNA CARTA,” and it keeps that file’s wording, including “No freemen” and “for this purposes”). The Northwest Ordinance quotations are from the Avalon Project at Yale Law School. This lesson names slavery as a grave wrong, as Scripture names man-stealing (Exodus 21:16), and it also names the ordinance’s fugitive clause plainly. A good further reading is the 1937 school text *History of the Ordinance of 1787 and the Old Northwest Territory* (Project Gutenberg #61909).

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Write the statement-of-the-law movement for a delegate supporting Article 6 in July 1787.

1. Quote the exact words; do not paraphrase the law you are asking men to vote on.
2. Say where it stands in the ordinance and what kind of article it is (an article of compact, unalterable without common consent).
3. Add one sentence that tells the assembly what you will prove.

Answer: “Mr. President, I ask the Congress to add to the articles of compact, which shall forever remain unalterable unless by common consent, these words: ‘There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.’ I mean to show that this article is plain, that it is just, that it will serve the settlement of the West, and that it can be kept, because we make it before the land is peopled and not after.”

Example 2. A student writes: “The barons were basically fighting for equality and human rights for everyone in England.” Revise it so that it is true to the time.

1. Check the facts: the barons fought chiefly for their own rights against the king; clause 39 protected “free men,” which in 1215 left out the villeins.
2. Avoid modern slogans; use the words of the document and the time.
3. Keep the true point: the charter put the king under the law, and later ages widened its words.

Answer: Revised: “The barons fought chiefly for their own liberties, and clause 39 protected only free men, not the villeins bound to the land. Yet the clause placed even the king under ‘the law of the land,’ and later generations, reading those words, extended them to all.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where and in what year did King John grant Magna Carta?
2. **EASY** Clause 39 allows the king to take or imprison a free man only in what two ways?
3. **EASY** What does Article 6 of the Northwest Ordinance forbid, and what exception does it allow?
4. **MEDIUM** Trace the phrase “law of the land” forward. Name three later stages.
5. **MEDIUM** Which head does Article 6 most clearly break with, and why is that not a fault?
6. **MEDIUM** Punctuate correctly: “Crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted may be punished by servitude. The ordinance which Congress passed on July 13 1787 contained six articles of compact.”

7. **CHALLENGE** Write the possibility paragraph for a speech supporting Article 6 in 1787, using only reasons available at the time.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (25 minutes, CLT style). "A law is only as strong as the people's willingness to keep it." Using Magna Carta or the Northwest Ordinance as your main example, write an argument that agrees, disagrees or qualifies the claim.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Saying King John "signed" Magna Carta; he sealed it.
- Using hindsight in a historic speech ("as the Civil War will prove").
- Turning the barons or the Founders into modern figures with modern slogans, or ignoring the real limits and wrongs of their laws.
- Paraphrasing the law in the statement instead of quoting it exactly.

Make it a game · Clause to Amendment. Write on cards: "law of the land," "judgment of his peers," "right or justice ... not delay," "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude," "schools ... forever be encouraged," "due process of law," "trial by jury." Players take turns drawing a card and must name the document it comes from (Magna Carta, Northwest Ordinance, Fifth Amendment) and one later law or event it leads to. A correct answer earns the card; most cards wins.

Scripture. "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it." (Deuteronomy 1:17, KJV)

Long before Runnymede, Moses charged Israel's judges to hear the small as well as the great; clause 39 and Article 2 are late echoes of that command.

Practice: answers

1. At Runnymede, beside the Thames, in June 1215.
2. By the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.
3. Slavery and involuntary servitude in the territory, except as punishment for crimes of which a person has been duly convicted.
4. Any three: the reissue of 1225 (clauses 39–40 joined); the statute of 1354 ("due process of law"); Sir Edward Coke's teaching in the 1600s; Article 2 of the Northwest Ordinance (1787); the Fifth Amendment (1791).
5. Custom: slavery was legal and customary in much of the nation. Custom gives a law only a presumption; it cannot outweigh justice.
6. "Crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted may be punished by servitude." (restrictive, no commas) "The ordinance, which Congress passed on July 13, 1787, contained six articles of compact." (Here the clause adds information about a particular ordinance, so it is set off; the date takes a comma after the day and after the year.)
7. Sample: Some say such an article cannot be kept on so wide a frontier. But consider when we make it. The country beyond the Ohio is almost empty of settlers; no fortunes there yet rest

on the labor of slaves, no planter yet must be dispossessed. It is easier to keep a weed out of a new field than to dig it from an old one. Let the settler know before he crosses the river what the law of the land will be, and he will build his farm accordingly.

8. Sample outline: Qualify. (1) Agree in part: Magna Carta was void within ten weeks because King John would not keep it; only reissue and repeated confirmation made it strong. (2) But a law can also teach and form the willingness it needs: Article 6 was resisted by Indiana petitioners, yet Congress held firm and a free people grew up under it. (3) Conclusion: law depends on the people, but a just law, kept firmly, makes the people who will keep it. Score for a clear thesis, accurate facts, an answered counterpoint and controlled sentences.

2.4 WRITE A PROPOSAL FOR A LOCAL ORDINANCE ★

OBJECTIVES

- Research a real local need (a park, a path, a road, a crossing) by observation, counting and reading the town's own code and plans.
- Draft a short ordinance in proper form: title, findings, enacting clause, numbered sections, cost and effective date.
- Write a 900–1,200-word proposal to the council that argues all five heads and answers the strongest objection, and cut it to a three-minute public comment.

Warm-up. Walk or drive (with a parent) one stretch of your town you use every week. Name one thing that would make it safer, more useful or more beautiful: a crosswalk, a bench, a path, a light, a trash can, a tree. Write it in one sentence beginning “The town should ...” Then write one sentence beginning “It has not been done because ...” If you do not know the answer to the second sentence, that is your research question.

Video slot. Video coming. How a city or town council meeting works and how a local ordinance is passed (a municipal league, county government or civics-education channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

municipal code

The collected ordinances of a city, town or county, arranged by subject. Many towns publish theirs online.

whereas clauses (findings)

The opening statements of an ordinance or resolution that set out the facts and reasons for it, each beginning “Whereas.”

enacting clause

The formula that turns findings into law: “Be it ordained by the Council of the Town of ...”

public comment

The part of a council meeting when citizens may speak, usually for two to five minutes, on items before the council or matters of local concern.

comprehensive plan

A town's or county's long-range plan for land, roads, parks and services. A proposal that fits the plan has the custom head on its side.

CORE IDEAS

From history to your own street. You have argued the laws of kings and congresses. Now you will propose one. Most of the laws that touch your daily life are not statutes of Congress

but ordinances of towns, townships and counties: where the sidewalks run, when the park closes, how fast a car may drive past the school, whether a field becomes a ballpark. Local government is close enough that a sixteen-year-old with a well-made proposal can be heard. It is also the best school for the law exercise, because the facts are near at hand and the questions are practical, not partisan.

Two documents. A citizen's proposal has two parts. The first is the *ordinance* itself, short and exact: a title; findings ("Whereas ...") that state the facts; the enacting clause ("Be it ordained by the Council of ..."); numbered sections that say who shall do what, where, by when and at what cost; and an effective date. The second is the *argument*, a letter or speech to the council that works through the heads and answers objections. Keep them separate. The ordinance must be plain enough for a clerk to carry out; the argument may be as persuasive as truth allows.

Research first. Do not argue from what you suppose. Go and look. Visit the place at the hours that matter and count: cars, walkers, children, minutes waited at the crossing. Take photographs. Read the part of your town's municipal code that governs your subject, and find the town's comprehensive plan or parks plan. Call or write the town clerk to ask how a citizen brings a matter before the council. If you can, ask the public works director or a council member what such a project would cost and why it has not been done. Write down every number and where you got it. A proposal stands or falls on its facts, and Ephesians 4:25 applies at the council table as everywhere: "speak every man truth with his neighbour."

The heads at home. *Clarity:* name the exact place ("the north side of Creek Road from Mill Street to the Harmon Park gate"), the exact work and the exact limit of cost. *Justice:* who benefits and who pays? Does the proposal burden one neighbor for the good of others, and if so, is he compensated? *Expedience:* what problem does it solve, what will it cost to build and to maintain, and what might go wrong? *Possibility:* is there money in a named fund, land the town already owns, a crew or contractor able to do the work, and nothing in state law that forbids it? *Custom:* does it fit the comprehensive plan, the existing code and the character of the place?

Franklin's method. Benjamin Franklin tells in his *Autobiography* how he got the streets of Philadelphia paved and cleaned. He did not begin with a law. He first talked and wrote until one stretch near the market was paved; then he found a poor, industrious man willing to sweep it twice a week for a small fee from each house; then he printed a paper showing the neighbors the advantages. Only when people had seen the thing work did he draft a bill for paving the whole city. That is the possibility head proved by trial. If you can show a small version working (a count of children who would use a path, a neighbor willing to water a tree, a cost estimate in writing), your proposal will carry more weight than any adjective.

Before the council. At public comment you will have about three minutes. Stand, give your name and address, state the proposal in one sentence, give your two strongest heads with one number each, answer the likeliest objection, thank the council and sit down. Hand the clerk a copy of your full proposal and the draft ordinance. Speak to the measure, not to persons; be "swift to hear, slow to speak" (James 1:19). You may not win the first time. Many

good ordinances pass on the second or third hearing, after the proposer has listened to objections and revised. Whether or not you deliver it, write your proposal as if the council will read every word.

The model. *Written for this course: a model student proposal (shortened), "A Footpath for Creek Road"*

To the Honorable Mayor and Council of the Town of Millbrook:

Proposed Ordinance: An Ordinance to Establish a Footpath on Creek Road. Whereas Creek Road between Mill Street and Harmon Park has no sidewalk and a shoulder less than two feet wide; and whereas children from the Mill Street neighborhood walk this road to reach the park; Be it ordained by the Council of the Town of Millbrook: Section 1. The Department of Public Works shall build a gravel footpath five feet wide on the north side of Creek Road from Mill Street to the Harmon Park gate, a distance of four-tenths of a mile. Section 2. The cost shall not exceed \$24,000, to be paid from the Parks Capital Fund. Section 3. This ordinance shall take effect thirty days after its passage.

The path is clear in its bounds: it begins at one corner and ends at one gate. It is just, because the families of Mill Street pay for Harmon Park with their taxes but cannot safely walk to it. It is expedient: on six June afternoons I counted an average of forty-one children walking this stretch while cars passed at forty miles an hour, and one accident would cost the town and a family far more than a path. It is possible: the town already owns a twelve-foot strip on the north side, the Parks Capital Fund holds enough to pay for it, and the Public Works crew built the gravel trail on Lake Street in two weeks last fall. And it fits our custom, for the town plan calls for safe walking routes to every public park.

Some will say a gravel path is a half measure and that we should wait for a full concrete sidewalk. But the children walking Creek Road this summer cannot wait five years. A gravel path now does not forbid a sidewalk later. I respectfully ask the Council to adopt the ordinance.

PICTURE STUDY



Stump Speaking, George Caleb Bingham, 1853–1854 · Oil on canvas · Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

George Caleb Bingham was a Missouri painter who also served in the state legislature, so he knew from the inside what he painted. *Stump Speaking* is one of three pictures he made about local elections in the 1850s. A candidate addresses the voters of a county in the open air, as candidates did on the frontier, from a stump or a rough platform. Bingham paints the whole public: the earnest, the doubtful, the bored and the boys who came for the show. This is the audience every local proposal must persuade.

Look closely

- Find the speaker. What is he doing with his hands, and whom is he looking at?
- Find the man sitting behind the speaker. Who might he be, and what is he waiting for?
- Find three listeners who are reacting in different ways. Which one would you most want to persuade?

Talk about it

1. Choose one listener in the crowd. Write the objection he would raise to your own local proposal, in his voice, and then your one-sentence answer.
2. Bingham shows politics as a gathering of neighbors in the open air. Write a paragraph comparing this scene with a modern town council meeting. What is gained and what is lost?

WRITING PROJECT: A PROPOSAL FOR A LOCAL ORDINANCE

Choose one real, local, practical need: a path, a crosswalk, a park bench, a streetlight, a playground, park hours, a speed limit near a school, a tree-planting, a bike rack at the library. Avoid matters that divide the town along party lines; the aim is to serve your neighbors and learn the craft. Your finished proposal has three parts: the draft ordinance, the written argument and the three-minute public comment.

You will need

- Writing notebook and a clipboard for field notes
- Phone or camera for photographs (with a parent's permission)
- Your town's municipal code and comprehensive or parks plan (often online; ask the clerk if not)
- A parent to accompany field visits and any contact with town officials

Steps

1. Choose the need and write it as a one-sentence resolution: "Resolved, that the Town of ____ ..."
2. Research: visit the site at least three times and count what matters (walkers, cars, wait times). Read the governing section of the code and the town plan. With a parent, ask the clerk how a citizen brings a matter before the council, and ask public works for a rough cost if you can.
3. Draft the ordinance (one page): title, two to four "Whereas" findings, the enacting clause, numbered sections naming who shall do what, where and by when, a cost limit and fund, and an effective date.
4. Make a five-head table with at least one fact or number under each head. Mark your two strongest heads.
5. Write the argument as a letter to the mayor and council, 900-1,200 words: introduction, the ordinance stated, the five heads (strongest last), the strongest objection answered, and a respectful request for adoption. Cite where every number came from.
6. Cut a three-minute public comment version (about 400 words): name, proposal, two heads with one fact each, one objection answered, thanks. Practice it aloud with a timer.
7. Revise with the checklist. With your parents' approval, you may send the letter to your council or speak at public comment.

Check your work

- The ordinance names the exact place, the responsible officer or department, the cost limit and the effective date.
- Every fact and number is true and its source is given; nothing is exaggerated.
- All five heads are argued, each with a reason and evidence, and the strongest objection is answered fairly.

- Each section of the ordinance uses active voice with a named actor (“The Department of Public Works shall build ...”), and *shall* and *may* are used correctly.
- The tone is respectful to the council and to any who may disagree.
- The public comment version fits in three minutes.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the enacting clause and Section 1 of the model ordinance; then write Section 1 of your own in the same form.
2. Field log: for each visit, record the date, time, weather and your counts in a simple table.
3. List five people in your town who would be affected by your proposal and one sentence each on how. This is your justice head.

History note. Franklin’s account of paving and cleaning Philadelphia’s streets is in Part Three of his *Autobiography*. He says he drafted a bill for paving the city and brought it into the Pennsylvania Assembly shortly before he sailed for England in 1757; it passed after he left. Bingham’s three election paintings are *Stump Speaking*, *The County Election* and *The Verdict of the People*, painted between about 1852 and 1855.

 **Style Clinic. Active and passive voice in drafting.** The passive voice hides the actor, and in law a hidden actor means no one is responsible. “The path shall be maintained” leaves the council asking, “By whom?” Write instead: “The Department of Public Works shall maintain the path.” Use the passive only when the actor truly does not matter or is obvious (“This ordinance shall be published in the town newspaper” is acceptable when the code already assigns publication to the clerk). In your argument, prefer active verbs too: “I counted forty-one children,” not “Forty-one children were counted.” Go through your ordinance and circle every *be* + past participle; give each one a named actor unless you can say why it needs none.

For families. This is a real civic exercise, so please supervise all field visits and all contact with officials, and decide together whether the proposal will be sent or spoken. Many towns post their codes through services such as Municode or American Legal Publishing, or on the town website; the clerk can also help. Steer your student away from proposals that would put them in the middle of a heated local dispute; a footpath or a bench teaches the same skills. A respectful letter from a young citizen is often welcomed by council members, and many councils will reply. The model is written for this course; the town and its numbers are fictional.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this draft section for clarity and voice: “Lights should be put in at the park in a reasonable amount of time so people feel safe.”

1. Find the problems: *should* (not a command), passive *be put in* (no actor), vague *at the park* and *a reasonable amount of time*, and a reason (*so people feel safe*) that belongs in the findings, not the section.
2. Name the actor, the exact place, the number and the deadline; move the reason to a “Whereas.”
3. Use *shall* for the duty.

Answer: “Whereas the walking path in Harmon Park is unlighted after sunset and is used by evening walkers; ... Section 1. The Department of Public Works shall install four pole-mounted lights along the Harmon Park walking path between the north gate and the pavilion no later than October 1.”

Example 2. Strengthen this expedience paragraph: “Everyone knows the intersection is super dangerous and a crosswalk would be a lot better for everybody.”

1. Replace “everyone knows” and “super dangerous” with evidence: a count, a record, an observation with date and time.
2. Say what the crosswalk would do and what it would cost.
3. Raise the register: no slang, no exaggeration.

Answer: Revised: “On four school-day mornings in September I counted an average of twenty-three students crossing Ford Street at Elm between 7:30 and 8:00, with no marked crossing and no stop sign. Painted crosswalk lines and two signs, by the public works estimate, would cost about \$1,800. For that sum the town would tell every driver where children cross, before a child is hurt teaching them.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five parts of a short ordinance in order.
2. **EASY** What is the difference between *shall* and *may* in an ordinance?
3. **EASY** What did Franklin do before he proposed a law to pave Philadelphia’s streets?
4. **MEDIUM** Which head does each fact support? (a) “The town already owns the land.” (b) “The comprehensive plan calls for trails along the creek.” (c) “Owners on both sides of the road share the cost equally.”
5. **MEDIUM** Rewrite in the active voice with a named actor: “The benches will be repaired and the grass will be mowed weekly.”
6. **MEDIUM** Write a “Whereas” finding for an ordinance to put a bike rack at the public library.

7. **CHALLENGE** Write the opening thirty seconds of a public comment for a proposal of your choice.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed writing (40 minutes, SAT/CLT style). “Young people should take part in local government long before they are old enough to vote.” Write an essay that argues for, against or a qualified position, using one example from history and one from your own research this unit.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Proposing a vague wish (“make the park nicer”) instead of a measure with a place, an actor, a cost and a date.
- Arguing from feelings or rumor instead of counts, records and the town’s own documents.
- Writing ordinance sections in the passive voice, so no one is responsible.
- Forgetting maintenance: the cost of keeping a thing up is part of expedience.
- Treating the council as opponents; the tone should be that of a neighbor offering help.

Make it a game • Council Night. Family members play the mayor and council, each secretly assigned a concern (cost, safety, neighbors, maintenance, the town plan). The student gives the three-minute public comment. Each council member then asks one question from their assigned concern, and the student has thirty seconds to answer each. The council votes; whatever the result, each member names the head that decided their vote.

Scripture. “And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.” (Jeremiah 29:7, KJV)

God told His exiled people to work and pray for the good of their city; a well-made proposal for your own town is one way of seeking its peace.

Practice: answers

1. Title, findings (“Whereas ...”), enacting clause, numbered sections (including cost), effective date.
2. *Shall* imposes a duty; *may* grants a permission.
3. He got one stretch paved, hired a man to sweep it, and printed a paper on the advantages, so people saw it work first.
4. (a) Possibility. (b) Custom. (c) Justice.
5. The Parks Department shall repair the benches and mow the grass weekly.
6. Sample: Whereas on five weekday afternoons an average of nine bicycles were found chained to the library’s handrails and trees for want of a rack; ...
7. Sample: “Good evening, Mayor and members of the Council. My name is Thomas Reed, and I live at 14 Mill Street. I ask you to adopt an ordinance building a gravel footpath on the north side of Creek Road from Mill Street to Harmon Park. I counted forty-one children walking that

road on June afternoons, where the shoulder is less than two feet wide. I would like to show you why the path is needed, how it can be paid for, and why it should not wait.”

8. Sample outline: For, with limits. (1) Local government is where citizens learn self-government; Franklin learned it by paving one street. (2) Young people see needs adults pass by: my count of children on Creek Road. (3) Limit: participation must be respectful and informed, which is why research and the five heads come first. Conclusion: the habit of serving one’s town should begin before the right to vote, so that the vote, when it comes, is wise. Score for a clear thesis, two specific examples, an answered objection and varied, correct sentences.

UNIT 2 REVIEW

Closed book except for item 10, where the student may use the five-head questions. Items 1–8 may be answered in writing or aloud. Items 9 and 10 are written; score them with the lesson checklists, not for spelling alone. Allow 60–75 minutes in all.

1. (3 pts) What is the last of Aphthonius’s progymnasmata, and how does it differ from the thesis?
2. (5 pts) Name the five heads and write the question each one asks.
3. (3 pts) Name the five movements of a law speech in order.
4. (3 pts) In his First Inaugural Address, what two things did Washington say should guide Congress in deciding on amendments?
5. (4 pts) Test the decree of Darius (Daniel 6:7) by the five heads. Which does it pass, and which does it fail?
6. (4 pts) Quote or closely paraphrase Magna Carta clause 39 and name the amendment that carries its idea today.
7. (3 pts) What did Article 6 of the Northwest Ordinance provide, and what happened when Indiana settlers asked Congress to suspend it?
8. (3 pts) Revise for voice and mood: “I move that the Council approves the plan and that the trees are planted by the town.”
9. (4 pts) Draft Section 1 of an ordinance to place two benches at the town library’s front walk. Include the actor, place, number and deadline.
10. (15 pts) Timed writing (30 minutes). Argue for or against this historic measure as a member of the assembly at the time: the Land Ordinance of 1785’s reservation of lot 16 in every township “for the maintenance of public schools.” Use at least three heads and answer one objection.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A PROPOSAL FOR A LOCAL ORDINANCE

Place your finished Lesson 2.4 proposal in your Grade 10 portfolio: the one-page draft ordinance, the 900–1,200-word letter to the council with sources for every fact, and the three-minute public comment version. If you sent the letter or spoke at a meeting, add a one-paragraph note telling what happened and what you learned.

- **Form of the ordinance:** Title, findings, enacting clause, numbered sections, cost and effective date; each section names an actor and uses shall/may correctly.
- **The five heads:** All five argued with reasons and evidence; strongest last; the strongest objection stated fairly and answered.
- **Research and truthfulness:** Field counts, the municipal code and the town plan are used accurately, and every number has a source.
- **Style and tone:** Active voice, parallel series, correct mood in motions and clauses punctuated correctly; respectful to the council and to those who may disagree.

1. The introduction of a law. A thesis argues a general question; a law argues a particular measure for a particular people, place and time.
2. Clarity: can it be understood and applied the same way by all? Justice: does it give each his due and command nothing wrong? Expedience: will it do more good than harm? Possibility: can it be carried out and enforced? Custom: does it fit the constitution, other laws and settled practice?
3. Introduction, statement of the law, the heads, objection answered, conclusion (request for a vote).
4. "A reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen and a regard for the public harmony" (while avoiding changes that would endanger an effective government or that should await experience).
5. It is clear, possible, presented as expedient and wrapped in custom ("the law of the Medes and Persians"), but it fails justice: it forbids prayer to God and rests on a lie that all the presidents had consulted.
6. No free man shall be taken, imprisoned, dispossessed, exiled or destroyed except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land. The Fifth Amendment ("due process of law").
7. It forbade slavery and involuntary servitude in the territory except as punishment for crime (with a clause for returning fugitives). Congress refused to suspend it.
8. I move that the Council approve the plan and that the Parks Department plant the trees.
9. Sample: Section 1. The Department of Public Works shall install two park benches on the east side of the front walk of the Millbrook Public Library no later than May 1.
10. Score: position stated and law quoted (2); three heads each with a reason (6); objection fairly stated and answered (3); voice of the time, no hindsight (2); controlled sentences and correct mechanics (2). Sample thesis: One lot in thirty-six is a small price for a West whose citizens can read their own laws.

THE PERSUASIVE SPEECH

Having argued for and against laws on paper in Unit 2, you now take an argument to the platform. You will study Lincoln's Cooper Union Address (1860) to see how careful research and fair treatment of an opponent persuade, turn your ordinance proposal into a speech, and learn the last two canons of rhetoric, memory and delivery, from Hamlet's advice to the players and Demosthenes' training. Then you will draft an original oration for the 2026-27 Optimist International Oratorical Contest, learning economy from the Gettysburg Address, and deliver it before a real audience, adapting to your hearers as Paul did on Mars' Hill.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written the Unit 2 proposal for a local ordinance (2.4), or another short argued proposal.
- Can organize a multi-paragraph argument with a clear thesis and evidence.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can state an opponent's claim fairly, adopt its terms, and answer it with evidence a listener can check.
- ☐ I can name and use the controls of voice (volume, rate, pitch, pause) and of body (stance, eyes, gesture).
- ☐ I can learn a speech by its structure using the method of places and a key-word card.
- ☐ I can write a 4-5 minute oration that meets the Optimist rules: topic stated exactly in the first sentence, true story, credited quotations.
- ☐ I can deliver a speech from memory before an audience, recover from a slip, and revise from judges' ballots.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Noted Speeches of Abraham Lincoln (Project Gutenberg #48364)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/48364>): Contains the full Cooper Institute Address; read at least the section on the thirty-nine signers.
- **Lincoln's Inaugurals, Addresses and Letters (Project Gutenberg #14274)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/14274>): Another free edition of the Cooper Institute Address, with notes.
- **The Gettysburg Address (Project Gutenberg #4)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4>): Short enough to memorize in a week; good practice for the memory palace.
- **Shakespeare, Hamlet (Project Gutenberg #1524)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1524>): Act III, scene 2, opens with Hamlet's advice to the players.
- **Optimist International Oratorical Contest** (<https://www.optimist.org/oratorical>): Official topic, rules, application and club locator. Get the current year's form from your

sponsoring club.

3.1 LINCOLN AT COOPER UNION (1860): RESEARCH THAT PERSUADES ★

OBJECTIVES

- Explain how Lincoln built the Cooper Union Address on an opponent’s own claim and tested it with counted evidence.
- Name the three parts of the speech and the audience each part addresses.
- Turn your Unit 2 ordinance proposal into a three-minute speech that adopts the other side’s terms and answers them with evidence.

Warm-up. Lincoln was known for stating his opponents’ arguments more fairly than they stated them themselves. Choose a question your family has argued about (a curfew, a chore chart, a vacation plan). In two sentences, state the other side’s best point as fairly as its strongest defender would. Then say whether stating it fairly made your own case harder or easier.

Video slot. Video coming. Lincoln’s Cooper Union Address, February 27, 1860 (a reading or historical documentary from a library, museum or Lincoln historic site); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

Cooper Union Address

Lincoln’s speech at the Cooper Institute in New York on February 27, 1860, answering the claim that the framers of the Constitution forbade Congress to control slavery in the federal territories.

adopting the opponent’s terms

Accepting the other side’s own statement or standard of proof and showing that, judged by it, your side wins.

proof by enumeration

An argument that counts cases one by one (here, the thirty-nine signers) so the hearer can check every step.

apostrophe

A turn in a speech to address a person or group directly, as Lincoln turns to “the Southern people” and then to his fellow Republicans.

peroration

The closing of a speech, which gathers the argument and moves the hearers to act.

CORE IDEAS

From essay to speech. In Unit 2 you argued for or against a law on paper, the last of the progymnasmata. A speech uses the same invention and arrangement, but it lives in the air. The hearer cannot turn back a page, so a speaker must say where he is going, repeat what matters, and build sentences the ear can carry. This unit finishes the canons of rhetoric you named in Grade 9: you will plan a speech (invention, arrangement, style), learn it (memory), and give it (delivery). We begin with the speech that, more than any other, made a frontier lawyer a candidate for president.

The occasion. On February 27, 1860, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois spoke at the Cooper Institute in New York City. Most of his hearers knew him only by reputation from his debates with Stephen Douglas in 1858. Eastern audiences expected a rough Western stump speaker. Instead they heard a lawyer's argument, built on weeks of reading in the records of Congress and the early state legislatures. Newspapers printed it the next morning, and pamphlet editions followed. In May the Republican convention in Chicago nominated him.

Adopting the opponent's terms. Douglas had said that "our fathers, when they framed the Government under which we live," understood the question of slavery in the territories as well as, or better than, men did in 1860. Lincoln did not quarrel with that sentence. He took it as his text and asked a plain question: who were those fathers, and what did they actually do? He answered that they were the thirty-nine men who signed the Constitution. Then he went through the record, vote by vote, to show how many of them had acted on whether Congress could control slavery in the federal territories. He found that twenty-one of the thirty-nine, a clear majority, had acted in ways that showed they thought Congress could. This is the strongest move in refutation: take the other side's own standard and show that it proves your case.

Proof the hearer can check. Notice that Lincoln did not say "history is on our side." He counted. He named the Ordinance of 1787 (the Northwest Ordinance you studied in 2.3), the acts of 1789, 1798, 1804 and 1820, and how named signers voted. A careful listener could check every step. When you speak, specific evidence does more than sound learned; it builds *ethos*, the hearer's trust that you have done your homework and are not asking him to take your word.

Three parts, three audiences. The speech has a clear plan. The first part is the historical proof addressed to everyone. In the second part Lincoln turns, by apostrophe, to "the Southern people," answering their charges one by one in the calm voice of a man reasoning with neighbors. In the third part he turns to his fellow Republicans and tells them what they must do. Each turn is announced, so the hearer always knows where he stands. That is arrangement working for the ear.

The peroration. The model below is the close of the speech. Lincoln names slavery as wrong without slogans, grants what the Constitution protected where slavery already existed, and refuses to let it spread. Then he lists the "sophistical contrivances" that might lure his hearers from their duty, piling up parallel phrases that begin "such as." He ends with

a single sentence of faith and resolve. Read it aloud. You will hear that it was written for a voice: long building clauses, then a short, plain close.

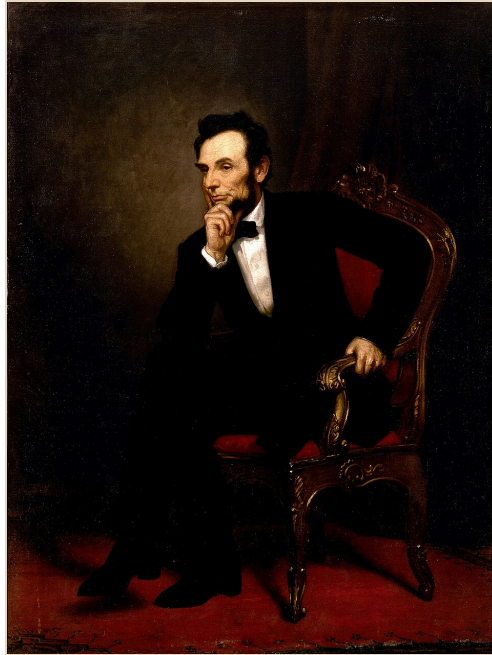
Your speech. In this lesson you will turn your Unit 2 ordinance proposal into a short speech to a town council. Like Lincoln, you will find the strongest sentence on the other side, adopt its terms, and test it with evidence your hearers could check. Then you will end with a peroration that asks for one clear action.

The model. *Abraham Lincoln, Cooper Institute Address, February 27, 1860 (closing paragraphs), in Noted Speeches of Abraham Lincoln, Including the Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Project Gutenberg #48364*

Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national Territories, and to overrun us here in these free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored--contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong: vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man; such as a policy of "don't care" on a question about which all true men do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous, to repentance; such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it

PICTURE STUDY



Abraham Lincoln, George Peter Alexander Healy, 1869 · Oil on canvas · The White House, Washington, D.C.
(State Dining Room)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Healy, one of the most sought-after portrait painters of his day, painted this picture in 1869, four years after Lincoln's death, and it now hangs over the fireplace in the White House State Dining Room. Healy shows Lincoln not speaking but listening: leaning forward, chin in hand, as if weighing an argument. The light falls on the two places a thinker works with, the face and the hands.

Look closely

- Find the brightest parts of the painting. Why might Healy light the face and hands and leave the rest dark?
- Look at the angle of the body. Is Lincoln resting, or about to answer?
- Find the red chair. What does its color and gilt frame add to a picture made mostly of black and brown?

Talk about it

1. The Cooper Union Address began with weeks of reading. Write a paragraph describing the Lincoln of this portrait at work in the library, weighing a vote from 1789.
2. A speaker must listen before he speaks. How does this listening pose fit a man famous for stating his opponents' arguments fairly?

WRITING PROJECT: A COOPER UNION SPEECH TO THE COUNCIL

Turn your Unit 2 ordinance proposal (a park, a road, a crosswalk) into a three-minute speech to your town council, built on Lincoln's method.

Aim for 375–450 words. A speaker talks about 130–150 words a minute.

You will need

- Your Lesson 2.4 ordinance proposal
- Writing notebook
- A timer
- Notes on at least two facts you can check (a map, a count of cars or visitors, a town budget line, a council minute)

Steps

1. Write the strongest sentence an opponent of your ordinance could say (for example, "The town cannot afford it"). Put it in quotation marks as your text.
2. Adopt its terms. Ask the question Lincoln asked: if we judge by that standard, what does the record show?
3. Gather two or three facts a council member could check, and count where you can (cars per hour, cost per resident, number of families within a half mile).
4. Arrange the speech in three parts: the proof (to everyone), a direct turn to the doubters ("To those who say ... I answer ..."), and a turn to your supporters telling them what to do.
5. Write a peroration of three to five sentences that ends with one plain request.
6. Read it aloud with a timer. Cut or add until it runs between two and a half and three and a half minutes.

Check your work

- I state the opponent's claim fairly, in words he would accept.
- My evidence is specific and checkable, not "everyone knows."
- Each of my three parts is announced so a listener knows where I am.
- My list of reasons or dangers uses parallel structure (same grammatical form for each item).
- My closing sentence is short and asks for one action.
- Every sentence is complete; I have no comma splices or run-ons.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the final two paragraphs of the model by hand, keeping Lincoln's punctuation.
2. Imitate the "such as" sentence: write one sentence that lists three or four excuses for neglecting a duty you know well (practice, chores, study), each beginning "such as."

3. List three sentences from opponents of any proposal you care about, and beside each write the question that tests it against the record.

History note. Lincoln was first invited to speak at Henry Ward Beecher's Plymouth Church in Brooklyn; the Young Men's Central Republican Union moved the event to the Cooper Institute in Manhattan. The same day he sat for a photograph by Mathew Brady, which was widely copied during the campaign. Lincoln is said to have remarked later that Brady and the Cooper Institute made him president. In 1860 Charles C. Nott and Cephas Brainerd published an annotated edition of the speech, tracing Lincoln's historical claims back to the records; their notes show how much labor stood behind a single evening on the platform.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism (Grammar Level 3).** Items in a series should share a grammatical form. Lincoln's four "such as" items each begin with the same phrase and follow it with a noun or gerund phrase: "such as groping ... such as a policy ... such as Union appeals ... such as invocations." His "neither ... nor" pair is also balanced: "Neither let us be *slandered* from our duty ... nor *frightened* from it." Faulty: "We need the crosswalk for safety, convenience, and because children walk there." Parallel: "We need the crosswalk for safety, for convenience, and for the children who walk there." In a speech, parallelism is not only correct; it helps the ear hear the list.

For families. The full speech runs about 7,500 words and takes well over an hour to read aloud; read at least the first section (the thirty-nine signers) together. It is also in Project Gutenberg #14274 (*Lincoln's Inaugurals, Addresses and Letters*) and in George Haven Putnam's *Abraham Lincoln* (#11728), which reprints the Nott and Brainerd notes. The speech treats slavery as a grave wrong, which it was, and treats the political parties of 1860 as historical actors; keep the discussion there rather than in present-day politics. This year's faith verse, "Righteousness exalteth a nation" (Proverbs 14:34), fits Lincoln's closing appeal to duty.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's speech on a new bike lane begins: "People who oppose this lane are just against progress, and history proves that progress always wins." Revise it using Lincoln's method.

1. Find the opponent's strongest real sentence. A merchant on Main Street might say, "Removing parking will hurt our shops."
2. Adopt the terms: judge the lane by its effect on the shops.
3. Bring checkable evidence: the town's own parking count, a nearby town's sales records after a similar lane.
4. Drop the insult and the vague appeal to "history."

Answer: "Mr. Hardin says the lane will hurt the shops on Main Street. I accept his test. The town's own count last spring found that the eleven spaces on that block were full on average only four hours a week, while the lot behind the library sat half empty. If we judge the lane by what it will do for the shops, the record is on its side."

Example 2. Mark the three parts and the turns in this outline: (A) What the 1987 traffic study and this year's count show. (B) "Some of you fear the cost. Let me speak to you directly." (C) "To those who already agree: come to the March meeting."

1. Part A is the proof, addressed to everyone, like Lincoln's thirty-nine signers.
2. Part B is an apostrophe to the doubters, like Lincoln's address to the Southern people.
3. Part C is the turn to allies with a call to act, like his address to Republicans.

Answer: Proof (A), turn to the doubters (B), turn to supporters with a call to action (C). Each turn is announced in words the hearer can catch.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** When and where did Lincoln give the Cooper Union Address?
2. **EASY** Whose claim did Lincoln take as his text?
3. **EASY** Who did Lincoln say "our fathers" were, and how many were there?
4. **EASY** Name the three audiences Lincoln addresses in the three parts of the speech.
5. **MEDIUM** What is "adopting the opponent's terms," and why is it strong?
6. **MEDIUM** Find the four parallel items in the model's long sentence and give the word each begins with.
7. **MEDIUM** Lincoln says the contrivances call "not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance." What Scripture does he reverse, and why is the allusion effective?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a two-sentence peroration for a speech asking your town to repair a footbridge. Use a "neither ... nor" pair and end with a short call to act.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Attacking the opponent instead of his argument. Lincoln never calls Douglas a name; he tests his sentence.
- Using vague appeals (“history shows,” “studies prove”) where a count or a named fact would do.
- Changing audiences without announcing the turn, so the hearer loses his place.
- Writing for the eye: long sentences with the main verb buried at the end and no repetition to guide the ear.

Make it a game · Thirty-Nine Questions. One player states a claim (“Everyone in this family hates broccoli”). The others must test it Lincoln’s way: name exactly who “everyone” is, then count, person by person, aloud. Score a point for every claim that falls apart when counted, and two points for a claim that survives.

Scripture. “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Proverbs 14:34, KJV)

Lincoln closed by asking his hearers to have faith that right makes might, which is the truth Solomon states about nations.

Practice: answers

1. February 27, 1860, at the Cooper Institute in New York City.
2. Stephen Douglas’s claim that “our fathers, when they framed the Government under which we live,” understood the question as well as or better than men did then.
3. The thirty-nine men who signed the Constitution.
4. Everyone (the historical proof), the Southern people, and his fellow Republicans.
5. Accepting the other side’s own standard and showing that it proves your case. It is strong because the opponent cannot reject the standard without rejecting his own words.
6. Each begins “such as”: groping for a middle ground; a policy of “don’t care”; Union appeals beseeching Union men to yield; invocations to Washington.
7. Christ’s words, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matthew 9:13). His hearers knew the verse, so the reversal shows at once how upside down the appeal is.
8. Sample: Let us neither wait for an accident to prove us right nor be talked out of the repair by those who say it can always be done next year. Fund the bridge this spring.

3.2 DELIVERY AND MEMORY: THE LAST TWO CANONS

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of delivery (voice and body) and explain Hamlet’s rule, “Suit the action to the word, the word to the action.”
- Use the method of places (the memory palace) and a key-word card to learn a speech by its structure.
- Mark a speaking script for pause and stress, rehearse it on a schedule, and deliver your 3.1 speech from memory to one listener.

Warm-up. Say the sentence “I never said he took the money” seven times, each time stressing a different word. Write down what each version means. How many different sentences did one line of words become?

Video slot. Video coming. Hamlet’s advice to the players (“Speak the speech, I pray you”) performed by a classical theater company, and a short talk on the memory palace method; preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

delivery (pronuntiatio, actio)

The fifth canon of rhetoric: the management of voice and body when a speech is given.

memory (memoria)

The fourth canon: learning a speech so it can be given without reading, usually by its structure and key phrases rather than word by word alone.

method of places (memory palace)

A memory method described by Cicero and Quintilian: picture a familiar building and set one image for each part of the speech in a room along your path.

vocal variety

Changes in volume, rate, pitch and pause that show the hearer what matters and keep attention.

key-word card

A single card with only the trigger words for each section, used to rehearse and as a safety net.

CORE IDEAS

The canons that finish the work. Invention finds what to say, arrangement puts it in order, and style chooses the words. Those three can be done at a desk. Memory and delivery cannot. They are done in the body, by practice, like a musician’s scales. The ancients took them as seriously as the other three. Cicero reports that when Demosthenes, the greatest

orator of Athens, was asked what was first in speaking, he answered “delivery”; second, “delivery”; third, “delivery.” A strong argument badly delivered loses to a weak one well delivered, which is exactly why a truthful speaker must learn delivery too.

Demosthenes in training. Demosthenes was not a natural speaker. Plutarch tells us that his first speeches were laughed at, that his voice was weak and his breath short. He did not give up. Plutarch, citing Demetrius of Phalerum, says he spoke with pebbles in his mouth to make his tongue work harder, and recited speeches while running uphill to strengthen his breath. Cicero adds that he declaimed by the sea so that he could learn to rise above the roar of a crowd. Whatever the details, the lesson is plain: delivery is learned by work, not by birth.

Voice. Your voice has four controls. *Volume*: the back row must hear you without strain, and a sudden drop can draw a room forward. *Rate*: most speakers race when nervous; aim for about 130–150 words a minute and slow down for your main point. *Pitch*: let it rise and fall as in good conversation; a flat voice tells the hearer nothing matters. *Pause*: the most powerful tool and the least used. A pause before a key sentence makes the hearer lean in; a pause after it lets the sentence land. Add to these *articulation*, giving each word its final consonant.

Body. Stand with your weight on both feet, not rocking. Begin by finding faces: look at one listener for a whole sentence, then another, in different parts of the room. Let your hands rest at your sides or lightly in front until a gesture is needed, then make it clear and finish it. A gesture should come from the meaning: a hand that opens on “all of us,” a finger that counts “first ... second ... third.” Your face must agree with your words; no one believes a smiling speaker announcing a danger.

Hamlet’s rules. Shakespeare, an actor himself, put the best short lesson on delivery in English into Hamlet’s mouth (the model below). Hamlet warns against two faults. One is overdoing: mouthing the words, sawing the air with the hand, tearing “a passion to tatters” to please the crowd. The other is being “too tame.” Between them lies the rule: “Suit the action to the word, the word to the action,” and do not “o’erstep ... the modesty of nature.” Even in a whirlwind of feeling, keep a “temperance” that gives the speech smoothness. Delivery should hold the mirror up to nature; it should look like a sincere person meaning what he says, only clearer.

Memory by structure. Cicero tells how the poet Simonides was called out of a banquet hall moments before the roof fell in. He could name the dead because he remembered where each guest had sat. From this came the method of places: picture a house you know well, walk a fixed path through it, and set a vivid image for each part of your speech in each room. For your 3.1 speech, the front door might hold the opponent’s claim, the kitchen your first fact, and so on. Learn the path first, then the key phrases, and learn the opening and closing word for word. A speaker who knows his structure can lose a sentence and recover; one who memorized only a string of words is lost when one link breaks.

A rehearsal plan. Mark your script: a single slash for a short pause, a double slash for a long one, an underline for the stressed word. Rehearse in short sessions over several days,

not once the night before. Say it aloud, standing, at full voice. Record yourself and watch once for voice and once for body. Then rehearse with the script face down and only your key-word card. Finally give it to one live listener and ask two questions: "What was my main point?" and "Where did you stop listening?"

The model. *William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act III, scene 2 (Hamlet's advice to the players), Project Gutenberg #1524*

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue. But if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant. It out-Herods Herod. Pray you avoid it.

FIRST PLAYER.

I warrant your honour.

HAMLET.

Be not too tame neither; but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure

PICTURE STUDY



Demosthenes Practicing Oratory (Démosthène s'exerçant à la parole), Jean-Jules-Antoine Lecomte du Nouÿ, 1870 · Oil on canvas · Private collection
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The French painter Jean-Jules-Antoine Lecomte du Nouÿ painted the young Demosthenes at his training, alone by the sea. Cicero reports that Demosthenes declaimed against the noise of the waves so that his voice could later master a noisy assembly. The painter gives us not the triumph in the Athenian assembly but the hard, private practice that came before it.

Look closely

- Find the sea. What would a speaker have to do with his voice to be heard over it?
- Look at Demosthenes' stance and hands. Is he resting, or working?
- Notice that no audience is in the picture. What does that tell you about where great speeches are really made?

Talk about it

1. Write a paragraph from Demosthenes' point of view at the end of a day of practice: what did he fix, and what still went wrong?
2. Where is your "seashore": a place where you can practice at full voice without an audience? Describe it and how you will use it this week.

WRITING PROJECT: LEARN IT AND GIVE IT: THE 3.1 SPEECH FROM MEMORY

Take the council speech you wrote in 3.1 and make it ready to give without reading it.

You will need

- Your 3.1 speech, printed double-spaced
- A pencil
- One index card
- A phone or recorder
- A timer and one willing listener

Steps

1. Mark the script: / for a short pause, // for a long pause, and underline the one word to stress in each important sentence.
2. Divide the speech into five to seven parts. Choose a room or spot in your house for each, in walking order, and set a vivid image there for that part.
3. Write a key-word card: one line per part, no more than five words a line. Write out only your first and last sentences in full.
4. Rehearse on three different days: day one from the marked script, day two from the card, day three with the card face down.
5. Record one full run. Watch it once for voice (volume, rate, pitch, pause) and once for body (stance, eyes, hands). Write one fix for each.
6. Deliver the speech to one listener. Ask: “What was my main point?” and “Where did you stop listening?” Revise the weak spot.

Check your work

- I can give the speech from memory using only my key-word card.
- I paused before and after my main point.
- I looked at my listener for whole sentences, not quick glances.
- My gestures came from the meaning and finished cleanly.
- My script’s punctuation matches my pauses: no comma splices or run-ons hide where a breath belongs.
- My time was within fifteen seconds of three minutes.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Hamlet’s second speech (“Be not too tame neither ...”) by hand, then mark it for pauses and stress as if you were to say it.
2. Draw a floor plan of your memory palace and label each room with the part of your speech it holds.
3. List Hamlet’s two faults (overdoing and too tame) and write two examples of each that you have seen in speakers, without naming any living person.

History note. The Demosthenes stories come from Plutarch’s *Life of Demosthenes* (the pebbles, the uphill recitations, the cave where he practiced) and from Cicero (the waves, and the answer “delivery, delivery, delivery”). The Simonides story is in Cicero’s *De Oratore*, Book II, and Quintilian repeats it in the *Institutes of Oratory*, Book XI, with a

long discussion of memory and delivery. Lecomte du Nouÿ (1842–1923) was a French painter and sculptor of historical subjects.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuation as a score for the voice (Grammar Level 3, Punctuation Mastery).** Read the Hamlet passage aloud and notice how its marks guide your breath: commas set off short phrases (“in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of passion”); semicolons join complete clauses that belong together and call for a longer pause (“use all gently; for in the very torrent ...”). A comma splice in a script (“The road is narrow, children walk there daily”) gives the speaker no signal; fix it with a period, a semicolon, or a conjunction: “The road is narrow, and children walk there daily.” Mark your own script so that every pause has a mark and every mark has a pause.

For families. Listen to the student rehearse at least once at full voice, standing. Praise one specific thing before naming one fix; nervous speakers improve fastest with a single target per run. The memory palace works well for most students; some prefer to memorize by writing the outline from memory several times. Either is fine as long as the student learns the structure, not just the words. Hamlet’s advice is spoken to traveling actors in Act III; the scene is suitable for this age.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Mark this sentence from a student’s speech for delivery: “The town has studied this crossing three times in twenty years and each time it has done nothing.”

1. Find the main point: the town has done nothing, three times.
2. Fix the run-on breath: add a comma before “and.”
3. Place a pause before the sting and stress the words that carry it.

Answer: “The town has studied this crossing three times in twenty years, / and each time // it has done nothing.”

Example 2. A student’s key-word card reads: “Intro about the park and why it matters to me and my family and how I first got the idea.” Revise it.

1. A key-word card holds triggers, not sentences.
2. Keep five words or fewer per part, tied to the memory-palace image.
3. Write out only the first and last sentences in full.

Answer: First sentence (in full). 1. Door: “cannot afford it” (their claim). 2. Kitchen: 212 children, half mile. 3. Stairs: county grant, 2025. 4. Den: “To those who doubt ...” 5. Porch: “Come March 10.” Last sentence (in full).

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five canons of rhetoric in order.
2. **EASY** According to Cicero, what did Demosthenes name as first, second and third in oratory?
3. **EASY** Name the four controls of the voice.
4. **EASY** What two faults does Hamlet warn against?
5. **MEDIUM** Explain “Suit the action to the word, the word to the action” in your own words.
6. **MEDIUM** Tell the Simonides story in two sentences and say what memory method came from it.
7. **MEDIUM** Why is memorizing a speech by structure safer than memorizing it only word by word?
8. **CHALLENGE** Fix the comma splice and mark the sentence for delivery: “We do not ask for a new road, we ask only that the old one be made safe.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Rehearsing silently or sitting down. Rehearse standing, at full voice, as you will deliver it.
- Racing. Nerves speed you up; plan your pauses and keep them.
- Memorizing only the words, so one forgotten sentence stops the whole speech.
- Gestures that wander or repeat without meaning (Hamlet’s “sawing the air”).

Make it a game • One Line, Many Meanings. Each player draws a slip with an emotion or purpose (warning, comfort, surprise, command, doubt). All players must say the same sentence, “The bridge will be closed on Monday,” to fit their slip, using only voice, face and one gesture. The others guess the slip. A correct guess scores for both speaker and guesser.

Scripture. “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.” (Nehemiah 8:8, KJV)

Ezra’s helpers read “distinctly” and “gave the sense,” which is what good delivery does: it makes the meaning plain to the hearer.

Practice: answers

1. Invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery.
2. Delivery, delivery, delivery.
3. Volume, rate, pitch and pause.
4. Overdoing (mouthing, sawing the air, tearing a passion to tatters) and being too tame.
5. Let gestures and voice match what the words mean, and choose words that fit what you are doing, so that body and speech say the same thing.
6. Simonides was called out of a banquet just before the roof fell, and he identified the dead by remembering where each guest had sat. From this came the method of places, or memory

palace.

7. If you forget a sentence, you still know which part comes next and can say it in other words; a word-by-word memory breaks when one link is lost.
8. Sample: "We do not ask for a new road; / we ask only // that the old one be made safe."

3.3 PREPARING FOR THE OPTIMIST ORATORICAL CONTEST

OBJECTIVES

- Summarize the 2026–27 Optimist International Oratorical Contest rules: topic, eligibility, time limit, penalties and the rule on quoted material.
- Learn from the Gettysburg Address how a short speech gains power by compression, structure and repetition.
- Draft and time a 4–5 minute original oration on “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me” that opens with the topic exactly as written.

Warm-up. Edward Everett spoke for about two hours at Gettysburg; Lincoln spoke for about two minutes. Set a timer for one minute and tell a family member about one person who made you stronger by something he or she did (not said). When the timer rings, stop. What did you have to leave out? What did you keep?

Video slot. Video coming. Optimist International Oratorical Contest winning speeches (from Optimist International or a local Optimist Club channel), and a reading of the Gettysburg Address at the Soldiers’ National Cemetery; preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

oration

A formal, prepared speech on a set subject, written to be delivered (usually from memory) before an audience and judges.

Optimist International Oratorical Contest

A speech contest run through local Optimist Clubs for students under 19 who have not finished high school, with scholarships at the district level and above.

compression

Saying much in few words: choosing one strong example over five weak ones and cutting every sentence that does not serve the main point.

tricolon

A series of three parallel parts, often growing in force: “of the people, by the people, for the people.”

attribution

Naming aloud and in writing the author of any quoted or closely paraphrased words, as the contest rules require.

CORE IDEAS

The contest. The Optimist International Oratorical Contest has given young speakers a public platform for generations. Each year Optimist International sets one topic. For 2026–

27 the topic is “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me.” You enter through a local Optimist Club, speak at the club contest, and, if you place, go on to zone, district, regional and world levels. Scholarships begin at the district level. Read the dated summary in the asides, then get the current official application and rules from your sponsoring club or optimist.org, because rules and deadlines are set by the official form, not by this lesson.

Rules that shape the writing. Three rules should govern your draft from the first day. First, you must state the official topic, exactly as written, in your first sentence; leaving it out costs points before you have said anything else. Second, the speech must run between four and five minutes, and points are taken off for every fifteen seconds (or part) under or over. At about 130–140 words a minute, that means roughly 550–650 words. Third, any quoted or closely paraphrased material must be credited aloud and in writing, and it may make up no more than a small share (15 percent) of the speech. The judges want your thought, not a string of famous lines.

A topic that tempts boasting. This year’s topic asks you to talk about your own actions. That is harder than it looks. A speech that lists your good deeds will sound like a résumé, and Scripture warns, “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth” (Proverbs 27:2). The way out is the classical way: speak of actions, not of yourself. Tell one true, specific story about work or service, give credit to those who taught you, and draw out a principle any listener can use. The hero of the best speech is often not the speaker but the person who was strengthened, or the person who first strengthened the speaker.

Lessons from Gettysburg. On November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the Soldiers’ National Cemetery, Lincoln spoke about 270 words. The day after, Everett wrote to him that he wished he had come as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as Lincoln had in two minutes. Study the model below for three things. *Structure*: it moves from past (“Four score and seven years ago”) to present (“Now we are engaged”) to future (“that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom”). *Repetition*: one word, *dedicate*, carries the whole speech, from the nation “dedicated to the proposition” to the living who must “be dedicated here.” *Climax*: the sentences build to a final tricolon and end on the largest idea.

An arrangement for five minutes. Use the classical parts in small. *Exordium* (about 45 seconds): the topic sentence, then a story or image that earns attention. *Proposition* (one or two sentences): your answer to the topic, stated plainly. *Confirmation* (about 2½ minutes): two or three points, each with one concrete example. *Refutation* (optional, 20–30 seconds): answer the hearer’s doubt, such as “What can one teenager’s actions really change?” *Peroration* (about 45 seconds): return to the opening story and ask the audience to do one thing. Write the peroration early; knowing where you will land keeps the middle honest.

Write for the ear. Keep most sentences short enough to say in one breath. Name people and places. Use numbers a listener can hold (“three mornings a week for two years,” not “a significant period of time”). Repeat your key word, as Lincoln repeated *dedicate*. Read every draft aloud with a timer, because a speech that reads well on paper may run long or stumble in the mouth.

Originality and truth. Your story must be true. Do not borrow someone else's story or improve your own with invented details; judges cannot check, but God sees, and Ephesians 4:25 tells us to put away lying and speak truth. A plain, true account told well is stronger than a dramatic one that is not quite so.

The model. *Abraham Lincoln, the Gettysburg Address, November 19, 1863, Project Gutenberg #4 (this edition prints a reported version with ellipses; the wording differs slightly from the later "Bliss copy")*

Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation: conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war. . .testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated. . . can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war.

We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that this nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate. . .we cannot consecrate. . . we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us. . .that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion. . . that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain. . . that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom. . . and that government of the people. . .by the people. . .for the people. . . shall not perish from this earth.

PICTURE STUDY



Patrick Henry before the Virginia House of Burgesses, Peter Frederick Rothermel, 1851 · Oil on canvas · Red Hill, Patrick Henry National Memorial, Brookneal, Virginia
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In May 1765 the young lawyer Patrick Henry rose in the Virginia House of Burgesses to oppose the Stamp Act. According to the account handed down by his early biographers, when members cried “Treason!” he answered, “If this be treason, make the most of it!” Rothermel painted the moment nearly ninety years later. Every face in the room is turned toward one speaker, and every face shows a different reaction.

Look closely

- Find Henry. How has Rothermel used light and the lines of the room to lead your eye to him?
- Find three listeners with three different reactions (alarm, approval, doubt). How can you tell?
- Look at Henry’s gesture. Does it “suit the action to the word,” or does it overdo it, in Hamlet’s sense?

Talk about it

1. A contest judge sees what these burgesses saw: one speaker and his whole body. Write a paragraph describing what Henry’s posture would tell you before he said a word.
2. Henry’s speech changed what the men around him dared to do. Write three sentences connecting this scene to this year’s topic, “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me.”

WRITING PROJECT: DRAFT THE ORATION: “HOW MY ACTIONS STRENGTHEN THOSE AROUND ME”

Write a complete, original oration of 550–650 words on the 2026–27 Optimist topic, ready to time and revise. You will deliver it in 3.4.

If you do not plan to enter, write it anyway: the rules make a fine exercise in speaking within a limit.

You will need

- The official 2026–27 Optimist Oratorical application and rules (from your local club or optimist.org)
- Writing notebook
- A timer
- Your 3.2 rehearsal notes

Steps

1. Invention: list five true stories of an action (yours or someone else’s toward you) that made another person stronger: in work, in family, in church, in a team. Choose the one you can tell most specifically.
2. Write your first sentence so that it states the topic exactly, “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me,” and leads straight into your story.
3. Write a one-sentence proposition: your answer to the topic, as a principle anyone could use (for example, that small faithful actions repeated over time strengthen others more than one grand gesture).
4. Write two or three confirmation points, each with one concrete example and one number or name a listener can hold.
5. Write the peroration: return to your opening story and ask the audience to do one specific thing.
6. Check your quotations: no more than 15 percent of the speech, and each one credited by name in the text you will say aloud.
7. Read it aloud with a timer three times. Revise until all three runs fall between 4:15 and 4:45, leaving room for nerves and pauses.

Check your work

- My first sentence states the topic exactly as written.
- My story is true and specific, and the speech gives credit to others rather than praising myself.
- Every quotation is attributed aloud, and quoted material is well under 15 percent of the speech.
- I vary my sentences (simple, compound, complex) and use a short simple sentence for my main point.
- Lists and series are parallel, and at least one builds as a tricolon.

- Three timed readings fell between 4:15 and 4:45.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the last paragraph of the Gettysburg Address by hand, then circle every form of the word “dedicate” in the whole speech.
2. Imitate Lincoln’s past-present-future structure in three sentences about a family, a farm, a church or a business you know.
3. Write five possible first sentences that state the 2026–27 topic exactly and lead into a story. Star the best.

History note. Rothermel’s painting shows the Stamp Act speech of 1765, not the “Give me liberty, or give me death” speech of 1775, which was given at St. John’s Church in Richmond. Both speeches come down to us mainly through William Wirt’s 1817 biography, written from the memories of men who had heard Henry, so the exact words are uncertain. The Gettysburg Address survives in five manuscript copies in Lincoln’s hand and several newspaper versions, which differ slightly; the Project Gutenberg text used here is one of the reported versions.

 **Style Clinic. The four sentence structures (Grammar Level 3).** The Gettysburg Address uses all four: *simple* (“We are met on a great battlefield of that war.”), *compound* (“The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.”), *complex* (“It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.”), and a long *compound-complex* close built of “that” clauses. For a speech, put your main point in a short simple sentence, use compound sentences for balance and contrast, and save the long, building sentence for the peroration, where the hearer is ready for it.

For families. Optimist Oratorical Contest, 2026–27: summary as of October 2026. Topic: “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me.” Open to students under 19 as of October 1, 2026, who have not finished high school or its equivalent; homeschool students enter through a local Optimist Club, and boys and girls compete in a combined contest. Speeches run 4–5 minutes, with penalties for each 15 seconds (or fraction) under or over; the official topic must be stated in the first sentence; quoted or largely paraphrased material must be credited aloud and in writing and may not exceed 15 percent of the speech. Optimist International lists district scholarships commonly of \$2,500, \$1,500 and \$1,000 (at district discretion), regional awards of \$5,000, and World Championship awards up to \$15,000. Club deadlines vary; many club contests finish by late March. Recent guidelines have allowed notes and a lectern, but confirm this and every other rule with the official 2026–27 application from your club or optimist.org/oratorical before your student writes the final draft. Find the nearest club early in the fall; some clubs hold their contests in January or February.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's opening: "Hello, my name is Caleb, and today I am going to talk about the topic, which is about how what I do helps other people." Revise it to meet the rules and win attention.

1. The rule: the first sentence must state the topic exactly as written. Caleb's paraphrase would cost him points.
2. Cut the throat-clearing ("Hello, my name is ... today I am going to talk about").
3. Lead straight into a specific, true story.

Answer: "How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me is a question I first had to answer at five-thirty on a February morning, when my grandfather handed me a milk pail and said, 'The cows don't know it's cold.'"

Example 2. A middle section runs 900 words and lists seven good deeds (tutoring, mowing, volunteering, and four more). Revise it Gettysburg-style.

1. Compression: choose the one deed with the most specific detail and the clearest effect on another person.
2. Cut the rest, or fold one into a single sentence of support.
3. Shift the praise away from the speaker: show the effect on the other person in his own words or actions.
4. Retime: the middle should be about 2½ minutes, roughly 330–360 words.

Answer: The revised middle tells one story (tutoring a younger boy in reading every Tuesday for a year), names one result ("In May he read the Scripture lesson aloud in church"), and adds one sentence: "I learned that showing up on the dull Tuesdays mattered more than anything clever I said." Length: about 340 words.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the 2026–27 Optimist Oratorical topic?
2. **EASY** How long must the speech be, and what happens if it is outside the limit?
3. **EASY** Where must the official topic appear in the speech?
4. **EASY** About how many words fit in a 4½-minute speech?
5. **MEDIUM** Trace the past-present-future structure of the Gettysburg Address with one phrase for each.
6. **MEDIUM** Why does this year's topic tempt a speaker to boast, and how can he avoid it?
7. **MEDIUM** A 600-word speech quotes 120 words from famous authors. Does it break the 15 percent limit? Show your work.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a tricolon for your peroration, in the pattern of "of the people, by the people, for the people."

COMMON MISTAKES

- Paraphrasing the topic in the first sentence instead of stating it exactly.
- Writing a résumé of good deeds instead of one true story with a clear principle.
- Timing the speech only silently; it always runs longer aloud and under nerves.
- Quoting famous people without naming them aloud, or quoting so much that the speech is not your own.

Make it a game • Two Minutes at Gettysburg. Each player draws a big subject (“the family farm,” “a good teacher,” “a hard winter”) and has one minute to plan and two minutes to speak, using a past-present-future structure. Listeners score one point for each part clearly heard and a bonus point for a closing tricolon. Anyone who runs past two minutes loses a point, as in the contest.

Scripture. “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:” (Hebrews 10:24, KJV)

This year’s topic asks how your actions strengthen others; Scripture tells us to think carefully about one another and spur each other on to love and good works.

Practice: answers

1. “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me.”
2. Four to five minutes; points are deducted for every 15 seconds or fraction under or over.
3. In the first sentence, exactly as written.
4. About 590–630 words at 130–140 words a minute.
5. Past: “Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth”; present: “Now we are engaged in a great civil war”; future: “that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.”
6. It asks about “my actions.” He can avoid boasting by telling one true story, crediting those who taught him, focusing on the effect on the other person, and drawing a principle any listener can use.
7. Yes. $120 \div 600 = 20$ percent, over the 15 percent limit. Cut to 90 words or fewer.
8. Sample: “Show up for the dull work, stay for the hard work, and give thanks for the work no one sees.”

3.4 DELIVER THE SPEECH: PAUL ON MARS' HILL AND YOUR OWN PLATFORM

OBJECTIVES

- Explain how Paul adapted his speech on Mars' Hill to his audience without changing his message.
- Run a real speaking event with an audience, a timekeeper and judges, following contest conditions.
- Deliver your Optimist oration from memory within 4–5 minutes, then revise it from the judges' comments.

Warm-up. Think of the last time you were nervous before speaking, playing or performing. Write down three things your body did (hands, voice, breath). Then write one thing you could do in the minute before you begin to steady each one.

Video slot. Video coming. The Areopagus (Mars' Hill) in Athens and Paul's speech in Acts 17 (a museum, Bible-lands or church history overview), and Raphael's tapestry cartoons at the Victoria and Albert Museum; preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

Areopagus (Mars' Hill)

A rocky hill below the Acropolis in Athens, and the name of the council that met there, before which Paul spoke in Acts 17.

audience adaptation

Fitting your opening, examples and proofs to what your hearers already know and value, while keeping your message the same.

common ground

A point both speaker and audience accept, from which the speaker leads them toward his conclusion.

poise

Calm self-command before an audience: steady stance, measured voice, and recovery from mistakes without fuss.

ballot

A judge's written score sheet and comments; the most useful revision tool a speaker ever receives.

CORE IDEAS

The speech is the event. Up to now your oration has lived on paper and in rehearsal. Today it meets an audience. Delivery is not decoration added to a finished speech; the speech is not finished until it is given. Everything in this unit comes together here: Lincoln's care with evidence, Hamlet's temperance, Demosthenes' practice, Gettysburg's economy. You will run a real event, give your oration under contest conditions, and use what the judges say to make it better.

Paul before the Areopagus. The model is one of the great speeches of the ancient world, given in the city that taught the world rhetoric. Paul stood before philosophers, Epicureans and Stoics, who called him a "babbler" (Acts 17:18). Watch how he begins. He does not open with a quarrel. He begins with what he has seen in their own city: an altar inscribed "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." That is common ground. From it he declares the God they do not know: the Maker of heaven and earth, who needs nothing from human hands and gives "to all life, and breath, and all things." Then he quotes their own poets: "For we are also his offspring." He meets them where they stand and leads them to where they must go.

Adapt the approach, never the message. Paul's method was flexible; his message was not. In the verses after our model he calls all men to repent and proclaims the resurrection of Christ, knowing many in the room would scoff. They did. Some mocked, some said, "We will hear thee again of this matter," and some believed, including Dionysius, a member of the council, and a woman named Damaris (Acts 17:32-34). This is the honest speaker's situation: you are responsible for what you say and how well you say it, not for every hearer's response. Know your audience, find your common ground, and then tell the truth plainly.

Setting up the event. Invite an audience of at least five: family, a co-op class, grandparents, a church small group. Assign a timekeeper with a stopwatch who records the time from your first word to your last, and gives no signals, since the Optimist contest gives no time warnings. Ask two or three adults to judge with a simple ballot: content (is the topic stated, the story true and specific, the point clear?), organization (can the parts be heard?), delivery (voice, body, eye contact) and poise. Have each judge write one strength and one specific suggestion. Dress as you would for a contest.

Managing nerves. Nervousness is energy that has not found its job. Give it one. Before you speak, take three slow breaths, feel both feet on the floor, and find one friendly face. Know your first sentence so well you could say it in your sleep, because the first ten seconds carry the most fear. Then turn your attention outward: you are not there to be admired but to give your hearers something they need. Paul reminds the anxious to bring every care to God "by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving" (Philippians 4:6). A short prayer before you rise is the best preparation of all.

When something goes wrong. Every speaker eventually loses a line. Do not apologize or say "Wait, let me start over." Pause, which to the audience looks like a deliberate pause. Breathe. Walk to the next room of your memory palace, or glance at your key-word card if the rules allow notes, and go on. The audience does not have your script; they will only know

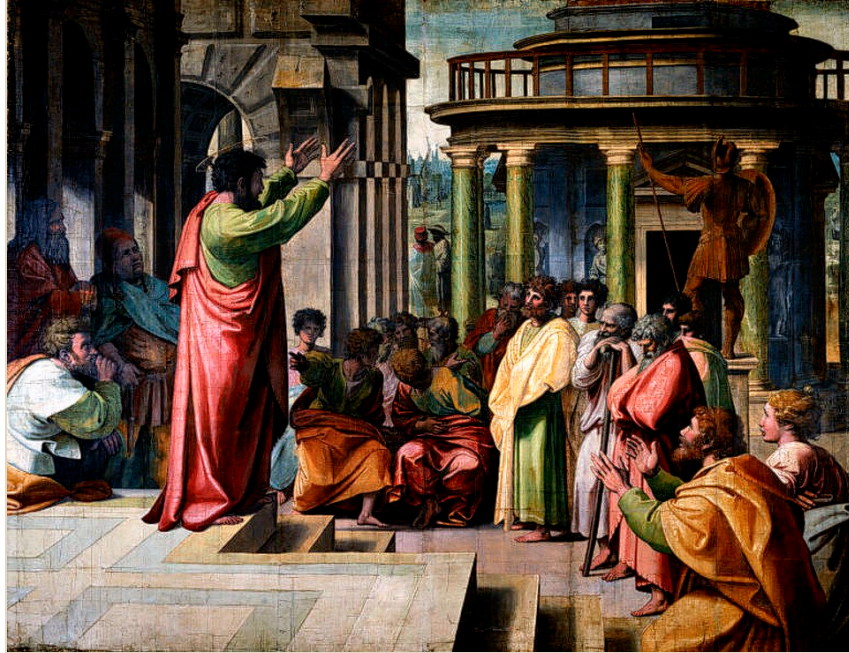
you lost your place if you tell them. If you stumble over a word, simply say it again correctly and continue. Poise is not never making mistakes; it is recovering without fuss.

After the speech. Finish your last sentence, hold eye contact for a breath, and then step away; do not rush off or say “That’s it.” Thank your judges. Read the ballots that day, while you still remember the room. Sort comments into three piles: content, organization, delivery. Choose the two changes that would help most, revise, and give the speech again. Every winning contest speech has been revised many times after it was first given aloud.

The model. *Acts 17:22-28 (KJV), Paul’s speech on Mars’ Hill*

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

PICTURE STUDY



St Paul Preaching in Athens, Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio), 1515–1516 · Bodycolour (distemper) on paper, mounted on canvas; a full-size tapestry cartoon · Royal Collection, on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Raphael made this huge drawing in color as a full-size design for a tapestry to hang in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. Paul stands above his hearers like a column, arms lifted, while the Athenians below show every possible response: thought, doubt, argument, and, at the lower right, the beginning of belief in the two figures usually identified as Dionysius and Damaris. Raphael painted not only a speaker but an audience.

Look closely

- Find Paul. How do his height, color and gesture make him the center of the picture?
- Find at least four listeners with different reactions. Which one would you most want to reach if you were the speaker?
- Find the man and woman at the lower right. How does Raphael show that they are moved?

Talk about it

1. Choose one listener in the crowd and write the ballot comment he might have written on Paul's speech: one strength and one objection.
2. Paul is the only figure who looks out over the whole crowd. Write a paragraph about what a speaker must see in his audience while he speaks.

WRITING PROJECT: THE ORATION, DELIVERED AND REVISED

Give your 3.3 oration before a real audience under contest conditions, then revise it from the ballots.

You will need

- Your 3.3 oration and key-word card
- A stopwatch and a timekeeper
- Two or three adult judges with printed ballots (content, organization, delivery, poise; one strength and one suggestion each)
- An audience of at least five
- A phone or camera to record

Steps

1. Two days before: rehearse twice at full voice, standing, from memory. Time both runs.
2. Set the room: a clear place to stand, the audience seated in front, judges where they can see you, the timekeeper with no signals.
3. Before you rise: three slow breaths, a short prayer, your first sentence said silently once.
4. Deliver the oration. Hold the last sentence with eye contact, then step away.
5. Collect the ballots and the time. Watch the recording once that day.
6. Sort the comments into content, organization and delivery; choose the two most important changes and revise the written speech.
7. Give the revised speech once more, to at least one listener, and note what improved.

Check your work

- My time was between 4:00 and 5:00, from first word to last.
- I stated the topic exactly in my first sentence and spoke from memory.
- I recovered from any slip by pausing and going on, without apologizing.
- My call to action is in the imperative mood and active voice ("Show up ...," not "It is hoped that people will ...").
- I made two specific revisions from the ballots and can name them.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Acts 17:22-23 by hand. Underline the words that show Paul starting from what his hearers had in front of them.
2. Imitate Paul's opening: write the first three sentences of a speech to a particular audience (a farm co-op, a church youth group, a town council) that begin from something they can see or already accept.
3. After your speech, write a short log: your time, the two strongest ballot comments, and the two changes you made.

History note. Pope Leo X commissioned Raphael’s ten tapestry cartoons, scenes from the lives of Peter and Paul, for the Sistine Chapel; the tapestries were woven in Brussels. Seven cartoons survive. Charles I bought them in 1623, while he was still Prince of Wales, and they belong to the Royal Collection, which has lent them to the Victoria and Albert Museum since 1865. The line “For we are also his offspring” is from the Greek poet Aratus, whose *Phaenomena* the Athenian philosophers would have known.

 **Style Clinic. Voice and mood (Grammar Level 3).** A peroration asks the audience to act, so it belongs in the *imperative mood* and the *active voice*. Weak (passive, indicative): “It is hoped that more young people will be encouraged to help their neighbors.” Strong (active, imperative): “Help one neighbor this week. Then help him again next week.” Paul uses the active voice throughout: “him declare I unto you,” “God that made the world.” Check your closing paragraph: underline every verb, and change any passive construction that hides who should act.

For families. A real audience matters more than a large one; grandparents on a video call, a co-op class or a church group all count. Give the judges a printed ballot so their comments are specific. Keep the first round encouraging: one strength and one suggestion per judge is enough. If your student is entering the Optimist contest, this home event is a dress rehearsal; check the official 2026–27 rules (see 3.3) for whether notes are allowed at your club’s contest. The model is printed from the King James text; read Acts 17:16–34 together to see the whole scene, including the varied responses.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student’s oration on “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me” will be given to a rural Optimist Club whose members are mostly farmers and small-business owners. His opening story is about a video game tournament. How should he adapt, as Paul did?

1. Find common ground: what do these listeners know and value? Work, early mornings, customers, keeping one’s word.
2. Keep the message (small, faithful actions strengthen others) but choose a story from work they will recognize.
3. Do not pretend; choose a true story from his own life that fits the room.

Answer: He opens instead with the true story of two summers stocking shelves at the hardware store, where the owner taught him to learn every regular customer’s name. The message is unchanged; the common ground is now under his listeners’ feet.

Example 2. Judges' ballots say: (1) "Strong story, but I lost the main point in the middle." (2) "You rushed the ending." (3) "Great eye contact." Turn them into a revision plan.

1. Sort: comment 1 is organization, comment 2 is delivery, comment 3 is a strength to keep.
2. For 1: state the proposition again, in one short sentence, at the start of the confirmation.
3. For 2: mark a // pause before the last paragraph and slow to about 120 words a minute in the peroration.

Answer: Revision 1: add the sentence "Small actions, repeated, make others strong" at the start of the middle section. Revision 2: mark a long pause before the peroration and rehearse the last paragraph at a slower rate three times. Keep the eye contact.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where did Paul give the speech in Acts 17, and to whom?
2. **EASY** What common ground did Paul begin with?
3. **EASY** Whom did Paul quote to reach his audience?
4. **EASY** Name the three responses to Paul's speech in Acts 17:32-34.
5. **MEDIUM** What is the difference between adapting your approach and changing your message?
6. **MEDIUM** You lose your place in the middle of your speech. List three things to do and one thing not to do.
7. **MEDIUM** Rewrite in the active voice and imperative mood: "It would be appreciated if old neighbors were visited by young people."
8. **CHALLENGE** Write the opening two sentences of a speech on keeping one's word, adapted for an audience of small-business owners, beginning from common ground as Paul did.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Opening with "Hi, my name is ..." or an apology instead of the first prepared sentence.
- Saying "Sorry" or "Wait" after a slip, which tells the audience something went wrong.
- Rushing the ending and walking away before the last sentence lands.
- Collecting ballots but never revising; the speech improves only when the comments are used.

Make it a game • The Unknown Altar. One player names an audience (a fire department, a quilting circle, a baseball team). Another names a message ("Read every day"). The speaker has thirty seconds to find common ground and give a two-sentence opening that starts from something that audience knows. The audience votes whether the opening would have won them over.

Scripture. “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:” (1 Peter 3:15, KJV)

Paul on Mars’ Hill was ready to give an answer; preparing and delivering a speech with meekness trains you to do the same.

Practice: answers

1. On Mars’ Hill (the Areopagus) in Athens, to Athenians including Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.
2. An altar in their city inscribed “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.”
3. Their own poets: “For we are also his offspring.”
4. Some mocked, some wanted to hear him again, and some believed.
5. Adapting the approach means choosing openings, examples and proofs your audience understands; changing the message means saying something different or less true to please them. Paul did the first and never the second.
6. Do: pause, breathe, go to the next part (memory palace or key-word card). Do not: apologize or start over.
7. Visit an old neighbor this week.
8. Sample: Every one of you has a customer who has paid on the same day of the month for twenty years, and you know his name without looking it up. That customer has kept his word to you, and tonight I want to talk about what our word is worth.

UNIT 3 REVIEW

The student answers in writing. Item 11 is a short speech delivered aloud and scored by a parent with the portfolio rubric. Allow 50 minutes for items 1–10.

1. (3 pts) When and where did Lincoln give the Cooper Union Address, and whose claim did he take as his text?
2. (4 pts) Explain “adopting the opponent’s terms” and how Lincoln used it.
3. (5 pts) Name the five canons of rhetoric in order.
4. (3 pts) Name the four controls of the voice and say which is most often neglected.
5. (3 pts) What two faults does Hamlet warn against, and what rule lies between them?
6. (3 pts) Describe the method of places (memory palace) and why memorizing by structure is safer than memorizing word by word.
7. (3 pts) State three Optimist Oratorical rules that shape how a speech is written.
8. (4 pts) Name the past, present and future movement of the Gettysburg Address and the one word repeated throughout it.
9. (3 pts) How did Paul find common ground on Mars’ Hill, and what did he refuse to change?
10. (3 pts) Rewrite in active voice and imperative mood, then mark it for one pause and one stressed word: “It is hoped that the bridge will be repaired by the town before winter.”
11. (6 pts) Deliver a two-minute speech from memory on a question of your choice from this unit (the ordinance, or a principle from your oration), opening with common ground and closing with a call to action.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE ORATION

Place in your Grade 10 portfolio the final, revised text of your 2026–27 Optimist oration, “How My Actions Strengthen Those Around Me,” with the judges’ ballots from 3.4, your timing log, and a short note naming the two revisions you made after delivering it. Add a recording of the final delivery if you have one.

- **Invention and truth:** The topic is stated exactly in the first sentence; the speech rests on one true, specific story and a clear principle, and it credits others rather than boasting.
- **Arrangement:** Exordium, proposition, confirmation and peroration can be heard; the speech runs 4–5 minutes (about 550–650 words).
- **Style:** Sentences are written for the ear: varied structures, parallel series, at least one tricolon, an active, imperative call to action; quotations are credited and under 15 percent.
- **Memory and delivery:** Given from memory with clear volume, controlled rate, planned pauses, steady eye contact and purposeful gesture; slips are recovered with poise; revisions from ballots are made and named.

1. February 27, 1860, at the Cooper Institute in New York; Stephen Douglas's claim that "our fathers, when they framed the Government under which we live," understood the question as well as or better than men did then.
2. Accepting the other side's own standard and showing that it proves your case. Lincoln accepted that the framers' views should decide, identified them as the thirty-nine signers, and showed from the record that a majority (twenty-one) had acted as if Congress could control slavery in the federal territories.
3. Invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery.
4. Volume, rate, pitch and pause; pause is most often neglected.
5. Overdoing (mouthing, sawing the air, tearing a passion to tatters) and being too tame; "Suit the action to the word, the word to the action," without overstepping the modesty of nature.
6. Picture a familiar building and place an image for each part of the speech in each room along a path. If a sentence is forgotten, the speaker still knows what part comes next and can go on.
7. Any three: the official topic stated exactly in the first sentence; 4-5 minutes with penalties for each 15 seconds over or under; quoted or paraphrased material credited aloud and in writing; quoted material no more than 15 percent.
8. Past: the founding ("Four score and seven years ago"); present: the war and the dedication of the field; future: "a new birth of freedom." The repeated word is "dedicate" (dedicated).
9. He began from their altar "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD" and quoted their own poets; he did not change his message, calling them to repent and proclaiming the resurrection.
10. Sample: "Repair the bridge / before winter."
11. Scored with the portfolio rubric: clear opening from common ground, one checkable fact or true story, audible structure, a call to act, and time within 15 seconds of two minutes.

STORY: THE HISTORICAL SHORT STORY

In this creative-writing unit you will write a historical short story: invented people set in a real time and place, with the history kept true. You will research a moment from the past as Hawthorne researched Puritan Boston for “The Gray Champion,” learn a believable period voice from Stevenson’s *Kidnapped*, draft living scenes after Crane’s *The Red Badge of Courage*, and finish a complete story of 1,000–3,000 words with an author’s note, shaped for the Bennington Young Writers Awards or the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can write a well-organized multi-page essay and use sources with citations (Units 1–2).
- Knows the basic parts of a story (character, setting, conflict, climax, resolution) and can punctuate dialogue.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can gather facts for fiction from primary, secondary and physical sources and record each with its source.
- ☐ I can write in a believable period voice and test my words for anachronism.
- ☐ I can plan a story in scenes and draft a scene with a goal, a conflict and a turn.
- ☐ I can revise a complete historical story in passes and write an honest author’s note.
- ☐ I can shape a finished story to a contest’s current rules.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Hawthorne, *Twice-Told Tales* (Project Gutenberg #13707)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13707>): Contains “The Gray Champion,” the unit’s main model; read the whole story in Lessons 4.1 and 4.4.
- **Stevenson, *Kidnapped* (Project Gutenberg #421)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/421>): Model for period voice; a fine family read-aloud.
- **Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage* (Project Gutenberg #73)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/73>): Model for scene drafting; parents should preview later battle chapters.
- **Chronicling America (Library of Congress)** (<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>): Free searchable American newspapers, 1770–1963, for prices, weather, news and period language.
- **Founders Online (National Archives)** (<https://founders.archives.gov/>): Free letters and papers of the Founders, rich in period voice and detail.

4.1 RESEARCH FOR FICTION

OBJECTIVES

- Explain how a historical short story joins invented people to a real time and place, and why the history must stay true.
- Gather facts for fiction from primary, secondary and physical sources, and record each with its source.
- Build a research dossier and a one-sentence premise for your own historical story.

Warm-up. Look around the room you are sitting in. List ten objects, words or habits that would not have existed in 1776. Then list five that would have. Which list was easier to make, and what does that tell you about writing a story set in the past?

Video slot. Video coming. Using primary sources for historical research (letters, diaries, old newspapers); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

historical short story

A short work of fiction set in a real past time and place, usually with invented main characters, in which the real history is kept accurate.

primary source

A document or object made at the time by people who were there: a letter, diary, newspaper, sermon, law, map, account book or tool.

secondary source

A later account that studies the past, such as a history book or a biography.

anachronism

Something placed in the wrong time: an object, word, idea or piece of knowledge that did not yet exist in the story's year.

author's note

A short note after a historical story that tells the reader which people and events are real and which are invented.

CORE IDEAS

A new kind of truth. Aristotle wrote in the *Poetics* that the historian tells what happened, and the poet tells what might happen. The historical short story stands with one foot on each side. Its main characters and their choices are invented, but the day, the street, the weather, the laws and the outcome of the great events are real. In “The Gray Champion” (1835), Nathaniel Hawthorne invented a mysterious old man, but he set him in Boston on a real April afternoon in 1689, when the colonists rose against the royal governor, Sir Edmund Andros.

Your story will do the same: imagine what might have happened on a day that truly happened.

Research is invention. The first canon of rhetoric is *invention*, from the Latin *inventio*, “finding.” Before the historical writer makes anything, he finds. There are three kinds of sources. *Primary sources* were made at the time: letters, diaries, newspapers, laws, sermons, court records, maps, store ledgers. *Secondary sources* are later histories and biographies, which help you understand the primary ones. *Physical sources* are things: a musket in a museum, a farmhouse still standing, a river you can walk beside, a painting made by someone who lived then. A good story usually uses all three.

What a storyteller looks for. An essayist wants causes and dates. A storyteller wants those too, but he also needs to know what a person in the scene could see, hear, smell, eat, wear, carry, pay and fear. What time did the sun set? What did bread cost? How long did it take to ride from Concord to Boston? What hymns were sung, and what news had arrived from England, and how old was that news? Keep a research notebook, and write the source beside every fact. A fact without a source is only a rumor, and you will not be able to check it when a reader asks.

The iceberg. You will use perhaps one fact in ten. The other nine stay under the water, but they hold the story up: they give you confidence, and confidence shows in the sentences. The worst mistake in historical fiction is the lecture, where a character says, “As you know, brother, the charter was annulled in 1684.” Notice how Hawthorne handles his research in the model. The rumor from England, the sunset, the drum, and King Street are each history, but each one also raises the tension of the scene. A researched fact belongs in a story only if it does work there.

What the characters could know. Your characters live inside their own year. A Boston shoemaker in April 1689 did not know for certain that William of Orange had taken the English throne; Hawthorne lets the crowd have only “a doubtful whisper.” The reader may know more than the characters, and that difference can make a scene tense. Your characters also think with their own century’s mind. Do not give them modern opinions, and do not judge them by modern slogans. Where the past did real wrong, name it plainly, as Hawthorne himself did when he wrote that some of the veterans in that crowd had “slaughtered young and old” in King Philip’s War.

Honest invention. A story is not a lie, because the writer and the reader both know it is a story. But the history inside it must be true, or the story deceives. Keep these rules: real events, dates and outcomes stay as they were; invented people stand at the center; when a real person speaks, use his recorded words or keep him at the edge of the scene; and add an author’s note telling what is real. Saint Luke, before he wrote his Gospel, gathered “perfect understanding of all things from the very first” so that his reader might “know the certainty” of what he had been taught. Fiction is a different kind of writing, but the care is the same.

Choosing your moment. Pick a moment small enough to see: one day, one place, one decision, often at the edge of a large event. The best seeds are surprising facts. A town history mentions that the bridge washed out the week of the election; a soldier’s letter

complains that the boots had paper soles; an 1847 newspaper prints the price of passage west. Look first at your own county's past, your family's stories, and the eras you already know from history class. Choose a time before living memory, so that research, not interviews, is your main tool.

The model. *Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Gray Champion," in Twice-Told Tales (1837), Project Gutenberg #13707*

At length a rumor reached our shores that the prince of Orange had ventured on an enterprise the success of which would be the triumph of civil and religious rights and the salvation of New England. It was but a doubtful whisper; it might be false or the attempt might fail, and in either case the man that stirred against King James would lose his head. Still, the intelligence produced a marked effect. The people smiled mysteriously in the streets and threw bold glances at their oppressors, while far and wide there was a subdued and silent agitation, as if the slightest signal would rouse the whole land from its sluggish despondency. Aware of their danger, the rulers resolved to avert it by an imposing display of strength, and perhaps to confirm their despotism by yet harsher measures.

One afternoon in April, 1689, Sir Edmund Andros and his favorite councillors, being warm with wine, assembled the red-coats of the governor's guard and made their appearance in the streets of Boston. The sun was near setting when the march commenced. The roll of the drum at that unquiet crisis seemed to go through the streets less as the martial music of the soldiers than as a muster-call to the inhabitants themselves. A multitude by various avenues assembled in King street, which was destined to be the scene, nearly a century afterward, of another encounter between the troops of Britain and a people struggling against her tyranny

PICTURE STUDY



Washington Crossing the Delaware, Emanuel Leutze, 1851 · Oil on canvas · The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Emanuel Leutze, a German-born painter raised in America, painted this enormous canvas in Düsseldorf about seventy-five years after the night it shows: Christmas night, 1776, when Washington led his army across the icy Delaware to surprise the Hessians at Trenton. Leutze studied the event, but he also changed it. The flag he painted, the Stars and Stripes, was not adopted until June 1777. The crossing happened in the dark and in sleet, not at a bright dawn, and the troops crossed in large, flat Durham boats, in which no general would stand in the bow. Leutze is a fine teacher for this lesson, both for what he researched and for what he chose to change.

Look closely

- Find the flag. Why might Leutze have wanted it in the picture even though it did not yet exist?
- Look at the ice and the men's faces and hands. Which details feel most researched and real?
- Count the different kinds of clothing among the rowers. What does the variety suggest about the army?

Talk about it

1. List three things Leutze got wrong. For each, write one sentence on what a historical storyteller should do differently, and one on why a painter might choose the change anyway.

2. Write a paragraph from inside one of the boats that night, using only what a soldier could actually see, hear and feel in the dark.

WRITING PROJECT: A RESEARCH DOSSIER FOR YOUR STORY

This dossier is the foundation for the story you will finish in Lesson 4.4. Do it thoroughly now, and the drafting will go much faster.

Keep everything in one notebook section or one folder, with a source written beside every fact.

You will need

- Writing notebook or a folder with dividers
- Library card; free online archives such as Chronicling America (Library of Congress newspapers) and Founders Online
- A local or county history (many are free on Project Gutenberg or the Internet Archive)

Steps

1. List three possible moments (a time before living memory, a real place, a real event). Talk them over with a parent and choose one.
2. Write a one-sentence premise: "In [place], on [date], [invented person] must [make a choice] while [real event] happens around him or her."
3. Find at least three primary sources and two secondary sources. Write a full citation for each.
4. Fill the dossier with at least 25 concrete facts under six headings: Place and Weather; Food and Prices; Clothing and Tools; Travel and News; Faith and Customs; Words and Phrases. Put the source beside each fact.
5. Make a timeline of the real event, hour by hour or day by day, and mark where your invented character could be at each point.
6. Star the five facts you most want in the story. Under each, write one sentence imagining it at work inside a scene.
7. Draft an author's note of 80–120 words that tells a reader what in your story will be real and what will be invented.

Check your work

- Every fact in my dossier has a source beside it.
- My premise names a real event, a real place and date, and an invented person facing a choice.
- My timeline shows only what my character could know at each point.
- Each participial or appositive phrase sits next to the word it modifies; no modifiers dangle.
- Appositives that add extra information are set off with commas.
- My author's note separates the real from the invented honestly.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy by hand Hawthorne's paragraph beginning "One afternoon in April, 1689." Underline every fact that came from research.
2. Imitate it: write a paragraph that begins "One [time of day] in [month], [year]," for your own moment, packing four researched facts into three sentences.
3. Start a "Not Yet" list: twenty things from your daily life that do not exist in your story's year.

History note. On April 18, 1689, after news reached Boston that William of Orange had landed in England, the people of Boston rose, and Sir Edmund Andros was arrested and later sent back to England. Hawthorne compressed and dramatized these events. King Street, where his crowd gathers, was later renamed State Street; on March 5, 1770, it was the scene of the Boston Massacre, the "encounter" his narrator foresees.

 **Style Clinic. Modifiers that carry research.** (Grammar Level 3, Modifiers and Phrases.) Appositives and participial phrases let you slip a fact into a sentence without a lecture: "Andros, *the king's governor*, rode at the head." "*Warm with wine*, the councillors gathered the guard." Keep each modifier beside the word it describes. Dangling: "Marching down King Street, the sun was setting." (The sun was not marching.) Fixed: "Marching down King Street, the soldiers saw the sun setting behind the steeples." Check every phrase you add to carry a fact.

For families. "The Gray Champion" first appeared in 1835 and was collected in *Twice-Told Tales* (1837). Its first paragraph, not printed here, describes James II and Catholic rule in the harsh Protestant language of Hawthorne's time; you may wish to read it with your student and talk about how a historical writer can present his characters' views without adopting them. Good free archives: Chronicling America (newspapers, 1770–1963) and Founders Online (letters of Washington, Adams, Franklin, Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison and Jay). A trip to a local historical society or museum makes an excellent research day.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote: “‘As you know, Mother,’ said Thomas, ‘the Stamp Act of 1765 taxes newspapers, legal papers, and even playing cards, and it was passed by Parliament without our consent.’” Revise so the research works inside the scene.

1. Spot the problem: Thomas tells his mother something she already knows, so he is really speaking to the reader.
2. Find the one fact that matters for the scene: the tax on paper.
3. Turn the fact into an object and an action the characters can touch.

Answer: Thomas laid the newspaper on the table and put his finger on the red stamp in the corner. “Twopence more,” he said. Mother did not look up from the dough. “Then we shall read it twice.”

Example 2. A student’s story is set in Boston in April 1689. The draft says: “Everyone in the crowd knew that King James had fled and William was now king.” Is this accurate to what the characters could know?

1. Check the timeline: William landed in England in November 1688; news crossed the Atlantic slowly and uncertainly.
2. Check the model: Hawthorne calls the news “a doubtful whisper.”
3. Rewrite so the characters know only the rumor, which also adds tension.

Answer: Not accurate. Revised: “A sailor off the Nantucket sloop swore the Prince of Orange had landed in England. No one in the crowd could say whether to believe him, and no one dared to say it loudly.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three kinds of sources a historical writer uses, with one example of each.
2. **EASY** What is an anachronism? Give one example for a story set in 1776.
3. **EASY** Which canon of rhetoric does research belong to, and what does its Latin name mean?
4. **MEDIUM** In the model, name two researched facts and explain what each does for the tension of the scene.
5. **MEDIUM** Write a premise sentence for a story set during the Johnstown Flood (May 31, 1889).
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling modifier: “Marching through the snow to Trenton, the boots of the soldiers left bloody tracks.”
7. **CHALLENGE** State the four rules of honest invention from this lesson.

8. **CHALLENGE** Timed practice (25 minutes, CLT/SAT pace): Write a 250-word paragraph opening a story set on a day you already know well from history. Use at least four concrete researched facts and no lecture.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Lecturing: putting research into a character's mouth as information he already knows.
- Giving characters knowledge or opinions they could not have had in their year.
- Collecting facts without sources, so they cannot be checked later.
- Choosing a moment so large ("the Civil War") that no single scene can hold it.

Make it a game · Two Truths and an Anachronism. One player describes a scene from a chosen year in three sentences; two details are accurate, one is an anachronism. The others guess which is wrong and must say how they would check it. Score a point for each correct guess and a bonus point for naming a real source.

Scripture. "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus," (Luke 1:3, KJV)

Luke researched before he wrote, so that his account would be true and orderly; a writer of historical fiction owes his readers the same care with the history.

Practice: answers

1. Primary (a soldier's letter), secondary (a history of the war), physical (a musket in a museum or the battlefield itself).
2. Something placed in the wrong time. Example: a character in 1776 striking a friction match, which was not invented until the 1820s.
3. Invention (inventio), which means "finding."
4. Sample: The rumor from England makes the people bold and the rulers nervous; the drum at sunset calls the crowd together like a muster, setting up a confrontation.
5. Sample: In Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on May 31, 1889, a telegraph boy must decide whether to stay at his post or run to warn his family when word comes that the South Fork Dam is failing.
6. Marching through the snow to Trenton, the soldiers left bloody tracks from their worn-out boots. (The soldiers, not the boots, were marching.)
7. Keep real events, dates and outcomes as they were; put invented people at the center; let real people speak only their recorded words or keep them at the edge; add an author's note that tells what is real.
8. Sample opening: "On the morning of July 4, 1776, the thermometer in Mr. Sparhawk's shop on Chestnut Street read seventy-six degrees, and the State House bell had not yet rung..." (Scored for four concrete facts woven into action, no character explaining history to someone who already knows it, and clean modifiers.)

4.2 PERIOD VOICE

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of a period voice: diction, syntax, idiom, reference and frame of mind.
- Study how Stevenson makes an 1886 novel sound like a young Scot writing about 1751, and test suspect words for anachronism.
- Write a 300–400 word opening for your story in a clear, believable period voice.

Warm-up. Read aloud: “Hey, Dad, I’m gonna head out. Text me if you need anything.” Now say the same thing as a farm boy might have said it to his father in 1850. Which words had to change, and which ideas had to change?

Video slot. Video coming. How English has changed: reading 18th- and 19th-century letters and diaries aloud; preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

voice

The sound of a piece of writing: the personality and time you hear in its words, sentence shapes and rhythms.

diction

Word choice. Period diction uses words that existed and were common in the story’s time and place.

idiom

A fixed expression whose meaning is more than its words (“set you on the way”). Idioms date a voice quickly.

retrospective narrator

A first-person narrator telling, years later, what happened to him when he was younger.

archaism

An old-fashioned word or form. Used well, it gives the flavor of a period; overused (“forsooth, prithee”), it becomes costume.

CORE IDEAS

Voice is the sound of a time. Research in Lesson 4.1 gave you the things of your period. Voice gives you its sound. A period voice is made of five parts: *diction* (which words), *syntax* (how sentences are built), *idiom* (fixed expressions), *reference* (what people compare things to), and *frame of mind* (what people take for granted). Robert Louis Stevenson wrote *Kidnapped* in 1886, but his narrator, David Balfour, is a seventeen-year-old Lowland Scot setting out in 1751. No one living in 1886 had heard 1751 speech. Stevenson did not need a

recording. He needed a voice his reader would believe and could still read with ease. That is your aim too: believable and clear, not a museum exhibit.

The retrospective narrator. Notice how the model begins: “I will begin the story of my adventures.” This is David as an older man, writing down what happened to him as a boy. A retrospective narrator may be a little more formal and old-fashioned than a modern narrator, and readers accept it, because he is writing a memoir in his own century. Phrases like “the year of grace 1751” and the warm aside “good man!” set his time in a single breath. You have two good choices for your own story: a first-person narrator from the period, or a close third-person narrator who tells the story in plain, timeless English while the dialogue and the character’s thoughts carry the period flavor.

Diction: three lists. Keep a page with three columns. In the first, list words from your primary sources that you want to use: the names of tools, rooms, coins, garments, meals and offices (Stevenson’s *manse* and *ford*). In the second, list words to avoid. Some are obvious: *okay* is first recorded in 1839, *scientist* was coined in the 1830s, *teenager* did not appear until the twentieth century. Others hide in plain sight, such as modern phrases like “reach out,” “process,” or “deal with it.” In the third column, list suspect words, and check each one in an etymological dictionary that gives first-use dates. When in doubt, choose the plainer, older word.

Dialect: a little salt, not the whole shaker. Stevenson’s narrator writes standard English, and the minister says only “ye” and “lad” to sound Scots. Stephen Crane, in *The Red Badge of Courage*, drops letters from his soldiers’ speech (“goin’,” “t’morra”) but never so much that the reader stumbles. One or two marks per speaker, used consistently, are enough. Avoid the stage-costume archaisms that no one really said (“Forsooth, good sir, prithee tarry”). Use *thou* and *thee* only for people who truly used them in your period, such as Quakers among themselves or a family at prayer, and use them correctly (see the Style Clinic).

Syntax and rhythm. Older prose often moves in longer sentences joined by semicolons and balanced clauses: “He asked me if I had breakfasted; and hearing that I lacked for nothing, he took my hand.” Narration of the period uses fewer contractions; polite speech has more ceremony (“Why, sir”). The King James Bible shaped ordinary English speech for three centuries, so scriptural phrases come naturally to many characters before 1900, from preachers and farmers to soldiers and presidents. Lincoln’s speeches, which you studied in Unit 3, are full of them.

Reference and frame of mind. When David wants to say his dead parents are far away, he compares the distance to “the Kingdom of Hungary,” a land at the edge of a Scots boy’s world. Your characters must compare things to what they knew: the plow, the sail, the hearth, the Psalms, the harvest, the market price of corn, never the engine they have not seen. Their frame of mind matters even more. They speak of providence, duty, honor and the next world as real things, because to them they were. Present your characters’ beliefs honestly, the way they held them, without apology and without modern commentary.

Train your ear. The surest way to a period voice is Franklin's method from his *Autobiography*: read a page of real writing from your period aloud, copy a paragraph by hand, put it away, rewrite it from notes, and compare. A week of reading letters, diaries and newspapers from your year will teach you more than any list. Then read your own draft aloud. If a sentence makes you wince or makes you laugh where you did not intend it, the voice has slipped.

The model. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Kidnapped (1886), Chapter I, Project Gutenberg #421*

I will begin the story of my adventures with a certain morning early in the month of June, the year of grace 1751, when I took the key for the last time out of the door of my father's house. The sun began to shine upon the summit of the hills as I went down the road; and by the time I had come as far as the manse, the blackbirds were whistling in the garden lilacs, and the mist that hung around the valley in the time of the dawn was beginning to arise and die away.

Mr. Campbell, the minister of Essendean, was waiting for me by the garden gate, good man! He asked me if I had breakfasted; and hearing that I lacked for nothing, he took my hand in both of his and clapped it kindly under his arm.

"Well, Davie, lad," said he, "I will go with you as far as the ford, to set you on the way." And we began to walk forward in silence.

"Are ye sorry to leave Essendean?" said he, after awhile.

"Why, sir," said I, "if I knew where I was going, or what was likely to become of me, I would tell you candidly. Essendean is a good place indeed, and I have been very happy there; but then I have never been anywhere else. My father and mother, since they are both dead, I shall be no nearer to in Essendean than in the Kingdom of Hungary, and, to speak truth, if I thought I had a chance to better myself where I was going I would go with a good will

PICTURE STUDY



The Reverend Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch ("The Skating Minister"), Attributed to Sir Henry Raeburn, about 1795 · Oil on canvas · Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Robert Walker was a minister in Edinburgh and a member of the city's skating club, one of the first in the world. Here he glides across a frozen loch with his arms folded, as composed on the ice as in the pulpit. The picture comes from the same Scotland as David Balfour, about forty years later, and it shows how a single figure, rightly dressed and posed, can call up a whole time and place. Like Stevenson's Mr. Campbell, Walker is a minister, and the painter lets us see both his dignity and his good humor.

Look closely

- Study his clothes: the hat, the coat, the neckcloth, the stockings and buckled skates. Which would you need to research to describe him in a story?
- Look at his posture. What does it say about his character before he speaks a word?
- Notice how little background there is. How does the painter suggest winter and Scotland with so few details?

Talk about it

1. Write four lines of dialogue for this minister greeting a young parishioner on the ice, in a believable 1790s Scots voice without overdoing the dialect.
2. A retrospective narrator remembers this sight fifty years later. Write his two-sentence memory of it, in the manner of David Balfour.

WRITING PROJECT: AN OPENING IN PERIOD VOICE

Write the opening of the story you began researching in Lesson 4.1. You will revise it, but the voice you settle now will carry the whole story.

You will need

- Your research dossier from Lesson 4.1
- At least two pages of primary-source writing from your period (letters, a diary, a newspaper, a sermon)
- An etymological dictionary with first-use dates (in print or online)

Steps

1. Read your primary-source pages aloud twice. Copy one paragraph by hand.
2. Build a period word bank of 30 words and phrases from your sources: nouns for things, verbs for work, forms of address, idioms, scriptural phrases.
3. Decide on your narrator: first-person period narrator or close third person. Write one sentence explaining why.
4. Draft a 300–400 word opening that sets the date, the place and your main character's situation, with at least four lines of dialogue.
5. Underline every word you are unsure of, and check at least ten in the etymological dictionary. Replace any anachronism.
6. Read the draft aloud to a parent. Mark any sentence where the voice slips into modern speech or into costume, and revise it.

Check your work

- I checked at least ten suspect words, and none are anachronisms.
- Each speaker's dialect marks are light and consistent.
- Any archaic pronouns are in the right case: thou and ye as subjects, thee and you as objects, thy and thine as possessives.
- My comparisons come from my characters' world, not mine.
- My sentences vary in length and structure, and semicolons join only closely related independent clauses.
- The opening tells when, where and who within the first paragraph or two.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Stevenson model by hand. Circle every word or phrase that tells you the time and place.
2. Imitate Stevenson's first sentence for your own character: "I will begin the story of ... with a certain morning ..."
3. Make the three-column diction page (Use, Avoid, Check) and fill in at least ten words in each column.

History note. *Kidnapped* is set mainly in 1751, a few years after the Jacobite rising of 1745, when the Highlands were still under hard government rule. Stevenson built the middle of the book around a real crime, the Appin murder of 1752, in which the government agent Colin Campbell of Glenure was shot; the real Alan Breck Stewart was accused of it. Stevenson's own note in the book tells readers where he changed the history, an example of the author's note from Lesson 4.1.

 **Style Clinic. Pronoun case in older English.** (Grammar Level 3, Pronouns.) If your characters use the old forms, use them correctly. *Thou* is the subject ("Thou art welcome"); *thee* is the object ("I will walk with thee"); *thy* comes before a consonant and *thine* before a vowel or alone ("thy house," "thine eyes," "the choice is thine"). In the King James Bible, *ye* is the plural subject and *you* the object: "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Verbs agree: thou art, thou hast, thou dost, thou wilt. One caution: by the nineteenth century many American Quakers said "thee is," using *thee* as a subject in their plain speech. If your characters are Quakers of that time, follow the sources, not the grammar book.

For families. *Kidnapped* is a fine family read-aloud for this unit, and its sequel *Catriona* (also called *David Balfour*) continues the story. The Scots words are explained by context or a glossary in most editions. For anachronism checks, the free Online Etymology Dictionary (etymonline.com) gives approximate first-use dates; the *Oxford English Dictionary*, often free through a public library, is the fuller authority.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's story is set in Pennsylvania in 1777. Revise this dialogue for period voice: "'Okay, so the British are basically right outside Philly,' said Jacob. 'We need to deal with it.'"

1. Find the anachronisms: "okay" (1839), "basically" in this casual sense, "deal with it" (twentieth century), and the casual nickname "Philly," which sounds modern even if you cannot prove it is.
2. Choose period words: the city's full name, "redcoats" or "the King's troops," "must," "look to."
3. Keep it plain; do not add costume words.

Answer: "The King's troops are within a day's march of Philadelphia," said Jacob. "We must look to the horses tonight."

Example 2. A student overcorrected: “‘Prithee, good Mother, wherefore dost thou weep? Forsooth, ‘tis but a trifle,’ quoth Hannah.” The story is set in a Massachusetts farmhouse in 1840. Revise.

1. Ask who really spoke this way in 1840 New England: no one. These are stage words.
2. Keep the feeling and the respect; use plain period speech.
3. Use the ordinary tag “said.”

Answer: “Mother, why are you crying?” said Hannah. “It is only a broken pitcher. Father can mend it.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five parts of a period voice.
2. **EASY** In the model, which two words does the minister use that mark his Scots speech?
3. **EASY** Why can a retrospective narrator sound more old-fashioned than a modern narrator?
4. **MEDIUM** Correct the pronoun case: “I will go with thou to the ford, for thee art my friend.”
5. **MEDIUM** Replace the modern comparison with one a 1790s farmer would use: “His mind raced like a computer.”
6. **MEDIUM** Find the semicolon in the model’s second paragraph and explain why it is there.
7. **CHALLENGE** Rewrite in a believable 1860s soldier’s voice, lightly marked: “I’m really nervous about tomorrow’s fight, but I’ll try to stay positive.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Explain the difference between period voice and costume, with one example of each for the same sentence.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Letting modern idioms slip into dialogue (“reach out,” “no problem,” “I’m good”).
- Overdoing the dialect until the reader cannot follow the speech.
- Using thou and thee in the wrong case, or for people who never used them.
- Giving the characters modern attitudes in old-fashioned words.

Make it a game · When Was That Word Born? A parent reads ten words aloud (for example: okay, blizzard, scientist, cowboy, telephone, gospel, sidewalk, typewriter, deadline, bonnet). Players guess the century each was first recorded in English, then check an etymological dictionary. One point for the right century; three for being within twenty-five years.

Scripture. “And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.” (Matthew 26:73, KJV)

Peter's Galilean speech gave him away in a Jerusalem courtyard; a period voice works the same way, telling the reader in a few words where and when a person belongs.

Practice: answers

1. Diction, syntax, idiom, reference, frame of mind.
2. "Lad" and "ye."
3. Because he is writing his memoir in his own century, so readers accept the older style as his natural voice.
4. I will go with thee to the ford, for thou art my friend.
5. Sample: His thoughts ran like a mill wheel in the spring flood.
6. "He asked me if I had breakfasted; and hearing that I lacked for nothing, he took my hand..." It joins two closely related independent clauses in the older balanced style.
7. Sample: "I don't mind sayin' I'm some uneasy about tomorrow. But the Lord's kept me this far, and I reckon He can keep me one day more."
8. Period voice uses words and rhythms people of the time really used; costume uses stagey archaisms for effect. Voice: "I thank you kindly, sir, but I must be home by dark." Costume: "Gramercy, good sir, yet I must hie me homeward ere nightfall."

4.3 SCENE DRAFTING

OBJECTIVES

- Tell scene from summary, and name the goal, conflict and turn in a scene.
- Study how Stephen Crane moves from summary into a living scene that carries research, period voice and conflict at once.
- Plan your story on scene cards and draft its opening scene.

Warm-up. Tell a parent, in one sentence, what happened at your last family meal. Then act out thirty seconds of it: who said what, who passed what, what someone did with his hands. The first was summary; the second was scene. Which would a reader remember?

Video slot. Video coming. Winslow Homer’s Civil War paintings and drawings (a museum gallery talk); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

scene

A part of a story shown moment by moment, in one place and time, with action and usually dialogue.

summary

A part of a story that compresses time and tells what happened over hours, days or years.

turn

The change at the end of a scene: something is learned, lost, decided or set in motion, so the story cannot go back to where it was.

beat

A small unit of action or speech inside a scene; a gesture, a line, a pause.

scene card

An index card that plans one scene: place and time, point-of-view character, goal, conflict, turn and one researched detail.

CORE IDEAS

Scene and summary. Every story moves between two speeds. *Summary* covers time quickly: “For two weeks it rained.” *Scene* slows to the speed of life, showing one place and one stretch of time with action and talk. Look at the model. Crane’s first paragraph is summary: the cold season passes, the roads dry, the army waits for weeks. Then, with the words “Once a certain tall soldier,” the camera drops to the ground, and we are in a scene: one man, one shirt, one rumor, one company street. A historical short story needs some summary to carry the reader across time, but its life is in its scenes.

Goal, conflict, turn. A scene is not a picture; it is a small contest. Someone wants something (a *goal*), something stands in the way (*conflict*), and by the end something has changed (a *turn*). Crane's tall soldier wants to be believed and admired; another private calls his news "a thunderin' lie"; and by the end of the scene the whole regiment is arguing, while young Henry Fleming slips away to wonder whether he will run when the fighting comes. If you can't name the goal, conflict and turn of a scene, it is probably a description, and it may belong in summary or nowhere at all.

Begin late, leave early. Enter the scene as close to the conflict as you can, and leave as soon as it turns. Crane does not show the tall soldier waking up, finding soap or walking to the brook. He begins with the man coming "flying back" with the news. Your first draft will often begin too early; when you revise, try cutting the first paragraph of each scene and see whether anything is lost.

Setting in motion. Research belongs inside the action, not in a block before it. Crane's setting moves: the fogs retire, the army "awakened," the river "purred at the army's feet," the enemy campfires gleam like eyes. Even the tall soldier's shirt becomes a flag ("waving his garment bannerlike"). Use more than sight: the smell of wood smoke, the feel of a wet wool coat, the sound of a drum or a church bell. Choose the details from your dossier that a person in this scene would actually notice, given what he is doing and feeling.

Dialogue does three jobs. Good dialogue reveals character, moves the conflict and carries the period voice, all at once. The tall soldier speaks "pompously," spreading his secondhand plan; his spelling ("goin'," "behint 'em") tells us his background without a word of explanation. Use "said" for most tags, and let small actions (beats) do the rest: a man thrusts his hands into his pockets, a woman sets down a pail. Cut any line that only passes along information both speakers already know.

Plan with scene cards. A short story of 1,500 words usually holds three to five scenes; one of 3,000 words, perhaps five to seven. Write each on a card: place and time, the point-of-view character, his goal, the conflict, the turn, and one researched detail you will use. Lay the cards in order and look at the whole: an opening scene that shows the character and his world; one or two scenes in which trouble grows; a crisis where he must choose; a climax where the choice is made; and a brief resolution. Move, combine or cut cards until each scene turns the story further.

Draft fast, research later. When you draft, do not stop to look up the price of flour or the name of a street. Put a bracket in the text, [check price], and keep writing. Momentum matters more than polish in a first draft. You will fill the brackets from your dossier or from new research when the scene is on the page and you know what it truly needs.

The model. *Stephen Crane, The Red Badge of Courage (1895), Chapter I, Project Gutenberg #73*

The cold passed reluctantly from the earth, and the retiring fogs revealed an army stretched out on the hills, resting. As the landscape changed from brown to green, the army awakened, and began to tremble with eagerness at the noise of

rumors. It cast its eyes upon the roads, which were growing from long troughs of liquid mud to proper thoroughfares. A river, amber-tinted in the shadow of its banks, purled at the army's feet; and at night, when the stream had become of a sorrowful blackness, one could see across it the red, eyelike gleam of hostile camp-fires set in the low brows of distant hills.

Once a certain tall soldier developed virtues and went resolutely to wash a shirt. He came flying back from a brook waving his garment bannerlike. He was swelled with a tale he had heard from a reliable friend, who had heard it from a truthful cavalryman, who had heard it from his trustworthy brother, one of the orderlies at division headquarters. He adopted the important air of a herald in red and gold.

"We're goin' t' move t'morra—sure," he said pompously to a group in the company street. "We're goin' 'way up the river, cut across, an' come around in behint 'em

PICTURE STUDY



Home, Sweet Home, Winslow Homer, about 1863 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Winslow Homer followed the Army of the Potomac as an artist for *Harper's Weekly*, so he painted camp life from what he saw. In this quiet picture two Union soldiers stand by their tent. Far off, a regimental band is playing, and the title tells us the tune: the old song "Home, Sweet Home." Nothing dramatic happens, yet the painting is a scene, not a pattern of objects: something has just reached these men, and something in them has turned. It is the same camp world as Crane's opening chapter.

Look closely

- Find the band in the background. How far away is it, and why does the distance matter?
- Look at the standing soldier's head and hands. What has the music done to him?
- List five objects in the camp you could use as researched props in a story.

Talk about it

1. Write this picture as a scene of about 200 words: give one of the soldiers a goal, add a small conflict, and end with a turn.
2. Homer shows the moment after the music begins, not before. How does that choice follow the rule "begin late, leave early"?

WRITING PROJECT: SCENE CARDS AND AN OPENING SCENE

Plan your whole story on cards, then draft the scene that opens it. Use the voice you settled in Lesson 4.2 and the facts from your dossier in 4.1.

You will need

- Ten index cards
- Your research dossier and period-voice opening
- Writing notebook or computer

Steps

1. On separate cards, plan three to six scenes. On each card write: place and time; point-of-view character; goal; conflict; turn; one researched detail.
2. Lay the cards out in order. Mark the opening, the crisis (where your character must choose) and the climax (where he chooses). Cut or combine any scene that does not turn.
3. Decide where summary will carry the reader between scenes, and write those bridges in one or two sentences each on the backs of the cards.
4. Draft the opening scene, 500–800 words, beginning as late as you can. Build on your 4.2 opening or replace it.
5. Leave [brackets] for any fact you need to check instead of stopping to research.
6. Read the scene aloud. Underline the goal, circle the conflict, and box the turn. If you cannot find all three, revise.

Check your work

- My scene has a clear goal, conflict and turn.
- Setting details appear inside action, not in a block at the start.
- Each new speaker begins a new paragraph.
- Commas and periods go inside closing quotation marks, and a tag after a quoted question or exclamation begins with a small letter.

- Interrupted speech is marked with a dash; trailing speech with an ellipsis.
- No line of dialogue only repeats what both speakers already know.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Crane model by hand. Draw a line where summary ends and scene begins.
2. Imitate Crane's rumor chain ("a reliable friend, who had heard it from a truthful cavalryman...") for news arriving in your story's world.
3. Write one sentence of summary and then the same moment as a five-line scene.

History note. Stephen Crane was born in 1871, six years after the Civil War ended, and had never seen a battle when he wrote *The Red Badge of Courage*. He read veterans' accounts, including the *Century* magazine series later published as *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, and listened to old soldiers. Most readers take his unnamed battle to be Chancellorsville (May 1863). Veterans praised the book's truth: research and imagination together.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuating dialogue.** (Grammar Level 3, Punctuation Mastery.) Commas and periods go inside the closing quotation mark: "We're goin' t' move," he said. A tag after a question or exclamation starts small: "Are ye sorry to leave?" said he. When a tag splits one sentence, use commas on both sides: "I will go," said he, "as far as the ford." When it splits two sentences, end the first with a period: "I will go," said he. "It is not far." Use a dash for speech that is cut off ("But the colonel said—") and an ellipsis for speech that trails away ("If only we had..."). Start a new paragraph for each new speaker.

For families. *The Red Badge of Courage* is short and powerful, but later chapters describe battle wounds and death plainly, and the soldiers occasionally swear; preview before assigning the whole book. The paragraph after this model uses a period term for a Black teamster. Homer's *Home, Sweet Home* was shown at the National Academy of Design in 1863 and helped establish his reputation.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's scene opens: "Sarah woke up at five o'clock. She got dressed in her calico dress and her apron. She went downstairs and lit the fire. Then she went out to the barn, where she found that the cow was gone." Revise to begin late.

1. Find the conflict: the cow is gone.
2. Cut everything before it, but save one or two researched details to use inside the action.
3. Open with motion and a sense other than sight.

Answer: The barn door was swinging in the wind, and the stall was empty. Sarah stood in the doorway with the milk pail still in her hand, her apron flapping, and listened for a bell. There was none.

Example 2. Name the goal, conflict and turn in Crane's scene (Chapter I, from the tall soldier's return to the end of the argument).

1. Goal: what does the tall soldier want?
2. Conflict: who stands against him?
3. Turn: what is different at the end?

Answer: Goal: the tall soldier wants to be believed and to seem important. Conflict: another private calls the news a lie, and the men split into arguing groups. Turn: the rumor has unsettled everyone, and the story's hero begins to fear what he will do in battle.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Define scene and summary.
2. **EASY** What three things does every scene need?
3. **EASY** What six things go on a scene card?
4. **MEDIUM** Punctuate correctly: are you coming said Mother the wagon leaves at noon
5. **MEDIUM** Find two places where Crane makes the setting move like a living thing.
6. **MEDIUM** Explain what "begin late, leave early" means and why it helps.
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a five-line scene set in a general store in 1849, in which a customer wants credit and the storekeeper refuses. End with a turn.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed practice (20 minutes): Rewrite this summary as a scene of 200-250 words: "During the winter of 1777-78 at Valley Forge, the soldiers had little food, and many had no shoes."

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing a whole story in summary, so the reader never stands inside a moment.
- Opening each scene too early, with waking, dressing and walking.
- Stopping the action for a paragraph of researched description.
- Running two speakers' lines together in one paragraph.

Make it a game · Summary to Scene. A parent reads a one-sentence summary from a history book ("In 1869 the rails met at Promontory Summit"). Each player has three minutes to write the opening three lines of a scene from that moment. Read them aloud; the family votes for the scene that begins latest and has the clearest goal.

Scripture. "And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee." (Ruth 2:4, KJV)

In one verse Scripture gives us a scene: a man arrives, speaks, and is answered, and the exchange of blessing shows his character and the godly order of his fields.

Practice: answers

1. Scene shows one place and stretch of time moment by moment, with action and dialogue; summary compresses time and tells what happened.
2. A goal, a conflict and a turn.
3. Place and time, point-of-view character, goal, conflict, turn, one researched detail.
4. "Are you coming?" said Mother. "The wagon leaves at noon."
5. Sample: "the army awakened, and began to tremble with eagerness"; "a river... purled at the army's feet"; the campfires as a "red, eyelike gleam."
6. Enter a scene close to its conflict and leave as soon as it turns; it cuts dull setup and keeps the reader in the tension.
7. Sample: "Put it on the book, Mr. Hale." "Your book's full, Amos." Amos laid his father's watch on the counter. Hale looked at it a long while. "Flour, salt and coffee," he said, and slid the watch into the drawer.
8. Sample answers should show one place and moment (a hut, a sentry post), one character with a goal (to find shoes, to share firecake), a conflict, a turn, and at least two researched details, such as firecake made of flour and water or feet wrapped in rags.

4.4 A COMPLETE HISTORICAL STORY

OBJECTIVES

- Trace the shape of a complete historical short story, from historical frame to climax to ending, in Hawthorne’s “The Gray Champion.”
- Draft, revise in passes, and title a complete historical short story of 1,000–3,000 words with an author’s note.
- Shape a clean final version to the current rules of the Bennington Young Writers Awards (fiction, up to 1,500 words) or the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards (Short Story or Flash Fiction).

Warm-up. Think of a story you know well (a parable, a novel, a film). In one sentence each, say: where it starts, what the hero must choose, the moment he chooses, and how it ends. Can you find the single moment the whole story was building toward?

Video slot. Video coming. Nathaniel Hawthorne and colonial Boston (a historic-site or museum program); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

climax

The point of highest tension, where the main conflict is decided by a choice or an act.

resolution

The short part after the climax that shows what has changed and settles the story.

frame

A narrator’s opening or closing passage that sets a story inside larger history or a larger meaning.

revision pass

One read-through of a draft for one kind of problem only: structure, history, voice, sentences or mechanics.

resonance

The meaning that lingers after the last line, carried by an image or event rather than stated as a lesson.

CORE IDEAS

The shape of the whole. You began “The Gray Champion” in Lesson 4.1; now see it whole. Hawthorne opens with a historical *frame*: New England under Andros, and a rumor from England. Then come scenes, each one tighter than the last. The crowd gathers in King Street at sunset; the governor’s soldiers march with drums; the street empties between them; an old man in Puritan dress walks out alone; he halts the soldiers with one word; he tells the

governor his power is ended. By the next day Andros is in prison, and the old man has vanished. A closing frame tells us he was seen again at Lexington and Bunker Hill. One afternoon, one street, one choice: that is the right size for a short story.

Where research meets invention. The climax in the model is pure invention, yet it stands on history. The old man's cry, "Stand!", never happened, but Andros really was overthrown in April 1689, King Street really was the town's main street, and the crowd's "sober garb" and "scriptural forms of speech" come from Hawthorne's long reading in Puritan records. Notice that the invented man does not change the outcome of history; he gives it a face. Your climax should work the same way: your invented character's choice happens inside the real event without altering its true result.

A person who must choose. Readers care about history through a person. Put at the center of your story one character who must make a real choice at real cost: to speak or keep silent, to stay or go, to tell the truth or save himself. Let the choice grow from the values of his time, such as duty, conscience, loyalty, faith and honor, presented honestly. The best historical stories show ordinary people doing right, or failing to, when the great event comes to their own door. That is where Proverbs 14:34, this year's faith verse, comes alive: "Righteousness exalteth a nation."

Endings that resonate. After the climax, end quickly. The resolution shows what has changed; it does not explain the moral. Hawthorne's closing frame is longer than most modern writers would dare, but it ends with an image, the gray champion walking his rounds at Bunker Hill, that the reader carries away. For your story, try ending on an image or a small action that echoes your opening: a key, a bell, a road, a shirt. Then add an author's note, set apart from the story, telling what is real and what is invented.

Revise in passes. Do not try to fix everything at once. Read the draft five times, each time for one thing only. *Structure*: does each scene turn, and does the climax come from the main character's choice? *History*: fill every [bracket], check every date and fact against your dossier, and hunt anachronisms. *Voice*: read aloud for slips into modern speech or costume. *Sentences*: vary length and structure, sharpen verbs, cut what does not work (see the Style Clinic). *Mechanics*: dialogue punctuation, spelling, pronoun case. Last of all, choose a title, ideally a concrete noun or image from the story.

The contests (summary as of October 2026). *Bennington Young Writers Awards* (Bennington College): open to students in grades 9–12; one submission per student in one category (Fiction, Nonfiction or Poetry); fiction is a short story or standalone excerpt of up to 1,500 words; the 2026–27 window runs from September 1, 2026, to November 1, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern; every entry needs a sponsoring teacher, and homeschoolers may use a mentor; no artificial-intelligence tools may be used at any stage, or the entry is disqualified; prizes are \$2,000, \$1,000 and \$500. *Scholastic Art & Writing Awards*: open to students in grades 7–12, age 13 and up; Short Story is 1,000–3,000 words, and Flash Fiction is up to 1,000 words; entries are \$10 each, with fee waivers in the online portal; regional deadlines usually fall between December and early January; AI may not write the work. Rules change

every year: read the official 2026-27 guidelines at bennington.edu and artandwriting.org, and use the official forms.

A plan for both. If the Bennington window is still open, finish a tight version of 1,500 words or fewer first; brevity sharpens every story. Then, if you like, restore a cut scene and enter a longer version (up to 3,000 words) in Scholastic's Short Story category, or keep it under 1,000 for Flash Fiction. Every word must be yours. A parent or mentor may ask questions and point out problems, but must not rewrite your sentences. That is not only a contest rule; it is a matter of truthfulness (Ephesians 4:25).

The model. *Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Gray Champion," in Twice-Told Tales (1837), Project Gutenberg #13707*

Meanwhile, the venerable stranger, staff in hand, was pursuing his solitary walk along the centre of the street. As he drew near the advancing soldiers, and as the roll of their drum came full upon his ear, the old man raised himself to a loftier mien, while the decrepitude of age seemed to fall from his shoulders, leaving him in gray but unbroken dignity. Now he marched onward with a warrior's step, keeping time to the military music. Thus the aged form advanced on one side and the whole parade of soldiers and magistrates on the other, till, when scarcely twenty yards remained between, the old man grasped his staff by the middle and held it before him like a leader's truncheon.

"Stand!" cried he.

The eye, the face and attitude of command, the solemn yet warlike peal of that voice—fit either to rule a host in the battle-field or be raised to God in prayer—were irresistible. At the old man's word and outstretched arm the roll of the drum was hushed at once and the advancing line stood still. A tremulous enthusiasm seized upon the multitude. That stately form, combining the leader and the saint, so gray, so dimly seen, in such an ancient garb, could only belong to some old champion of the righteous cause whom the oppressor's drum had summoned from his grave. They raised a shout of awe and exultation, and looked for the deliverance of New England

PICTURE STUDY



Pilgrims Going to Church, George Henry Boughton, 1867 · Oil on canvas · New-York Historical Society, New York

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Boughton, who grew up in Albany, New York, painted many scenes of early New England. Here a small congregation walks through the winter woods to worship, guarded by men with muskets. Boughton painted it nearly two hundred and fifty years after the Pilgrims landed, so this is itself a work of historical imagination: researched clothing and setting, invented people and an invented moment, meant to show something true about a whole generation. These are the grandparents of the crowd in Hawthorne's *King Street*, and the Gray Champion wears their dress.

Look closely

- Find the muskets. Where are the armed men placed in the line, and why?
- Find the minister and the Bible. Where is he in the procession?
- Study the faces and the snow. What mood has the painter chosen, and how does he make it?

Talk about it

1. This painting is a single scene. Write the goal, conflict and possible turn of a story that could begin here.
2. Boughton and Hawthorne both shaped history to show a people's character. Write a paragraph on what a storyteller may change and what he must not.

WRITING PROJECT: A COMPLETE HISTORICAL STORY

Finish the story you have built across this unit: the research of 4.1, the voice of 4.2, and the scenes of 4.3.

Aim for a complete draft of 1,000–3,000 words, then a final version cut or shaped to the contest you choose.

You will need

- Your dossier, word bank, scene cards and opening scene
- The official 2026–27 rules and entry forms for the Bennington Young Writers Awards and/or the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards
- A parent or mentor willing to read and sponsor

Steps

1. Review your scene cards. Make sure the climax is the main character's choice and that it happens inside the real event without changing its true outcome.
2. Draft every remaining scene, with short bridges of summary. Leave [brackets] for facts to check.
3. Revise in five passes: structure, history, voice, sentences, mechanics. Read the story aloud at least once.
4. Write a final paragraph that ends on an image or action, not a stated moral. Choose a concrete title.
5. Write an author's note of 80–150 words on a separate page: what is real, what is invented, and your main sources.
6. Shape the final version to your contest: up to 1,500 words for Bennington; 1,000–3,000 for Scholastic Short Story; under 1,000 for Flash Fiction. Check word count, format and deadline.
7. Give it to your parent or mentor to read for problems (not to rewrite). Make your last corrections and submit through the official portal.

Check your work

- Every scene has a goal, conflict and turn, and the climax comes from my main character's choice.
- Every historical fact is checked against a source, and no anachronism remains.
- The period voice is believable and consistent from the first line to the last.
- Key moments use parallel structure: items in a series match in grammatical form.
- Dialogue is punctuated correctly, and every pronoun is in the right case.
- The story meets the word count and rules of the contest I chose, and every word is my own.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model's third paragraph by hand. Bracket each parallel series ("so gray, so dimly seen, in such an ancient garb").
2. Write your climax in one sentence, then in one paragraph modeled on Hawthorne's "Stand!" moment.
3. List three possible titles for your story, each a concrete noun or image; star your favorite.

History note. Hawthorne's old man is never named, but his claim to have "stayed the march of a king himself" points to the judges who condemned Charles I in 1649. Several of them, including William Goffe and Edward Whalley, fled to New England after 1660 and lived in hiding; a later legend said Goffe appeared from nowhere to lead the town of Hadley against an attack in 1675. Hawthorne's closing frame ties the champion to King Street in 1770, Lexington in 1775 and Bunker Hill.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism at the climax.** (Grammar Level 3, Usage and Style.) At his story's height Hawthorne uses series of matching parts: "The eye, the face and attitude of command, the solemn yet warlike peal of that voice"; "so gray, so dimly seen, in such an ancient garb." Parallel structure gives a climax weight and rhythm. Keep the parts in the same grammatical form. Not parallel: "He was old, gray, and had a sword." Parallel: "He was old, gray and armed." Use it sparingly, at your story's high point; three parallel series in one paragraph sound like a speech.

For families. This lesson ends with a contest-ready piece. The contest summary in the lesson was checked in October 2026; confirm every detail in the official 2026-27 rules before entering. Bennington requires a sponsoring teacher, and homeschooled students may name a mentor; its window closes November 1, 2026. Scholastic entries are made through its online portal, by regional deadline; homeschool students may enter and should follow the portal's instructions for their region. Both contests forbid AI-written work, and Bennington forbids AI tools at every stage. Please help your student by asking questions and pointing out problems, not by rewriting.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's story about the Great Chicago Fire (October 1871) ends: "And so Thomas learned that courage means doing what is right even when you are afraid, and that God is always with us." Revise for resonance.

1. Find the image the story has already built: suppose Thomas saved his neighbor's family Bible from the fire.
2. Replace the stated moral with an action that shows it.
3. Keep it short; let the reader draw the lesson.

Answer: In the morning Mrs. Kerrigan opened the Bible on the tailboard of the wagon. The edges were black, but the pages turned. She wrote a new line on the flyleaf under her husband's name, and Thomas saw that it was his own.

Example 2. A student's 1,820-word story must be cut to 1,500 words for Bennington. How should the student cut?

1. First cut whole sentences that repeat what the reader already knows, and summary that slows the opening.
2. Then cut any scene that does not turn, or merge two scenes that turn the same way.
3. Last, trim words: adverbs propping up weak verbs, "began to," "very," and doubled adjectives.

Answer: Cutting the opening paragraph of background (140 words), merging two market scenes (120 words) and trimming sentences (about 70 words) brings the story to about 1,490 words, and it is stronger for it.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five revision passes in order.
2. **EASY** What is the climax of "The Gray Champion"?
3. **EASY** What is the fiction word limit for the Bennington Young Writers Awards (2026–27)?
4. **MEDIUM** Which Scholastic category fits a 2,200-word story? A 900-word story?
5. **MEDIUM** Make parallel: "The captain was brave, honest, and he never gave up."
6. **MEDIUM** Why does Hawthorne's invented old man not change the outcome of history?
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a one-paragraph resolution for a story set at the Lexington green on April 19, 1775, ending on an image rather than a moral.
8. **CHALLENGE** Explain, citing Ephesians 4:25, why a parent or mentor may advise but not rewrite a contest story.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Letting the real event decide the story while the main character only watches; the climax must come from his choice.
- Changing the true outcome of a real event to fit the plot.
- Ending with a stated moral instead of an image or action.
- Missing a contest rule: word count, format, sponsor or deadline.

Make it a game • Title Auction. Each family member writes three possible titles for the student's story on slips of paper. Everyone gets ten beans to "bid" on the titles they like best. The student keeps the top two and chooses between them after the final revision.

Scripture. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."
(Proverbs 14:34, KJV)

Hawthorne's champion stands for a people's righteous cause, and your story, too, can show how one person's right choice in a hard hour belongs to the life of a nation.

Practice: answers

1. Structure, history, voice, sentences, mechanics.
2. The old man halts the soldiers with the word "Stand!" and confronts Governor Andros.
3. Up to 1,500 words.
4. Short Story (1,000–3,000 words); Flash Fiction (up to 1,000 words).
5. The captain was brave, honest and unyielding.
6. Because Andros really was overthrown in 1689; the invented figure gives the real event a face and meaning without falsifying what happened.
7. Sample: By noon the green was empty but for the trampled grass and a single hat. Hannah picked it up, brushed the dew from the brim, and hung it on the peg by the door, where it would stay until its owner came home or did not.
8. Ephesians 4:25 tells us to put away lying and speak truth; submitting another person's sentences as one's own would deceive the judges. Advice leaves the work honestly the student's.

UNIT 4 REVIEW

Answer in writing. Short answers may be a sentence or two; writing tasks are scored for the skills taught in the unit, not for length. Allow 50 minutes.

1. (3 pts) Define a historical short story, and state the rule that keeps it honest.
2. (3 pts) Name the three kinds of sources and give one example of each.
3. (3 pts) What is an anachronism? Find the one in this sentence set in 1776: “He checked his pocket watch, struck a match and lit his pipe.”
4. (5 pts) Name the five parts of a period voice.
5. (2 pts) Correct the pronoun case: “Thee art welcome; I will sit with thou.”
6. (4 pts) Define scene and summary, and name the three things every scene needs.
7. (3 pts) Punctuate: we must cross tonight said the captain the river will freeze by morning
8. (2 pts) Make parallel: “The old man was gray, stern, and he carried a staff.”
9. (3 pts) In “The Gray Champion,” what is invented and what is historical? Give one of each.
10. (4 pts) Revise this ending for resonance: “And so Mary learned that honesty is always the best policy.”
11. (8 pts) Write the opening four to six sentences of a historical scene set in a year of your choice. Use at least two researched details, a line of dialogue and a clear goal.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A HISTORICAL SHORT STORY

Place the final, titled version of your story from Lesson 4.4 in your Grade 10 portfolio, followed by your author’s note and a list of your main sources. If you entered a contest, include a copy of the version you submitted and the date.

- **Historical truth:** The setting is researched and accurate; real events keep their true outcomes; the author’s note honestly separates fact from invention.
- **Scenes and structure:** Each scene has a goal, conflict and turn; the climax comes from the main character’s choice; the ending resonates through an image or action.
- **Period voice:** Diction, dialogue and frame of mind are believable for the period, consistent, free of anachronism and not overdone.
- **Style and mechanics:** Varied sentences, clean modifiers, parallel structure at key moments, and correct dialogue punctuation and pronoun case.

Answer key

1. A short work of fiction set in a real past time and place, usually with invented main characters; the real history (events, dates, outcomes) must stay true, and an author’s note tells what is real.
2. Primary (a diary or newspaper of the time), secondary (a later history), physical (an object, building or place).

3. Something placed in the wrong time. The friction match, which was not invented until the 1820s.
4. Diction, syntax, idiom, reference, frame of mind.
5. Thou art welcome; I will sit with thee.
6. Scene shows one place and time moment by moment; summary compresses time. Every scene needs a goal, a conflict and a turn.
7. "We must cross tonight," said the captain. "The river will freeze by morning."
8. The old man was gray, stern and armed with a staff. (Or: gray, stern and staff in hand.)
9. Invented: the old man and his command "Stand!" Historical: the overthrow of Governor Andros in Boston in April 1689 (or King Street, the rumor of William of Orange).
10. Sample: Mary set the extra coin on the counter. Mr. Doane looked at it, then at her, and wrote her name in the ledger with the word "trusted" beside it.
11. Scored for a clear time and place, two accurate concrete details inside action, correctly punctuated dialogue, a visible goal, and no anachronism.

POETRY: FORMS

Fixed forms are a trellis, not a cage. In this unit you will read, copy, imitate and then invent in four forms: the villanelle, with its two circling refrains (Edwin Arlington Robinson’s “The House on the Hill”); the Petrarchan sonnet, with its octave, turn and sestet (Wordsworth’s “London, 1802”); the shaped poem, in which line lengths draw the meaning (George Herbert’s “Easter Wings”); and the rondeau (John McCrae’s “In Flanders Fields”). The unit ends with one finished form poem prepared for the Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest (young women in grades 10–11) or the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award (ages 11–17).

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can identify rhyme, stanza and refrain, and has written short poems in earlier grades.
- Can tell an independent clause from a dependent clause and use colons and semicolons (Grammar Level 3).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can describe the villanelle, the Petrarchan sonnet, the shaped poem and the rondeau, and map each one’s pattern.
- ☐ I can write refrains that gain new meaning as they return.
- ☐ I can write iambic pentameter and place a clear turn between octave and sestet.
- ☐ I can plan a shaped poem by syllable count so that its outline carries its meaning.
- ☐ I can revise a form poem aloud and prepare a clean manuscript to a contest’s rules.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Edwin Arlington Robinson, *The Children of the Night* (Project Gutenberg #313)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/313>): Contains “The House on the Hill” and several other villanelles and sonnets.
- **William Wordsworth, *Poems, in Two Volumes, Volume 1* (Project Gutenberg #8774)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8774>): The 1807 text, with the “Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty.”
- **George Herbert, *The Temple* (Christian Classics Ethereal Library)** (<https://www.ccel.org/ccel/herbert/temple.html>): The whole 1633 collection free online, including “Easter Wings” and “The Altar.”
- **John McCrae, *In Flanders Fields and Other Poems* (Project Gutenberg #353)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/353>): Includes the poem, an earlier draft and a memoir of McCrae.
- **Milton: *Minor Poems* (Project Gutenberg #31706)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/31706>): Milton’s sonnets, including “On His Blindness,” for further Petrarchan models.

5.1 THE VILLANELLE: TWO REFRAINS AND A CIRCLE

OBJECTIVES

- Describe the villanelle: nineteen lines, five tercets and a quatrain, two rhyme sounds and two refrains, and map its pattern (A1 b A2 / a b A1 / ... / a b A1 A2).
- Read Edwin Arlington Robinson’s “The House on the Hill” closely and explain how each refrain gains new meaning as it returns.
- Write two refrain lines and a full draft villanelle on a subject that keeps coming back.

Warm-up. Think of a line you have heard repeated until it meant more than it did the first time: a hymn’s chorus, a grandparent’s saying, “for his mercy endureth for ever” in Psalm 136. Write it down, then write two sentences on why the repetition made it stronger, not weaker.

Video slot. Video coming. What is a villanelle? (poetic form explained, with a reading of a public-domain villanelle). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

villanelle

A nineteen-line poem of five tercets and a closing quatrain, built on only two rhyme sounds, with two refrain lines that alternate and then come together at the end.

refrain

A line (or part of a line) that repeats at fixed places in a poem. In a villanelle the first line (A1) and the third line (A2) are the refrains.

tercet

A stanza of three lines. A villanelle has five of them before its last stanza.

quatrain

A stanza of four lines. The villanelle ends with one, in which both refrains appear as the last two lines.

rhyme scheme

The pattern of end rhymes, marked with letters. Capital letters with numbers (A1, A2) mark refrain lines that rhyme with every “a” line.

CORE IDEAS

Form as a trellis. This unit turns from the historical story to poetry in fixed forms. A fixed form is a set of rules agreed upon before the first word is written: so many lines, these rhymes, this pattern of return. A beginner thinks rules will choke a poem; a craftsman knows they hold it up, the way a trellis holds a climbing rose. Scripture itself uses fixed forms. Psalm 119 is an acrostic of twenty-two stanzas, each of eight verses beginning with the same

letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and Psalm 136 answers every line with the same refrain. The classical method still applies: read the model, copy it by hand, imitate its pattern, then invent your own.

The pattern. A villanelle has nineteen lines: five tercets and a quatrain. It uses only two rhyme sounds, “a” and “b.” Line 1 (call it A1) and line 3 (A2) are both refrains. A1 returns as the last line of the second and fourth tercets; A2 returns as the last line of the third and fifth; then both close the poem as a couplet inside the final quatrain. Written out: A1 b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 A2. Count it and you will find thirteen lines on the “a” sound and only six on the “b” sound. That arithmetic matters when you choose your rhymes.

Where it came from. The Italian *villanella* was a rustic part-song (from *villa*, a farm). The nineteen-line pattern we use comes from a French poem by Jean Passerat, “J’ay perdu ma Tourterelle” (“I have lost my turtledove”), printed in 1606. French poets of the nineteenth century took it up, and in the 1870s and 1880s English poets such as Austin Dobson and Edmund Gosse made it a fixed form in English. It was usually light and graceful. Then a young poet in Gardiner, Maine, Edwin Arlington Robinson, used it for something heavier.

Reading Robinson. In “The House on the Hill,” collected in *The Children of the Night* (1897), Robinson’s two refrains are “They are all gone away” and “There is nothing more to say.” His rhyme sounds are “-ay” and “-ill.” The lines are short, about three beats each, so the poem moves slowly, like someone walking around an empty house. Watch the refrains change. At first “They are all gone away” is a plain report. After the question “Why is it then we stray / Around that sunken sill?” it becomes an answer, and a sad one. By the last stanza, after “ruin and decay,” the two refrains join, and the silence they describe seems final. Nothing in the words changed; the stanzas around them changed what they mean.

Refrains that turn. That is the secret of the form. A refrain must be strong enough to bear four repetitions and flexible enough to mean something new each time. Three tests help. First, each refrain should be a complete statement that can stand after a colon, a comma or a period. Second, it should be plain and rhythmic rather than clever, since cleverness wears thin on the third hearing. Third, the middle line of each tercet should set the refrain up, so the reader hears it with fresh ears. Poets may make small changes to a refrain (Robinson changes a period to a comma), but they keep its rhyme word.

What fits a villanelle. Because the form circles, choose a subject that circles: something that keeps returning to the mind. Grief, a lesson learned the hard way, the turning of seasons, a sound you hear every evening, a promise you keep repeating. Robinson’s poem circles and ends in silence. A Christian poet may let the circle end in hope instead. Psalm 136 repeats “for his mercy endureth for ever” twenty-six times, and each time the verse before it (creation, the Exodus, the daily bread) gives the refrain a new weight. That is a villanelle’s method, long before there were villanelles.

Workflow. Write the two refrains first, and make them rhyme with each other. Then build two rhyme lists: at least fifteen words on your “a” sound and eight on your “b” sound, so you have choices. Lay out the nineteen-line skeleton on paper with the refrains already in place,

and fill the blank lines last. Read the draft aloud. If a refrain lands with a thud in one stanza, rewrite the lines before it, not the refrain.

The model. *Edwin Arlington Robinson, "The House on the Hill," in The Children of the Night (1897), Project Gutenberg #313*

They are all gone away,
The House is shut and still,
There is nothing more to say.

Through broken walls and gray
The winds blow bleak and shrill:
They are all gone away.

Nor is there one to-day
To speak them good or ill:
There is nothing more to say.

Why is it then we stray
Around that sunken sill?
They are all gone away,

And our poor fancy-play
For them is wasted skill:
There is nothing more to say.

There is ruin and decay
In the House on the Hill:
They are all gone away,
There is nothing more to say.

PICTURE STUDY



Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose, John Singer Sargent, 1885–1886 · Oil on canvas · Tate Britain, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Sargent painted two young sisters, Dolly and Polly Barnard, lighting Chinese paper lanterns in a garden in the village of Broadway, in the English Cotswolds. He wanted the exact color of the light just after sunset, so he painted only a few minutes each evening, over two summers and autumns. His title is a refrain: it comes from a line of a popular song of the day, “The Wreath,” by Joseph Mazzinghi, which Sargent and his friends sang. Notice that the title, like a villanelle, repeats a word: *lily, lily*.

Look closely

- Find the repeated shapes: the round lanterns, the trumpets of the lilies, the girls’ two heads bent the same way. How many lanterns can you count?
- Find where the light comes from. Which glows warmer, the lanterns or the sky?
- Find the edges of the picture. What has Sargent left out (sky, house, horizon), and why might he have kept the garden so close?

Talk about it

1. Write two refrain lines, rhyming with each other, that one of the girls might say each evening as the lanterns are lit.
2. Sargent came back to the same few minutes of dusk again and again to finish one picture. How is that like writing a villanelle?

WRITING PROJECT: A VILLANELLE OF RETURN

Write a complete nineteen-line villanelle on something that keeps coming back: a season, a sound, a place, a lesson, a loss. Your refrains should mean something new by the last stanza.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Robinson's poem (copied in your sketchbook)
- Colored pencils or two highlighters
- A rhyming dictionary (optional)

Steps

1. Choose a subject that circles. Write one sentence saying what returns and why it matters.
2. Draft five or six pairs of possible refrains. Each line should be a complete statement of six to ten syllables, and the two lines of a pair must rhyme. Pick the best pair: A1 and A2.
3. Build two rhyme lists: fifteen or more words on the "a" sound (your refrains' sound) and eight or more on the "b" sound.
4. Write the skeleton: number nineteen lines, place A1 at lines 1, 6, 12 and 18 and A2 at lines 3, 9, 15 and 19, and mark every other line "a" or "b."
5. Fill in the open lines, stanza by stanza. Let each tercet's middle line set up the refrain so it lands differently each time.
6. Read the whole poem aloud twice. Mark any line that stumbles or any refrain that feels flat, and revise the lines leading into it.
7. Copy a clean draft and color the two refrains, as you did with Robinson's poem.

Check your work

- My poem has nineteen lines: five tercets and a quatrain, in the A1 b A2 pattern.
- I used only two rhyme sounds, and my refrains rhyme with each other.
- Each refrain is a complete independent clause that makes sense everywhere it appears.
- At least two of my refrains mean something different by the end than at the start.
- My line lengths are steady, and I read the poem aloud to test them.
- Punctuation at the ends of lines is deliberate; I have no comma splices I did not choose.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy "The House on the Hill" by hand. Color every A1 line one color and every A2 line another, and write the rhyme letter beside each line.
2. List twenty words that rhyme with "-ay" and ten that rhyme with "-ill." Circle the five strongest nouns and verbs.
3. Write three pairs of rhyming refrains on three different subjects. Star the pair you would most like to hear four times.

History note. Robinson (1869–1935) grew up in Gardiner, Maine, and paid to have his early poems printed. President Theodore Roosevelt read *The Children of the Night*, praised it in a 1905 magazine review, and helped Robinson get a post at the New York Custom House so he could keep writing. Robinson later won three Pulitzer Prizes for poetry (1922, 1925, 1928).

 **Style Clinic. Independent clauses as refrains.** An independent clause has a subject and a verb and can stand alone: “They are all gone away.” A dependent clause cannot: “Because they are all gone away.” Robinson’s refrains are both independent clauses, which is why they can follow a colon in one stanza and a question in the next. A dependent-clause refrain would need a new main clause every time it came back. Note, too, that Robinson’s last two lines join two independent clauses with only a comma. In prose that is a comma splice; in his poem it is a deliberate breath, the two thoughts running together. In your essays, join two independent clauses with a semicolon, a colon, or a comma plus a coordinating conjunction. *Try it:* check each of your refrains for a subject and a verb.

For families. This is a quarter-path lesson. Robinson’s poem is melancholy but entirely clean; it is about an empty house and a family gone, and it opens a good conversation about how poetry handles loss. If your student chooses grief as a subject, the Psalms (Psalm 42’s refrain, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?”) model how a refrain can carry both sorrow and hope. The villanelle is a hard form; a draft with a few rough lines is a success. Sargent’s painting hangs in Tate Britain; the song title is usually given as “The Wreath” by Joseph Mazzinghi.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Map the first three stanzas of “The House on the Hill.” Label each line with its rhyme letter and mark the refrains.

1. Line 1, “They are all gone away,” is the first refrain: A1. Line 3, “There is nothing more to say,” rhymes with it and is the second refrain: A2.
2. Line 2 ends “still”: that is the “b” sound. Lines 5 and 8 (“shrill,” “ill”) repeat it.
3. Lines 4 and 7 (“gray,” “to-day”) are plain “a” lines. Line 6 brings back A1; line 9 brings back A2.

Answer: A1 b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2. Robinson’s rhyme sounds are “-ay” (a) and “-ill” (b), and his refrains alternate exactly as the form requires.

Example 2. A student’s draft refrains: A1 “I think about the summer a lot,” A2 “Because the swing was always there.” Revise them so they can work in a villanelle.

1. Test rhyme: “lot” and “there” do not rhyme. The two refrains must share the “a” sound.
2. Test grammar: A2 is a dependent clause (“Because ...”). It cannot stand after a period in a later stanza.
3. Test strength: “a lot” is flat and vague. Name the thing that returns: the swing, the creak of its chain, the evening.
4. Rewrite both as short independent clauses on one rhyme sound.

Answer: A1 “The old swing creaks when evening falls.” A2 “I hear it still through summer walls.” Both are independent clauses, both rhyme on “-alls,” and both can mean something new as the poem moves from childhood to memory.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How many lines does a villanelle have, and how are they divided?
2. **EASY** How many rhyme sounds does a villanelle use?
3. **EASY** Which lines of the first stanza become the refrains?
4. **EASY** Name Robinson’s two refrains.
5. **MEDIUM** Write out the full rhyme scheme of a villanelle.
6. **MEDIUM** How does the meaning of “They are all gone away” change between stanza 1 and stanza 4 of Robinson’s poem?
7. **MEDIUM** Why must a villanelle writer gather more rhymes on the “a” sound than on the “b” sound?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write two rhyming refrains and one middle tercet for a villanelle about the sound of church bells.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Choosing refrains that are clever or wordy; by the fourth time the reader is tired of them. Plain, strong lines wear best.
- Writing a refrain that is a dependent clause or a fragment, so it does not make sense in some stanzas.
- Running out of rhymes halfway through and forcing nonsense words into “a” lines. Build the rhyme lists first.
- Letting the refrain mean exactly the same thing every time, so the poem goes in a circle without going anywhere.

Make it a game • Refrain Relay. One player says a refrain line (for example, “The tide comes in, the tide goes out”). Each other player in turn must say two new lines that lead

into it so that it means something different from the last time. Score a point when the group agrees the refrain “turned.”

Scripture. “O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.” (Psalm 136:1, KJV)

The psalmist repeats one refrain twenty-six times, and each new verse gives it fresh weight, which is exactly what a villanelle’s refrains must do.

Practice: answers

1. Nineteen lines: five tercets and one quatrain.
2. Two.
3. Line 1 (A1) and line 3 (A2).
4. “They are all gone away” and “There is nothing more to say.”
5. A1 b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 A2.
6. In stanza 1 it is a plain report of fact. In stanza 4 it follows the question “Why is it then we stray / Around that sunken sill?” and becomes an answer that shows the neighbors’ lingering is useless; it sounds sadder and more final.
7. Thirteen of the nineteen lines (including all eight refrain lines) end on the “a” sound; only six end on the “b” sound.
8. Sample: A1 “The bells ring out across the town.” A2 “They call the weary sleepers down.”
Tercet 2: “The baker lays his loaves out brown, / the miller stills his grinding wheel: / The bells ring out across the town.” (“Brown” takes the “a” sound; “wheel” sets the “b” sound for the rest of the poem.)

5.2 THE PETRARCHAN SONNET: OCTAVE, TURN AND SESTET



OBJECTIVES

- Describe the Petrarchan (Italian) sonnet: fourteen lines of iambic pentameter, an octave rhymed *abbaabba*, a sestet on new rhymes, and a turn (*volta*) at line 9.
- Mark the rhyme scheme, the turn and the iambic beat in Wordsworth’s “London, 1802,” and explain how the octave poses a problem the sestet answers.
- Write a Petrarchan sonnet of address to a worthy person of the past or to a place.

Warm-up. Say aloud: “da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM.” Now read Milton’s line “They also serve who only stand and wait” and tap the five beats (they AL-so SERVE who ON-ly STAND and WAIT). Write one ten-syllable line of your own about your street that fits the same beat.

Video slot. Video coming. The Petrarchan sonnet explained: octave, sestet and volta (with a reading of Wordsworth or Milton). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

Petrarchan sonnet

A fourteen-line poem in two parts: an octave rhymed *abbaabba* and a sestet on two or three new rhymes (often *cdecde* or *cddece*). Also called the Italian sonnet.

octave

The first eight lines of a Petrarchan sonnet, which usually state a problem, a question or a situation.

sestet

The last six lines, which answer, resolve or turn the octave.

volta

Italian for “turn”: the shift in thought, usually at line 9, where the sestet answers the octave.

iambic pentameter

A line of five iambs (da-DUM), ten syllables in all. The usual meter of the English sonnet.

CORE IDEAS

Fourteen lines in two parts. The sonnet is the most famous fixed form in Western poetry. Its Italian version has two parts. The *octave* (eight lines) rhymes *abbaabba*: only two rhyme sounds, folded in on each other like an envelope. The *sestet* (six lines) brings in new rhymes,

often *cdecde*, *cdcdcd* or *cddece*. Between them comes the *volta*, the turn. Every line is usually iambic pentameter: ten syllables, five beats.

From Petrarch to Milton. Francesco Petrarca, or Petrarch (1304-1374), wrote more than three hundred sonnets in Italian, and his name stuck to the form. In the court of Henry VIII, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, carried the sonnet into English; their poems were printed in *Tottel's Miscellany* in 1557. English has fewer rhyming words than Italian, so later Elizabethans, Shakespeare among them, often used three quatrains and a closing couplet instead; you will write about one of those in Unit 6. John Milton went back to the Italian pattern and widened its subjects. Petrarch had written mostly of love; Milton wrote sonnets on public events, on friends and on his own blindness, ending that one with the line "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Wordsworth answers Milton. William Wordsworth wrote "London, 1802" after a trip to France, when he came home to London and thought his country had grown soft and selfish. He printed it in *Poems, in Two Volumes* (1807) among his "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty." The poem speaks directly to Milton, dead since 1674. The octave rhymes *hour, fen, pen, bower, dower, men, again, power*: abbaabba. Then the turn. Line 9, "Thy soul was like a Star and dwelt apart," leaves England's sickness and looks at Milton's health. The sestet rhymes *apart, sea, free, way, heart, lay*: cddece.

Problem and answer. The octave and sestet work like the two halves of a classical argument. The octave states the case: England is "a fen / Of stagnant waters"; altar, sword and pen (church, army and letters) have lost their "inward happiness." The sestet answers with a portrait of the virtue that was lost: a voice "like the sea," a soul "majestic, free," and yet a heart that took on "The lowliest duties." You may recognize two old exercises here. The octave blames the vices of an age; the sestet is an encomium of one man. A good Petrarchan sonnet makes the reader feel the turn, the way a door opens onto a lit room.

Apostrophe. When a speaker turns away from his audience to address someone absent or dead, or a thing that cannot hear ("Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour"), the figure is called *apostrophe*. It gives a poem urgency: we overhear a man calling for help. Apostrophe suits the sonnet, because fourteen lines are about the length of one strong appeal. Speaking to the dead Milton is not prayer to him; it is a way of setting his example before the living.

Hearing the beat. An iamb is an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed one: *a-WAY, the HOUSE*. Five make a pentameter. Read line 10 aloud: "Thou HADST a VOICE whose SOUND was LIKE the SEA." That line is perfectly regular. Real speech is rarely so even, and good poets let natural stress win where it must. Line 2 begins with a reversed foot, "ENG-land hath NEED of THEE," which hits the key word hard. Count ten syllables first, then listen for five stresses. One reversed foot at the start of a line is a strength; three in a row is a stumble.

Rhyme without strain. Four "a" rhymes and four "b" rhymes are hard to find in English. Choose rhyme sounds with many common words (*-ay, -ight, -ore, -ain, -ear*). Never twist a sentence into odd order just to land a rhyme ("The hill upon the sun did shine"). If a rhyme

forces nonsense, change the rhyme sound, not the sense. Wordsworth used the old words *bower* and *dower*, but he used them for their meaning: the private room and the inheritance that England had lost.

The model. William Wordsworth, "London, 1802," in *Poems, in Two Volumes, Volume 1* (1807), Project Gutenberg #8774

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea;
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In chearful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on itself did lay.

PICTURE STUDY



The Blind Milton Dictating "Paradise Lost" to His Daughters, Mihály Munkácsy, 1877-1878 · Oil on canvas ·
New York Public Library, New York
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The Hungarian painter Mihály Munkácsy painted John Milton, blind since about 1652, dictating his great poem to his daughters. The large canvas won him wide fame when it was

shown in Paris in 1878; a smaller version hangs in the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest. The scene follows a popular tradition. Historians think Milton used several helpers to write down *Paradise Lost* (1667), but the picture shows truly how the poem was made: spoken aloud, line by line, and held in memory.

Look closely

- Find Milton's hands and face. How does the painter show that he cannot see but is thinking hard?
- Find the daughter who is writing. Where is the light, and why might the painter put it on her page?
- Compare the three daughters' postures. Which one seems to be listening most closely?

Talk about it

1. Write the octave of a sonnet from the point of view of the daughter holding the pen.
2. Milton composed lines in his head at night and dictated them in the morning. Compose one iambic pentameter line in your head, without writing, and then dictate it to someone.

WRITING PROJECT: A SONNET OF ADDRESS

Like Wordsworth, speak to someone absent: a person who died long ago whose virtue your town, church or family needs now (a grandparent, a founder of your town, a hymn writer, a figure from Scripture or history), or a place you have left. The octave states the need; the sestet portrays the virtue that answers it.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Wordsworth's sonnet (copied in your sketchbook)
- A rhyming dictionary (optional)

Steps

1. Choose your addressee and write one sentence for the octave ("We need you because ...") and one for the sestet ("You were ...").
2. Choose two rhyme sounds for the octave and list at least eight words for each. Choose two or three new sounds for the sestet.
3. Draft the octave, abbaabba, in iambic pentameter. Begin with the name or title of the person you address, as Wordsworth does.
4. Mark the turn. Write line 9 so that it plainly shifts from the need to the answer.
5. Draft the sestet (cdecde, cdcdcd or cddece). End on a concrete picture, not a slogan.
6. Count syllables in every line and read the sonnet aloud, tapping the five beats. Mend any line that stumbles or any sentence twisted for a rhyme.
7. Copy a clean draft with the rhyme letters in the margin.

Check your work

- My sonnet has fourteen lines: an octave (abbaabba) and a sestet on new rhymes.
- The turn at line 9 is clear; the octave states a need and the sestet answers it.
- Most lines have ten syllables and five beats, and none are twisted out of natural order for a rhyme.
- I address my subject directly and set off the name of the person addressed with commas or an exclamation point.
- Colons and semicolons, where I used them, join complete thoughts correctly.
- My addressee is a person from the past or a place, not a living public figure.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy “London, 1802” by hand. Write a, b, c, d, e beside each line and draw a line across the page between lines 8 and 9.
2. Mark the stresses in lines 1, 2 and 9 with a slash over each stressed syllable. Note any reversed foot.
3. Write four pairs of ten-syllable lines that rhyme, each pair on a different sound.

History note. Milton (1608-1674) wrote about two dozen sonnets, most in the strict Italian form, and several on public matters: “On the Late Massacre in Piedmont” (1655) protests the slaughter of Protestant Waldensians in the Alps. Wordsworth admired these poems and wrote more than five hundred sonnets himself, bringing the form back into wide use in English.

 **Style Clinic. Colons and semicolons.** Wordsworth’s octave runs on these two marks. A *colon* after a complete clause introduces what explains or completes it: “England hath need of thee: she is a fen / Of stagnant waters.” The second clause tells *why* England needs him. A *semicolon* joins two closely related independent clauses of equal weight without a conjunction: “We are selfish men; / Oh! raise us up.” Both marks need a complete clause before them. Do not write “The things England lost: altar, sword and pen” in an essay unless a full clause comes first (“England lost three things: ...”). *Try it:* find one sentence in your sonnet where a colon would show cause, and one where a semicolon would join two equal statements.

For families. Wordsworth’s line “We are selfish men” blames the vices of a whole age, including his own; it is a model of criticism aimed at faults rather than at persons. Keep the project’s addressee to someone long dead or to a place, in keeping with the course’s guardrails. Iambic pentameter takes practice; if your student’s lines vary by a syllable, praise the effort and help him or her hear the beat by reading aloud together. Milton’s sonnet “When I consider how my light is spent” makes a good companion reading and is in any public-domain edition of his poems.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Find the rhyme scheme and the turn in “London, 1802,” and say in one sentence what the octave and the sestet each do.

1. Octave end words: hour (a), fen (b), pen (b), bower (a), dower (a), men (b), again (b), power (a). That is abbaabba.
2. Sestet end words: apart (c), sea (d), free (d), way (e), heart (c), lay (e). That is cddece.
3. Line 9 changes subject from England (“she,” “we”) to Milton (“Thy soul”). That is the volta.

Answer: Octave abbaabba, sestet cddece, turn at line 9. The octave lays out England’s sickness and pleads for help; the sestet portrays the virtues of Milton that England has lost, ending on his humility.

Example 2. Revise this student octave opening, which twists its syntax to rhyme: “O Grandfather, the fields thou once did plow / Are fallow lying, weeds upon them grow.”

1. Find the twist: “Are fallow lying” and “weeds upon them grow” reverse normal English order to reach “grow.”
2. Check the rhyme: “plow” and “grow” do not rhyme anyway.
3. Check the address: “thou ... did” mixes old and new verb forms; choose one. Plain modern English is fine.
4. Rewrite in natural order on a rhyme sound with many words (-ay or -ound).

Answer: “Grandfather, you should walk these fields today: / The fence is down, the weeds have overrun / the rows you plowed and planted one by one, / and no one rises early now to pray.” (Rhymes a b b a, natural word order, ten syllables a line.)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How many lines are in the octave and in the sestet?
2. **EASY** What is the rhyme scheme of a Petrarchan octave?
3. **EASY** What is the volta, and where does it usually come?
4. **EASY** Who is addressed in “London, 1802”?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the figure of speech in which a speaker addresses someone absent or dead.
6. **MEDIUM** What do “altar, sword and pen” stand for in Wordsworth’s octave?
7. **MEDIUM** Why did many English poets after Wyatt and Surrey move away from the abbaabba octave?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write line 9 (the turn) for a sonnet whose octave complains that your town has forgotten its old craftsmen.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Having no turn: the sestet just keeps going in the same direction as the octave.
- Twisting word order for the sake of rhyme (“The hill upon the sun did shine”).
- Counting syllables but ignoring stress, so a ten-syllable line still sounds lumpy.
- Ending on a slogan or abstraction instead of a concrete picture, as Wordsworth ends on Milton’s “lowliest duties.”

Make it a game · Octave Envelope. Write the rhyme sounds “a” and “b” on two cards. Players take turns adding a line to a group octave, following abbaabba; a player who breaks the rhyme or the ten-syllable count must start the next round. When the octave is done, everyone writes a different line 9 and the group votes for the best turn.

Scripture. “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.” (Matthew 23:11, KJV)

Wordsworth ends his praise of the greatest English poet not on his fame but on the “lowliest duties” he laid on his own heart, the greatness Christ commends.

Practice: answers

1. Eight in the octave, six in the sestet.
2. abbaabba.
3. The turn in thought between octave and sestet, usually at line 9.
4. John Milton, who had been dead since 1674.
5. Apostrophe.
6. The church (clergy), the army (soldiers) and literature or learning (writers): the leading institutions of England.
7. English has fewer rhyming words than Italian, so finding four words on each of two rhyme sounds is hard; three quatrains and a couplet allow more rhyme sounds.
8. Sample: “Yet in my uncle’s shop the lathe still turns,” which shifts from the town’s loss to one place where the old skill survives.

5.3 HERBERT'S SHAPED POEMS: WHEN THE PAGE BECOMES A PICTURE

OBJECTIVES

- Explain what a shaped (pattern) poem is and trace it from the Greek poet Simmias to George Herbert's *The Temple* (1633).
- Show how the line lengths of "Easter Wings" enact its meaning: the fall and the rise, poverty and flight.
- Plan a shaped poem by syllable count and draft it so that its shape grows out of its sense.

Warm-up. Write the word "fall" so that it looks like it is falling, and the word "rise" so that it looks like it is rising. Then ask: could you do the same thing with whole lines of a poem, using only their lengths?

Video slot. Video coming. George Herbert "Easter Wings" and the 1633 printing of *The Temple* (a reading or a library exhibit). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

shaped poem

A poem whose lines are arranged so that the printed poem forms a picture of its subject. Also called a pattern poem or, in Latin, *carmen figuratum*.

syllabic pattern

A planned sequence of syllable counts, line by line (for example 10, 8, 6, 4, 2), that gives a shaped poem its outline.

imp

A falconer's word: to graft new feathers onto a hawk's damaged wing so that it can fly again. Herbert uses it in "Easter Wings."

felix culpa

Latin for "happy fault": the old Christian thought that God brings a greater good out of the Fall, through Christ's redemption. Herbert's line "Then shall the fall further the flight in me" turns on it.

The Temple

George Herbert's collection of devotional poems, published in 1633, the year he died.

CORE IDEAS

A poem you can see. Most poems are made for the ear. A shaped poem is made for the ear and the eye at once: the lengths of its lines draw a picture of its subject on the page. The

picture is not drawn around the words; it is made of them. A good shaped poem still reads well aloud with your eyes closed. The shape is a second argument, laid alongside the first.

An old game. Around 300 B.C. the Greek poet Simmias of Rhodes wrote poems shaped like a pair of wings, an egg and an axe. Renaissance scholars rediscovered them, and in 1589 George Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* showed English readers poems shaped like lozenges, pillars and pyramids. In many hands the shaped poem was a parlor trick. George Herbert took the trick and turned it into prayer.

The poet-priest of Bemerton. Herbert (1593–1633) came from a noble family, served as Public Orator of Cambridge University and might have risen at court. Instead he was ordained and in 1630 became rector of Bemerton, a small parish near Salisbury, where he served for less than three years before he died at thirty-nine. As he was dying he sent his poems to his friend Nicholas Ferrar. Izaak Walton, his early biographer, reports that Herbert asked Ferrar to publish them only if they might help “any dejected poor soul,” and otherwise to burn them. Ferrar published *The Temple* in 1633.

“Easter Wings.” Here is the poem as printed in 1633, set so you can see its outline. (The first edition turned it sideways across two facing pages, so that each stanza looked like a pair of spread wings.)

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee
Oh let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne:
And still with sicknesses and shame
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine
And feel this day thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

How the shape works. Count the syllables in the first stanza: 10, 8, 6, 4, 2, then 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. As mankind falls from Eden's “wealth and store,” the lines shrink until man is “Most poore,” two syllables wide. Then, “With thee,” they widen again, rising like a lark. The

second stanza does the same for one man's life: sickness and sin wear him down to "Most thinne," and then he grafts ("imps") his broken wing onto Christ's. The narrowest point of each stanza is the turning point of the gospel. The shape does not decorate the meaning; it *is* the meaning, drawn.

"The Altar." *The Temple* opens with another shaped poem, built like an altar on a pedestal. It begins "A broken ALTAR, Lord, thy servant reares, / Made of a heart." Herbert is remembering two passages: God's law that an altar of stone must not be shaped with a tool (Exodus 20:25), and David's words that "a broken and a contrite heart" God will not despise (Psalm 51:17, today's copywork). The altar is the poet's heart, shaped by God rather than by the craftsman's chisel, and yet offered to God as a crafted poem.

Rules for your shape. Choose a shape that tells a story, not just a thing: something that narrows and widens (an hourglass, a candle burning down, a well, a tree and its roots), climbs (a ladder, a stair) or turns. Plan the outline in numbers before you write a word: a column of syllable counts. Keep a steady beat inside the changing lengths, as Herbert does. Then test: if the shape were erased and the poem read aloud, would it still be a poem? If not, it is a puzzle, not yet a poem.

The model. *Psalm 51:15-17 (KJV), the passage behind Herbert's "The Altar"*

O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

PICTURE STUDY



George Herbert at Bemerton, Salisbury, William Dyce, 1860 · Oil on canvas · Guildhall Art Gallery, City of London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The Scottish painter William Dyce, himself a devout churchman, imagined George Herbert in the garden of his rectory at Bemerton, with Salisbury Cathedral's spire across the meadows. Walton tells us that Herbert loved music and walked to the cathedral twice a week to hear the services. Dyce painted every leaf with great care, in the detailed manner of his time, as if to say that a quiet country parish was worth a great painter's full attention.

Look closely

- Find the cathedral spire. How does its shape echo the figure of Herbert?
- Find the ground between Herbert and the cathedral. What lies between the small parish and the great church, and how far apart do they seem?
- Find where the light falls most brightly. What does Dyce want you to look at first?

Talk about it

1. The spire is a shape that narrows as it rises. Plan the syllable counts for a shaped poem about a spire, and write its first three lines.
2. Herbert left a possible career at court for a small parish. Write a short paragraph on what this painting suggests he gained.

WRITING PROJECT: A SHAPED POEM

Write a shaped poem of twelve to twenty-four lines whose outline grows out of its meaning, as "Easter Wings" does. Plan the shape in numbers first.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Graph paper (optional, for planning the outline)
- “Easter Wings” (copied in your sketchbook)

Steps

1. Choose a subject with motion in it: falling and rising, burning down, climbing, narrowing and opening.
2. Choose the shape and write one sentence explaining how it carries the meaning (“The lines shrink as the candle burns, then the last line widens as the light fills the room”).
3. Write the syllable plan as a column of numbers, one per line, and mark the turning point.
4. Draft the poem line by line to fit the plan. Put your key word at the narrowest or widest point.
5. Read it aloud without looking. Mend any line that only fills a space.
6. Copy it carefully, centering each line, so the shape is clear on the page.

Check your work

- My shape shows the poem’s meaning, and I can say how in one sentence.
- My lines follow a written syllable plan, and my turning point falls where the shape turns.
- The poem still makes sense and sounds good read aloud with the shape unseen.
- No line is padded with filler words just to reach a length.
- Shifts in mood (statement, command, wish) are deliberate and clear.
- My final copy is neat, centered and easy to read.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Psalm 51:15–17 by hand.
2. Copy “Easter Wings,” centering each line. Write the syllable count beside each line and circle the two narrowest points.
3. Sketch three possible shapes (with syllable columns) for three different subjects.

History note. In the 1633 first edition of *The Temple*, “Easter Wings” was printed sideways on two facing pages, one stanza to a page, so that the reader had to turn the book to read it. Izaak Walton’s *Life of Mr. George Herbert* (1670) is the main early account of his life; it is on Project Gutenberg (#13139) in Walton’s collected *Lives*, Volume 2. Herbert’s hymns, including “Let all the world in every corner sing” and “Teach me, my God and King,” are still sung today.

 **Style Clinic. Mood: indicative, imperative, subjunctive.** Mood tells the reader what kind of statement a verb makes. The *indicative* states a fact: “Thou didst so punish sinne.” The *imperative* gives a command or plea: “open thou my lips” (Psalm 51:15).

English often softens an imperative with *let*: “Oh let me rise,” “Let me combine.” The *subjunctive* expresses a wish or a condition contrary to fact: “If I were braver.” Notice how “Easter Wings” moves: indicative for the fall, an imperative prayer at the narrow waist, then a confident future, “Then shall the fall further the flight in me.” The mood shift follows the shape. In an essay, keep mood consistent: do not slide from “Students should read Herbert” into “Read him aloud” unless you mean to address the reader directly. *Try it*: label the mood of each main verb in your shaped poem.

For families. Project Gutenberg does not currently carry *The Temple*; the text of “Easter Wings” here follows the 1633 edition as transcribed by the Christian Classics Ethereal Library (ccel.org), which also has the whole book free. The model passage for copywork is therefore Psalm 51, which Herbert himself drew on. A shaped poem tempts students toward clip-art cleverness; hold them to Herbert’s standard, that the shape must carry the meaning and the poem must stand on its own read aloud.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Show how the second stanza of “Easter Wings” matches its shape to its meaning.

1. Count syllables: “My tender age in sorrow did beginne” (10), “And still with sicknesses and shame” (8), “Thou didst so punish sinne” (6), “That I became” (4), “Most thinne” (2).
2. Note the subject: the speaker’s own life, worn down by sickness and the punishment of sin, until he is “Most thinne.”
3. Count the second half: 2, 4, 8, 8, 10. The lines widen again “With thee,” as he grafts his wing on Christ’s.
4. Read the last line: “Affliction shall advance the flight in me.” The trial that narrowed him becomes the means of his rising.

Answer: The stanza narrows with the speaker’s suffering to its thinnest point and widens as he joins himself to Christ, so the outline on the page traces the sentence of the last line: affliction leads to flight.

Example 2. A student’s shaped poem is a sun made of lines radiating in a circle, with the words “sun,” “bright,” “warm” and “yellow” repeated around it. Revise the plan.

1. Ask what the shape means. A sun outline only shows what the poem is about; it does not carry an argument.
2. Find motion in the subject: a sunrise, which grows from a thin line on the horizon to full day.
3. Make a syllable plan that grows: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 10, 10, with the turn at the first full line, when the light reaches the fields.
4. Replace list words with a scene: a farmer waiting in the dark, the first gray line, the barn roof catching light.

Answer: A seven-line sunrise poem whose lines widen from “Still dark” (2 syllables) to “and all the fields lie open to the day” (10), so the growth of the lines is the coming of the light.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a shaped poem?
2. **EASY** When was *The Temple* published, and who published it?
3. **EASY** Name the Greek poet who wrote shaped poems around 300 B.C. and one of his shapes.
4. **EASY** Where did Herbert serve as rector?
5. **MEDIUM** What does “imp my wing on thine” mean?
6. **MEDIUM** Explain “Then shall the fall further the flight in me.”
7. **MEDIUM** Which two Old Testament passages lie behind “The Altar”?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write the syllable plan and the first four lines of a shaped poem about a candle.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Choosing a shape that only names the subject (a heart, a star) without carrying any change or argument.
- Padding lines with filler words to reach a length, so the shape is right but the poem is weak.
- Writing first and forcing the lines into a shape afterward; plan the syllables first.
- Forgetting the ear: a shaped poem must still sound good read aloud.

Make it a game • Shape Charades. Each player secretly writes a syllable column (for example 2, 4, 6, 8, 6, 4, 2) and a one-line subject. Others try to guess the shape from the numbers alone, then the subject. Bonus point if the group agrees the shape fits the subject’s meaning, not just its outline.

Scripture. “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:57, KJV)

Herbert’s Easter poem sings “thy victories”: the rising half of each stanza is the victory Paul gives thanks for.

Practice: answers

1. A poem whose line lengths form a picture of its subject on the page.
2. In 1633, the year of Herbert’s death, by his friend Nicholas Ferrar.
3. Simmias of Rhodes: wings, an egg or an axe.
4. Bemerton, near Salisbury.
5. To graft my broken wing onto Christ’s, as a falconer grafts new feathers onto a hawk’s wing, so that I can fly by his strength.
6. God turns the Fall to good: through Christ, man rises higher than before. The fall becomes the occasion of a greater flight (the “happy fault”).
7. Exodus 20:25 (an altar of stone must not be shaped with a tool) and Psalm 51:17 (a broken and contrite heart).
8. Sample plan: 10, 8, 6, 4, 2, 2 (the candle burns down; the last two lines are the flame). “I lit it when the evening hymn began; / it gave its tallow inch by inch / to hold one point of light / against the dark.”

5.4 A FORM POEM FOR CONTEST

OBJECTIVES

- Read John McCrae’s rondeau “In Flanders Fields” and map its fifteen lines, two rhymes and returning refrain.
- Match a subject to the form that suits it (villanelle, Petrarchan sonnet, shaped poem or rondeau) and give a reason.
- Draft, revise and prepare one finished form poem to the rules of the Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest or the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award.

Warm-up. Look back over your villanelle, your sonnet and your shaped poem from this unit. Which one has the best single line? Copy that line at the top of a fresh page and write two sentences on why it works.

Video slot. Video coming. John McCrae and the writing of “In Flanders Fields” (a war museum, veterans’ or library channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

rondeau

A French fixed form of fifteen lines in three stanzas (five, four and six lines) on two rhyme sounds, in which the opening words of line 1 return as a short refrain after the second and third stanzas: aabba aabR aabbaR.

rentrement

The short refrain of a rondeau, taken from the first words of the first line (“In Flanders fields”).

prosopopoeia

The figure in which the dead, the absent or a thing is made to speak. In the progymnasmata it is a cousin of *ethopoeia*, the speech in character.

manuscript

The clean, final copy of a poem prepared for submission, with a title, typed or neatly written, following the contest’s rules.

revision

Literally “seeing again”: reworking a draft for sense, sound and form, not just fixing spelling.

CORE IDEAS

From exercises to a finished poem. In this unit you have practiced three forms. Now you will bring one poem to finished, public quality. A contest judge reads hundreds of entries; what stands out is not the hardest form but the poem in which form and subject fit so well

that the reader forgets there was ever a rule. Before you choose, study one more form, the rondeau, in a poem that nearly every English-speaking schoolchild once knew by heart.

The rondeau. The rondeau came from medieval France. It has fifteen lines in three stanzas of five, four and six lines, and only two rhyme sounds. Its refrain, the *rentrement*, is not a whole line but the first few words of line 1, which return as a short, unrhymed line at the end of the second and third stanzas. The pattern is *aabba / aabR / aabbaR*. In “In Flanders Fields” the “a” rhymes are *blow, row, below, ago, glow, foe, throw, grow*; the “b” rhymes are *sky, fly, lie, high, die*; and the refrain is the place itself: “In Flanders fields.”

The poem and its maker. John McCrae (1872–1918) was a Canadian physician and poet who served as a medical officer with the Canadian artillery in the Second Battle of Ypres, in Belgium, in the spring of 1915. After his friend Lieutenant Alexis Helmer was killed on May 2, 1915, McCrae wrote this poem. It was published in the London magazine *Punch* on December 8, 1915, and was soon read across the English-speaking world. McCrae died of pneumonia in January 1918 while commanding a military hospital in France. Because of his poem, the red poppy became the flower of remembrance for the war dead.

Why the form works. The short refrain tolls like a bell: three times the reader comes back to the same ground. The dead speak (“We are the Dead”), a figure called prosopopoeia, which you met in the progymnasmata as the speech in character. The first stanza sets a scene of contrasts, larks singing above guns. The second stanza packs a whole life into one line of verbs: “We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, / Loved and were loved.” The third stanza turns from memory to charge: “Take up our quarrel.” McCrae did not choose the rondeau by accident; its narrow rhymes and returning place-name make the poem feel like a vigil kept in one spot.

Matching subject to form. Each form you have studied has a natural subject. A *villanelle* suits something that keeps returning: grief, a season, a lesson. A *Petrarchan sonnet* suits a problem and its answer, or a need and the virtue that meets it. A *shaped poem* suits motion: a fall and a rise, a burning down, a climb. A *rondeau* suits a single place or phrase that rings again and again. Choose the form your subject asks for, not the one you think will impress. Then count, scan and read aloud until every line earns its place.

The contests. As of October 2026: the *Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest*, run by Hollins University in Virginia, is for young women who are high school sophomores or juniors and U.S. citizens. Each entrant sends one or two original poems that have not been published or submitted elsewhere; there is no fee, and the 2026 deadline is October 31, 2026, by online form. The first-place winner receives a cash prize, publication in Hollins’s student magazine *Cargoes* and scholarships; six runners-up are also published. The *Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award*, run by the Poetry Society in London, is free and open worldwide to writers aged 11 to 17. Poems must be original, unpublished, in English and no longer than forty lines; entrants outside the United Kingdom may send one poem. The 2026 round closed on July 31, 2026; the next round usually opens in the spring. Foyle forbids poems written with generative AI. Rules change every year, so check the official pages and entry forms before you submit.

Honest work. A contest poem must be your own: your subject, your lines, your revisions. A parent or teacher may tell you where a line stumbles, but the mending is yours. That is not only a rule of the contests; it is the commandment to “speak every man truth with his neighbour” (Ephesians 4:25). Put your name only on what you made.

The model. *John McCrae, “In Flanders Fields,” in In Flanders Fields and Other Poems (1919), Project Gutenberg #353*

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

PICTURE STUDY



Poppy Field (Wild Poppies near Argenteuil), Claude Monet, 1873 · Oil on canvas · Musée d'Orsay, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Monet painted this field near Argenteuil, outside Paris, in the summer of 1873 and showed it at the first Impressionist exhibition in 1874. A woman with a parasol and a child, probably his wife Camille and their son Jean, walk through the grass; a second, similar pair appears near the top of the slope, as if we see the same walk twice. The poppies are dabs of red paint, hardly more than marks. Forty-two years later, poppies in another field would mean something very different to the world.

Look closely

- Find the two pairs of figures. How does the repetition suggest a path and the passing of time?
- Find the diagonal line where the red poppies give way to green. Where does it lead your eye?
- Look closely at one poppy. How many brushstrokes did Monet use for it?

Talk about it

1. Monet's poppies are a picture of peace; McCrae's are a picture of remembrance. Write two lines, one for each field, that use the same flower to mean different things.
2. Write the first stanza of a rondeau whose refrain is the name of a field, road or place you know.

WRITING PROJECT: A FORM POEM FOR CONTEST

Bring one poem to finished, contest-ready quality. Use a draft from this unit or start fresh, but write in one of the four forms you have studied: villanelle, Petrarchan sonnet, shaped poem or rondeau. Keep it to forty lines or fewer so it fits either contest.

Young women in grades 10–11 who are U.S. citizens may enter the Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest (one or two poems). Any student aged 11–17 may enter the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award (one poem for entrants outside the U.K.). Get the current official rules and entry form with a parent before submitting.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Your drafts from Lessons 5.1–5.3
- The current official contest rules (Hollins University; the Poetry Society)
- A computer for typing the final manuscript

Steps

1. Choose your subject and form. Write one sentence explaining why this form suits this subject.
2. Draft (or redraft) the poem, checking the form's pattern line by line: rhyme letters in the margin, syllable counts, refrains in place.
3. Read the poem aloud twice, once slowly and once at speaking pace. Mark every stumble, filler word ("so," "very," "just," "really") and twisted sentence.
4. Revise for one thing at a time: first sense (does every line mean something?), then sound (beat and rhyme), then images (replace abstractions with things a reader can see).
5. Ask a parent or friend to read it aloud to you. Listen for where the reader hesitates, and decide for yourself how to mend it.
6. Choose a title that adds something the poem does not already say.
7. Type a clean manuscript following the contest's current rules, and with a parent, submit it before the deadline.

Check your work

- My poem follows its form exactly (or breaks it on purpose, for a reason I can explain).
- Every line earns its place; I cut filler words and padded phrases.
- My rhymes sound natural, and no sentence is twisted out of normal order to reach one.
- Every modifier sits next to the word it describes; I have no dangling modifiers.
- My poem is forty lines or fewer, titled, original and unpublished.
- Spelling, capitals and punctuation are correct and consistent on the final manuscript.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy “In Flanders Fields” by hand. Mark a and b rhymes and circle the three refrains.
2. List five subjects you care about. Beside each, name the form that would suit it and why, in one line.
3. Copy your final poem neatly by hand, the way you would want a judge to see it.

History note. “In Flanders Fields” appeared without McCrae’s name in *Punch* on December 8, 1915; the Gutenberg edition prints both the published text and an earlier handwritten version. In 1918 an American teacher, Moina Michael, read the poem and began wearing a red silk poppy in memory of the dead, a custom that spread to many nations. Monet’s *Poppy Field* is in the Musée d’Orsay in Paris.

 **Style Clinic. Placing modifiers.** A modifier must sit next to the word it modifies. McCrae’s participial phrase “still bravely singing” sits right after “The larks,” so we know who sings. Compressed lines tempt poets into *dangling modifiers*: “Kneeling by the grave, the poppies seemed to bow” says that the poppies knelt. Fix it by naming the doer: “Kneeling by the grave, I watched the poppies bow.” Watch also for *misplaced* modifiers: “I saw the crosses walking through the field” puts the crosses on the move; write “Walking through the field, I saw the crosses.” The same care keeps essay sentences clear on a timed test. *Try it:* underline every participial phrase in your poem and draw an arrow to the word it describes.

For families. This lesson ends with a piece ready for contest. Rules summarized here were checked in October 2026: Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest (Hollins University, hollins.edu; for young women in grades 10–11 who are U.S. citizens; one or two unpublished poems; no fee; deadline October 31, 2026) and Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award (the Poetry Society, foleyoungpoets.org; ages 11–17 worldwide; poems up to 40 lines; one poem for international entrants; free; 2026 round closed July 31, 2026). Rules, deadlines and forms change each year, so please read the official pages and complete the official entry forms yourself. Foyle prohibits poems written with generative AI; this course asks for the student’s own work in any case. “In Flanders Fields” speaks of war and death plainly but without gore.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Map “In Flanders Fields” as a rondeau.

1. Stanza 1 end words: blow (a), row (a), sky (b), fly (b), below (a): aabba.
2. Stanza 2: ago (a), glow (a), lie (b), then the refrain “In Flanders fields” (R): aabR.
3. Stanza 3: foe (a), throw (a), high (b), die (b), grow (a), then the refrain: aabbaR.
4. The refrain repeats the first three words of line 1.

Answer: aabba / aabR / aabbaR: fifteen lines, two rhyme sounds (“-ow” and “-y”), and a short refrain drawn from the opening words.

Example 2. Revise these lines from a student’s sonnet for contest: “Walking home, the moon was very bright / and it was really, really beautiful that night.”

1. Find the dangling modifier: “Walking home” has no walker; the moon is not walking.
2. Cut filler: “very,” “really, really.”
3. Replace the abstraction “beautiful” with a picture the reader can see.
4. Check the meter: aim for ten syllables and five beats.

Answer: “Walking home, I saw the moon stand white / and turn the stubble field to silver light,” which keeps the rhyme, fixes the modifier, drops the filler and shows the beauty instead of naming it.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How many lines and stanzas are in a rondeau?
2. **EASY** Where does a rondeau’s refrain come from?
3. **EASY** When and where was “In Flanders Fields” first published?
4. **EASY** Who may enter the Nancy Thorp Poetry Contest?
5. **MEDIUM** What is the line limit for the Foyle Young Poets award, and how many poems may an entrant outside the U.K. send?
6. **MEDIUM** Which form would best suit a poem about a lesson your grandfather repeated every harvest? Why?
7. **MEDIUM** Name the figure in which the dead speak, and give McCrae’s example.
8. **CHALLENGE** Fix the modifier: “Covered in snow, my father pointed to the field.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Picking the most difficult form to impress a judge instead of the form the subject needs.
- Stopping at the first draft; contest poems usually need several rounds of revision read aloud.
- Ignoring the contest rules (line limits, number of poems, unpublished status, deadline).

- Letting someone else rewrite lines; the poem must be your own work.

Make it a game • Judge's Table. Each family member brings one poem (from this unit or a favorite public-domain poem with the author hidden). Everyone reads all poems aloud and ranks them on form, sound and picture, giving one sentence of praise and one of advice for each. Compare rankings and discuss what made the top poem stand out.

Scripture. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13, KJV)

McCrae wrote for friends who had laid down their lives; a form poem can hold such love steady in memory, as the refrain holds the field.

Practice: answers

1. Fifteen lines in three stanzas of five, four and six lines (counting the refrains).
2. From the first few words of its first line.
3. In *Punch*, a London magazine, on December 8, 1915.
4. Young women who are high school sophomores or juniors and U.S. citizens (check the current rules).
5. Forty lines; one poem (as of the 2026 rules).
6. A villanelle, because its refrains return as the lesson returned each year; or a rondeau if one short phrase is the heart of it.
7. Prosopopoeia: "We are the Dead. Short days ago / We lived ..."
8. Sample: "My father pointed to the field, covered in snow." Better: "My father pointed to the snow-covered field."

UNIT 5 REVIEW

Closed book except where a poem is printed. Answer in complete sentences unless a list is asked for. Writing tasks are scored on form, sense and sound, not on spelling alone. About 45 minutes.

1. (3 pts) Give the number of lines, the stanza pattern and the number of rhyme sounds in a villanelle.
2. (4 pts) Write out the rhyme scheme of a villanelle, marking the refrains.
3. (4 pts) Explain how one refrain in Robinson's "The House on the Hill" changes meaning as the poem goes on.
4. (4 pts) Name the two parts of a Petrarchan sonnet, the rhyme scheme of the first part, and the term for the shift between them.
5. (4 pts) In "London, 1802," what does the octave do and what does the sestet do?
6. (3 pts) Scan this line by marking the stressed syllables: "Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea."
7. (4 pts) How do the line lengths of "Easter Wings" show its meaning?
8. (2 pts) Which two Scriptures lie behind Herbert's "The Altar"?
9. (4 pts) Map the rondeau: give its line count, stanza lengths, rhyme scheme and the source of its refrain.
10. (2 pts) Fix the dangling modifier: "Standing in the rain, the bells rang out over the town."
11. (2 pts) Punctuate with a colon or semicolon and explain your choice: "England needed one thing a voice like Milton's."
12. (4 pts) Write one rhyming pair of villanelle refrains on a subject of your choice. Each must be an independent clause.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A FORM POEM

Add your finished contest poem from Lesson 5.4 to your Grade 10 portfolio, typed and titled, with a short note (three to five sentences) naming the form, explaining why it suits your subject, and listing the contest you entered or plan to enter. Include one earlier draft to show your revision.

- **Form:** Follows the chosen form exactly (lines, rhymes, refrains, turn or syllable plan), or breaks it deliberately for a reason explained in the note.
- **Fit of form and subject:** The form carries the meaning: refrains turn, the volta answers, the shape enacts, the refrain rings.
- **Sound and image:** Lines read naturally aloud with a steady beat; concrete pictures replace abstractions; no filler or twisted syntax.
- **Mechanics and manuscript:** Modifiers placed correctly; colons and semicolons used correctly; clean, titled manuscript that meets the contest's rules.

1. Nineteen lines; five tercets and a quatrain; two rhyme sounds.
2. A1 b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 A2.
3. Sample: "They are all gone away" begins as a plain report; after the question "Why is it then we stray / Around that sunken sill?" it becomes an answer showing that lingering is useless, and in the final quatrain, joined to "There is nothing more to say," it sounds final and grieving.
4. Octave (abbaabba) and sestet; the volta (turn).
5. The octave laments England's selfishness and lost "inward happiness" and calls on Milton to return; the sestet portrays Milton's virtues (a soul apart, a voice like the sea, cheerful godliness, humility).
6. thou HADST a VOICE whose SOUND was LIKE the SEA: five iambs (iambic pentameter).
7. Each stanza narrows (10 to 2 syllables) as man falls or the speaker is worn down by sin and sickness, to "Most poore" and "Most thinne," then widens again "With thee" as he rises with Christ: the shape traces the fall and the flight.
8. Exodus 20:25 (no tool on the altar stones) and Psalm 51:17 (a broken and contrite heart).
9. Fifteen lines; stanzas of five, four and six; aabba / aabR / aabbaR; the refrain is the opening words of line 1.
10. Sample: "Standing in the rain, I heard the bells ring out over the town."
11. "England needed one thing: a voice like Milton's." A colon follows a complete clause and introduces what it names or explains.
12. Sample: A1 "The river keeps the names we gave." A2 "It sings them softly, wave on wave."
Score: rhyme (1), both independent clauses (1), strong and repeatable (1), sense (1).

LITERARY ANALYSIS

For nine years you have learned to write by imitating great writers; now you learn to explain how they did it. You will read closely with John Ruskin as he unpacks two words of Milton (“Blind mouths”), build analytical paragraphs on the pattern of Samuel Johnson’s praise of Shakespeare as “the poet of nature,” learn to quote and cite honestly by correcting William Hazlitt’s loose quoting in his essay on Macbeth, and write a full literary essay and a 40-minute timed essay on a Shakespeare sonnet. Careful reading is a form of truthfulness: we listen to what an author actually said before we speak. The Bereans “searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11), and the year’s verse, “Righteousness exalteth a nation” (Proverbs 14:34), reminds us that a people who read honestly and speak truly are a stronger people.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Writes a multi-paragraph thesis essay with a clear claim and support (Units 1–3).
- Knows the sonnet form and basic poetic terms (meter, rhyme, image, metaphor) from Unit 5.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read a passage three times and annotate its diction, imagery, sound, syntax and structure.
- ☐ I can climb from observation to inference to an arguable claim.
- ☐ I can write an analytical paragraph with a claim, lead-in, evidence, analysis and link, using more commentary than quotation.
- ☐ I can quote poetry and drama exactly, with slashes, brackets, ellipses, line citations and a Works Cited entry.
- ☐ I can write a literary essay on a sonnet, both in revised form and in 40 minutes.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Shakespeare’s Sonnets (Project Gutenberg #1041)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1041>): All 154 sonnets; print the one you write on with wide margins for annotation.
- **John Ruskin, Sesame and Lilies (Project Gutenberg #1293)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1293>): The first lecture, “Of Kings’ Treasuries,” is a classic essay on how to read; the close reading of Lycidas is the 6.1 model.
- **Samuel Johnson, Preface to Shakespeare (Project Gutenberg #5429)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/5429>): The first fifteen paragraphs make an excellent read-aloud.
- **William Hazlitt, Characters of Shakespeare’s Plays (Project Gutenberg #5085)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/5085>): Short, lively essays on each play; the Macbeth chapter is the 6.3 model.

- **Folger Shakespeare (free online texts)**

(<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/>): Free, line-numbered modern editions of the plays and sonnets, useful for act-scene-line citations.

6.1 CLOSE READING: WHY THIS WORD AND NOT ANOTHER ★

OBJECTIVES

- Read a short passage three times (for sense, for pattern, for questions) and annotate diction, imagery, sound, syntax and structure.
- Follow John Ruskin’s close reading of Milton’s “Blind mouths” and name each move he makes.
- Turn three observations about a sonnet into inferences and one arguable claim.

Warm-up. Read this line from Shakespeare aloud twice: “Bare ruin’d choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.” Now change one word (try “empty” for “ruin’d,” or “trees” for “choirs”). Read your version aloud. In two sentences, say what was lost.

Video slot. Video coming. How to annotate a poem or close reading of a Shakespeare sonnet (a university library, a classical school, or the Folger Shakespeare Library). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

close reading

Slow, careful reading that asks how each word, image, sound and sentence shape the meaning of a passage, and why the author chose them.

annotation

Notes written in the margin or between the lines as you read: underlines, circled words, arrows between echoes, and short questions.

diction

An author’s choice of words. Close readers ask why this word was chosen over its near-synonyms.

connotation

The feelings and associations a word carries beyond its dictionary meaning (its denotation). “Ruin’d” and “empty” may denote the same thing, but they do not connote the same thing.

inference

A reasonable conclusion drawn from what you observe in the text. Observation: “The poet uses two one-syllable words.” Inference: “The bluntness makes the charge hit hard.”

CORE IDEAS

From writing to reading. For nine years you have learned to write by reading: you copied a model, imitated it, and then invented your own. This unit turns the method around. Literary analysis is the art of explaining *how* a great writer did what you have been trying to do.

When you can say why Shakespeare chose “ruin’d” instead of “empty,” you will choose your own words better. The ancient teachers knew this. Quintilian told the student of rhetoric to read the poets not once but over and over, taking the text apart line by line, the way a man chews his food before he swallows it.

Three readings. A close reader never stops at one reading. Read the passage first *for sense*: who is speaking, to whom, about what? Paraphrase it in a sentence. Read it a second time *for pattern*: what repeats? What contrasts? Where does the sentence or stanza turn? Read it a third time *for questions*: what is strange, surprising or hard? The strange places are where the treasure is buried. A word that seems odd is usually not a mistake; it is an invitation.

Five things to mark. Annotate with a pencil, not a highlighter, so you can write words and not just color. Mark (1) *diction*: circle any word that is unusual, old, or doing more than one job; (2) *imagery*: underline pictures that appeal to the senses, and note what they compare; (3) *sound*: bracket alliteration, rhyme and rhythm that speeds up or slows down; (4) *syntax*: note long or short sentences, questions, inverted order, and lists; (5) *structure*: draw a line where the passage turns. In the margin, ask short questions: “Why ‘choirs’?” “Why does it slow down here?”

Observation, inference, claim. An annotation is only the start. Climb the ladder in three steps. An *observation* points to something any careful reader could check: “Line 4 has six heavy stresses in a row.” An *inference* says what that does: “The line drags, as if the speaker is tired.” A *claim* pulls several inferences into one arguable sentence about the whole: “Shakespeare makes the reader feel old age in the body of the line before he names it.” Observations without inferences are a list. Inferences without observations are opinion. Analysis needs both.

Ruskin at work. In 1864 the art critic John Ruskin gave a lecture on reading, later printed in *Sesame and Lilies*. To show his audience how a good reader works, he read twenty-odd lines from Milton’s elegy *Lycidas* (1637), in which St. Peter rebukes false shepherds of the church. He stopped at two words, “Blind mouths!” A careless reader would call this a “broken metaphor.” Ruskin refuses. He asks what a *bishop* is (from the Greek for “overseer,” one who sees) and what a *pastor* is (Latin for “shepherd,” one who feeds). Then he shows that “blind” and “mouths” are the exact opposites of those two offices. Two short words carry the whole charge. Watch his moves in the model: he notices the strange phrase, refuses the easy dismissal, opens up each word, and connects the words to the meaning of the whole passage.

Readers of the Word. Christians have always been close readers, because God has spoken in words. The Bereans “searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). Our Lord answered the Sadducees from the tense of one verb: God said “I am,” not “I was,” the God of Abraham, so Abraham lives (Matthew 22:32). Paul built an argument on a singular noun, “seed” and not “seeds” (Galatians 3:16). If every word of Scripture is worth weighing, the words of good human writers are worth weighing too, though never with the

same authority. Careful reading is a form of honesty: you listen to what the author actually said before you say anything yourself.

The model. *John Ruskin, "Of Kings' Treasuries," in Sesame and Lilies (1865), Project Gutenberg #1293*

I pause again, for this is a strange expression; a broken metaphor, one might think, careless and unscholarly.

Not so: its very audacity and pithiness are intended to make us look close at the phrase and remember it. Those two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character, in the two great offices of the Church—those of bishop and pastor.

A "Bishop" means "a person who sees."

A "Pastor" means "a person who feeds."

The most unbishoply character a man can have is therefore to be Blind.

The most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed,—to be a Mouth.

Take the two reverses together, and you have "blind mouths." We may advisably follow out this idea a little. Nearly all the evils in the Church have arisen from bishops desiring *power* more than *light*. They want authority, not outlook. Whereas their real office is not to rule; though it may be vigorously to exhort and rebuke: it is the king's office to rule; the bishop's office is to *oversee* the flock; to number it, sheep by sheep; to be ready always to give full account of it

PICTURE STUDY



Old Woman Reading, Gerrit Dou, about 1631–1632 · Oil on panel · Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Gerrit Dou of Leiden was Rembrandt's first pupil, and he became famous for painting small things with astonishing care. Here an old woman bends over a large book of Scripture readings. Dou painted the page so finely that you can make out the lines of type and a small picture printed on it. The painting was once called "Rembrandt's Mother," though no one can be sure who sat for it. It is a picture of close reading: nothing in the room matters to her except the page.

Look closely

- Find the source of the light. What does it fall on most brightly?
- Look at her hand on the page. What is it doing, and what does that tell you about how she reads?
- Find three textures Dou took pains to paint (fur, paper, skin, cloth). Which is most convincing?

Talk about it

1. Make one observation, one inference and one claim about this painting, in three sentences.
2. Dou could have painted the page as a blur. Why do you think he painted the type and picture so carefully?

WRITING PROJECT: A CLOSE-READING ANNOTATION AND PARAGRAPH OF NOTES

You will annotate Shakespeare's Sonnet 73 (the model in Lesson 6.4) or Sonnet 146 using the three readings and five marks, then climb from observation to claim.

This annotation becomes raw material for your analytical paragraph in 6.2 and your essay in 6.4, so keep it.

You will need

- Writing notebook and pencil
- A printed copy of Sonnet 73 or 146 with wide margins (Project Gutenberg #1041)
- A good dictionary (an older one, such as Webster's 1913, is useful for old words)

Steps

1. First reading, for sense: write a one-sentence paraphrase of the whole sonnet at the top of the page.
2. Second reading, for pattern: draw lines between the quatrains and the couplet; box words and images that repeat; label the rhyme scheme.
3. Third reading, for questions: write at least five margin questions beginning "Why ...?"
4. Mark the five things: diction, imagery, sound, syntax, structure. Look up at least two words in the dictionary and note their older meanings.
5. On a fresh page, make a three-column chart headed Observation / Inference / So what. Fill in at least five rows.
6. From your chart, write one arguable claim about the whole poem in a single sentence.

Check your work

- I read three times and my paraphrase is accurate.
- Every inference in my chart rests on an observation I can point to in a numbered line.
- My claim is arguable: a thoughtful reader could disagree with it.
- I used an appositive or participial phrase correctly in my claim (see the Style Clinic).
- My claim is one complete sentence, not a fragment or a run-on.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the second paragraph of the Ruskin model by hand. Then, in the margin, label his four moves: notice, refuse, unpack, connect.
2. Imitate Ruskin: choose a two-word phrase from Scripture or a poem you know (for example, "living water" or "still small voice") and write a short paragraph explaining what each word contributes.
3. List ten words that have a near-synonym with a different connotation (thrifty / stingy, firm / stubborn). Use one pair in a sentence about a character.

History note. Ruskin gave “Of Kings’ Treasuries” as a lecture in Manchester in December 1864 and published it with a second lecture, “Of Queens’ Gardens,” as *Sesame and Lilies* in 1865. The book sold widely for decades and was often given as a school prize. Milton wrote *Lycidas* in 1637 as an elegy for Edward King, a young Cambridge friend who drowned in the Irish Sea; Ruskin’s lines come from the speech of St. Peter, who mourns that a good young minister has died while greedy ones live on.

 **Style Clinic. Phrases that identify (Grammar Level 3, phrases).** An analytical sentence often needs to name a work, an author and a detail all at once. Use an *appositive* to rename a noun, set off with commas: “Ruskin, a Victorian critic, reads two words of *Lycidas*.” Use a *participial phrase* to show action, and keep it next to the noun it modifies: “Refusing the easy answer, Ruskin opens each word.” Watch for dangles: “Reading the line slowly, the metaphor becomes clear” says the metaphor is reading. Fix: “Reading the line slowly, we see the metaphor clearly.”

For families. This unit’s four lessons build one skill: reading a short text closely and writing about it with evidence, the core of college literature courses and of the reading sections on the SAT, ACT and CLT. Ruskin’s passage criticizes ambitious clergy of his own and Milton’s day; it is a rebuke drawn from Scripture itself (compare John 21:15–17, “Feed my sheep,” and 1 Peter 5:2–3, which Ruskin echoes just before this passage: “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock”). You might discuss with your student how Ruskin’s two duties, to see and to feed, apply to anyone who leads, including parents. The year’s faith verse, “Righteousness exalteth a nation” (Proverbs 14:34), reminds us that the health of a people depends on faithful shepherds in church, home and state.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student annotated line 4 of Sonnet 73, “Bare ruin’d choirs, where late the sweet birds sang,” with the note “sad.” Take it up the ladder to a claim.

1. Observation: “choirs” is a church word. The bare branches of an autumn tree are compared to the stripped choir stalls of a ruined church, where singers once stood.
2. Observation: “late” means “lately,” so the singing is recent; “sweet birds” are both real birds and, by the metaphor, choristers.
3. Inference: The image joins nature and worship; losing youth is like losing a place of praise, not just a season.
4. So what: The speaker’s aging is given dignity and grief at once; it is a holy place in ruins, not just a bare tree.

Answer: Claim: In line 4 Shakespeare turns autumn branches into the ruined choir of a church, so that the speaker’s fading youth feels less like the passing of a season than the silencing of a place of song.

Example 2. Name Ruskin's four moves in the model and give the sentence where each happens.

1. Notice: "I pause again, for this is a strange expression."
2. Refuse the easy answer: "a broken metaphor, one might think, careless and unscholarly. Not so."
3. Unpack each word: "A 'Bishop' means 'a person who sees.' A 'Pastor' means 'a person who feeds.'"
4. Connect to the whole: "Take the two reverses together, and you have 'blind mouths,'" followed by the bishop's true office, to oversee the flock.

Answer: Notice, refuse, unpack, connect. Use the same four moves on any hard phrase you meet.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three readings of a close reader and what each is for.
2. **EASY** List the five things to mark when you annotate.
3. **EASY** Label each as observation, inference or claim: (a) "Line 14 rhymes 'strong' with 'long.'" (b) "The rhyme ties the strength of love to the shortness of time." (c) "Sonnet 73 argues that mortality is what makes love strong."
4. **MEDIUM** According to Ruskin, why are "blind" and "mouths" exactly the right words for false clergy?
5. **MEDIUM** Give the denotation and two connotations of "mansion" in Sonnet 146: "Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?"
6. **MEDIUM** Sonnet 146, lines 7-8: "Shall worms, inheritors of this excess, / Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?" Make one observation about syntax and one inference.
7. **CHALLENGE** In Galatians 3:16 Paul argues from the difference between "seed" and "seeds." Explain how this is close reading.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed practice (15 minutes, as on a test's reading section): annotate Sonnet 146, lines 1-4, and write one arguable claim about them.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Highlighting whole lines without writing a word in the margin. Annotation means notes, not color.
- Jumping from a feeling ("this is sad") to a claim without pointing to the words that create the feeling.
- Treating a strange word as a mistake instead of asking why the author chose it.
- Reading meanings into a poem that the words cannot support. Every inference must rest on something you can quote.

Make it a game · Synonym Swap. One player reads a line of poetry aloud with one word replaced by a near-synonym (for example, “When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do dangle”). The others must find the swapped word, restore the original, and give one reason the original is better. A point for finding it, a point for the best reason.

Scripture. “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” (Acts 17:11, KJV)

The Bereans are the pattern of the close reader: eager to hear, careful to check every claim against the words of the text.

Practice: answers

1. First for sense (who, what, paraphrase), second for pattern (repetition, contrast, turns), third for questions (what is strange or hard).
2. Diction, imagery, sound, syntax, structure.
3. (a) observation; (b) inference; (c) claim.
4. A bishop is one who sees (oversees) and a pastor is one who feeds; “blind” is the opposite of seeing and “mouth” (wanting to be fed instead of feeding) is the opposite of feeding.
5. Denotation: a large house; here, the body that houses the soul. Connotations: wealth and show (the soul spends lavishly on it), and impermanence, since it is “fading” and only leased; a Bible reader may also hear John 14:2, “In my Father’s house are many mansions,” the lasting house set against the fading one.
6. Sample: Observation: the lines are two questions, and the first runs over the line break. Inference: the questions press the soul to answer, and the run-on makes “Eat up” land hard at the start of line 8, as sudden as the worms.
7. Paul builds his argument on the number of a single noun: the promise was to Abraham’s “seed” (singular), meaning one person, Christ, not many. He assumes every word, even its grammatical form, was chosen and means something, which is the first principle of close reading.
8. Sample: By calling the body “rebel powers” that the soul nonetheless decorates “so costly gay,” Shakespeare shows a soul that feeds its own enemy while it starves within.

6.2 THE ANALYTICAL PARAGRAPH

OBJECTIVES

- Build an analytical paragraph with a claim, a lead-in, evidence, analysis and a link back to the claim.
- Tell analysis (how and why) from summary (what happens), and keep commentary at least twice as long as quotation.
- Study the arrangement of Samuel Johnson’s paragraph on Shakespeare as “the poet of nature” and write a paragraph of your own on a sonnet.

Warm-up. Here are two sentences about Sonnet 73. (a) “In the third quatrain the speaker compares himself to a fire.” (b) “By comparing himself to a fire choked by its own ashes, the speaker suggests that the very years which fed his life are now smothering it.” Which one could you argue with? Which one only reports? Write one sentence explaining the difference.

Video slot. Video coming. How to write a literary analysis paragraph (claim, evidence, commentary) from a university writing center or classical school. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

claim

The topic sentence of an analytical paragraph: an arguable statement about how or why a text works, not a fact about what happens in it.

evidence

Words from the text, quoted or closely paraphrased, that support the claim.

analysis (commentary)

Your explanation of how the evidence proves the claim: what the words mean, what they suggest, and why the author chose them.

summary

A retelling of what a text says or what happens in it. Summary is useful in small amounts for context but is not analysis.

enthymeme

Aristotle’s name for a rhetorical argument that gives a claim and a reason (“because ...”), leaving one step for the hearer to supply. Every good analytical paragraph is built on one.

CORE IDEAS

A little confirmation. You already know how to prove a point. In the confirmation exercise you took a claim and supported it head by head; in the thesis you argued a general question. An analytical paragraph is a small confirmation about a text. It states a claim about how a

passage works, proves it with the passage's own words, and explains why those words prove it. Aristotle called this kind of argument an *enthymeme*: a claim with its reason.

"Shakespeare makes old age feel holy, *because* he compares bare branches to a ruined church choir." If you can write that sentence, you can write the paragraph.

Five parts. A strong analytical paragraph usually has five parts. (1) The *claim*: an arguable topic sentence. (2) The *lead-in*: one sentence of context so the reader knows where the evidence comes from ("In the third quatrain, the speaker turns from the day to a fire"). (3) The *evidence*: a short quotation, woven into your sentence. (4) The *analysis*: two or three sentences that explain how the words prove the claim. Here you use your close reading: diction, imagery, sound, syntax, structure. (5) The *link*: a closing sentence that ties the evidence back to the claim and, if you are writing an essay, toward the next paragraph. In a long paragraph, parts 2–4 may repeat with a second piece of evidence.

Analysis, not summary. The most common weakness in student essays is summary dressed up as analysis. Summary tells what: "The speaker says he is like a fire going out." Analysis tells how and why: "The fire is 'Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by,' so the very fuel that once made it blaze now smothers it, just as the years that built the speaker's life are now ending it." A good test is to ask of every sentence, "Could someone who has not read the poem have written this?" If yes, it is probably summary. A second test is the two-to-one rule: write at least two sentences of your own commentary for every one sentence of quotation.

Johnson's paragraph. In 1765 Samuel Johnson published his edition of Shakespeare with a long Preface that is still one of the great pieces of English criticism. The model paragraph shows how a master arranges an analytical paragraph. It opens with a bold claim: Shakespeare is "the poet of nature," who holds up "a faithful mirrour of manners and of life." Next it explains by *negation*, saying what his characters are not (shaped by local customs, odd professions or passing fashions), and then what they are: "the genuine progeny of common humanity." Then comes a sharp *antithesis* that sums up the whole argument: in other poets "a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species." Last, Johnson draws the *consequence*: this is why Shakespeare's plays are full of "practical axioms and domestick wisdom."

What Johnson leaves out, and you must not. Johnson was writing a preface to eight volumes that his readers had in their hands, so in this paragraph he argues from the whole of Shakespeare and quotes nothing. You are writing about a short text, and your reader needs proof. Keep Johnson's arrangement (claim, explanation, contrast, consequence) but put a quotation where he puts a general statement. Notice also his sentence variety: a long, balanced sentence of three "by" phrases, then a short, pointed antithesis. Analysis reads best when long sentences that explain are broken by short sentences that strike.

Claims worth arguing. A weak claim is a fact: "Sonnet 73 has three quatrains." A vague claim is a feeling: "Sonnet 73 is very sad." A strong claim is specific, arguable and about *how*: "In Sonnet 73 the units of time shrink from a year to a day to the last hour of a fire, so that the poem itself seems to run out of time." A good claim usually names a technique and

an effect. Test it by asking whether a thoughtful reader could disagree. If no one could, it is a fact; if no one could prove it, it is a guess.

The model. *Samuel Johnson, "Preface to Shakespeare" (1765), Project Gutenberg #5429*

Shakespeare is above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world; by the peculiarities of studies or professions, which can operate but upon small numbers; or by the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions: they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole system of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species. It is from this wide extension of design that so much instruction is derived. It is this which fills the plays of Shakespeare with practical axioms and domestick wisdom.

PICTURE STUDY



The Philosopher Reading (Portrait of the Painter Joseph Aved), Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, 1734 · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Chardin painted his friend, the portrait painter Joseph Aved, dressed in an old-fashioned fur hat and coat, deep in a large book. The French title calls him simply “the philosopher reading.” Chardin is known for quiet pictures in which a single person is absorbed in one task, and for the patient, layered way he laid on his paint. Nothing happens in this picture except thinking, yet it holds the eye.

Look closely

- Where is the man looking, and where are his hands? What do they suggest about how he reads?
- Find the brightest area of the painting. How does Chardin lead your eye to it?
- Look at the textures of fur, cloth and paper. Which are painted sharply and which softly?

Talk about it

1. Write an analytical paragraph about this painting with a claim, two pieces of visual evidence, and analysis of each.
2. Johnson says Shakespeare's characters are "a species," not just individuals. Is Chardin's philosopher an individual or a type? Argue your answer.

WRITING PROJECT: ONE ANALYTICAL PARAGRAPH ON A SONNET

Using your annotations from 6.1, write one analytical paragraph of 175–250 words on Sonnet 73 or Sonnet 146.

Then revise it using the two-to-one rule and the summary test.

You will need

- Your annotated sonnet and Observation / Inference chart from 6.1
- Writing notebook or computer
- Two colored pencils for the revision step

Steps

1. Choose your strongest row from the 6.1 chart and turn it into a claim that names a technique and an effect.
2. Choose one or two short quotations (a phrase to a line each) that best prove the claim.
3. Draft the paragraph in five parts: claim, lead-in, evidence, analysis, link.
4. With one color, underline every sentence of quotation; with the other, underline every sentence of your own commentary. Aim for at least two commentary sentences for every quotation sentence.
5. Put a check beside any sentence that someone who had not read the poem could have written. Cut or rewrite it.
6. Read the paragraph aloud and vary at least one sentence: break a long one or join two short ones with a subordinate clause.

Check your work

- My first sentence is an arguable claim about how the poem works, not a fact or a feeling.
- Each quotation is introduced, quoted exactly, and followed by analysis.

- I have at least two sentences of commentary for every sentence of quotation.
- I used at least two subordinate clauses (because, although, since, so that) correctly, with no fragments.
- My last sentence links the evidence back to the claim.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Johnson's paragraph. Label its parts in the margin: claim, explanation by negation, positive statement, antithesis, consequence.
2. Imitate Johnson's antithesis: write three sentences in the pattern "In other ___, a ___ is too often ___; in ___, it is commonly ___." (Sample: In other hymns a sorrow is too often private; in the Psalms it is commonly shared.)
3. Rewrite this summary sentence as an analytical claim: "In Sonnet 146 the speaker talks to his soul."

History note. Johnson's *Plays of William Shakespeare* appeared in eight volumes in 1765, nine years after he issued his proposals for it and ten years after his *Dictionary*. His notes cleared up hundreds of obscure words, and his Preface defended Shakespeare against critics who complained that he broke the classical rules. The spellings "mirrour" and "domestick" are Johnson's own; copy them as he wrote them.

 **Style Clinic. Subordinate clauses for reasoning (Grammar Level 3, clauses and sentence structures).** Analysis lives in words that show relations: *because, since, although, so that, while, whereas*. Put the less important idea in the dependent clause and the main point in the independent one: "Although the fire still glows, it lies on the ashes that will put it out." Two cautions. A dependent clause alone is a fragment: "Because the fire is dying." And "which" should point to a noun, not to a whole idea: not "The poem ends in a couplet, which shows his love," but "The closing couplet shows his love."

For families. The five-part paragraph taught here goes by many names in schools (claim-evidence-commentary, TEA, PEEL); the names matter less than the habit of proving every claim with the text and explaining the proof. Johnson's Preface is long, but the first fifteen paragraphs make an excellent read-aloud for a parent and a high schooler. Johnson was a devout Anglican whose prayers and meditations were published after his death; his conviction that literature should teach "domestick wisdom" fits the classical Christian view that good books form good character.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this weak paragraph: “Sonnet 73 is about getting old. In the first quatrain he talks about autumn. ‘When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang.’ This shows he is old. In the second quatrain he talks about night. Shakespeare uses a lot of imagery in this poem.”

1. Diagnose: the first sentence is a fact, not a claim; the quotation is dropped in with no lead-in; “This shows he is old” is the only analysis; the rest is summary.
2. Find a claim in the quoted line: the leaves are listed as “yellow ... or none, or few,” and the speaker seems to correct himself as he goes.
3. Explain how the words prove it: the list moves backward toward nothing, and the hesitation sounds like a man unwilling to admit how far gone he is.
4. Link back to the claim.

Answer: In the first quatrain of Sonnet 73, Shakespeare lets the speaker’s grammar admit what the speaker himself would rather not. He describes the autumn of his life as the season “When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang.” The line begins with color, as if the tree were still clothed, but then corrects itself twice: “or none, or few.” The order is strange, since “none” should come after “few,” and the stumble sounds like a man trying to soften a hard truth and failing. The very syntax of the line, halting and self-correcting, shows an old man unwilling to say plainly how bare he has become.

Example 2. Turn these three into strong claims: (a) “Sonnet 146 has a lot of questions.” (b) “The couplet of Sonnet 146 is about death.” (c) “Johnson liked Shakespeare.”

1. Ask of each: what technique, and what effect?
2. Make each arguable and specific.

Answer: (a) The four questions in Sonnet 146’s octave turn the poem into a cross-examination, in which the soul is put on trial for wasting its wealth on a body it only rents. (b) In the couplet of Sonnet 146, the repeated word “Death” is defeated by its own grammar, as the one who “feeds on men” becomes food and then is “dead.” (c) Johnson praises Shakespeare not for his inventiveness but for his truth, arguing that his characters last because they are “a species,” not mere individuals.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five parts of an analytical paragraph in order.
2. **EASY** Summary or analysis? “Johnson says Shakespeare’s characters are like real people.”
3. **EASY** State the two-to-one rule.
4. **MEDIUM** Find Johnson’s antithesis and explain what it contrasts.

5. **MEDIUM** Johnson lists three things that do not shape Shakespeare's characters. Name them.
6. **MEDIUM** Write an enthymeme (claim + because) about Sonnet 73, line 8: "Death's second self, that seals up all in rest."
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a five-part analytical paragraph (125–175 words) on the Dou or Chardin painting from this unit.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed practice (25 minutes, like the planning and first body paragraph of a 40-minute ACT-style essay): Write a claim about Johnson's model paragraph and one fully developed body paragraph supporting it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Opening with a fact ("Sonnet 73 was written by Shakespeare") instead of an arguable claim.
- Dropping a quotation into the paragraph with no lead-in and no analysis after it.
- Ending the paragraph on the quotation, so the reader never hears what it proves.
- Writing "This shows ..." and then repeating the quotation in other words instead of explaining it.

Make it a game • Claim Court. One player reads a sentence about a poem. The others vote: Fact, Feeling or Claim. If it is a claim, the player must defend it with a quotation in thirty seconds. If it is a fact or feeling, the next player must turn it into a claim. Score a point for each successful defense or rescue.

Scripture. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" (1 Peter 3:15, KJV)

An analytical paragraph gives a reason for what you claim; Peter asks Christians to be ready to do the same for their hope, with meekness.

Practice: answers

1. Claim, lead-in, evidence, analysis, link.
2. Summary. It reports what Johnson says without explaining how or why.
3. Write at least two sentences of your own commentary for every sentence of quotation.
4. "In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species." It contrasts a character who is only one odd person with one who stands for a whole kind of human being.
5. The customs of particular places, the peculiarities of studies or professions, and the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions.
6. Sample: Shakespeare makes death seem gentle and terrible at once, because he calls night "Death's second self," a twin that "seals up all in rest" as a man seals a letter or a tomb.
7. Sample: Chardin makes thinking visible by quieting everything except the man's attention. The painter Aved sits wrapped in a heavy fur coat and hat, but Chardin paints these softly, almost in shadow. The brightest places are his face and the pages of the book, and his hand

rests on the page as if holding his place in an argument. Because the light and the hand meet at the book, the eye travels where the mind of the sitter is already going. The fur, which might have made a portrait of wealth, becomes only a frame. Chardin has painted not a rich man with a book but a reader, and the stillness of the picture is the stillness of a mind at work.

8. Sample claim: Johnson persuades less by giving examples than by the balance of his sentences, which make his judgment sound as steady as the “stability of truth” he praises. The paragraph should quote at least one balanced sentence (the antithesis or the three “by” phrases), explain how the balance works, and link back.

6.3 QUOTING AND CITING HONESTLY

OBJECTIVES

- Bring quotations into your sentences in three ways (signal phrase, woven phrase, colon) and set off long quotations as block quotations.
- Quote poetry and drama correctly with slashes, brackets, ellipses and MLA-style parenthetical citations and a Works Cited entry.
- Judge William Hazlitt's quoting in his essay on Macbeth by today's standards and correct it.

Warm-up. A friend writes, "Shakespeare says love is 'an ever-fixed mark.'" Another writes, "Shakespeare says love 'alters when it alteration finds.'" Look up lines 2–5 of Sonnet 116. Which friend quoted accurately but misrepresented the poem? Write two sentences on how a true quotation can tell a lie.

Video slot. Video coming. MLA format for quoting poetry and Shakespeare (in-text citations, line numbers, block quotations) from a university writing center or the MLA Style Center. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

signal phrase

Words that introduce a quotation and name its source: "As Hazlitt observes, ..." or "Johnson calls Shakespeare ..."

integrated (woven) quotation

A short quoted phrase that fits grammatically into your own sentence, so the sentence reads smoothly with or without the quotation marks.

block quotation

A long quotation (in MLA style, more than three lines of poetry or more than four lines of prose) set off on new lines, indented, without quotation marks, with the citation after the final punctuation.

brackets and ellipsis

Brackets [] mark a word you changed or added inside a quotation; an ellipsis (...) marks words you left out. Neither may change the author's meaning.

plagiarism

Presenting another person's words or ideas as your own, whether by copying without quotation marks or by using an idea without credit. It is a form of lying.

CORE IDEAS

Quoting is testimony. In the old exercises you learned the head called *testimony*: calling a witness to support your point. Every quotation in a literary essay is a witness, and the rules for witnesses are strict. A witness must be named. His words must be reported exactly. And he must not be made to say what he did not mean. Proverbs warns, “Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (30:6). The craft of quoting and citing is the craft of being truthful in public, which is why Paul’s command fits it so well: “putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour” (Ephesians 4:25).

Three ways in. Never drop a quotation into your paragraph alone, as if it could speak for itself. Bring it in one of three ways. (1) With a *signal phrase* and a comma: As Johnson puts it, “In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual.” (2) *Woven* into your own grammar, with no comma: Johnson praises the “faithful mirrour of manners and of life” that Shakespeare holds up. (3) After a complete sentence and a *colon*: Johnson ends with a consequence: Shakespeare’s plays are full of “practical axioms and domestick wisdom.” Woven quotations are usually best in analysis, because they let you quote only the words you will discuss. Quote a phrase, not a paragraph, unless you mean to analyze the whole thing.

Poetry and drama. When you quote two or three lines of poetry in your sentence, mark each line break with a slash and a space on each side: “Bare ruin’d choirs, where late the sweet birds sang. / In me thou see’st the twilight of such day” (lines 4–5). Mark a stanza break with a double slash (//). Cite poems by line number: write “line” or “lines” the first time, then numbers only. Cite plays by act, scene and line: (*Macbeth* 1.5.17). Because line numbers differ slightly from one edition to another, your Works Cited must name the edition you used. More than three lines of poetry go in a block quotation, set off on new lines with the original line breaks kept.

Changing a quotation. Sometimes a quotation must be adjusted to fit your sentence. Use square brackets for any word you change or add. Lady Macbeth, having just read her husband’s letter, says to the absent Macbeth, “Yet do I fear thy nature.” In your sentence you may write: Lady Macbeth admits, “Yet do I fear [his] nature.” Or you may avoid the change by weaving: she fears that his nature is “too full o’ th’ milk of human kindness.” Use an ellipsis (...) for words you leave out from the middle. You need no ellipsis at the start or end of a short woven phrase, since the reader can see it is a fragment. The test of every change is honesty: if the author read your sentence, would he say, “Yes, that is what I meant”?

Hazlitt at work. William Hazlitt’s *Characters of Shakespear’s Plays* (1817) is one of the liveliest books ever written about Shakespeare. In the model, Hazlitt contrasts two murderous kings, Macbeth and Richard III, by a run of balanced sentences, and he weaves Shakespeare’s own words into his argument: Macbeth is full of “the milk of human kindness,” while Richard “is ‘himself alone.’” Read it once for his comparison and once for his quoting. Hazlitt was writing for readers who knew the plays nearly by heart, so he quoted loosely and from memory and gave no citations. “Fate and metaphysical aid” is a phrase from Lady Macbeth’s speech in *Macbeth* 1.5, yet Hazlitt does not mark it as a quotation at all. And “himself alone” adapts Richard’s own boast in *Henry VI, Part 3*, “I am myself alone,”

changing the pronoun without brackets. Hazlitt was not dishonest by the customs of his day, but by today's standard a student who wrote this way would be faulted.

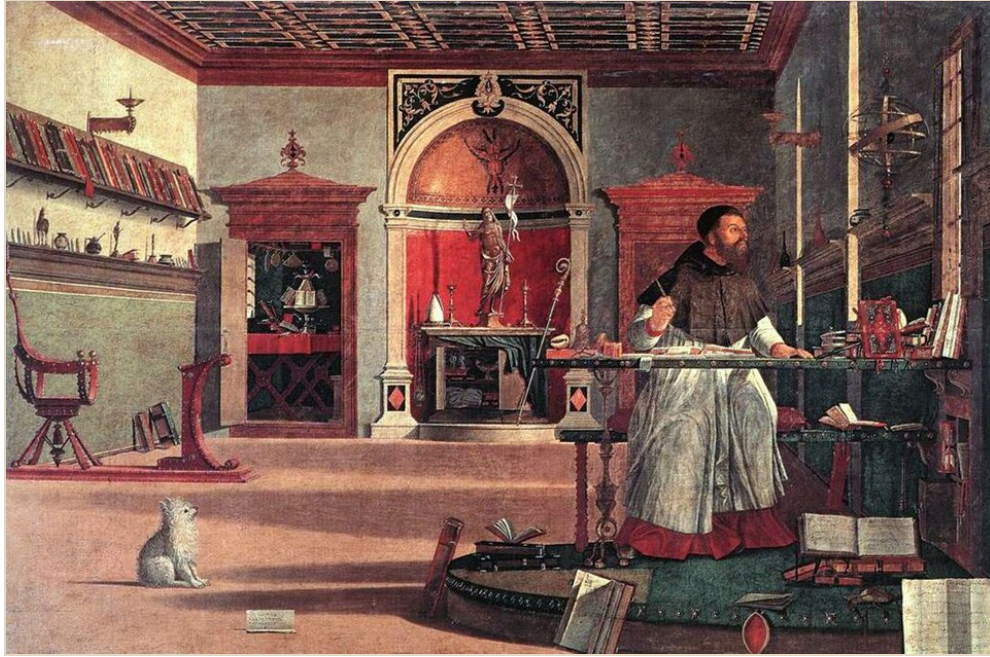
Citing your sources. Modern literary essays in American schools usually follow MLA style (the *MLA Handbook*, 9th edition, 2021). In the text you give a short citation in parentheses, and the period comes after it: Shakespeare calls night "Death's second self" (line 8). At the end you list every work you quoted in a Works Cited page, alphabetized by author:

Shakespeare, William. *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. Project Gutenberg, www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1041. You must also cite *ideas* you borrow, even when you put them in your own words. If a note in your edition told you that "choirs" means the part of a church where the choir sits, say so. Giving credit costs you nothing and keeps your word good.

The model. William Hazlitt, *Characters of Shakespear's Plays* (1817), "Macbeth," Project Gutenberg #5085

For both are tyrants, usurpers, murderers, both aspiring and ambitious, both courageous, cruel, treacherous. But Richard is cruel from nature and constitution. Macbeth becomes so from accidental circumstances. Richard is from his birth deformed in body and mind, and naturally incapable of good. Macbeth is full of 'the milk of human kindness, is frank, sociable, generous. He is tempted to the commission of guilt by golden opportunities, by the instigations of his wife, and by prophetic warnings. Fate and metaphysical aid conspire against his virtue and his loyalty. Richard, on the contrary, needs no prompter, but wades through a series of crimes to the height of his ambition from the ungovernable violence of his temper and a reckless love of mischief. He is never gay but in the prospect or in the success of his villanies; Macbeth is full of horror at the thoughts of the murder of Duncan, which he is with difficulty prevailed on to commit, and of remorse after its perpetration. Richard has no mixture of common humanity in his composition, no regard to kindred or posterity, he owns no fellowship with others, he is 'himself alone

PICTURE STUDY



The Vision of Saint Augustine, Vittore Carpaccio, about 1502 · Tempera and oil on canvas · Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Carpaccio painted this scene for a brotherhood of Dalmatian sailors and merchants in Venice. It shows St. Augustine of Hippo in a Renaissance study. According to a legend popular at the time, Augustine was writing a letter to St. Jerome, asking his advice, when a light filled the room and Jerome's voice told him that Jerome had just died and entered heaven. Augustine stops with his pen in the air. The room is full of the tools of a scholar: books, open music, an astronomical sphere, a shelf of objects. It is a picture of one writer answering another.

Look closely

- Find Augustine's pen. What has just happened to his writing?
- Find the small white dog. Where is it looking, and why do you think Carpaccio put it there?
- Find at least three kinds of books or papers in the room. What do they suggest about how a scholar works?

Talk about it

1. Augustine was writing to Jerome to ask his judgment. Write a paragraph on why good writers seek out and credit other good writers rather than hiding what they borrowed.
2. Describe the painting in a paragraph that weaves in one short quotation from the Hazlitt model, used honestly and in context.

WRITING PROJECT: THE QUOTATION CLINIC

You will practice every way of quoting on Sonnet 73 or 146, correct Hazlitt's quoting by modern rules, and then revise your 6.2 paragraph with correct citations and a Works Cited entry.

You will need

- Your 6.2 analytical paragraph
- Sonnet 73 or 146 (Project Gutenberg #1041) and a free modern edition of *Macbeth* with line numbers (for example, the Folger Shakespeare online)
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Write three sentences about your sonnet, each bringing in a quotation a different way: signal phrase, woven phrase, colon.
2. Write one sentence that quotes two lines with a slash and a line citation, and one block quotation of four lines with the citation after the final punctuation.
3. Write one sentence that uses brackets to change a pronoun and one that uses an ellipsis, then check that neither changes the meaning.
4. Rewrite two sentences of the Hazlitt model by modern rules: mark "metaphysical aid" as a quotation, bracket the change in "himself alone," and add act-scene-line citations from your edition.
5. Revise your 6.2 paragraph: check every quotation word for word against the text, add parenthetical citations, and write a Works Cited entry for the edition you used.

Check your work

- Every quotation is copied exactly, word for word and mark for mark.
- No quotation stands alone as its own sentence without a lead-in.
- Commas and periods go inside closing quotation marks, except that a parenthetical citation comes before the period.
- Line breaks in poetry are marked with a slash; changes are in brackets; omissions are marked with an ellipsis.
- Every woven quotation fits the grammar of my sentence.
- My Works Cited entry names the edition I actually used.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Hazlitt model. Circle each word or phrase that comes from Shakespeare, whether or not Hazlitt marked it.
2. Imitate Hazlitt's balanced comparison: write five sentences contrasting two characters from a book you know, in the pattern "But A is _____. B becomes so from _____."
3. Copy Proverbs 30:6 and Ephesians 4:25 at the top of your Works Cited page as a reminder.

History note. Hazlitt (1778–1830) was an essayist and lecturer; *Characters of Shakespear's Plays* appeared in 1817 and went into a second edition the next year. He spelled the poet's name "Shakespear," as many did then. Systems for citing sources grew up slowly: the Modern Language Association published its first style sheet in 1951, and the current *MLA Handbook* (9th edition) appeared in 2021. Hazlitt's readers expected a critic to quote from memory; your readers expect you to check.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuating quotations (Grammar Level 3, punctuation mastery).** In American usage, commas and periods go *inside* closing quotation marks: Johnson calls him "the poet of nature." Colons and semicolons go *outside*: Hazlitt calls Richard "himself alone"; Macbeth he finds full of kindness. Question marks and exclamation points go inside only if they belong to the quotation. When a parenthetical citation follows, the period moves after it: "Death's second self" (line 8). Use single quotation marks only for a quotation inside a quotation. Hazlitt's single marks and his comma outside the quotation ("kindness',"") are British habits; copy them in the model, but do not use them in your own essay.

For families. Many students first meet plagiarism rules in college and are punished for habits nobody corrected at home. This lesson treats honest citation as a moral matter (Proverbs 30:6; Ephesians 4:25), not just a format. Hazlitt's passage discusses two murderers from Shakespeare's history plays and tragedies but contains no violent detail. If your student uses AI tools or online summaries, the same rule applies: any borrowed idea or wording must be credited, and the student should always check quotations against the actual text.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Correct this student sentence: Shakespeare says that the fire is, "consumed with that which it was nourished by". (Line 12)

1. Copy exactly: the text reads "Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by." Keep Shakespeare's spellings.
2. A woven quotation that fits the grammar takes no comma before it.
3. The citation goes inside the sentence, before the period, in lowercase "line."
4. Stronger verb: "says" is vague; "describes" fits.

Answer: Shakespeare describes a fire "Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by" (line 12).

Example 2. Rewrite Hazlitt's sentence "Richard has no mixture of common humanity in his composition, ... he is 'himself alone'" by modern MLA rules, using a play edition with Richard's line "I am myself alone" at *3 Henry VI* 5.6.83.

1. Use double quotation marks (American style).
2. Bracket the changed word, since Shakespeare wrote "myself," not "himself."
3. Add a citation for the play, act, scene and line, with the period after it.
4. Check: line numbers vary by edition; use the number in the edition you list in Works Cited.

Answer: Richard has no mixture of common humanity in his composition; he is, as he boasts, "[him]self alone" (*3 Henry VI* 5.6.83).

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three ways to bring a quotation into a sentence.
2. **EASY** How do you show a line break when quoting two lines of poetry in your sentence? A stanza break?
3. **EASY** When does a quotation become a block quotation in MLA style?
4. **MEDIUM** Fix the punctuation: Johnson calls Shakespeare "the poet of nature", and Hazlitt agrees.
5. **MEDIUM** What two phrases in the Hazlitt model come from Shakespeare, though Hazlitt marks only one of them or alters it?
6. **MEDIUM** Weave this line into a sentence of your own: "Death's second self, that seals up all in rest" (Sonnet 73, line 8).
7. **CHALLENGE** Is this an honest use of an ellipsis? Original (Sonnet 146, lines 13-14): "So shall thou feed on Death, that feeds on men, / And Death once dead, there's no more dying then." Student: Shakespeare says "Death ... feeds on men" and so "there's no more dying."
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a correct MLA Works Cited entry for Johnson's Preface as read on Project Gutenberg, and an in-text sentence quoting it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Quoting from memory and getting a word wrong. Always check the quotation against the text.
- Putting a comma before every quotation, even woven ones that are part of your own clause.
- Placing the period before the parenthetical citation: "...sang." (line 4) instead of "...sang" (line 4).
- Using a quotation that is accurate word for word but misrepresents the author, as when a line a poet rejects is quoted as his view.

Make it a game · Spot the Forgery. One player copies four quotations from this unit on cards, secretly changing one word or mark in two of them. The other player checks each card against the texts and names the forgeries. Swap roles. A point for each forgery found, and a bonus for explaining how the change alters the meaning.

Scripture. “Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” (Proverbs 30:6, KJV)

Agur speaks of God’s words, which are pure; the same honesty governs how we report the words of men: exactly, and in their true sense.

Practice: answers

1. With a signal phrase and comma; woven into your own grammar; after a complete sentence and a colon.
2. A slash with a space on each side (/); a double slash (//) for a stanza break.
3. When it is more than three lines of poetry or more than four lines of prose.
4. Johnson calls Shakespeare “the poet of nature,” and Hazlitt agrees.
5. “Fate and metaphysical aid” (from Lady Macbeth’s speech in *Macbeth* 1.5), which Hazlitt does not mark at all; and “himself alone,” adapted from Richard’s “I am myself alone” (3 *Henry VI*), which he marks but changes without brackets.
6. Sample: The speaker calls night “Death’s second self” (line 8), a twin that rehearses the final sleep every evening.
7. Not quite. The ellipsis keeps true words, but leaving out “once dead” and “then” hides that the poem is describing the defeat of Death; the student makes it sound as if Death’s feeding causes there to be no more dying. The sentence should quote “And Death once dead, there’s no more dying then” (line 14).
8. Sample entry: Johnson, Samuel. *Preface to Shakespeare*. Project Gutenberg, www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/5429. Sentence: Johnson argues that in Shakespeare a character “is commonly a species.” (No page number is given for an unpaginated online text.)

6.4 ESSAY ON A SHAKESPEARE SONNET

OBJECTIVES

- Write a thesis that names what a sonnet means and how Shakespeare makes it mean it.
- Arrange a 900–1,200-word literary essay with an introduction, three or four analytical body paragraphs, and a conclusion that answers “So what?”
- Quote and cite correctly throughout, and write a 40-minute timed version of the same task.

Warm-up. Read Sonnet 73 aloud slowly. In the margin beside each quatrain, write the length of time it pictures (a season? a day? an hour?). What happens to the length of time as the poem goes on? Write one sentence on why Shakespeare might have arranged it so.

Video slot. Video coming. Shakespeare Sonnet 73 read aloud and discussed (the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Royal Shakespeare Company, or a university English department). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

Shakespearean (English) sonnet

Fourteen lines of iambic pentameter in three quatrains and a couplet, rhyming abab cdcd efef gg.

quatrain and couplet

A quatrain is a group of four lines; a couplet is two rhyming lines. In the English sonnet the couplet often sums up, reverses or applies the quatrains.

volta (turn)

The place where a sonnet shifts its argument or feeling. In Petrarchan sonnets it usually comes at line 9; in Shakespeare’s it may come at line 9, at line 13, or both.

thesis

The one-sentence claim that the whole essay proves. In a literary essay it names the poem’s meaning and the techniques that create it.

literary present tense

The convention of writing about what happens in a text in the present tense, because the text says it every time it is read: “Shakespeare compares,” not “Shakespeare compared.”

CORE IDEAS

The whole unit in one essay. In this lesson you bring everything together. You will read a sonnet closely (6.1), build analytical paragraphs (6.2), and quote and cite it honestly (6.3). You worked on Sonnet 73 or 146 in the earlier lessons; you may keep going with it, or choose another from the list in the project. Last unit you studied the Petrarchan sonnet, with its

octave and sestet. Shakespeare's English form is different: three quatrains and a couplet, rhyming abab cdcd efef gg. That shape suggests an argument in three steps and a conclusion, and the best essays notice how the poem's form carries its thought.

A thesis with a how. A weak thesis restates the subject: "Sonnet 73 is about growing old." A better one adds a claim: "Sonnet 73 shows that the nearness of death makes love stronger." The best one adds the *how*: "In Sonnet 73, Shakespeare pictures old age in three images that shrink from a season to a day to a dying fire, so that the reader feels time running out and understands why the beloved's love grows 'more strong' as the end draws near." This thesis tells the reader what the poem means, how Shakespeare makes it mean it, and how the essay will be arranged. Write the thesis last as well as first: draft one before you begin, and sharpen it after the body paragraphs show you what you really think.

Arranging the body. There are two good ways to arrange a sonnet essay. The first follows the poem, one body paragraph per quatrain and one for the couplet. It is clear and suits a timed essay, but it tempts you to summarize, so every paragraph must open with a claim, not a plot point. The second arranges by idea or technique: one paragraph on imagery, one on sound and rhythm, one on the turn in the couplet. It is harder and usually stronger. Whichever you choose, each paragraph is a full analytical paragraph: claim, lead-in, evidence, analysis, link. Use transitions that show logic, not just order: not "Next," but "If the second quatrain shortens time, the third makes it almost touchable."

Beginning and ending. Open with something from the poem's own world, not a flat generalization like "Throughout history, people have grown old." You might begin with a striking detail ("Shakespeare compares an aging man to a church with no roof") or a question the poem answers. Name the title and author, give one or two sentences of context, and end the introduction with the thesis. In the conclusion, do not merely repeat the thesis. Answer the question "So what?" What does the poem teach about time, love, death or the soul? Here you may bring the poem into conversation with Scripture, as long as you do it briefly and do not let a sermon replace the analysis. Moses prayed, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12). Sonnet 73 is a poem about numbering days.

Reading Sonnet 73. The model is the poem itself. Read it with the questions you have practiced. Each quatrain begins with a picture of the speaker: "in me behold," "In me thou see'st," "In me thou see'st." Each picture is shorter than the last: the late autumn of a year, the twilight of a day, the last glow of a fire. Each is darker and closer to the end; the third even names a "death-bed." Then the couplet turns from "me" to "thou": the beloved sees all this, and it makes his love "more strong." Look hard at line 12, where the fire is "Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by," and at the last line, where "that" may mean the speaker, or youth, or life itself. Strong essays take a position on hard places like these.

Timed writing. Many tests ask you to plan and write an essay in about forty minutes (the optional ACT writing test, for example, allows forty). Practice the same sonnet task under that limit. Spend five minutes reading, annotating and writing a thesis with a three-part how. Spend thirty minutes writing an introduction of three sentences, three body paragraphs, and

a two-sentence conclusion. Spend the last five minutes checking quotations, verb tense and the end of every sentence. A clear, well-proved essay of five paragraphs beats a brilliant unfinished one.

The model. *William Shakespeare, Sonnet 73, from Shakespeare's Sonnets (1609), Project Gutenberg #1041*

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed, whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well, which thou must leave ere long

PICTURE STUDY



William Shakespeare (the Chandos Portrait), Attributed to John Taylor, about 1600–1610 · Oil on canvas ·
National Portrait Gallery, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

This portrait, named for the Dukes of Chandos who once owned it, was the first picture to enter the collection of the National Portrait Gallery when the gallery was founded in 1856. It

is attributed to John Taylor, a painter and member of the Painter-Stainers' Company in London, and it may be the only portrait of Shakespeare painted from life, though no one can prove it. The sitter is a man of middle years, dressed plainly, with an earring that some think marks him as a man of the theater. Whether or not this is the true face of Shakespeare, generations of readers have pictured him this way.

Look closely

- Look at his eyes. Where are they looking, and what expression do they give him?
- Find the collar and the earring. What do they suggest about the man?
- How much of the painting is dark? Where does the light fall, and why there?

Talk about it

1. Sonnet 73 begins, "That time of year thou mayst in me behold." Write a paragraph on what a viewer might "behold" in this face, quoting one line of the sonnet.
2. Since we cannot be sure this is Shakespeare, how should you write about it honestly? Write two sentences that describe the portrait without claiming more than is known.

WRITING PROJECT: A LITERARY ESSAY ON A SHAKESPEARE SONNET

Write a 900–1,200-word essay on one of these sonnets: 29 ("When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes"), 30 ("When to the sessions of sweet silent thought"), 55 ("Not marble, nor the gilded monuments"), 73 ("That time of year thou mayst in me behold"), 116 ("Let me not to the marriage of true minds"), or 146 ("Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth"). All are in Project Gutenberg #1041.

Then, on another day, write a 40-minute timed essay on a different sonnet from the list.

You will need

- Your annotations, chart and paragraphs from 6.1–6.3
- A clean printed copy of your sonnet with line numbers
- Writing notebook or computer; a timer for the timed essay

Steps

1. Session 1: Annotate your sonnet with the three readings and five marks (or extend your 6.1 annotations). Fill an Observation / Inference / So what chart of at least eight rows.
2. Draft a working thesis that names what the poem means and how Shakespeare makes it mean it. Choose your arrangement: by quatrain, or by idea and technique. Write a one-line claim for each body paragraph.
3. Session 2: Draft the body paragraphs first, each with claim, lead-in, evidence, analysis and link. Then draft the introduction and conclusion, and sharpen the thesis to match what the body actually proves.
4. Session 3: Revise. Check the two-to-one rule in each paragraph; cut summary; check every quotation against the text; add line citations and a Works Cited entry.

5. Read the essay aloud to a parent. Ask them to say your thesis back to you in their own words. If they cannot, sharpen it.
6. On a separate day, write the 40-minute timed essay: 5 minutes to plan, 30 to write, 5 to proofread.

Check your work

- My thesis is one sentence that names the poem's meaning and how Shakespeare creates it.
- Each body paragraph begins with a claim and contains at least one quotation followed by analysis.
- My conclusion answers "So what?" without simply repeating the thesis.
- Every quotation is exact and cited by line; my Works Cited entry names my edition.
- I wrote about the poem in the literary present tense throughout.
- My sentences are complete, and the items in my thesis are parallel in form.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Sonnet 73 by hand from memory as far as you can, then check it against the model and correct every difference in red.
2. Imitate the structure: write three quatrains, each beginning "In me thou see'st," that picture something ending (a candle, a harvest, a school year) in shrinking units of time, and close with a couplet that turns to "thou." (It need not be in pentameter.)
3. List five thesis statements for Sonnet 73, each naming a different technique (imagery, sound, syntax, structure, diction). Star the strongest.

History note. Shakespeare's 154 sonnets were first printed together in 1609 by the publisher Thomas Thorpe, with a famous and puzzling dedication to "Mr. W. H." Some had circulated in manuscript long before; in 1598 Francis Meres praised Shakespeare's "sugred Sonnets among his private friends." Most of the first 126 are addressed to a young man, a friend whom the speaker urges, praises and grieves over. No one knows for certain how much of the sequence is autobiography and how much is art, so write about "the speaker," not "Shakespeare," when you mean the voice in the poem.

 **Style Clinic. The literary present tense (Grammar Level 3, usage and style; verb tense).** Write about what happens in a poem in the present tense, because the poem says it every time it is read: "The speaker compares himself to a dying fire," not "compared." Use the past for real historical events: "Shakespeare published the sonnets in 1609." Do not drift between tenses in one paragraph: "In line 9 the speaker *describes* a fire, and then he *said* it was dying" should read "and then he *says*." Also keep the parts of your thesis parallel: "through images of autumn, of twilight, and of a dying fire," not "through images of autumn, twilight, and how a fire dies."

For families. Every sonnet on the essay list is suitable for this age. A few of Shakespeare's other sonnets contain bawdy wordplay, so if your student wants to choose

a sonnet not on the list, preview it first. Grading: use the rubric in the unit portfolio, and consider giving separate marks for the thesis, the analysis and the accuracy of quotations. Sonnet 146, the soul's address to the body, is one of the most openly Christian poems in the sequence and pairs well with Matthew 6:19–21 and 1 Corinthians 15:54–55 (“O death, where is thy sting?”). Sonnet 73 pairs with Psalm 90. Line 2 of Sonnet 146 repeats “My sinful earth” from line 1 in the 1609 printing; most editors think this is a printer's error and supply a different phrase, which is a good example of why careful readers care about editions.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Strengthen this thesis for an essay on Sonnet 116: “In Sonnet 116, Shakespeare talks about love and uses many literary devices.”

1. Diagnose: “talks about love” names only a subject; “many literary devices” names no technique.
2. Find the meaning: the poem defines true love by what it is not: it does not alter, bend, or end with time.
3. Find the how: the poem defines by negation (“Love is not love / Which alters”) and by images of fixed things (“an ever-fixed mark,” “the star”) set against images of change (tempests, “bending sickle”).
4. Combine meaning and how in one sentence with parallel parts.

Answer: In Sonnet 116, Shakespeare defines true love by what it refuses to do, setting images of fixed things, a sea-mark and a guiding star, against images of storm and the reaper's sickle, so that love appears as the one constant in a world of change.

Example 2. Take apart this student body paragraph on the couplet of Sonnet 73, then improve it: “In the couplet the speaker says that the person he is talking to sees all of this and it makes his love stronger. ‘This thou perceiv’st, which makes thy love more strong, / To love that well, which thou must leave ere long.’ This shows that love is stronger when you know you will lose it.”

1. Diagnose: the first sentence is summary; the quotation stands alone with no lead-in or citation; the analysis is one sentence that restates the quotation.
2. Claim: the couplet turns the whole poem from the speaker’s decline to the beloved’s response.
3. Analyze the words: every quatrain began “in me”; now the couplet begins “This thou perceiv’st.” The rhyme pairs “strong” with “long,” but “ere long” means soon, so strength rises as time shrinks.
4. Name the hard place: “that” may mean the speaker or the life the beloved himself must leave; take a position and link back.

Answer: The couplet turns the poem’s eyes from the speaker to his friend and finds, in the very nearness of the end, the reason for love’s strength. For twelve lines the speaker has said “in me”; now he says, “This thou perceiv’st, which makes thy love more strong” (line 13). The word “perceiv’st” answers the opening “behold,” so the whole poem has been a lesson in seeing. The rhyme then binds “strong” to “long,” yet “ere long” means “soon”: as the time grows short, the love grows strong. The “that” which the friend “must leave” is most simply the speaker himself, but it may also be life, which the young friend too must one day leave. Either way, Shakespeare suggests that love is strongest not when it forgets death but when it looks straight at it.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Give the rhyme scheme of a Shakespearean sonnet.
2. **EASY** Name the three images of Sonnet 73, in order.
3. **EASY** Correct the tense: “In Sonnet 73, Shakespeare compared himself to a tree in autumn.”
4. **MEDIUM** What phrase opens the second and third quatrains of Sonnet 73, and what does the repetition do?
5. **MEDIUM** Explain line 12: “Consum’d with that which it was nourish’d by.”
6. **MEDIUM** Write an introduction (three or four sentences ending in a thesis) for an essay on Sonnet 146.
7. **CHALLENGE** Some readers hear in “Bare ruin’d choirs” an echo of the monasteries closed under Henry VIII, many of which still stood roofless in Shakespeare’s day. How should you use a historical suggestion like this in an essay?
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed essay (40 minutes): “Choose one sonnet from the list and write an essay explaining how Shakespeare uses imagery and structure to develop its central idea.” Plan in 5 minutes, write in 30, proofread in 5.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing a thesis that names only a subject (“This sonnet is about love”) with no claim and no how.
- Arranging by quatrain and then summarizing each one instead of making a claim about each.
- Confusing the speaker with Shakespeare, and writing his biography into the poem.
- Ending with a sermon or a personal story that leaves the poem behind. Apply the poem briefly, and keep the analysis at the center.

Make it a game · Sonnet Scramble. Copy the fourteen lines of a sonnet on separate slips and shuffle them. Race to put the poem back in order using only rhyme, grammar and the logic of the argument; then check against the text. Afterward, each player names one clue (a rhyme, a pronoun, a turn) that helped most.

Scripture. “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” (Psalm 90:12, KJV)

Sonnet 73 numbers the speaker’s days in seasons, hours and embers; Moses’ prayer shows where such numbering should lead: to wisdom.

Practice: answers

1. abab cdcd efef gg.
2. Late autumn (a year), twilight (a day), and a dying fire (its last glow).
3. In Sonnet 73, the speaker compares himself to a tree in autumn. (Use the present tense and, when you mean the voice of the poem, “the speaker.”)
4. “In me thou see’st.” The repetition makes each quatrain a new picture held up for the friend to look at, and it keeps the speaker’s body at the center until the couplet turns to “thou.”
5. The fire is smothered by the ashes of the very wood that once fed it. Likewise, the years that made the speaker’s life are what now end it.
6. Sample: Few poems speak to the soul as sternly as a preacher and as tenderly as a friend, but Shakespeare’s Sonnet 146 does both. The speaker addresses his own soul, asking why it starves within while it decorates the body, a house it only leases. In Sonnet 146, Shakespeare builds his argument from the language of money and food, so that the soul learns to sell the body’s “hours of dross” to buy “terms divine” and, in the end, to feed on Death itself.
7. Present it as a possible reading, not a fact (“Many readers hear ...”), credit the source where you found it, and show how the words of the poem support it (the church word “choirs” and the ruined, empty state). Then show what it adds: the speaker’s aging becomes like the loss of an old holy place.
8. Sample plan for Sonnet 55: Thesis: In Sonnet 55, Shakespeare sets the ruin of marble, war and fire against the endurance of “this powerful rhyme,” and arranges the poem so that each quatrain names a stronger destroyer, until the couplet points beyond time to “the judgment.” Body 1: marble monuments and “unswept stone”; Body 2: war and fire (“Mars his sword”); Body 3: death and oblivion overcome, and the couplet’s Day of Judgment. Conclusion: what lasts, and the Christian horizon of the final line.

UNIT 6 REVIEW

Closed book except for a printed copy of Sonnet 73 (supplied with line numbers). Answer items 1–9 in writing. Item 10 is a timed paragraph: allow 20 minutes. Score writing tasks with the unit checklists; for quotations, accuracy counts.

1. (3 pts) Name the three readings of a close reader and the purpose of each.
2. (3 pts) Label each: (a) “Line 8 calls night ‘Death’s second self.’” (b) “Night becomes a rehearsal for death.” (c) “Sonnet 73 teaches the reader to see each evening as a small death, so that love learns to value the time that remains.”
3. (4 pts) Explain Ruskin’s reading of “Blind mouths.”
4. (5 pts) Name the five parts of an analytical paragraph.
5. (3 pts) Quote Johnson’s antithesis about Shakespeare’s characters as nearly as you can, and explain it.
6. (3 pts) Punctuate correctly with a line citation: Shakespeare calls the branches bare ruin’d choirs line 4 and the reader hears a church
7. (3 pts) Quote lines 11–12 of Sonnet 73 within a sentence of your own, marking the line break and citing the lines.
8. (3 pts) Hazlitt writes that Richard “is ‘himself alone’,” adapting Richard’s line “I am myself alone.” How would you quote this by modern rules?
9. (3 pts) Correct the tense: “In the couplet, the speaker turned to his friend and said that his love grew stronger.”
10. (15 pts) Timed (20 minutes): Write a thesis and one full analytical paragraph on how the third quatrain of Sonnet 73 (lines 9–12) develops the poem’s central idea.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A LITERARY ESSAY ON A SHAKESPEARE SONNET

Place the revised 900–1,200-word essay from 6.4 in your Grade 10 portfolio, with a clean copy of the sonnet, your annotated copy, and a Works Cited page. Add the 40-minute timed essay behind it, unrevised, so you can compare your best work with your work under pressure.

- **Thesis:** One arguable sentence that names the poem’s meaning and how Shakespeare creates it, and that the whole essay proves.
- **Analysis:** Each body paragraph makes a claim and explains its evidence (diction, imagery, sound, syntax, structure), with at least twice as much commentary as quotation and no mere summary.
- **Quotation and citation:** Every quotation is exact, smoothly introduced, correctly punctuated and cited by line; the Works Cited entry names the edition used.
- **Style and mechanics:** Literary present tense, parallel structure in the thesis, varied sentences with subordinate clauses, and no fragments or run-ons.

1. For sense (paraphrase: who, what), for pattern (repetition, contrast, turns), for questions (what is strange or hard).
2. (a) observation; (b) inference; (c) claim.
3. A bishop is one who sees (oversees) and a pastor one who feeds; “blind” and “mouths” (wanting to be fed) are the exact opposites of those two offices, so the two words name the false shepherd precisely.
4. Claim, lead-in, evidence, analysis, link.
5. “In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species.” Shakespeare’s characters stand for whole kinds of human beings, so they speak to every age.
6. Shakespeare calls the branches “Bare ruin’d choirs” (line 4), and the reader hears a church.
7. Sample: The fire lies “As the death-bed, whereon it must expire, / Consum’d with that which it was nourish’d by” (lines 11-12).
8. Use double quotation marks, bracket the change, and cite: Richard is “[him]self alone” (3 Henry VI 5.6), with the line number from the edition used.
9. In the couplet, the speaker turns to his friend and says that his love grows stronger.
10. Sample: Thesis: In Sonnet 73, Shakespeare narrows time from a season to a day to the last glow of a fire, so that the reader feels the end approaching and understands why love grows “more strong.” Paragraph: The third quatrain brings the end closest of all, because the fire is the shortest unit of time and the only image that names death outright. The speaker sees in himself “the glowing of such fire, / That on the ashes of his youth doth lie” (lines 9-10). A glow is all that remains after flame, and it lies on “ashes” that were once its fuel. The fire is “Consum’d with that which it was nourish’d by” (line 12): the years that made the speaker’s life now smother it. With the “death-bed” of line 11, the poem has moved from a picture of age to the very place of dying, and the couplet’s “ere long” becomes literal. (Score: thesis 3, claim 2, evidence quoted and cited 3, analysis 4, mechanics 3.)

PERSONAL NARRATIVE: THE PROFILE

The profile joins two exercises from Grade 8, the encomium and the description, and turns them toward the people who keep a town running. You will read profiles in verse and prose (Longfellow's village blacksmith, Goldsmith's village schoolmaster, Steele's merchant Sir Andrew Freeport), learn from Luke's preface how an honest writer works from eyewitnesses, and study working men and women in paintings by Rembrandt, Matsys, Vermeer and Holbein. Then you will do what reporters and oral historians do: observe someone at work, prepare and conduct an interview, arrange your material into lead, nut paragraph, background, work, turn and close, and write a true, fact-checked profile of 1,200–1,800 words of a tradesman or business owner in your own town.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written an encomium and a description (Grade 8) or a multi-paragraph narrative essay.
- Can punctuate dialogue and set off nonrestrictive clauses with commas, or will review them in this unit's Style Clinics.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell a profile from a biography, an encomium and a résumé, and back every judgment with observed detail.
- ☐ I can prepare open questions, conduct an interview, and quote and trim a speaker's words honestly.
- ☐ I can arrange a profile in six parts around an organizing principle, alternating scene and summary.
- ☐ I can show a business owner's "notions of trade" through his or her own sayings and work.
- ☐ I can draft, revise in four passes, and fact-check a 1,200–1,800-word profile.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **The Complete Poetical Works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Project Gutenberg #1365)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1365>): Contains "The Village Blacksmith" (Ballads and Other Poems).
- **Oliver Goldsmith, The Deserted Village (Project Gutenberg #50500)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/50500>): Read the portraits of the village preacher and the schoolmaster together.
- **The Coverley Papers, From 'The Spectator' (Project Gutenberg #6482)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/6482>): Spectator No. 2 introduces the whole club, including Sir Andrew Freeport.
- **Henry Mayhew, London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 1 (Project Gutenberg #55998)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/55998>): Interviews with London street

traders, 1849-1851. For parents to preview and select passages.

- **Library of Congress, American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940** (<https://www.loc.gov/collections/federal-writers-project/>): Interviews with American workers; a parent should preview, as some contain rough language.

7.1 PROFILES OF WORKING MEN AND WOMEN 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Define the profile and tell it apart from a biography, an encomium and a résumé.
- Read Longfellow’s “The Village Blacksmith” as a profile and name its four parts: the place, the person, the work and the meaning.
- Write a 300–400-word observed sketch of a person at work, and draw up a list of three local tradesmen or business owners you might profile in 7.4.

Warm-up. Think of someone you have watched at work: a mechanic, a baker, a farmer, a nurse, a carpenter, a pastor on a Saturday. In two minutes, list every concrete thing you remember: tools, sounds, smells, the clothes, the hands, one thing the person said. Then circle the one detail that a stranger would never guess.

Video slot. Video coming. A short documentary of a traditional craftsman at work (blacksmith, cooper, wheelwright or saddler), such as a living-history museum film. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

profile

A piece of nonfiction that shows one living (or recently living) person through scene, observed detail and the person’s own words, usually at work. It is shorter and more focused than a biography.

observed detail

A fact the writer saw, heard or handled in person (“large and sinewy hands”), as opposed to a fact looked up or a general claim.

the telling detail

The one particular that stands for the whole person, the detail that makes a reader say “I know this man.”

vocation

From Latin *vocare*, “to call”: work seen as a calling, a station in which a man or woman serves God and neighbor.

ethopoeia

The progymnasma of character speech: words that fit a particular person. In a profile you do not invent them; you listen for them and quote them.

CORE IDEAS

A new kind of portrait. In Grade 8 you praised famous men in the encomium and painted people in words in the description. The profile joins those two exercises and brings them

home. Its subject is usually not famous at all: a blacksmith, a seamstress, a man who keeps bees, a woman who has run the same diner for thirty years. Its method is the reporter's: you go, you look, you ask, you listen, and then you arrange what you found so that a stranger can meet the person on the page. A biography tells a whole life in order. An encomium argues that someone deserves praise. A résumé lists jobs. A profile shows a person *doing* something, and lets the reader draw the conclusion.

Why working people. Scripture takes work seriously. Adam was put in the garden "to dress it and to keep it" before the Fall, so work is part of man's first calling and not only part of the curse. Bezaleel was "filled with the spirit of God" for cutting stones and carving timber (Exodus 31:3-5). Paul made tents (Acts 18:3). The Reformers spoke of a man's or woman's *vocation*, the calling in which each serves God and neighbor, whether at the altar or the anvil. When you profile a tradesman you are honoring that calling, and you are also learning what it takes to keep a town fed, housed, shod and repaired. Many of you will run a business or learn a trade yourselves.

Observed, not imagined. The rule of the profile is the rule of the witness: write what you saw and heard. "Large and sinewy hands" is an observation. "He was a kind man" is a conclusion, and a reader will only believe it if you have earned it with observations first. The ancient teachers of description (Theon, Aphthonius) told students to describe a person by going through him in order, head to foot, and then by what he does. That order still works. Take notes in nouns and verbs: *leather apron, burn scar on left thumb, hums while filing, says "there you go, sir" to every customer.*

The telling detail. A profile lives or dies on one or two details that stand for the whole. Longfellow's is the children at the open door catching sparks "Like chaff from a threshing-floor." In one picture we learn that the shop is open, that the smith tolerates children, that the work is a kind of harvest, and that the village loves him. When you observe someone, look for the detail you could not have predicted: the shelf of hand-labeled jars, the father's hammer still on the wall, the Scripture verse taped above the cash register.

Truthfulness. A profile is nonfiction. Ephesians 4:25 binds the profiler as much as the historian: "putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour." You may choose and arrange, but you may not invent a quotation, merge two people into one, or improve a scene. If you did not see it, either leave it out or attribute it ("his wife says he never misses a Sunday"). The reader trusts you because you went and looked.

Your work this unit. In this lesson you read profiles and write a short sketch from observation. In 7.2 you prepare and conduct an interview. In 7.3 you learn how to arrange your material. In 7.4 you write and polish a full profile, 1,200-1,800 words, of a tradesman or business owner in your own town. Start now: list three people you might profile, and ask a parent which of them you could visit.

The model. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The Village Blacksmith," *Ballads and Other Poems* (1841; first printed 1840), stanzas 1-5, in *The Complete Poetical Works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, Project Gutenberg #1365

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And bear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice

PICTURE STUDY



The Syndics of the Drapers' Guild (De Staalmeesters), Rembrandt van Rijn, 1662 · Oil on canvas ·
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The drapers' guild of Amsterdam elected sampling officials, or syndics, each year to test the quality of dyed cloth and stamp what passed. Rembrandt painted the board of 1662 at work over their sample book. This is a group profile: real tradesmen, named in the guild records, shown not in heroic poses but at their desk, as if someone had just stepped into the room and they had looked up from the business of keeping their trade honest.

Look closely

- Find the man who is half out of his chair. What might have made him rise?
- Find the servant standing in the back without a hat. How does Rembrandt show that he is not one of the officials?
- Look at the open book and the rug. What do they tell you about the work being done at this table?

Talk about it

1. Write the first paragraph of a profile of one syndic, as if you were the visitor who has just walked in. Begin with the place, then the man, then the work.
2. Rembrandt could have painted these men as rich and grand. Instead he painted them working. What does that choice say about how the Dutch of 1662 thought of trade, and how does it fit Proverbs 22:29?

WRITING PROJECT: AN OBSERVED SKETCH AND A LIST OF SUBJECTS

Before you interview anyone, practice seeing. Spend at least twenty minutes watching someone at work, with permission, and write what you see.

Then begin planning the unit's main profile.

You will need

- Writing notebook and pencil
- Permission to watch someone work for 20–30 minutes (a parent, a neighbor, a shopkeeper, a church volunteer)
- Longfellow's poem (model above)

Steps

1. Copy the first two stanzas of "The Village Blacksmith" by hand. Underline every concrete noun.
2. Watch your subject at work for twenty minutes. Take notes only in nouns and verbs: tools, motions, sounds, words spoken. Do not write any adjectives like "nice" or "hardworking."
3. Mark the one detail you did not expect. That is your candidate for the telling detail.
4. Write a 300–400-word sketch in Longfellow's order: place, person, work, life beyond the work, meaning. Let the meaning come only in the last two or three sentences.
5. Read the sketch aloud to a parent. Ask: "Which sentence made you see him (or her) best?" Star that sentence.
6. List three local tradesmen or business owners you might profile in 7.4. For each, write one sentence on why a reader would want to meet that person, and ask a parent which you may contact.

Check your work

- Every claim about character is backed by at least one observed detail.
- I used no invented quotation; any words I quote I actually heard.
- My sketch follows the order place, person, work, meaning.
- I used at least one participial phrase to show action ("Wiping his hands on his apron, he ...") and placed it next to the noun it modifies.
- Verbs are mostly active and concrete (files, hums, lifts), not forms of "to be."

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy stanzas 1–2 of "The Village Blacksmith" by hand and underline every concrete noun.
2. Imitation: write one stanza or one prose paragraph in Longfellow's pattern about a worker you know: "Behind the counter of the hardware store / The old clerk ...".

3. Start a “telling details” list: ten details from real people at work that a stranger could never guess.

History note. Longfellow’s blacksmith had a real shop under a real chestnut tree on Brattle Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which Longfellow passed on his walks. When the city cut the tree down in 1876, the schoolchildren of Cambridge gave money to have a chair made from its wood and presented it to the poet on his seventy-second birthday in 1879. The chair is still at Longfellow’s house, now a National Historic Site.

 **Style Clinic. Participial phrases (Grammar Level 3, phrases).** A participial phrase lets you show a worker doing two things at once without a weak “and.” Longfellow: “He hears his daughter’s voice, / *Singing in the village choir.*” The phrase must sit right next to the noun it describes, or it dangles. *Dangling:* “Covered in sawdust, I watched the carpenter work.” (Who is covered?) *Fixed:* “Covered in sawdust to the elbows, the carpenter planed the last board while I watched.” In your sketch, use two participial phrases and check that each one touches its noun.

For families. This unit asks your student to observe and then interview a real person in your community. Please choose subjects you know or can vouch for, make the first contact yourself, and plan to be present at any visit. The year’s faith thread is Proverbs 14:34, “Righteousness exalteth a nation”; this unit applies it to ordinary work done honestly. The profile follows the Grade 8 encomium and description, so a student who did those exercises already has the habits of praise grounded in deeds and of orderly description. The model text is copied from Project Gutenberg #1365. A good further reading, if you want one, is Charles Lamb’s portrait of the clerk Lovel in “The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple” (*Essays of Elia*, 1823, Project Gutenberg #10343).

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's opening: "Mr. Haskins is a very hardworking and kind man who has been fixing cars for a long time. He really loves his job and everyone in town likes him." Revise it into an observed opening.

1. Find the conclusions: "hardworking," "kind," "loves his job," "everyone likes him." None is shown.
2. Return to the notes for observations: the shop sign hand-painted in 1979, the radio tuned to a ballgame, grease to the wrist, a boy's bicycle waiting in the corner that he fixes for free.
3. Open on the place, then the person, and let one detail carry the kindness.

Answer: The sign over the bay door was painted by hand in 1979, and the paint has held better than the siding. Inside, under a radio tuned to a ballgame, Earl Haskins lies on a creeper beneath a pickup, grease to the wrists. In the corner a boy's bicycle waits with a slipped chain. There is no ticket on it. "That one's on the house," he says, without rolling out.

Example 2. Name the four parts of a profile in stanzas 1-5 of "The Village Blacksmith," with the lines for each.

1. Place: stanza 1, lines 1-2, "Under a spreading chestnut-tree / The village smithy stands."
2. Person: stanza 1, lines 3-6, and stanza 2 (hands, arms, hair, face, brow).
3. Work: stanzas 3-4 (bellows, sledge, forge, sparks); life beyond the work: stanza 5 (church, boys, daughter).

Answer: Place (st. 1, ll. 1-2), person (st. 1, ll. 3-6 and st. 2), work (st. 3-4), life beyond work (st. 5). The meaning comes in the poem's last stanzas, which draw a lesson from the smith's life; it is earned by everything before it.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How does a profile differ from a biography?
2. **EASY** What does "vocation" mean, and where does the word come from?
3. **EASY** In stanza 2, what observed detail supports the claim that the smith "owes not any man"?
4. **MEDIUM** Sort these into observation or conclusion: (a) "She has a pencil behind each ear." (b) "She is very organized." (c) "He says 'Yes, ma'am' to every customer." (d) "He is polite."
5. **MEDIUM** Why does Longfellow compare the sparks to "chaff from a threshing-floor"?

6. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling modifier: “Bent over the workbench, the clock ticked loudly while I watched Mr. Ruiz.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Write a telling detail (one or two sentences) for a baker who has run the same shop for forty years.
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed practice (25 minutes, CLT/ACT style): “Some say the most important work in a town is done by its leaders; others say it is done by its tradesmen. Take a position, using at least one example from history or your own observation.” Write the thesis and outline.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Telling the reader what to think of the person (“an amazing man”) before showing anything.
- Writing about yourself (“I learned so much”) instead of about the subject.
- Inventing a quotation or a scene to make the sketch livelier. A profile is nonfiction.
- Choosing a subject you cannot actually visit; pick someone a parent can introduce you to.

Make it a game · Who Works Here?. One player names three objects from a workplace (a leather apron, a pair of tongs, a bucket of water). The others guess the trade. Then make it harder: give three objects that could fit two trades, and the guesser must ask one yes-or-no question before answering. Keep the best object lists for your telling-details page.

Scripture. “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.” (Proverbs 22:29, KJV)

Solomon honors the diligent worker; a profile lets readers see such a man or woman plainly.

Practice: answers

1. A biography tells a whole life, usually in order; a profile shows a person in a focused slice of life, usually at work, through scene, observed detail and the person’s own words.
2. A calling: work in which a person serves God and neighbor. From Latin *vocare*, “to call.”
3. “His brow is wet with honest sweat, / He earns whate’er he can”: his own labor is the source of his living.
4. (a) and (c) are observations; (b) and (d) are conclusions.
5. It links the smith’s work to the harvest, the most basic work of a village, and suggests that his labor is as needful as the farmer’s; it also gives the children a fitting, rural picture.
6. Sample: While I watched, Mr. Ruiz bent over the workbench, and the clock ticked loudly. Or: Bent over the workbench, Mr. Ruiz did not seem to hear the clock ticking.
7. Sample: On the wall behind the register hangs a curling photograph of the shop’s first loaf, sliced and buttered, with the date 1986 written on the back in her mother’s hand.
8. Sample thesis: A town can survive a poor mayor for a term, but not a winter without a furnace man, so the work that keeps a town alive belongs first to its tradesmen. Outline: (1) necessity: food, water, heat, repair; (2) historical example: the guild officials in Rembrandt’s *Syndics*

kept Amsterdam's cloth trade honest; (3) concession: leaders protect the order in which trade can flourish (Proverbs 14:34); (4) conclusion: both are vocations, but the tradesman's work is the daily foundation.

7.2 THE INTERVIEW: ASKING, LISTENING, QUOTING

OBJECTIVES

- Prepare for an interview by researching the subject and writing open questions in three groups: the story, the work and the meaning.
- Conduct a 30–45-minute interview, taking notes and (with permission) a recording, and capture at least five exact quotations.
- Punctuate and trim quotations honestly, using quotation marks, ellipses and brackets correctly.

Warm-up. Ask a parent these two questions and write down the answers word for word: (1) “Did you like your first job?” (2) “Tell me about your first job.” Which question got the better answer? Why?

Video slot. Video coming. How to conduct an oral history interview (a library, historical society or Library of Congress oral history guide). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

open question

A question that cannot be answered “yes” or “no” and invites a story or explanation: “How did you learn to set a saw?”

follow-up question

A question you did not plan, asked because of something the subject just said: “You said your father wouldn’t let you near the lathe. Why not?”

direct quotation

The subject’s exact words, inside quotation marks. Use it for what only he or she could say.

paraphrase

The subject’s meaning in your words, without quotation marks but still attributed: “She says the hardest year was the first.”

eyewitness

A person who saw an event with his own eyes. Luke built his Gospel on the accounts of those “which from the beginning were eyewitnesses.”

CORE IDEAS

Luke the interviewer. The model for this lesson is the opening of Luke’s Gospel. Luke was a physician and a companion of Paul, not one of the Twelve. He tells Theophilus exactly how he worked: others had written accounts; the facts had been “delivered” by eyewitnesses; he had “perfect understanding of all things from the very first”; and he wrote “in order” so that his

reader might “know the certainty.” That is the whole method of the honest interviewer in four verses: go to the people who were there, check what they say, set it in order, and write so that a reader can trust it. Luke’s own writing shows the fruit: details like Mary keeping “all these things” in her heart could only have come from someone who asked.

Prepare before you go. An interview is not a chat. Before you meet your subject, learn what can be learned without him: how long the business has been open, what the trade involves, any newspaper story, the words of the trade (a farrier is not a blacksmith; a cabinetmaker is not a framer). Then write fifteen to twenty questions in three groups. *The story*: How did you start? Who taught you? What was the first year like? *The work*: Walk me through a normal day. Show me how you do this. What tool would you save in a fire? *The meaning*: What do customers not understand about your work? What would you tell a young person thinking of this trade? What has the work taught you? You will not ask them all; they are a map, not a script.

Open questions and silence. “Do you like your job?” gets “Yes.” “What’s a day you’ll never forget in this shop?” gets a story. Begin questions with *how*, *what*, *tell me about*, *show me*, *why*. Then do the hardest thing: after the answer, wait. Count to five in your head. Most people will fill a silence with the best thing they say all day. James gives the rule: “let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak.” A good interviewer talks perhaps a fifth of the time.

Follow the answer. The best question is usually not on your list. If a woman who runs a feed store mentions that the flood of 1993 nearly closed her, put the list down and ask about the flood. Listen for three things: a *story* (something happened), a *turn* (a hard year, a choice, a mistake), and a *saying* (a sentence the person has clearly said before, the shop’s private proverb). Ask to be shown things: a tool, a ledger, a photograph. People explain better with their hands.

Notes, recording and exact words. Ask permission before you record, and record only if the subject agrees. Take notes anyway: recordings fail, and notes catch what a recorder cannot (the gesture, the look at the photograph on the wall). When a sentence is good, write it word for word and put a star by it. Afterward, the same day, type up your notes while you still remember. A direct quotation must be the person’s exact words. You may trim with an ellipsis (...) and clarify with brackets ([the lathe]), but you may never change the meaning. If you are not sure of the exact words, paraphrase and attribute: “He says he learned more from his mistakes than from his teacher.”

The interviewers before you. James Boswell carried a notebook through twenty years of conversations with Samuel Johnson and wrote *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), still the most famous record of a man’s talk in English. Henry Mayhew walked the streets of London in 1849–1850 interviewing costermongers, watercress sellers and dustmen, and published their words in *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851). In the 1930s the Federal Writers’ Project sent writers to record the life stories of American farmers, miners and shopkeepers; the Library of Congress keeps those interviews today. Each of them understood that ordinary working people are worth listening to.

Courtesy and truth. Dress neatly, arrive on time, and bring a parent. Thank the subject at the end, and ask, “May I call if I have a question when I write?” Afterward, write a short thank-you note by hand. Before you publish or share your profile, offer to read your subject the quotations so that he can confirm them. That is not asking permission to write what you like; it is making sure you heard right. Colossians 4:6 applies to interviews as well: “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt.”

The model. *Luke 1:1-4 (KJV)*

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

PICTURE STUDY



The Moneylender and His Wife, Quentin Matsys (Quinten Massijs), 1514 · Oil on panel · Musée du Louvre, Paris

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Matsys painted an Antwerp moneychanger at his daily work, testing coins on a tiny balance, while his wife sits beside him with a prayer book open on her lap. Her eyes have left the page to watch the scales. A small convex mirror on the table reflects a window and a man sitting beside it, someone in the room on our side of the table, outside the picture's frame. Early descriptions of the painting say its original frame carried a line from Leviticus about just balances and just weights (Leviticus 19:36). It is a study of a trade, and also a quiet question about where a worker's attention belongs.

Look closely

- Find the balance. What is the man doing with it, and how carefully?
- Follow the wife's eyes. What is she looking at, and what is she not looking at?
- Find the small round mirror. What do you see reflected in it?

Talk about it

1. Pretend you are the man in the mirror, come to interview the moneylender. Write five open questions you would ask him, at least one in each group: the story, the work and the meaning.
2. Proverbs 11:1 says, "A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight." How might an honest interview be like a just balance?

WRITING PROJECT: PREPARE AND CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW

Choose the subject for your 7.4 profile from your 7.1 list. With a parent, make contact, explain that this is a school writing project, and set a time of 30–45 minutes, ideally at the person's place of work.

You will need

- Writing notebook and two pencils
- A phone or recorder, used only with the subject's permission
- Your 7.1 list of subjects
- Plain stationery for a thank-you note

Steps

1. Research: write down five facts you can learn before the visit (years in business, the trade's main tools and terms, any news story).
2. Write 15–20 open questions in three groups: the story, the work, the meaning. Star the five you most want answered.
3. Practice on a parent or grandparent for ten minutes. Count to five in silence after each answer.
4. Conduct the interview with a parent present. Ask permission to record. Ask to be shown at least one tool, object or process.
5. Write down at least five exact quotations and star them. Note the setting: sounds, smells, objects on the walls.
6. The same day, type up your notes and transcribe the starred quotations. Mark any you are not sure of.
7. Write and mail a handwritten thank-you note within three days.

Check your work

- At least 12 of my questions are open (none can be answered yes or no).
- I have at least five exact quotations, each marked with where it came in the interview.

- Quotations are punctuated correctly: commas and periods inside the closing quotation mark; question marks inside only when the quoted words are a question.
- Any trimmed quotation uses an ellipsis, and any added word is in brackets; the meaning is unchanged.
- I wrote down at least five details of the setting.
- My thank-you note is written in complete sentences, with a greeting, body and closing.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Luke 1:1–4 by hand and underline the four steps of Luke’s method (eyewitnesses, perfect understanding, in order, certainty).
2. Turn these closed questions into open ones: “Was it hard to start a business?” “Do you use a computer?” “Is your work dangerous?”
3. After the interview, write the one sentence your subject said that you think he or she has said many times before. That is the shop’s proverb.

History note. Boswell met Samuel Johnson in a London bookshop in 1763 and published *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* in 1791. He wrote up conversations from notes, often the same night. Henry Mayhew’s interviews first appeared as letters in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1849–1850 before he collected them in *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851). The Federal Writers’ Project “life histories” (1936–1940) are online at the Library of Congress and include interviews with American tradesmen; they are worth browsing with a parent, who should preview, since some contain rough language.

 **Style Clinic. Punctuating and trimming quotations (Grammar Level 3, punctuation).** (1) Commas and periods go inside the closing quotation mark: “I start at five,” he says. (2) A question mark goes inside only if the quoted words are a question: She asked, “Who taught you?” but Did he really say “never again”? (3) A quotation inside a quotation takes single marks: “My father always said, ‘Measure twice,’ and he was right.” (4) An ellipsis (...) shows words left out; brackets show words you added: “It [the lathe] was older than I was.” Never use either to change what the person meant. (5) Prefer *says* or *said* as the verb of attribution; “he chuckled” and “she exclaimed” draw attention away from the words.

For families. Please make the first contact with the subject yourself, explain that it is a school project, and attend the interview. Choose someone you know or can vouch for, and meet at the place of business during working hours. Ask the subject before anything is recorded, and before the finished profile is shared beyond your family; some people are glad to be written about but not to appear online. The model passage is printed from the King James text. A good next step for an interested student is the Library of Congress guide to oral history interviews, which also explains release forms.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's question list for a beekeeper: "Do you like bees? Have you ever been stung? Is honey hard to make? Do you sell a lot?" Revise it.

1. Every question is closed; each can be answered in one word.
2. Sort into story, work and meaning, and rewrite with how, what, tell me about, show me.
3. Add one question that asks to be shown something.

Answer: Story: "How did you come to keep bees?" "Tell me about your first hive." Work: "Walk me through a day in June." "Show me how you check a frame." "What's the worst sting you ever got, and what were you doing wrong?" Meaning: "What have the bees taught you about patience?" "What do people buying honey at the market not understand?"

Example 2. From the notes: *"Well, you know, the first year, I mean, I didn't think we were going to make it, honestly, the first year we lost money every single month."* Quote it honestly in a profile.

1. The filler words ("well, you know, I mean") may be trimmed with an ellipsis, but the meaning must stay.
2. Do not turn it into a smoother sentence she did not say.
3. Attribute with "says."

Answer: "The first year, I ... didn't think we were going to make it," she says. "The first year we lost money every single month." (Or paraphrase: She says the shop lost money every month of its first year.)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** From whom did Luke say the facts of his Gospel came?
2. **EASY** Make this an open question: "Did you always want to be a plumber?"
3. **EASY** When should you paraphrase instead of quoting directly?
4. **MEDIUM** Punctuate: he said I never open on Sundays
5. **MEDIUM** Punctuate: my grandfather told me you can't rush varnish she says
6. **MEDIUM** Name the three things to listen for in an interview.
7. **CHALLENGE** Is this trim honest? Original: "I would never cut corners, except when the customer insists and signs off on it." Profile: "I would never cut corners," he says.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a follow-up question for this answer: "My dad ran the shop till '98. Then it was me or nobody."

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading the question list like a test and never following an interesting answer.
- Talking too much: telling your own stories, or answering your own question before the subject can.
- Tidying a quotation into words the person did not say.
- Waiting days to type up notes, and losing the exact words.

Make it a game • Five-Second Silence. Pairs take turns interviewing each other for three minutes on “the best meal you ever ate.” The interviewer may ask only open questions and must wait five full seconds after every answer before speaking. A judge scores a point for every follow-up question and takes one away for every closed question. Afterward, each interviewer reads one exact quotation; the speaker says whether it is word for word.

Scripture. “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:” (James 1:19, KJV)

The interviewer’s first virtue is listening; James makes it every Christian’s.

Practice: answers

1. From those “which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word.”
2. Sample: “How did you end up becoming a plumber?”
3. When you are not sure of the exact words, or when the person’s words are ordinary information that does not need his voice.
4. He said, “I never open on Sundays.”
5. “My grandfather told me, ‘You can’t rush varnish,’” she says.
6. A story (something happened), a turn (a hard year, a choice, a mistake) and a saying (the shop’s private proverb).
7. No. Leaving out the exception changes his meaning. Quote the whole sentence, or paraphrase: He says he never cuts corners unless a customer insists and signs off.
8. Sample: “What made you choose it, when ‘nobody’ was an option?” or “What was the first thing you changed, and what did you keep exactly as he had it?”

7.3 STRUCTURE: LEAD, CENTER, TURN AND CLOSE

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of a profile’s arrangement: lead, nut paragraph, background, the work shown, the turn, and the close.
- Trace the arrangement of Goldsmith’s village schoolmaster and choose an organizing principle (a day, a job, a life, a quality) for your own profile.
- Outline your profile from your interview notes and draft the lead and nut paragraph.

Warm-up. Lay out your interview notes. In five minutes, pick the three best things you have: one scene, one quotation, one fact. Which of the three would you put first if you had only one sentence to make a stranger keep reading?

Video slot. Video coming. Vermeer’s *The Milkmaid* explained (a Rijksmuseum or museum lecture on the painting). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

arrangement

The second canon of rhetoric (Latin *dispositio*): putting the material you found in the order that best serves the reader.

lead

The opening of a profile, usually a scene, a moment or a quotation that puts the reader in the room with the subject.

nut paragraph

The paragraph, usually second or third, that tells the reader why this person is worth meeting. It is the profile’s thesis.

the turn

The place where the profile shows difficulty: a hard year, a mistake, a choice, a loss. Without it, praise is flat.

the close

The ending, often a return to the opening scene or a last quotation that sums up the person without the writer’s explaining.

CORE IDEAS

Arrangement after invention. In 7.1 and 7.2 you did the work of *invention*: you watched, researched and interviewed, and now you have more material than you can use. The second canon of rhetoric is *arrangement*. Quintilian called one good plan the “Homeric” order, after old Nestor in the *Iliad*, who drew up his troops with the strongest at the front and the rear

and the weaker in the middle. A profile is arranged the same way. Your best scene goes first, your best line goes last, and everything in between must earn its place.

The six parts. Most good profiles, from local newspaper features to long magazine portraits, have six parts, though the writer never labels them. (1) The *lead*: a scene or moment that puts us in the room. (2) The *nut paragraph*: why this person is worth meeting, the profile's thesis in two or three sentences. (3) *Background*: origin, training, how he came to the work; these are the encomium's old heads of origin and education. (4) *The work shown*: a process or a day, told with observed detail and the subject's own words. (5) *The turn*: a hard year, a mistake, a choice. (6) *The close*: a return to the opening scene, or a last quotation that sums the person up.

Goldsmith's schoolmaster. In *The Deserted Village* (1770), Oliver Goldsmith remembers the people of the village of his boyhood, and his portrait of the schoolmaster is a small profile in twenty-four lines. Watch the order. The *place* comes first: the straggling fence, the furze, the "noisy mansion" of the school. Then the *man*, in one balanced line: "A man severe he was, and stern to view." Then the man *at work*, seen through his pupils, who laugh at his jokes on purpose and read "The day's disasters in his morning face." Then the *turn*: "Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught, / The love he bore to learning was in fault." Then the village's view of his learning (he could write, cipher, measure land, and argue with the parson). And the *close*: the wonder "That one small head could carry all he knew." Goldsmith is smiling at the villagers and at the master together, but the smile is affectionate.

Choose an organizing principle. Inside those six parts, the middle needs a spine. There are four good ones. *A day*: open at five in the morning when the bakery lights come on, close when they go off. *A job*: follow one piece of work from start to finish, one saddle, one roof, one wedding cake. *A life*: move through a career in order, with scenes at the key moments. *A quality*: organize around one trait (patience, exactness, generosity), with each section giving evidence for it. Pick the one your notes support best. If your richest material is a single repair you watched, choose the job.

Scene and summary. A profile alternates between *scene* (a moment told closely, with dialogue and detail, like a film) and *summary* (time covered quickly: "For the next eleven years she worked nights"). Scene is slow and vivid; summary is fast and clear. Too much summary and the profile reads like a résumé; too much scene and the reader loses the thread. A good rhythm is scene, summary, scene, with each summary carrying the reader to the next moment worth watching.

Quotations as evidence. Use the subject's words where only his words will do: a judgment, a saying, a story told in his voice. Use paraphrase for plain facts ("He opened the shop in 2004"). Never stack quotations one after another; set each in a frame of your own sentences that tells the reader what to notice. Three to six strong quotations are enough for 1,500 words.

The turn keeps it honest. A profile that is nothing but praise reads like an advertisement, and readers stop believing it. The ancient encomium praised virtue shown in difficulty, and so should you. Goldsmith admits his schoolmaster was severe before he tells us he was kind.

Ask what was hard: a fire, a bad loan, a long apprenticeship, a time the subject nearly quit. Treat the hard thing with respect, and show how the person met it. Often that is where God's providence shows most clearly in an ordinary life.

The model. *Oliver Goldsmith, The Deserted Village (1770), the village schoolmaster, Project Gutenberg #50500*

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way

With blossom'd furze, unprofitably gay,

There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,

The village master taught his little school:

A man severe he was, and stern to view;

I knew him well, and every truant knew:

[Illustration: 0055]

Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee

At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;

{028}

Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace

The day's disasters in his morning face:

Full well the busy whisper, circling round,

Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd;

{029}

Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,

The love he bore to learning was in fault:

The village all declared how much he knew;

'Twas certain he could write and cipher too:

Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,

And e'en the story ran that he could gauge:

[Illustration: 0058]

In arguing too the parson own'd his skill,

For e'en though vanquish'd, he could argue still;

{030}

While words of learned length, and thundering sound,

Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;

And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew

That one small head could carry all he knew

PICTURE STUDY



The Milkmaid, Johannes Vermeer, about 1657–1658 · Oil on canvas · Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Vermeer painted one moment of ordinary work: a kitchen maid pouring milk, perhaps to make a bread pudding from the broken loaf on the table. Nothing happens, and yet the painting holds the eye for hours. The light falls from the left window across her arms; the stream of milk is the thinnest line in the picture and the center of everything. This is exactly what a profile's lead does: it stops one moment of work so that the reader looks closely.

Look closely

- Follow the stream of milk. Where does Vermeer place it in the picture, and why does it draw your eye?
- Find three things on the wall or floor. What do they tell you about the room and the work done there?
- Look at her face and arms. What does her posture tell you about how she does her work?

Talk about it

1. Write a 100-word scene lead for a profile of this maid, in the present tense, using only what you can see. End on the stream of milk.
2. Vermeer chose one moment instead of a whole day. When is one moment better than a summary for showing a worker's character?

WRITING PROJECT: OUTLINE THE PROFILE AND DRAFT THE OPENING

Turn your interview notes into a plan, then write the first two parts.

You will need

- Typed interview notes and transcribed quotations from 7.2
- Index cards or slips of paper
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Copy the schoolmaster passage by hand. In the margin, label place, man, work, turn, learning and close.
2. Put every usable item from your notes on its own card: one scene, one quotation or one fact per card.
3. Choose your organizing principle (a day, a job, a life, a quality) and write it at the top of a page with one sentence on why.
4. Sort the cards into the six parts. Set aside any card that fits nowhere; it probably does not belong.
5. Write the nut paragraph first, in two or three sentences: who this is and why a stranger should care.
6. Write three different leads (a scene, a moment of speech, a striking fact) of 80–150 words each. Read them aloud and choose the one that makes a listener lean in.
7. Choose your close now, before you draft the middle, so you know where you are going.

Check your work

- My outline has all six parts, and I can name the card that fills each.
- My nut paragraph states why this person matters in no more than three sentences.

- My lead is a scene, moment or quotation, not a general statement (“Everyone has a job”).
- Items in a series are parallel in form (all nouns, all verbs, or all phrases of the same kind).
- My middle alternates scene and summary at least once.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy lines 1–8 of the schoolmaster passage and mark each line’s caesura (the natural pause).
2. Imitation: write eight lines of heroic couplets, or a prose paragraph in the same order, about a teacher, coach or pastor you knew as a child, ending on what the people around him said of him.
3. Write three possible closing sentences for your profile: one that returns to the lead, one that is a quotation, one that is an image.

History note. Goldsmith (about 1728–1774) grew up in the village of Lissoy in County Westmeath, Ireland, and the “sweet Auburn” of *The Deserted Village* is often taken to be a memory of it. His own schoolmaster there was Thomas (Paddy) Byrne, a former soldier, who is usually named as the original of this portrait. The poem was published in 1770 and dedicated to Goldsmith’s friend the painter Sir Joshua Reynolds.

 **Style Clinic. Parallelism (Grammar Level 3, usage and style).** Goldsmith builds his list of the master’s skills in parallel: “he could write and cipher too: / Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage.” Each skill is a verb after *could*. In your profile, lists of tasks, tools and traits should match in form. *Faulty*: “She orders the flour, kneading the dough, and the ovens are cleaned by her.” *Parallel*: “She orders the flour, kneads the dough and cleans the ovens.” Parallelism also makes a strong close: “He came to the shop at sixteen, bought it at forty, and will leave it, he says, when they carry him out.”

For families. Index cards make arrangement concrete; let your student spread them on a table and move them around before drafting. If the interview yielded little, it is fine to arrange a short follow-up visit or phone call. Do not let the student fill gaps by inventing. The model is copied from Project Gutenberg #50500, which follows its source edition’s spelling (“declared,” “cipher”); some other editions print “declar’d” and “cypher.”

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's plan for a profile of a farrier (a horseshoer): "1. He was born in 1961. 2. He went to farrier school. 3. He shoes horses. 4. He likes his job. 5. Conclusion." Revise it with the six parts.

1. The plan is a biography in order and has no lead, no nut paragraph and no turn.
2. From the notes: a scene of him holding a horse's hoof between his knees in a cold barn; his saying "No hoof, no horse"; the year he was kicked and laid up for four months; thirty years with the same clients.
3. Choose a principle: *a job* (one shoeing from start to finish), with background and the turn woven in.

Answer: Lead: the cold barn at 7 a.m., the hoof between his knees, the smell of hot iron. Nut: Dale Morrow has shod the horses of this county for thirty years; some of his clients are the grandchildren of his first. Background: farrier school in 1983, apprenticeship under an old cavalry farrier. Work shown: trimming, shaping, fitting, nailing, in scene. Turn: the kick in 2009 and four months off, when his clients waited rather than call anyone else. Close: he sets the last nail, pats the mare, says, "No hoof, no horse," and is already looking at the next stall.

Example 2. Revise this lead: "Hard work is something that many people don't value anymore, but Mrs. Lindqvist does."

1. It is a general statement and a hidden complaint, not a scene.
2. Find a moment in the notes: 4:45 a.m., the bakery dark except for the oven light, flour already on her forearms.
3. Put the reader in the room and let the hard work be seen.

Answer: At a quarter to five the only light on Main Street is the oven light at Lindqvist's Bakery. Inside, Karin Lindqvist has already been at work for an hour, flour to the elbows, folding the first batch of cardamom dough the way her mother folded it in Minnesota sixty years ago.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the six parts of a profile.
2. **EASY** Which canon of rhetoric is this lesson about?
3. **EASY** What are the four organizing principles for the middle of a profile?
4. **MEDIUM** Where is the turn in Goldsmith's schoolmaster?
5. **MEDIUM** Label each as scene or summary: (a) "He hands me the chisel. 'Feel the edge,' he says." (b) "Through the 1990s the business grew slowly."

6. **MEDIUM** Make parallel: “He welds, does the books himself, and his customers are greeted by name.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Why does Goldsmith end on the villagers’ wonder rather than on his own judgment of the master?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a nut paragraph (two or three sentences) for a profile of a woman who has run a small-town hardware store for twenty-five years.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Opening with a general statement or a dictionary definition instead of a scene.
- Telling the life in strict order from birth, so the best material is buried in the middle.
- Leaving out the turn, so the profile reads like an advertisement.
- Ending with a summary that repeats the nut paragraph (“In conclusion, Mr. Ruiz is a hard worker”).

Make it a game · Shuffle and Rebuild. A parent copies the six parts of the worked example (the farrier) onto six cards, shuffles them, and the student puts them back in order against the clock. Then the student shuffles the cards for their own profile and a parent rebuilds it; if the parent cannot tell which card is the lead and which the close, the student revises.

Scripture. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” (Ecclesiastes 9:10, KJV)

The Preacher calls for wholehearted work in the time given; a well-arranged profile shows one person doing exactly that.

Practice: answers

1. Lead, nut paragraph, background, the work shown, the turn, the close.
2. Arrangement (*dispositio*).
3. A day, a job, a life, a quality.
4. “Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught, / The love he bore to learning was in fault.” After showing his severity, Goldsmith turns to his kindness and excuses his sternness as love of learning.
5. (a) scene; (b) summary.
6. He welds, keeps the books himself and greets his customers by name.
7. Ending on the village’s view shows the master’s place in the community and lets the reader enjoy the gentle irony (the rustics are amazed by “words of learned length,” and the poet knows the master was not as learned as they thought) without the poet having to say it. The closing image does the judging.
8. Sample: For twenty-five years, Joan Pettit has sold nails by the pound and advice for free at Pettit Hardware, the last independent store on Route 9. The big-box store across the highway has more aisles, but when a pipe bursts on a Sunday, it is Joan’s home number people call.

7.4 PROFILE OF A LOCAL TRADESMAN OR BUSINESS OWNER

OBJECTIVES

- Show a business owner’s mind through his or her “notions of trade”: sayings, opinions and ways of working, as Steele does with Sir Andrew Freeport.
- Draft and revise a profile of 1,200–1,800 words with all six parts, three to six exact quotations and at least one turn.
- Fact-check the profile with the subject and prepare a clean final copy with a title.

Warm-up. Write down the one sentence your subject said in the interview that sounds most like him or her. Now write one sentence that could have been said by anyone in the same trade. What makes the first one better?

Video slot. Video coming. Hans Holbein’s portrait of the merchant Georg Gisze explained (a museum or art-history lecture). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

character sketch

A short portrait of a type or a person through habits, opinions and sayings. The *Spectator* club members are famous examples.

appositive

A noun phrase set beside another noun to rename it: “Sir Andrew Freeport, *a merchant of great eminence*.” Profilers use it to identify people quickly.

fact-check

Confirming every name, date, number and quotation with the subject or a record before the piece is shared.

kicker

A journalist’s word for the last line of a feature, the sentence the reader carries away.

the Steelyard

The walled trading post of the German merchants of the Hanseatic League on the Thames in London, where Holbein’s Georg Gisze kept his office.

CORE IDEAS

The capstone. This is the lesson in which you write the whole thing. You have observed (7.1), interviewed (7.2) and arranged (7.3). Now you will draft a profile of 1,200–1,800 words of a tradesman or business owner in your own town: a mechanic, a farmer who sells at the market, an electrician, the woman who runs the bookstore, the man who has cut hair on Main Street since before your father was born. The profile should leave a stranger feeling that he has met the person and understands both the work and the worker.

The model: a merchant's mind. In the second number of *The Spectator* (March 2, 1711), Richard Steele introduced the members of an imaginary club, each a portrait of a type of Englishman. Sir Andrew Freeport is the merchant, and Steele gives him only one paragraph. Look at what fills it. Almost nothing about his appearance: instead, his "notions of trade," his opinions (true power is "got by arts and industry," not by arms), his little joke (he calls the sea "the British Common"), his favorite maxim ("A penny saved is a penny got"), and one closing image of a ship blowing home from every point of the compass. Freeport is invented and your subject is real, so you may not invent a word; but Steele's method is just right for a business owner. Show the mind behind the business: what does this person believe about work, customers, money and quality?

Notions of trade. Every good tradesman has a philosophy, usually in a few sayings. A carpenter may say, "Wood moves; plan for it." A restaurant owner may say, "Every plate goes out like my mother's eating it." Listen for those sayings in your notes. They are the business owner's maxims, and they belong at the turning points of the profile: at the end of the nut paragraph, after a scene of the work, or as the kicker. One well-chosen saying, framed by a scene that proves it, does more than a page of praise.

Drafting. Draft fast and fully from your outline, with your notes beside you. Do not stop to polish. Write the scenes in the present tense if you watched them ("He lifts the hood") and the background in the past tense ("He opened the shop in 1994"), and keep each consistent. Mark every quotation with a star and every fact you need to check with a question mark. If a section feels thin, the cure is usually in your notes, not in your imagination.

Revision in four passes. First, *truth*: is every quotation exact, every fact attributed, every scene something you saw? Second, *shape*: are all six parts present, and does each paragraph serve the organizing principle? Cut anything that does not, however much you like it. Third, *sentences*: replace forms of "to be" and vague verbs with exact ones; vary sentence openings; check that participial phrases touch their nouns and that lists are parallel. Fourth, *the ear*: read it aloud, slowly, to someone who has never met your subject. Where the listener's attention drifts, cut.

Fact-check and courtesy. Before the profile goes anywhere, call or visit your subject (with a parent) and read back every quotation and every fact: names, dates, numbers, spellings. Correct anything you got wrong. You do not need to hand over the whole draft for approval, but you must not publish something you know he would say is untrue. If the subject asks you to leave out a private matter, honor it. Then give the subject a clean copy as a gift. Many people have never been written about; a true and kind profile may hang on a shop wall for years.

Why this matters. Proverbs 14:34 says that "Righteousness exalteth a nation." Nations are made of towns, and towns are kept running by people who do honest work every day: who give a fair weight, show up when the furnace fails, and teach their trade to the next man. Writing one of them down truthfully is a small act of honor (Romans 13:7, "honour to whom honour"), and it trains the skill every employer, editor and admissions officer wants: the ability to go out, find the facts and tell them clearly.

The model. Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 2 (March 2, 1711), the portrait of Sir Andrew Freeport, in *The Coverley Papers*, From 'The Spectator', ed. O. M. Myers, Project Gutenberg #6482

The person of next consideration is Sir ANDREW FREEPORT, a merchant of great eminence in the city of *London*. A person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and (as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting, which would make no great figure were he not a rich man) he calls the sea the *British Common*. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will tell you that it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue, that if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove, that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valour, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, amongst which the greatest favourite is, 'A penny saved is a penny got.' A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir ANDREW having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortunes himself; and says that *England* may be richer than other kingdoms, by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men; though, at the same time, I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner

PICTURE STUDY



The Merchant Georg Gisze, Hans Holbein the Younger, 1532 · Oil on oak panel · Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Georg Gisze was a merchant from Danzig who worked at the Steelyard, the London trading post of the German Hanseatic merchants. Holbein painted him in his office, opening a letter, surrounded by everything he used to do business. This is a profile in paint: the man is shown by his tools, his papers and his place of work. A Latin note on the wall gives his name and his age, thirty-four, and another line reads *Nulla sine merore voluptas*, “No pleasure without sorrow.”

Look closely

- Find the small balance and the seal. What does each tell you about his work?
- Find the letters on the wall. Why might a merchant keep so many?
- Find the clock and the vase of carnations. One measures time; what might the other suggest?

Talk about it

1. Write the paragraph of a profile that describes Gisze’s office through its objects, ending with the one object you think best stands for the man.
2. Gisze’s motto is “No pleasure without sorrow.” Where is the turn (the difficulty) in your own subject’s story, and how will you show it?

WRITING PROJECT: THE FINISHED PROFILE

Write, revise and fact-check a profile of 1,200–1,800 words of a local tradesman or business owner, and give a clean copy to your subject.

This is the Unit 7 portfolio piece.

You will need

- Your outline, cards, lead and nut paragraph from 7.3
- Typed interview notes and quotations from 7.2
- A computer or clean paper for the final copy

Steps

1. Copy the Freeport paragraph by hand. Underline each of his “notions” (opinions and sayings).
2. List three of your subject’s notions of trade from your notes, and decide where each will go in the profile.
3. Draft the whole profile from your outline in one or two sittings. Star every quotation; put a question mark by every fact to check.
4. Revise in four passes: truth, shape, sentences, the ear.
5. With a parent, call or visit the subject and read back every quotation and fact. Correct what is wrong.
6. Give the profile a title that names the person or the work (not “My Profile”), and prepare a clean final copy.

7. Give or mail a copy to your subject with a short note of thanks.

Check your work

- The profile has a scene lead, a nut paragraph, background, the work shown, a turn and a close.
- It includes three to six exact quotations, each checked with the subject, and at least one of the subject's "notions of trade."
- Every scene is something I saw, and every fact is checked or attributed.
- Appositives and nonrestrictive clauses are set off with commas; restrictive clauses are not.
- Verb tense is consistent: present for scenes I watched, past for background.
- Lists are parallel, and no participial phrase dangles.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Freeport paragraph by hand.
2. Imitation: write a one-paragraph character sketch in Steele's pattern of a business owner you know (not your profile subject), built on his or her opinions and one favorite maxim.
3. Write five possible titles for your profile, and star the best.

History note. *The Spectator* was a daily paper written mainly by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele from March 1711 to December 1712 (with a later run by Addison in 1714). Its imaginary club gathered a country squire (Sir Roger de Coverley), a lawyer, a soldier, a clergyman, a man about town and the merchant Sir Andrew Freeport. Benjamin Franklin taught himself to write by outlining *Spectator* essays and rewriting them from his notes, the method this course uses. Holbein painted Giszze in 1532 during his second stay in England, when the Steelyard merchants were among his chief patrons.

 **Style Clinic. Appositives and clauses (Grammar Level 3, clauses and punctuation).** Steele identifies his merchant with an appositive: "Sir ANDREW FREEPORT, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London." A profile needs many such introductions, and they follow one rule: if the added words are extra (nonrestrictive), set them off with commas; if they are needed to tell *which* one (restrictive), do not. "Tom Ellis, *who has run the mill since 1988*, opens at six" (extra: commas). "The man *who taught him* was his uncle" (needed: no commas). Use *which* with commas and *that* without: "The lathe, which his father bought in 1962, still runs." "The lathe that broke was the newer one."

For families. Please attend the fact-check visit or call and look over the final copy before it is given away or shared. If your student wishes to submit the profile to a local paper, church newsletter or historical society, get the subject's permission in writing first. The model is copied from Project Gutenberg #6482; Sir Andrew Freeport is a fictional character, used here to show how opinions and sayings can portray a businessman, while

the student's profile must be strictly factual. Suggested grading: use the portfolio rubric in the unit page. The finished profile also works well as a writing sample for applications to trade programs or colleges.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's middle paragraph: "Mr. Okafor is very good at fixing watches. He has a lot of tools. He is very careful. He said that he likes to be careful because watches are delicate. He has fixed a lot of watches over the years." Revise it.

1. Truth pass: the claims are probably true, but none is shown.
2. Notes supply a scene (the loupe in his eye, tweezers, a hairspring on a white card), a number ("about nine thousand watches since 1990," his estimate) and a saying ("A watch tells you everything if you don't hurry it").
3. Sentence pass: replace "is," "has" and "said" with exact verbs; use one appositive to identify him.

Answer: Samuel Okafor, the only watchmaker left in the county, works with a loupe screwed into his right eye and a pair of tweezers no thicker than a pine needle. On a white card in front of him lies a hairspring finer than a hair. He does not talk while he lifts it. When it is seated, he leans back. "A watch tells you everything," he says, "if you don't hurry it." By his own count he has repaired about nine thousand since 1990.

Example 2. Revise this close: "In conclusion, Mrs. Reyes is a great business owner and our town is lucky to have her."

1. It announces itself ("In conclusion") and repeats the nut paragraph.
2. Return to the lead: the profile opened with her unlocking the flower shop at dawn.
3. End on an action or her words, and let the reader draw the judgment.

Answer: At six she turns the sign to Closed, sweeps the stems into a bucket for her neighbor's compost, and sets one white rose in a jar by the register. "For tomorrow's first customer," she says. "Whoever it is."

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Who wrote *Spectator* No. 2, and when did it appear?
2. **EASY** What is Sir Andrew Freeport's favorite maxim?
3. **EASY** Name the four revision passes.
4. **MEDIUM** Punctuate: Mr. Hall who has farmed this land since 1979 sells eggs at the Saturday market.
5. **MEDIUM** Punctuate correctly, and explain: The truck that he drove for thirty years still sits behind the barn.

6. **MEDIUM** According to Steele, how does Sir Andrew think true power is gained?
7. **CHALLENGE** Steele's Sir Andrew is fictional. Why is it acceptable to imitate his method but not to invent your subject's sayings?
8. **CHALLENGE** Timed practice (40 minutes, ACT Writing style): "Some say a town is best served by large national businesses that offer low prices; others say small local businesses serve it best." Write the thesis and a four-part outline that weighs both views.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Turning the profile into an advertisement: prices, hours and slogans instead of a person.
- Burying the best quotation in the middle instead of saving it for a turning point or the kicker.
- Skipping the fact-check and misspelling the subject's name or the business.
- Switching between present and past tense inside a scene.

Make it a game • Whose Notion?. Each player writes three "notions of trade" on slips, one from their profile subject and two invented for imaginary tradesmen (a baker, a roofer, a banker). Mix the slips. Players draw and guess the trade from the saying alone. The real sayings usually win; discuss why a true saying sounds different from an invented one.

Scripture. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;" (Colossians 3:23, KJV)

Paul gives every honest trade its dignity, and a profile of a faithful worker shows that verse lived out.

Practice: answers

1. Richard Steele, March 2, 1711.
2. "A penny saved is a penny got."
3. Truth, shape, sentences, the ear.
4. Mr. Hall, who has farmed this land since 1979, sells eggs at the Saturday market.
5. No commas are needed. "That he drove for thirty years" is restrictive: it tells which truck.
6. "By arts and industry," not by extending dominion by arms; diligence makes more lasting gains than valor, and sloth has ruined more nations than the sword.
7. A character sketch in a periodical essay is understood by readers to be fiction, so Steele may invent. A profile is presented as fact; readers trust that every quotation was really said. Inventing a saying would be a lie (Ephesians 4:25), however apt.
8. Sample thesis: Low prices matter to every family, but a town is more than a market, and the local owner who knows his customers by name gives what no national chain can: accountability, advice and a stake in the town's future. Outline: (1) concede the strength of the other side (prices, selection, jobs); (2) local accountability (Proverbs 11:1, the just weight; the owner lives among his customers); (3) evidence from the profile (the hardware store

owner called on a Sunday); (4) conclusion: a healthy town needs both, but should not lose the second for the sake of the first.

UNIT 7 REVIEW

Allow 60 minutes. The student may use a KJV Bible but not the lesson pages. Short answers are scored for accuracy; writing tasks are scored with the unit checklists. The portfolio profile is graded separately with the rubric below.

1. (3 pts) Define a profile and tell how it differs from a biography.
2. (3 pts) Sort into observation or conclusion: (a) "He is generous." (b) "He fixes the boy's bicycle without writing a ticket." (c) "She keeps a pencil behind each ear."
3. (4 pts) Name the four parts of Longfellow's profile of the blacksmith in stanzas 1-5, in order.
4. (4 pts) What four steps of an honest writer's method does Luke give in Luke 1:1-4?
5. (2 pts) Rewrite as open questions: "Was it hard to start?" and "Do you like your work?"
6. (3 pts) Punctuate: my father always told me measure twice cut once he says
7. (6 pts) Name the six parts of a profile.
8. (3 pts) Quote the line where Goldsmith's portrait of the schoolmaster turns, and explain what changes.
9. (2 pts) Make parallel: "She orders the lumber, measuring each board, and the cuts are made by her."
10. (4 pts) Punctuate and explain: The welder who trained him still stops by. / Mr. Grant who trained him in 1985 still stops by.
11. (3 pts) What does Steele show us about Sir Andrew Freeport instead of his appearance? Give two examples.
12. (5 pts) Write a scene lead (80-120 words) for a profile of a tradesman you have observed. Then write one sentence explaining why you chose that moment.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A PROFILE OF A LOCAL TRADESMAN OR BUSINESS OWNER

Place the final, fact-checked profile from 7.4 (1,200-1,800 words, with a title) in your Grade 10 portfolio, along with your interview question list, your typed notes and a copy of your thank-you note. These show the reporting behind the writing.

- **Reporting and truth:** Built on real observation and an interview; three to six exact quotations, all checked with the subject; nothing invented; facts attributed.
- **Arrangement:** Scene lead, clear nut paragraph, background, the work shown, an honest turn and a close that returns or resonates; a clear organizing principle; scene and summary alternate.
- **Portrait of the person:** The subject's character and "notions of trade" come through observed detail, telling details and his or her own words, not the writer's adjectives.
- **Style and mechanics:** Exact, active verbs; consistent tense; parallel lists; no dangling modifiers; quotations, appositives and nonrestrictive clauses punctuated correctly.

1. A nonfiction portrait of one person, usually at work, shown through scene, observed detail and the person's own words. A biography tells a whole life in order; a profile is a focused slice.
2. (a) conclusion; (b) and (c) observations.
3. Place, person, work, life beyond the work (church, family).
4. He went to eyewitnesses; he gained perfect understanding from the first; he wrote in order; he wrote so his reader might know the certainty.
5. Sample: "Tell me about your first year." "What part of the work would you miss most if you retired?"
6. "My father always told me, 'Measure twice, cut once,'" he says.
7. Lead, nut paragraph, background, the work shown, the turn, the close.
8. "Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught, / The love he bore to learning was in fault." After his severity, Goldsmith shows his kindness and excuses the sternness as love of learning.
9. She orders the lumber, measures each board and makes the cuts.
10. First sentence: no commas (restrictive; tells which welder). Second: Mr. Grant, who trained him in 1985, still stops by (nonrestrictive; extra information).
11. His "notions of trade": opinions and sayings. Two of: true power comes "by arts and industry," not arms; diligence lasts longer than valor; he calls the sea "the British Common"; his maxim "A penny saved is a penny got."
12. Sample: "At six the bay door rattles up at Haskins Auto, and the first thing in is the cold. Earl Haskins doesn't seem to notice. He is already under a pickup on a creeper, a drop light hooked on the frame, humming along with the ballgame replay from last night ..." I chose the opening of the shop because it shows his habits before any customer arrives.

REVIEW

The last unit gathers the year. You will revise one major piece in three passes using Franklin's method of comparing your work with a master's (8.1), set the year's finished writing in order as a bound portfolio with a preface and answer for it aloud (8.2), argue a local law face to face in a formal debate using the heads of law (8.3), and write a final timed essay on the question beneath the whole year, whether good laws or good character do more to keep a people free (8.4). The models are Franklin's *Autobiography*, Ecclesiastes, Milton's *Areopagitica* and Paul's speech on Mars' Hill.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has finished pieces from Units 1-7: a timed essay, an ordinance proposal, a speech, a historical story, a form poem, a sonnet essay and a profile.
- Knows the five heads of law (clarity, justice, expedience, possibility, custom) and the timed-essay plan from 1.2.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can revise a piece in three passes (the whole, the paragraph, the sentence) and explain my changes.
- ☐ I can select, arrange and introduce a portfolio of my work and answer questions about it.
- ☐ I can debate a resolution on either side, using the heads of law, cross-examination and point-by-point rebuttal.
- ☐ I can write a complete, proofread argumentative essay with evidence and an answered objection in 40 minutes.
- ☐ I can vary sentence structure and correct dangling modifiers, comma splices and errors of mood.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Franklin's Autobiography (Project Gutenberg #20203)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20203>): The Spectator passage (8.1) comes early in Part One; the whole book rewards reading.
- **Milton's Areopagitica (Project Gutenberg #608)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/608>): A speech in print on free argument; read the last third for 8.3.
- **Bacon's Essays (Project Gutenberg #575)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/575>): Short, dense essays for timed-writing practice; "Of Studies" is a classic model of compression.
- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): For Ecclesiastes 12 and Acts 17, the models for 8.2 and 8.4.

8.1 REVISION: SEEING THE YEAR'S WORK AGAIN ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell revision, editing and proofreading apart, and use them in that order.
- Use Franklin's method of comparing a draft with a model to find faults in your own work.
- Revise one major piece from this year in three passes: the whole, the paragraph and the sentence.

Warm-up. Take out the essay you wrote under the clock in Lesson 1.2. Don't look at it yet. From memory, write its thesis in one sentence. Now read the essay. Did the essay prove the sentence you remembered, or a different one?

Video slot. Video coming. Benjamin Franklin teaching himself to write (a biography or history lecture on his early life as a printer's apprentice). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

revision

Literally "seeing again": rethinking a draft's thesis, proof and arrangement. Revision can move, cut or rebuild whole paragraphs.

editing

Improving sentences once the arrangement is sound: clarity, economy, sentence variety, word choice.

proofreading

The last pass: spelling, punctuation, capitals, typing errors and format.

reverse outline

An outline made *from* a finished draft, one line per paragraph, to show what the draft actually says and in what order.

emendation

The old rhetoricians' word for correcting a text (Latin *emendatio*). Quintilian called it the most useful part of a writer's labor.

CORE IDEAS

The year in review. This year you finished the progymnasmata. You argued a thesis under the clock, proposed a law and defended it by the heads, gave a persuasive speech, wrote a historical story and a form poem, analyzed a Shakespeare sonnet, and profiled a working man or woman. Unit 8 gathers that work. Before you gather it, you will choose one piece and make it better. Quintilian, the Roman teacher of rhetoric, said that correcting is the most

useful part of a writer's study. Good writers are not people who draft perfectly. They are people who revise well.

Three jobs, in order. Revision, editing and proofreading are different jobs, and the order matters. *Revision* asks whether the thesis is true and clear, whether each paragraph proves it, and whether the paragraphs come in the best order. *Editing* asks whether each sentence says its part plainly and well. *Proofreading* catches the comma and the misspelled name. If you polish sentences first, you will polish sentences you later cut. Build the house before you paint the trim.

Distance. Franklin laid his notes aside "a few days" before rebuilding the essay, and once kept jumbled notes for "some weeks" before putting them in order. Horace, in his *Art of Poetry*, joked that a poem should be kept nine years before it is published. You do not have nine years, but you have months: most of this year's pieces have been resting since autumn or winter. That is your advantage. You can read your own draft almost as a stranger would. Read it aloud, slowly, with a pencil in your hand and no pen.

Pass one: the whole. Make a reverse outline. Beside each paragraph write one line: what does this paragraph claim, and how does it prove it? Then read the column of lines alone. Do the lines follow from the thesis? Does any paragraph say what another already said? Is the strongest proof buried in the middle? This is where you use the canon of *arrangement*. Franklin scrambled his notes on purpose and then rebuilt their order, "to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts." You can do the same: cut your paragraphs apart with scissors and lay them out again.

Pass two: the paragraph and the proof. Now test each paragraph by the heads of the exercise it belongs to. A law proposal should touch clarity, justice, expedience, possibility and custom. A thesis should answer the strongest objection. A profile should show its subject at work, not only describe him. A literary analysis should quote briefly and explain at length. Mark every claim that has no proof and every proof that has no explanation. Add evidence from history where you only asserted; cut whatever is ornament without argument.

Pass three: the sentence. Only now do you edit sentences. Hunt for three faults: wordiness ("due to the fact that" for "because"), weak verbs ("there is," "it is," "was being"), and modifiers that attach to the wrong word. Vary the openings and the lengths. Then proofread separately, ideally on paper, and read the last page first so your eye cannot run ahead on the sense.

Compare with a master. Franklin's method was not only to fix his faults but to find them by comparison. He set his own version beside Addison's and saw at once where his was weaker. Do the same: set your revised piece beside a model from the unit where you first wrote it (Lincoln for the speech, Shakespeare for the sonnet essay, the Northwest Ordinance for the law). Ask what the master did in one paragraph that you did not. Franklin admits he found "many faults," and also that he sometimes thought he had improved on the original. Humility and courage both belong to revision.

The model. *Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (written 1771–1790), Project Gutenberg #20203*

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, try'd to compleat the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and compleat the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts

PICTURE STUDY



The Lacemaker, Johannes Vermeer, about 1669–1670 · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · CC BY-SA 3.0

Vermeer's smallest painting, only about nine and a half by eight inches, shows a young woman making bobbin lace. Lace is built pin by pin and thread by thread; one careless crossing spoils the pattern, and the lacemaker must find it and undo it. Vermeer paints her hands sharp and clear, while the loose threads in the foreground blur, as if our eye, like hers, can only focus on the work at hand.

Look closely

- Find the pin and the bobbins. Which hand holds which?
- Compare the sharp threads between her fingers with the soft, blurred threads spilling from the cushion in front.
- Find the small book on the table. What might a lacemaker keep in a book?

Talk about it

1. Write a paragraph comparing the lacemaker's work with the third pass of revision, the sentence-by-sentence edit.
2. Vermeer kept everything outside her work soft and unfocused. What should a writer keep out of focus while revising, and why?

WRITING PROJECT: ONE PIECE, THREE PASSES

Choose one major piece from this year: the timed essay (1.2), the ordinance proposal (2.4), the speech (3.4), the historical story (4.4), the sonnet essay (6.4) or the profile (7.4). It should be a piece you care about and know is not yet your best. You will revise it in three passes and keep every stage for your portfolio.

You will need

- The original draft, printed, plus a clean copy
- Two colors of pencil and a pair of scissors
- The model passage from the unit where you first wrote the piece
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Read the draft aloud once without marking it. Then write the thesis (or, for a story, the central change) in one sentence at the top.
2. Make a reverse outline in the margin: one line per paragraph, claim and proof. Circle any paragraph that repeats another or wanders from the thesis.
3. Rearrange. Cut the paragraphs apart if it helps, and try at least one other order. Keep the order that builds best to your strongest point.
4. Test each paragraph by the heads of its exercise. Add one piece of evidence or one answered objection where the draft only asserted. Cut one passage that is ornament without argument.
5. Set your draft beside the model. Write three sentences on what the master does that you did not, and make one change because of it.

6. Edit sentences: cut wordiness, strengthen verbs, fix misplaced modifiers, vary openings. Then proofread on paper, starting from the last page.
7. Write a short revision note (half a page) listing the three most important changes and why you made them.

Check your work

- The thesis or central change is stated clearly and every paragraph serves it.
- The paragraphs are in the strongest order, and none repeats another.
- Each claim has proof, and each proof is explained.
- Every modifier sits next to the word it describes; no participle dangles.
- Parallel ideas are in parallel grammatical form.
- Commas, semicolons and quotation marks are correct, and every quotation is copied exactly.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Franklin's sentence beginning "With this view I took some of the papers" by hand. Then rewrite it as three short sentences and compare. What did his one long sentence do that your three cannot?
2. Try Franklin's exercise: take one paragraph of the *Areopagitica* or of Lincoln's Cooper Union speech, write short hints of each sentence, put the book away for two days, and rebuild the paragraph from your hints. Compare.
3. Keep a "faults list": the five errors you find most often in your own drafts this year. You will use it in 8.4.

History note. Franklin was a teenage apprentice in his brother James's Boston printing house when he found the odd volume of the *Spectator*, the London daily paper written mostly by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele in 1711–1712. Franklin began the *Autobiography* in 1771 as a letter to his son and kept adding to it until near his death in 1790. Vermeer's *Lacemaker* has been in the Louvre since 1870.

 **Style Clinic. Misplaced and dangling modifiers** (Grammar Level 3, modifiers). A modifier should sit beside the word it describes. Revision often creates these errors, because we move phrases without moving their partners. Dangling: "Having reread the draft, the thesis seemed weak." (The thesis did not reread anything.) Fixed: "Having reread the draft, I saw that the thesis was weak." Misplaced: "Franklin only compared one paper." If you mean he compared just one, write "Franklin compared only one paper." In pass three, underline every opening participial phrase and ask: who is doing this? That person must be the subject that follows the comma.

For families. This is the year's capstone revision, and it feeds the portfolio in 8.2. Let your student pick the piece; ownership matters more than choosing the weakest one. Resist rewriting for them. Your best help is to listen to the draft read aloud and to ask, "What is this paragraph proving?" Quintilian's remarks on correction are in Book X of the

Institutio Oratoria; the Horace line (“nonum prematur in annum,” keep it back till the ninth year) is from the *Ars Poetica*. The Franklin passage keeps his eighteenth-century spellings (“try'd,” “compleat”); these are not typos.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Reverse outline of a student’s ordinance proposal (from 2.4), five paragraphs: (1) Our town has no place for children to play near Elm Street. (2) A park would raise property values. (3) Parks are good for health. (4) The old lot on Elm Street is empty and owned by the town. (5) Many towns have parks. What should change?

1. Read the column of lines alone. Paragraph 4 is the possibility head and the most concrete fact in the essay, but it comes late, after general claims.
2. Paragraphs 2 and 3 are both expedience; they can be one paragraph with two proofs.
3. Paragraph 5 is weak custom (“many towns”). It needs a named example or a local precedent.
4. No paragraph answers an objection (cost, upkeep).

Answer: New order: (1) the need on Elm Street; (2) the empty town lot (possibility); (3) benefits to families and property (expedience, combined); (4) cost and upkeep answered, with a named nearby town’s park and its budget; (5) custom and conclusion: our town has kept a green since its founding. The same five paragraphs now build toward the thesis instead of circling it, and the objection is answered.

Example 2. Edit this sentence from a profile: “Due to the fact that it was being a cold morning, there were only two customers that came into the shop of Mr. Alvarez, which was a bakery, before seven.”

1. Cut wordiness: “due to the fact that” becomes “because.”
2. Replace weak verbs: “it was being,” “there were ... that came.”
3. Tighten the noun phrase: “the shop of Mr. Alvarez, which was a bakery” becomes “Mr. Alvarez’s bakery.”

Answer: Because the morning was cold, only two customers came into Mr. Alvarez’s bakery before seven. (Thirty words became fifteen, and nothing was lost.)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Put in order and define in a phrase each: proofreading, revision, editing.
2. **EASY** What did Franklin do with his notes before rebuilding a *Spectator* paper, and why?
3. **EASY** What is a reverse outline?
4. **MEDIUM** Why did Franklin turn prose tales into verse and back again?

5. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling modifier: “After rearranging the paragraphs, the essay finally made sense.”
6. **MEDIUM** Cut this to ten words or fewer: “In my opinion I think that the reason why the law failed was because it was not clear.”
7. **CHALLENGE** Why is it a mistake to proofread before you revise? Answer in two sentences.
8. **CHALLENGE** Franklin says he sometimes fancied he had “been lucky enough to improve” on Addison. Write a short paragraph on why both humility and confidence belong to revision.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Treating revision as proofreading: fixing commas and calling the piece revised.
- Revising the piece you already like best instead of one that still has room to grow.
- Cutting the strongest material because it is hard to fit, instead of rearranging so it fits.
- Moving a phrase during revision and leaving its modifier dangling.

Make it a game · Franklin’s Puzzle. A parent picks a paragraph of five to seven sentences from a classic (Franklin, Lincoln, Milton), writes each sentence on a separate card, and shuffles them. The student restores the order and explains each choice by the transition words and the logic. Then compare with the original. Score one point for every sentence in its true place and a bonus point for any order the student can defend as equally good.

Scripture. “And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.” (Jeremiah 18:4, KJV)

The potter does not throw the clay away when the vessel is marred; he makes it again, and revision is the same patient work of remaking.

Practice: answers

1. Revision (rethinking thesis, proof, arrangement), editing (improving sentences), proofreading (fixing surface errors).
2. He laid them by for a few days so he would forget the original wording and have to express each idea in his own words.
3. An outline made from a finished draft, one line per paragraph, showing what each paragraph claims and proves.
4. Verse forced him to search for words of the same meaning but different length or sound, which built his stock of words and his readiness in using them.
5. Sample: After I rearranged the paragraphs, the essay finally made sense. (Or: After rearranging the paragraphs, I found that the essay finally made sense.)
6. Sample: The law failed because it was unclear. (Seven words.)
7. Sample: Revision may cut or rebuild whole paragraphs, so time spent perfecting their commas is wasted. Worse, a polished paragraph is harder to let go of, so early proofreading makes a writer timid about the larger changes the piece needs.

8. Sample: A writer who thinks his draft has no faults will never find them, so humility opens his eyes; but a writer who thinks the masters cannot be equaled will never try, so confidence keeps his hand moving. Franklin compared his work with Addison's to find his faults, and the same comparison showed him small places where he had done well. Revision needs the honesty to see what is weak and the hope to believe it can be made strong.

8.2 THE PORTFOLIO: SETTING THE YEAR IN ORDER

OBJECTIVES

- Select, arrange and present one finished piece from each unit of the year as a bound portfolio.
- Write a preface “To the Reader” that describes the work and what each piece practiced, without padding or self-praise.
- Answer questions about your own pieces in a short oral examination.

Warm-up. List the eight units of this year from memory, and beside each, the name of the finished piece you wrote. Which piece would you hand to a stranger who asked, “Can you write?” Why that one?

Video slot. Video coming. How a book is bound by hand (a bookbinding demonstration from a library, museum or craft guild). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

portfolio

A gathered, ordered collection of a writer’s finished work, chosen to show range and skill (Latin *portare*, to carry, and *folium*, leaf).

preface

A short opening letter to the reader explaining what the collection contains and how it was made.

range

The variety of forms a writer has mastered: argument, speech, story, poem, analysis, profile.

colloquy

A conversation-style oral examination in which the student answers questions about his or her own work.

goad

A pointed stick used to drive oxen. Ecclesiastes compares the words of the wise to goads: they prod us to move.

CORE IDEAS

Why gather? A pile of papers in a drawer proves little. The same papers, chosen, ordered, corrected and introduced, show a reader what you can do. Writers have always gathered their work this way. Ecclesiastes says the Preacher “set in order many proverbs.” He was not content to say wise things; he collected them, arranged them, and chose “acceptable words.”

Your portfolio is the same kind of work on a small scale: you set the year's writing in order so that it can be read, kept and used.

Who will read it. Think of three readers. The first is your family and teacher, who will use it to judge the year. The second is a future reader you cannot yet name: an admissions office, a scholarship committee, an employer who asks for a writing sample. The third is yourself in two years, who will open it and see how far you have come. Each reader wants the same things: finished pieces, clean copies, clear labels and an honest account of what each piece was for.

What goes in. Include one finished piece from each unit: the timed essay (or your evidence essay) from Unit 1, the ordinance proposal from Unit 2, the speech from Unit 3, the historical story from Unit 4, the form poem from Unit 5, the sonnet essay from Unit 6 and the profile from Unit 7. For the piece you revised in 8.1, include the final version, the original draft behind it and your revision note; a reader learns more from seeing the change than from the polished copy alone. Add the final timed essay from 8.4 when you write it. If you sent a piece to a contest, note the contest and the date sent.

Arrangement. Arrangement is the second canon of rhetoric, and it applies to a collection as well as to an essay. You may arrange chronologically, so the reader watches the year unfold, or by kind: arguments first (thesis, law, speech, analysis), then creative work (story, poem, profile). Either is good; choose one and keep it. Number the pages. Make a table of contents with each title, its form and its date. Give every piece a real title, not "Essay 6.4."

The preface. Open with a one-page letter headed "To the Reader." It should do three things. First, say what is in the collection and how it is arranged. Second, say in a sentence or two for each piece what it attempted: "The proposal argues that our town should reopen the footpath along Mill Creek, by the five heads of law." Third, name what you learned to do this year that you could not do before, and what you mean to work on next. Write about the work and the craft, not about your feelings. Do not praise yourself; the pieces will speak for themselves. Do not apologize either. Plain, confident description is the right tone.

Clean copies. Every piece should be in its final form: typed or neatly handwritten, titled, dated, with quotations checked against the source and Scripture checked against the King James text. Use one font and one heading style throughout. Small mistakes in a portfolio cost more than the same mistakes in a draft, because a portfolio claims to be finished.

The colloquy. The old schools did not stop at the page. A student had to answer for his work aloud. When the portfolio is done, a parent or teacher will ask you questions about it for ten or fifteen minutes: Why did you choose this thesis? Which head of law was hardest to prove? What did you change in revision, and why? What would you do differently with the story? Answer plainly, refer to the page, and if you do not know, say so and then reason toward an answer. This is good preparation for the speaking you will do in 8.3 and for interviews to come.

The model. *Ecclesiastes 12:9-11 (KJV)*

And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

PICTURE STUDY



The Harvesters, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1565 · Oil on wood · The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Bruegel painted a series of pictures of the seasons, and this is the late-summer harvest. Some workers are still cutting; others carry bound sheaves down the path; a group rests under a tree and eats bread, porridge and pears. The whole year's work in the field comes down to this: cutting, binding and carrying in. A portfolio is the harvest of a writing year, when the sheaves are bound and brought home.

Look closely

- Find the sheaves that are already bound and standing. How are they different from the uncut grain?
- Follow the path from the field down toward the village. Who is carrying what?
- Look far into the background. What signs of other work and other people can you find?

Talk about it

1. Write a paragraph comparing the stages of harvest in the painting (cutting, binding, carrying, resting) with the stages of finishing a portfolio.

2. Bruegel shows workers resting as well as working. Write a sentence or two for your preface about what rest or distance did for your writing this year.

WRITING PROJECT: THE GRADE 10 PORTFOLIO

Assemble a bound collection of your year's finished writing, with a table of contents and a preface, and then answer for it in a short colloquy.

Leave a place at the end for the final timed essay you will write in 8.4.

You will need

- Final copies of one piece from each of Units 1-7
- The revised piece, original draft and revision note from 8.1
- A binder, folder or binding supplies; page protectors are optional
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Gather one finished piece from each of Units 1-7. If a piece is unfinished, finish it now or choose another from the same unit.
2. Check every quotation and every Scripture reference against its source. Correct titles, dates and names.
3. Choose an arrangement (by date or by kind) and write a table of contents: title, form, date and page.
4. Draft the preface "To the Reader" in under 400 words: what is here, what each piece attempts, what you learned to do and what comes next.
5. Revise the preface with the 8.1 passes, then make clean copies of everything in one format and assemble the portfolio.
6. Hold the colloquy: a parent asks five to eight questions about the pieces for ten to fifteen minutes. Answer from the page.
7. After the colloquy, write two sentences in your notebook on the question you answered least well and what you would say now.

Check your work

- One finished, titled, dated piece from each unit, plus the revision set from 8.1.
- The table of contents matches the pages and the arrangement is consistent.
- The preface describes the work plainly, without padding, apology or self-praise.
- Titles of long works are italicized and titles of short works are in quotation marks.
- Colons introduce lists only after a complete clause, and semicolons join closely related independent clauses.
- Every quotation and Scripture reference has been checked against the source.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Ecclesiastes 12:10 by hand. Under it, list three “acceptable words” you replaced this year with better ones.
2. Write a one-sentence description of each piece in your portfolio in the form “This [form] argues/tells/shows that” These become the heart of your preface.
3. Write five questions you hope the colloquy will ask, and five you hope it won’t. Prepare an answer to the second list.

History note. Bruegel painted *The Harvesters* in 1565 as one of a series on the times of the year for Nicolaes Jongelinck, a merchant of Antwerp. Five of the series survive; this is the only one in America, bought by the Metropolitan Museum in 1919. Oral examination on one’s own work is an old custom: medieval and Renaissance students “disputed” or defended theses aloud before their masters, and doctoral candidates still “defend” a dissertation.

 **Style Clinic. Colons, semicolons and titles** (Grammar Level 3, punctuation mastery). A colon introduces a list or explanation only after a complete clause: “The portfolio holds three kinds of writing: argument, story and poetry.” Not: “The portfolio holds: argument, story and poetry.” A semicolon joins two independent clauses that are closely related: “The proposal argues by the heads of law; the speech argues by appeal to the audience.” In a table of contents, italicize the titles of long works (*Areopagitica*, *Hamlet*) and put short works in quotation marks (“Sonnet 73,” “The Miller of Mill Creek”). Your own titles in the portfolio need neither on their own pages; they are headings.

For families. Keep the portfolio; it is a transcript in visible form, and many colleges, scholarship committees and employers accept or ask for writing samples. For the colloquy, ask open questions and let silences sit; the goal is for the student to explain choices, not to recite. A few useful questions: “Which piece was hardest, and why?” “Read me your best sentence.” “What did the model passage teach you for this piece?” “Where is your strongest evidence?” Judge the preface for clarity and honesty, not for length. If your student is applying to a program that wants a graded sample, the revised piece with its draft and note is often the strongest choice.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this preface paragraph: “This year I learned so much and grew a lot as a writer. I am really proud of all my work, especially my story, which I think is amazing. Sorry the poem is not very good, I am not a poet.”

1. Cut the vague claims (“learned so much,” “grew a lot”) and replace them with something the reader can check.
2. Cut self-praise (“amazing”) and apology (“not very good”); describe what each piece attempted.
3. Fix the comma splice in the last sentence.

Answer: Sample: This collection shows the forms I practiced this year. The historical story, “Winter at Valley Forge,” tries to make a reader hear the speech of 1778 without stopping to explain it. The villanelle was my first attempt at a strict form; its repeated lines taught me to choose words that can carry weight twice.

Example 2. A student has these pieces: law proposal (October), timed essay (September), form poem (January), profile (March), speech (November), sonnet essay (February), historical story (December). Arrange them by kind for a table of contents.

1. Separate arguments (essay, proposal, speech, analysis) from creative work (story, poem, profile).
2. Within each group, keep the order of the year so growth is visible.

Answer: Part One, Argument: Timed Essay (Sept.), Proposal of Law (Oct.), Persuasive Speech (Nov.), Essay on a Sonnet (Feb.). Part Two, Creative Writing: Historical Story (Dec.), Form Poem (Jan.), Profile (Mar.). Then the revision set and, last, the final timed essay.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** From what two Latin words does “portfolio” come?
2. **EASY** What three things should the preface do?
3. **EASY** What does Ecclesiastes 12:9 say the Preacher did with many proverbs?
4. **MEDIUM** Why include the original draft and revision note alongside the revised piece?
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the punctuation: “My portfolio includes: a speech, a story and a poem.”
6. **MEDIUM** Write a one-sentence description of a law proposal for the preface.
7. **CHALLENGE** Ecclesiastes says the words of the wise are “as goads, and as nails fastened.” Explain the two comparisons and say which your portfolio should aim to be.
8. **CHALLENGE** In the colloquy you are asked, “What is the weakest piece in your portfolio, and why did you include it?” Write a good answer.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Filling the preface with feelings and self-praise instead of describing the work.
- Including drafts with uncorrected errors because “it’s just the portfolio.”
- Mixing arrangements, so the reader cannot tell why one piece follows another.
- Answering colloquy questions in general terms instead of pointing to the page.

Make it a game · Blind Table of Contents. A parent reads aloud one sentence from somewhere in the portfolio. The student names the piece, the unit and the head or part of the piece it comes from. Three points for all three, one for the piece alone. Then switch: the student reads, and the parent guesses.

Scripture. “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;” (Colossians 3:23, KJV)

A portfolio is finished for real readers, but it is first an offering of honest, careful work done heartily, as to the Lord.

Practice: answers

1. *Portare*, to carry, and *folium*, a leaf (sheet of paper).
2. Say what is in the collection and how it is arranged; say what each piece attempted; name what you learned to do and what you will work on next.
3. He “sought out, and set in order many proverbs.”
4. They show the reader your judgment and growth, which a polished copy alone cannot show.
5. My portfolio includes a speech, a story and a poem. (Or: My portfolio includes three pieces: a speech, a story and a poem.)
6. Sample: “A Footpath for Mill Creek” proposes that the town reopen the old creek path and defends the plan by clarity, justice, expedience, possibility and custom.
7. Sample: A goad prods the ox to move, so wise words stir the hearer to act; a fastened nail holds firm, so wise words stay fixed in the memory. A good portfolio should be both: arguments that move a reader and sentences firm enough to remember.
8. Sample: The sonnet essay is the weakest; my analysis of the couplet stays too close to paraphrase. I included it because it is the only piece of literary analysis I wrote this year, and leaving it out would hide a form I still need to practice. Next year I mean to paraphrase less and explain more.

8.3 DEBATE: ARGUING A LAW FACE TO FACE

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the parts of a formal debate: resolution, burden of proof, constructive speeches, cross-examination and rebuttal.
- Prepare cases on both sides of a resolution for a local law, using the heads of law from Unit 2.
- Take notes on an opponent's case ("flow") and answer it point by point in rebuttal.

Warm-up. Proverbs 18:17 says, "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him." Think of your ordinance proposal from 2.4. Write down the first question a skeptical neighbor would ask about it.

Video slot. Video coming. The Lincoln–Douglas debates of 1858 (a history lecture or museum program on their format and setting). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

resolution

The proposition being debated, worded as a single proposed action: "Resolved: That the town reopen the Mill Creek footpath."

burden of proof

The duty of the side proposing change (the affirmative) to show that the change should be made. If it fails, the present law stands.

constructive speech

A speech that builds a side's case: definitions, main arguments and evidence.

cross-examination

A short period in which one debater asks the other questions to clarify, test evidence or set up a rebuttal.

rebuttal

A speech that answers the opponent's arguments and rebuilds one's own. No new main arguments are allowed in rebuttal.

CORE IDEAS

The progymnasmata come alive. All year you argued on paper, and your reader could not answer back. A debate is the same work with an opponent in the room. The old exercises were made for this: refutation and confirmation taught you to attack and defend a claim, the thesis taught you to argue a general question on both sides, and the proposal of law taught you to argue a specific action by its heads. In a debate you use all of them at once, out loud, and with the clock running.

The resolution. Every debate turns on one sentence, the resolution. It proposes a single action and is worded so that one side can say yes and the other no: “Resolved: That the town of Millbrook close Main Street to cars on Saturday mornings.” A good resolution is clear, balanced (a reasonable person could take either side), and about a real choice. For this lesson, use a local ordinance, ideally your own from 2.4. Local laws are perfect for practice: the facts can be checked, the people are your neighbors, and the question is about a road or a park, not about national parties.

Burden and presumption. The affirmative proposes the change, so the affirmative carries the burden of proof. The negative enjoys presumption: if the affirmative fails to prove its case, the present law stands. This matches the head of custom from Unit 2. A long-standing practice deserves to be kept unless good reason is shown to change it. The negative does not need a plan of its own. It may defend the present arrangement, show that the plan will not work, or show that its costs outweigh its benefits.

The heads as a map. The five heads of law give both sides their arguments. The affirmative shows that the proposal is *clear* (people will know what it requires), *just* (it treats people rightly), *expedient* (it does more good than harm), *possible* (it can be done with the money and people available), and agreeable to good *custom*. The negative attacks wherever the case is weakest, usually expedience or possibility. A debater who has written both sides of the heads will rarely be surprised.

The format. Use this shortened one-on-one format, modeled on high school Lincoln–Douglas debate: Affirmative constructive, 5 minutes. Cross-examination by the negative, 2 minutes. Negative constructive, 6 minutes. Cross-examination by the affirmative, 2 minutes. First affirmative rebuttal, 3 minutes. Negative rebuttal, 4 minutes. Second affirmative rebuttal, 2 minutes. The affirmative speaks first and last because it carries the burden. Each side may also take two minutes of preparation time during the round.

Flowing and clash. Debaters take notes in columns, one column per speech, so that each argument can be followed (“flowed”) across the round. When your opponent makes a point, write it in shorthand; in your next speech, answer it on the same line. This is called clash, and it is the heart of debate. A speech that ignores the other side’s arguments is a second speech, not a rebuttal. Answer the strongest point first, then say why your own case still stands. Cross-examination is for questions, not speeches: ask short questions that expose a gap (“Where will the town find the money for the crossing guard?”) and save the conclusion for your rebuttal.

Fighting fair. Milton wanted Truth and Falsehood to “grapple” in “a free and open encounter.” He also mocked those who would “skulk” and “lay ambushments” instead of meeting an argument. A debater meets the argument, not the person. Quote your opponent fairly, concede what is true, and never invent evidence. Paul wrote, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Colossians 4:6). Grace and salt belong together: courtesy toward your opponent, and sharpness toward the argument.

The model. John Milton, *Areopagitica* (1644), Project Gutenberg #608

And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter? Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clearer knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline of Geneva, framed and fabricked already to our hands. Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence, to seek for wisdom as for hidden treasures early and late, that another order shall enjoin us to know nothing but by statute? When a man hath been labouring the hardest labour in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage: drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle ranged: scattered and defeated all objections in his way; calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun, if he please, only that he may try the matter by dint of argument: for his opponents then to skulk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valour enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of Truth.

PICTURE STUDY



Stump Speaking, George Caleb Bingham, 1853–1854 · Oil on canvas · Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, Missouri
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Bingham was a painter and a Missouri politician, and in the early 1850s he painted three scenes of a frontier election. Here a candidate leans toward the crowd and lists his points. Behind him sits his opponent with a tablet in hand, writing down what is said so he can

answer it when his turn comes. The listeners are farmers, townsmen and boys, some listening hard, some unconvinced, some hardly paying attention.

Look closely

- Find the seated man taking notes behind the speaker. What is he preparing to do?
- Look at the speaker's hands. What gesture is he making, and what might it mean?
- Find three listeners with different reactions. How can you tell what each thinks?

Talk about it

1. Write the first two sentences the note-taking opponent might say when he rises to reply.
2. Choose one skeptical listener in the crowd. Write the question he would ask in cross-examination.

WRITING PROJECT: A DEBATE ON A LOCAL ORDINANCE

Prepare both sides of a resolution about a local law, then debate it in the format from this lesson with a parent, sibling or classmate as your opponent. If no opponent is available, write and record both constructive speeches and both rebuttals yourself.

Use your 2.4 ordinance if it can be argued both ways. Otherwise choose one like these:

"Resolved: That our town build a public library branch on the east side," or "Resolved: That the county require sidewalks on all new residential streets."

You will need

- Your 2.4 proposal and notes on the five heads of law
- Index cards and a legal pad for flowing, ruled in seven columns
- A timer
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Write the resolution in one sentence beginning "Resolved: That ..." and define its key terms.
2. Draft an affirmative case on the five heads, with at least one piece of checkable evidence (a town budget, a map, a precedent from a neighboring town).
3. Draft a negative case: the two strongest attacks on the affirmative and one defense of the present arrangement.
4. Write five cross-examination questions for each side. Each question should be answerable in a sentence.
5. Flip a coin for sides. Debate in the format: 5-2-6-2-3-4-2 minutes, with two minutes of prep time each. Flow the whole round.
6. Afterward, the judge (a parent or third person) names the winner and gives one reason based on the arguments, not on delivery alone.

7. Write a one-page reflection: the argument you answered best, the argument you dropped, and what you would say now.

Check your work

- The resolution proposes one clear action and can be argued on both sides.
- Each case uses the heads of law and offers at least one piece of checkable evidence.
- The rebuttals answer the opponent's arguments point by point; no new main arguments appear in rebuttal.
- The resolution and formal motions use the subjunctive correctly ("That the town reopen ...").
- Speeches use active voice for claims of responsibility ("The council should fund," not "It should be funded").
- Quotations and figures are accurate and fairly represent their sources.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Milton's sentence "Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter?" Then write one sentence of your own on fair argument in the same pattern: a command followed by a question.
2. Rule a page in seven columns and label them AC, CX, NC, CX, 1AR, NR, 2AR. Practice flowing by listening to a short speech or sermon and noting each point in shorthand.
3. List five resolutions about your own town or county that could be debated fairly on both sides.

History note. Milton wrote *Areopagitica* in 1644 as a speech in print, addressed to Parliament, against a law requiring books to be licensed before publication. The title recalls the Areopagus, the hill and council of Athens where Paul also spoke (Acts 17). "The wise man" in the model is Solomon (Proverbs 2:4); "the discipline of Geneva" is the church order of Calvin's Geneva, which some in Parliament wished to impose on England. In 1858 Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas held seven debates in Illinois: the first speaker had an hour, the second an hour and a half, and the first a closing half hour. High school "Lincoln-Douglas" debate is named for them. Bingham, who ran for the Missouri legislature himself, painted *Stump Speaking* as one of three pictures in his election series, with *The County Election* (1852) and *The Verdict of the People* (1854-1855).

 **Style Clinic. Voice and mood** (Grammar Level 3). Formal resolutions use the *subjunctive* mood after "That": "Resolved: That the town *reopen* the footpath" (not "reopens"), "I move that the debate *be* extended." Use the subjunctive also for conditions contrary to fact: "If the path *were* open, children would walk to school." In debate, prefer the *active* voice when responsibility matters. "Mistakes were made in the budget" hides who made them; "The council underestimated the budget" names them. The passive is right only when the doer is unknown or unimportant.

For families. Debate can turn sharp between siblings; set the rule before the round that every attack must be on an argument and every concession is a sign of strength. Keep resolutions local and practical, as the course does, so that the round tests reasoning rather than party loyalty. If you would like more, the National Speech & Debate Association and several Christian homeschool leagues run Lincoln-Douglas and team-policy debate; check each league's current rules and statement of faith. The Milton passage includes his complaint about "the discipline of Geneva," a seventeenth-century church dispute; it is worth a sentence of explanation but no more.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn this vague topic into a debatable resolution: "Parks are good."

1. A resolution proposes one specific action by a named body.
2. It must be fair to both sides: a reasonable person could oppose it.
3. It should name the place and the scope.

Answer: Resolved: That the town of Millbrook convert the vacant Elm Street lot into a public park. (The negative can fairly argue cost, upkeep, a better use of the lot or a park elsewhere.)

Example 2. The affirmative said: "Closing Main Street on Saturday mornings will double sales for shops." Write the negative's cross-examination and the rebuttal that uses it.

1. Cross-examination: ask for the source, not for a speech. "Where does the figure 'double' come from?" "Has any town our size closed its main street, and what happened?"
2. Suppose the answer is "It's an estimate" and "I don't know of one."
3. Rebuttal: name the claim, show the gap, weigh it.

Answer: Sample rebuttal: "My opponent's case rests on expedience: that a closed street doubles sales. But in cross-examination she agreed the figure is an estimate and named no town where it happened. Meanwhile the hardware store and pharmacy on Main depend on customers who drive in for heavy or urgent purchases. Without evidence of the benefit, and with a certain cost, the present arrangement should stand."

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Which side carries the burden of proof, and why?
2. **EASY** What is the difference between a constructive speech and a rebuttal?
3. **EASY** Name the five heads of law.
4. **MEDIUM** Correct the resolution: "Resolved: That the county requires sidewalks on all new streets."

5. **MEDIUM** What image does Milton use for a man who has prepared his arguments, and what does he call those who will not meet him?
6. **MEDIUM** Rewrite in the active voice: "The park was promised by the council but it was never funded."
7. **CHALLENGE** Write two cross-examination questions the negative might ask about a proposal to build a public skating rink.
8. **CHALLENGE** Proverbs 18:17 says the first to plead his cause "seemeth just" until his neighbor "searcheth him." Explain in a short paragraph why a debate format gives the affirmative both the first and the last word.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Choosing a resolution so one-sided that no fair person could oppose it.
- Reading a prepared rebuttal instead of answering what the opponent actually said.
- Making speeches during cross-examination instead of asking short questions.
- Attacking the opponent rather than the argument, or misquoting what was said.

Make it a game • Thirty-Second Clash. One player states a one-sentence claim about a local matter ("The library should open on Sundays"). The other has thirty seconds to answer it directly, naming the claim and giving one reason against it. The first then has fifteen seconds to rebut. A point goes to anyone who answers the actual claim; a point is lost for changing the subject. Switch roles each round.

Scripture. "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him." (Proverbs 18:17, KJV)

Debate puts this proverb into practice: no case is proved until a neighbor has searched it.

Practice: answers

1. The affirmative, because it proposes a change; if it does not prove its case, the present law stands.
2. A constructive builds a side's case with main arguments; a rebuttal answers the opponent and rebuilds one's own case without new main arguments.
3. Clarity, justice, expedience, possibility, custom.
4. Resolved: That the county require sidewalks on all new streets. (Subjunctive after "That.")
5. A commander who has drawn up his reasons "as it were a battle ranged" and calls his adversary into the open plain; those who skulk and lay ambushments show "weakness and cowardice in the wars of Truth."
6. The council promised the park but never funded it.
7. Sample: "What will the rink cost each year to maintain, and from which budget line?" "How many residents have asked for a rink, and how do you know?"
8. Sample: The affirmative speaks first because it must lay out the change before anyone can search it, and the burden of proof is its to carry. But first speech alone only "seemeth just"; the negative then searches it in cross-examination and rebuttal. Because the affirmative bears the heavier burden, the format gives it the last word too, so that it can answer the searching

before the judge decides. The arrangement balances Solomon's warning against the duty of whoever proposes change.

8.4 THE FINAL TIMED ESSAY

OBJECTIVES

- Review the timed-essay plan from 1.2 and adapt it to the time limits of the ACT and CLT essays.
- Use evidence carried in memory from the year’s reading to support a thesis written under the clock.
- Write a complete, proofread argumentative essay in 40 minutes and score it against a rubric.

Warm-up. Set a timer for five minutes. Without notes, list every piece of evidence from this year you could use in an essay about law or character: documents, speeches, people, dates. Count them. These are your “provisions” for the final essay.

Video slot. Video coming. Paul’s speech on Mars’ Hill (Acts 17) and the Areopagus in Athens (a Bible-lands or archaeology overview from a trusted ministry or museum). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

timed essay

An argument written in one sitting under a fixed limit, usually 30 to 40 minutes, to a prompt the writer has not seen before.

prompt

The question or situation the essay must answer. Read it twice and answer exactly what it asks.

provisions

Here, the stock of evidence a writer carries in memory: examples, quotations, dates and cases ready for use without notes.

counterargument

The strongest objection to your thesis, stated fairly and then answered.

holistic score

A single score given for the whole essay at once, based on thesis, development, organization and language, rather than counting errors.

CORE IDEAS

Where you began. In Lesson 1.2 you learned to write an essay under the clock. Since then you have argued a law, delivered a speech, revised a major piece and debated face to face. The final timed essay asks you to do in forty minutes what you have done all year with more time: take a perennial question, choose a side, prove it with evidence, answer the strongest

objection, and conclude. It is both an examination and a rehearsal. The ACT's optional writing test gives forty minutes; the CLT's optional essay, taken in person, gives thirty. The SAT no longer has an essay. Check each test's current rules before you register.

Paul on Mars' Hill. The model is a speech given when the philosophers of Athens brought Paul to the Areopagus and asked him to explain his teaching. He could not go home and draft. Notice what he did. He began with what his hearers knew: their own city and their altars. He found evidence on the spot, an altar "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD," and turned it into his thesis: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." He then argued in order from creation to providence to man's duty to seek God, and he quoted their own poets as testimony. A timed essay works the same way: begin with common ground, state the thesis early, use the evidence at hand, and move in a clear order.

The forty-minute plan. Divide your time before you begin. *Five minutes:* read the prompt twice, underline what it asks, choose a side, write the thesis in one sentence, and jot a four-line outline (two or three reasons and an objection). *Thirty minutes:* write. Spend about three minutes on the introduction, seven on each body paragraph, and three on the conclusion. *Five minutes:* proofread, using the faults list you made in 8.1. For a thirty-minute test, shorten each part: four, twenty-two and four. Do not skip the planning minutes; they are the fastest minutes in the essay.

Provisions. Paul quoted Greek poets from memory. You must also carry your evidence in your head, because you will have no books. This year has stocked you well. You know Magna Carta's promise that no free man shall be imprisoned except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land. You know the Northwest Ordinance's ban on slavery, Lincoln's argument from the Founders at Cooper Union, Milton's defense of free argument, Franklin teaching himself to write, and the working men and women you profiled. Before the test, choose six such examples and practice summarizing each in two sentences: what happened, and what it proves.

The objection. Readers who score essays want to see that you can handle the other side. The thesis exercise taught you to state the strongest objection fairly and then answer it. Give the objection its own paragraph or a strong place in your last body paragraph: "Some will say that laws matter more than character, because a good law restrains even a bad man. This is partly true ..." Then answer. A concession that is followed by a stronger reason makes you look more trustworthy, not less.

Style under pressure. Write plainly. Use active verbs, vary your sentences, and connect paragraphs with clear transitions ("First," "Even more," "It may be objected"). Avoid inflated vocabulary; a precise plain word scores better than a grand vague one. Scorers read quickly and grade the whole essay at once. A clear thesis, specific evidence, logical order and clean sentences will carry you further than length. Most strong forty-minute essays run four to six paragraphs.

The final prompt. This year's faith verse is "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). Your final essay takes up the question that has run under the whole Proposal of Law: Which does more to keep a people free and prosperous,

good laws or good character? You may argue either side, or argue that one depends on the other, but you must take a clear position, support it with specific evidence, and answer the strongest objection.

The model. *Acts 17:22-28 (KJV), Paul's speech on the Areopagus*

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

PICTURE STUDY



The Country School, Winslow Homer, 1871 · Oil on canvas · Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, Missouri
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Winslow Homer painted several pictures of country schools in the early 1870s, after he had spent the Civil War drawing soldiers for *Harper's Weekly*. In this one, a young teacher stands in a plain, sunlit room while her pupils work on benches along the walls. Some bend over their books; some are restless and look about. Fresh flowers stand on the teacher's desk, and

through the windows a green hill waits outside. The room is bare, but it is full of the ordinary work of learning: reading, reciting, sitting still and trying again.

Look closely

- Find the teacher. What is she holding, and what does her posture tell you?
- Compare two pupils: one working and one distracted. What details tell you which is which?
- Look at the light through the windows and the flowers on the desk. What do they add to a plain room?

Talk about it

1. Write a paragraph describing the room in the moment the teacher says, “You may begin,” from the point of view of a pupil facing a test.
2. Homer shows learning as daily, ordinary work. Write two sentences on what daily habit this year most improved your writing.

WRITING PROJECT: THE FINAL TIMED ESSAY

Write the year’s final argumentative essay in one sitting of 40 minutes, then score it and add it to your portfolio.

Prompt: “Which does more to keep a people free and prosperous: good laws or good character? Take a clear position, support it with specific evidence from history, literature or your own observation, and answer the strongest objection to your view.”

You will need

- Lined paper and two pencils, or a computer with spell-check turned off
- A timer
- Your faults list from 8.1
- The rubric in this lesson’s check list

Steps

1. Session one: review your provisions. Write six examples from this year’s reading on cards, two sentences each (what happened, what it proves). Review your faults list. Then put everything away.
2. Session two: a parent reads the prompt aloud and starts the timer for 40 minutes.
3. Minutes 0–5: underline the task words, choose your position, write the thesis and a four-line outline.
4. Minutes 5–35: write the introduction, two or three body paragraphs with specific evidence, a paragraph or passage answering the strongest objection, and a conclusion.
5. Minutes 35–40: proofread against your faults list. Make neat corrections; do not recopy.
6. Afterward, score the essay with the check list (1–6 on each item) and write three sentences: what worked, what you would change, and how this essay compares with

your 1.2 essay.

7. Place the essay, your score and your comparison at the end of your portfolio.

Check your work

- Thesis: a clear position on the question asked, stated in the first paragraph.
- Evidence: at least two specific, accurate examples, each explained in relation to the thesis.
- Objection: the strongest counterargument stated fairly and answered.
- Organization: logical order with clear transitions and a conclusion that does more than repeat.
- Sentences: varied structures (simple, compound, complex, compound-complex) with no fragments or comma splices.
- Usage: pronouns agree with their antecedents and verbs with their subjects.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Acts 17:23 by hand. Underline the evidence Paul found and circle the sentence that serves as his thesis.
2. Write your six “provisions” in two sentences each from memory, then check them against your notes for accuracy.
3. Write three different thesis sentences for the final prompt: one for laws, one for character, and one arguing that each needs the other.

History note. The Areopagus (“hill of Ares,” Mars’ Hill in the King James Version) is a rock outcrop below the Acropolis in Athens and gave its name to the ancient council that met there. The line “For we are also his offspring” comes from the Greek poet Aratus of Soli (third century B.C.), in his poem *Phaenomena*. Homer’s *The Country School* is in the Saint Louis Art Museum; he made other schoolroom and schoolyard pictures in the same years, including *Snap the Whip* (1872).

 **Style Clinic. The four sentence structures** (Grammar Level 3). Scorers reward variety, and you can build it on purpose. *Simple*: “Laws restrain the hand.” *Compound*: “Laws restrain the hand, but character governs the heart.” *Complex*: “Because laws can be evaded, a nation depends on the honesty of its people.” *Compound-complex*: “Magna Carta bound the king, and the barons enforced it while they had the strength to do so.” In a timed essay, put your thesis in a strong complex sentence, open body paragraphs with clear simple or compound sentences, and save a short simple sentence for emphasis at the end of a paragraph. Watch for the two timed-writing faults: the fragment (“Because the law was unclear.”) and the comma splice (“The law was clear, the people ignored it.”).

For families. Give the prompt only when the clock starts, and keep the conditions honest: no notes, no phone, no help. Score generously but truthfully; the comparison with the September essay matters more than the number. Testing rules as of autumn 2026: the ACT writing test is optional and lasts 40 minutes; the CLT’s optional essay is 30 minutes

and offered only for in-person testing; the SAT discontinued its essay. These rules change, so confirm on the official ACT, CLT and College Board sites before registering. If your student is aiming at the CLT, have them practice the 30-minute version as well.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Plan, in five minutes, an essay on the final prompt.

1. Underline the task: “which does more,” “clear position,” “specific evidence,” “strongest objection.”
2. Choose a side: character does more, because laws depend on people to keep and enforce them.
3. Outline: (1) Magna Carta was reissued and ignored by kings for centuries until men of character insisted on it; (2) the Northwest Ordinance banned slavery, but its ban held because settlers and officials upheld it; (3) objection: a good law restrains even bad men, as the Ordinance did; answer: only where enough good men enforce it; (4) conclusion: Proverbs 14:34.

Answer: Thesis: “Good laws are necessary, but good character does more to keep a people free, because no law enforces itself; a law lasts only as long as the people under it are willing to honor and defend it.”

Example 2. Improve this body paragraph from a timed essay: “There are many examples in history of laws. One example is Magna Carta. It was a very important document. It was signed in 1215. It shows that laws are important.”

1. The paragraph has evidence but no argument: it never says what Magna Carta proves.
2. Five simple sentences in a row; combine them and vary structure.
3. “Very important” is vague; name what the charter did. (King John set his seal to it; he did not sign it.)

Answer: Sample: When King John set his seal to Magna Carta in 1215, he promised that no free man would be imprisoned except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land. Yet within months John asked the pope to annul the charter, and later kings ignored it when they could. The words survived because generations of Englishmen kept appealing to them. Magna Carta shows that a good law can outlast a bad king, but only when good men refuse to let it be forgotten.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How long is the ACT’s optional writing test, and how long is the CLT’s optional essay?

2. **EASY** Divide a 40-minute timed essay into three parts.
3. **EASY** What evidence did Paul find in Athens and use in his speech?
4. **MEDIUM** Find Paul's thesis in Acts 17:22-28.
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the comma splice in two different ways: "The law was clear, the people ignored it."
6. **MEDIUM** Write a two-sentence "provision" on the Northwest Ordinance.
7. **CHALLENGE** Write an objection-and-answer passage (three or four sentences) for an essay arguing that character matters more than law.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write the conclusion (three or four sentences) for an essay arguing that good laws and good character each need the other.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Skipping the planning minutes and writing an essay that wanders from its thesis.
- Listing examples without explaining how each proves the thesis.
- Leaving out the objection, or stating a weak version of it that is easy to knock down.
- Spending the last five minutes adding a paragraph instead of proofreading.

Make it a game • Provision Drill. Write twelve examples from the year (Magna Carta, the Northwest Ordinance, Cooper Union, Areopagitica, Franklin and the Spectator, a profile subject, and so on) on cards. A parent draws a card and names a thesis (for example, "Hard work builds character"). The student has sixty seconds to say in two sentences how that example could support or challenge the thesis. One point for a fair, accurate use; two if the student turns it to fit an unexpected thesis.

Scripture. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."
(Proverbs 14:34, KJV)

The year's faith verse becomes the year's last question: laws can command right action, but only a righteous people will keep them.

Practice: answers

1. ACT: 40 minutes. CLT: 30 minutes (in-person testing only). Check current rules before registering.
2. About 5 minutes planning, 30 minutes writing, 5 minutes proofreading.
3. An altar inscribed "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD," and lines from the Greeks' own poets.
4. "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you" (verse 23).
5. The law was clear, but the people ignored it. / Although the law was clear, the people ignored it. (Also correct: The law was clear; the people ignored it.)
6. Sample: In 1787 the Confederation Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance, which banned slavery in the territory north of the Ohio River. It shows that a good law, written before a society takes shape, can set the course of whole states.
7. Sample: It may be objected that laws matter more, since a good law restrains even a man of bad character. This is true as far as it goes; a thief may fear the jail when he does not fear God. But someone must still catch, judge and punish the thief, and if the constable and the

judge are corrupt, the best law is only ink. Law restrains the wicked only where enough of the righteous enforce it.

8. Sample: Laws without character are fences no one mends, and character without laws is goodwill with no common rule. The Founders wrote a careful Constitution, yet John Adams warned that it was made only for a moral and religious people. A free nation needs both the written law and the righteous people to keep it. As Solomon said, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."

UNIT 8 REVIEW

Items 1–9 may be answered in writing or aloud. Item 10 is the final timed essay from 8.4 and may be scored here instead of separately; give 40 minutes, no notes. Score writing tasks with the unit’s checklists, not for spelling alone.

1. (3 pts) Name, in order, the three jobs of improving a draft, and define each in a phrase.
2. (3 pts) Describe Franklin’s method of learning from the *Spectator* in two or three sentences.
3. (2 pts) Fix the dangling modifier: “Reading the draft aloud, three errors became obvious.”
4. (3 pts) Name three things the portfolio preface should do.
5. (2 pts) Punctuate correctly: “The year included three kinds of argument a law a speech and an essay.”
6. (4 pts) Define burden of proof and presumption, and say which side holds each.
7. (2 pts) Correct the mood: “Resolved: That the town builds a footbridge over Mill Creek.”
8. (3 pts) Write two cross-examination questions on the resolution in item 7.
9. (3 pts) How did Paul begin his speech on Mars’ Hill, and what does it teach about beginning a timed essay?
10. (15 pts) Final timed essay (40 minutes): Which does more to keep a people free and prosperous, good laws or good character? Take a clear position, support it with specific evidence, and answer the strongest objection.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE GRADE 10 PORTFOLIO

Bind the year’s work in one collection: a preface “To the Reader,” a table of contents, one finished piece from each of Units 1–7, the revision set from 8.1 (original draft, final version and revision note), a page of debate notes and reflection from 8.3, and the final timed essay from 8.4 with its self-score and a comparison with the 1.2 essay.

- **Completeness and order:** Every unit is represented by a finished, titled, dated piece; the arrangement is consistent and the table of contents matches.
- **Revision:** The revision set shows real changes in thesis, proof or arrangement, not only proofreading, and the note explains them.
- **Preface and colloquy:** The preface describes the work plainly and accurately; in the colloquy the student explains choices with reference to the page.
- **Accuracy and mechanics:** Quotations and Scripture are exact; modifiers, mood, punctuation and sentence boundaries are correct throughout.

Answer key

1. Revision (rethinking thesis, proof and arrangement), editing (improving sentences), proofreading (correcting surface errors).
2. He made short hints of each sentence’s sense, laid them aside for days, rebuilt the essay in his own words, and compared it with the original to find and correct his faults. He also turned

prose into verse and back, and scrambled his notes to practice arrangement.

3. Reading the draft aloud, I found three obvious errors.
4. Describe what is in the collection and how it is arranged; say what each piece attempted; name what the writer learned and will work on next.
5. The year included three kinds of argument: a law, a speech and an essay.
6. Burden of proof: the duty to prove the change should be made (affirmative). Presumption: if the burden is not met, the present law stands (negative).
7. Resolved: That the town build a footbridge over Mill Creek.
8. Sample: "What will the bridge cost, and from which fund?" "How many people now cross the creek, and where?"
9. He began with what his hearers knew (their city, their altar to the unknown God) and turned it into his thesis. A timed essay should begin from common ground and state the thesis early.
10. Score with the 8.4 rubric: thesis (3), evidence (4), objection answered (3), organization (3), sentences and usage (2). A strong essay states a clear position early, uses at least two accurate examples (Magna Carta, the Northwest Ordinance, Cooper Union, etc.), answers the best counterargument, and concludes with more than a restatement.