

SCHOOL LAUNCH • COMPOSITION & CREATIVE WRITING

GRADE 4 COMPOSITION & CREATIVE WRITING: THE FABLE GROWN UP, AND NARRATIVE

The second year of classical writing: amplify and condense a fable as Aphthonius taught, tell true narratives with Theon's six questions, build characters and settings with Kenneth Grahame, tell the Wright brothers' flight three ways, write ballads after Longfellow and mail real letters.

First edition

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Psalm 19:1 (KJV)

COURSE GUIDE

Grade 4 continues the progymnasmata, the “first exercises” of the Greek and Roman schools. The student revisits the fable with Aphthonius’ own model, learning to amplify it (make it longer) and condense it (make it shorter) and to place the moral first or last. Then comes the second exercise, narrative: Theon’s six questions, the three virtues of clarity, brevity and believability, and the three orders of telling (beginning, middle and end first), practiced on Luke 2, David and Goliath, Paul Revere and the Wright brothers.

The creative track teaches character and setting with *The Wind in the Willows*, the ballad with Longfellow and Psalm 136, and the friendly letter with Abigail Adams and the apostle Paul. Each lesson has a model passage, a picture study of fine art, a writing project, worked examples, practice, a game and a verse from the King James Bible.

WHO IT IS FOR

Written for students in grade 4 (about ages 9–10) who write a paragraph on their own. A parent reads along, listens and helps with revision. Pairs with Grammar Level 1, Units 5–8. Grade 3 Composition is helpful but not required.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

1. **The weekly rhythm.** One lesson a week in two sessions of 30–40 minutes. Session 1: warm-up, video, teaching, model passage and picture study. Session 2: worked examples, practice and the writing project.
2. **Copy, imitate, invent.** Each unit opens with a model to copy, then an imitation, then a piece of the student’s own.
3. **The quarter path.** Short on time? The ten ★ lessons make a one-quarter course.
4. **With Grammar.** Every lesson names the Grammar Level 1 lesson it uses (🔗). The revision checklist asks only for skills Grammar Level 1 has taught.
5. **Contest Lab.** The optional bonus unit prepares a poem or essay for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Education Contest (Grades 4–12, free).

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Unit 1: Fable Review: Amplify and Condense (1–4)

This year begins where Grade 3 ended: with the fable. You will meet Aphthonius, the Greek teacher whose little book trained schoolboys for a thousand years, and learn to make a fable longer (amplify) and shorter (condense), and to place its moral first or last.

Unit 2: Narrative: The Six Questions (5–8)

A fable is made up to teach; a narrative tells what happened. In this unit you learn Theon’s six questions (who, what, when, where, how, why), find them in Luke’s account of Christ’s

birth and in David and Goliath, follow Paul Revere through the night of April 18, 1775, and learn the three virtues of every good narrative.

Unit 3: 🐸 Story: Character and Setting (9-12)

Stories need people (or animals) we can see and places we can feel. With Kenneth Grahame's *Mole and Toad* as your guides, you will learn to show a character instead of naming his traits, to give him a want and an obstacle, to build a setting with a mood, and to put them together in a one-page story.

Unit 4: Narrative II: Changing the Order (13-16)

A narrative does not always have to begin at the beginning. Homer began the *Odyssey* in the middle; newspapers begin with the end. In this unit you will learn all three orders and use them to tell one great true story: the Wright brothers' first flight at Kitty Hawk on December 17, 1903.

Unit 5: 🐾 Poetry: The Ballad (17-20)

A ballad is a story told in a poem. In this unit you will gallop through Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride," learn the four-line ballad stanza from "The Wreck of the Hesperus," hear refrains in an old ballad and in Psalm 136, and write a ballad of your own family's or town's history.

Unit 6: Description of Persons and Things (21-24)

Description helps the reader see. In this unit you will order a description of a person from head to toe with Longfellow's village blacksmith, describe a tool by purpose, parts and use with Robinson Crusoe's spade, compare with similes like Washington Irving, and make an exact wanted poster for a fable villain.

Unit 7: 🐦 Personal Narrative: The Friendly Letter (25-28)

A letter is a personal narrative sent to one reader. In this unit you will read Abigail Adams's letter written the day after Bunker Hill and Paul's letters to Timothy and the Philippians, and you will write and mail real letters to a grandparent and to someone serving far from home.

Unit 8: Review, Revise, Read Aloud (29-32)

The year ends the way good writers work: by revising. You will learn Franklin's way of teaching himself to write, revise with a five-pass checklist, give and receive notes with a sibling, hold a family showcase and gather your best work in a portfolio.

Unit 9: Bonus: Contest Lab (Bonus)

An optional lab for students who want to enter a real contest. The School Launch directory lists the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Education Contest for Grades 4-12: free, open to students of any church, with poetry and essay categories. You will read its rules, then write an eight-line poem and a one-page essay on the theme.

MATERIALS

- **A writing notebook (composition book)**One for the whole year.
- **Pencils, colored pencils, clean paper**For clean copies and drawings.
- **A KJV Bible**For Units 2, 5 and 7 and each lesson's verse.
- **Envelopes and stamps**At least two of each, for Unit 7.
- **A folder for the portfolio**Unit 8.

GRADING

Grades come mostly from the writing projects, judged with each lesson's checklist. Praise first, then fix one thing at a time.

- Writing projects: 50%
- Writing notebook: 20%
- Unit reviews: 15%
- Unit portfolio pieces: 15%

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

- Spelling counts lightly; capitals, end marks and commas taught in Grammar Level 1 count more.
- Recitations (the first stanza of “Paul Revere’s Ride”) are graded on effort and accuracy.

A NOTE TO PARENTS

You do not need to be a writer to teach this course. Read the model aloud, listen to your child, and use the checklist. Praise specific things (“I love ‘thumped his tail’”) before suggesting one change.

Each lesson has a *For families* note with background, sources and cautions. Public-domain model passages were copied from downloaded Project Gutenberg texts, and Scripture was checked against an offline King James text. Models written for this course are labeled. The Paul Revere lesson retells his letter rather than quoting it.

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9.3 A One-Page Essay 🏆

★ quarter path (10 lessons) · 📝 creative writing track · 🏆 ends with a piece for a contest or family showcase · 🔗 Grammar link in every lesson

FABLE REVIEW: AMPLIFY AND CONDENSE

This year begins where Grade 3 ended: with the fable. You will meet Aphthonius, the Greek teacher whose little book trained schoolboys for a thousand years, and learn to make a fable longer (amplify) and shorter (condense), and to place its moral first or last.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can name the four parts of a fable and write a moral in one sentence (Grade 3, Unit 1).
- Writes complete sentences with capitals and end marks.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell who Aphthonius was and name his three parts of a fable.
- ☐ I can amplify a fable with dialogue, detail and feeling.
- ☐ I can condense a long fable to three sentences.
- ☐ I can arrange a fable with the moral first or last.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Aesop's Fables, Townsend translation (Project Gutenberg #21)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/21>): Free. Every fable in this unit comes from it.
- **La Fontaine's Fables with Gustave Doré's illustrations:** Optional. Many public-domain editions are free online.

1.1 APHTHONIUS' FABLE ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell who Aphthonius was and why schoolboys used his book for over a thousand years.
- Name the three parts of Aphthonius' fable: the moral, the story and the moral again.
- Copy "The Ants and the Grasshopper" and mark its parts.

Warm-up. Last year you learned the four parts of a fable. Say them from memory: characters, problem, ending and ... ? Then tell "The Fox and the Grapes" in three sentences.

Video slot. Video coming. "The Ant and the Grasshopper" read aloud or animated. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

progymnasmata

The "first exercises" in writing used by Greek and Roman schools. The fable is the first one.

Aphthonius

A Greek teacher of writing who lived about A.D. 400 and wrote a short book of the first exercises.

moral

The lesson of a fable, said in one sentence.

cicada

A summer insect that "sings" loudly by buzzing. In the old Greek fable it is the cicada, not the grasshopper.

CORE IDEAS

A very old schoolbook. About four hundred years after Christ, a Greek teacher named Aphthonius wrote a small book of fourteen writing exercises. Each exercise had a short rule and a model. His book was so clear that schoolboys used it for more than a thousand years, in Greek and later in Latin. Boys in Shakespeare's England still learned from it.

His fable. For the first exercise, Aphthonius told the story of the ants and the cicada. In summer the cicada sang while the ants gathered grain. In winter the cicada was starving and begged the ants for food, and the ants turned him away. Aphthonius began with a sentence telling young people to work hard, then told the story, then ended by saying the lesson again: those who will not work when they are young will suffer when they are old.

Three parts. So Aphthonius' fable has three parts: *moral, story, moral*. Last year you put the moral only at the end. This year you will learn to place it in different spots, and to make a fable longer or shorter on purpose.

Our model. We do not have a free, public-domain English translation of Aphthonius' own words, so the summary above is our retelling. The model below is the same fable as Aesop told it, in Townsend's translation, where the cicada has become a grasshopper.

The model. *Aesop, translated by George Fyler Townsend (1867), "The Ants and the Grasshopper"*

The Ants were spending a fine winter's day drying grain collected in the summertime. A Grasshopper, perishing with famine, passed by and earnestly begged for a little food. The Ants inquired of him, "Why did you not treasure up food during the summer?" He replied, "I had not leisure enough. I passed the days in singing." They then said in derision: "If you were foolish enough to sing all the summer, you must dance supperless to bed in the winter."

PICTURE STUDY



The Cicada and the Ant (La Cigale et la Fourmi), Gustave Doré, 1868 · Wood engraving · From Doré's illustrated edition of La Fontaine's Fables (Paris, 1868)

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Gustave Doré was a French artist who drew pictures for great books: the Bible, Dante and La Fontaine's fables. Instead of drawing insects, Doré drew the fable as if it happened to people.

Look closely

- Find the season. What clues tell you it is cold?

- Who stands at the door, and who stands inside?
- Look at the faces. What is each person feeling?

Talk about it

1. Why do you think Doré drew people instead of insects?
2. Is the ant in the fable kind, fair or both? What would you have done?

WRITING PROJECT: MORAL, STORY, MORAL

Copy the model fable in your best hand, then frame it the way Aphthonius did, with a moral before and after.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Pencil and a colored pencil

Steps

1. On a fresh page, write a one-sentence moral at the top, such as “Work while you can, so you will have what you need.”
2. Copy “The Ants and the Grasshopper” under it, a sentence at a time. Check each one.
3. At the bottom, write the moral again in different words.
4. With a colored pencil, label the three parts in the margin: Moral, Story, Moral.

Tips

- Your two morals should mean the same thing but use different words.

Check your work

- I wrote a moral at the top and the bottom.
- I copied every word of the story.
- Every sentence begins with a capital and ends with an end mark.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model fable.
2. Write two different one-sentence morals for it.

History note. Aphthonius’ book was printed again and again in Europe after the printing press. Reinhard Lorich’s Latin edition, first printed at Marburg in Germany in 1542, became a favorite schoolbook across Europe and was used in English grammar schools in the 1500s.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 5.1 “Adverbs.” Words like *earnestly* tell how something was done. Find one in the model.

For families. Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata* (late 4th century) opens with the fable of the ants and the cicadas. Modern English translations are under copyright, so the lesson summarizes the fable and quotes Townsend's public-domain Aesop instead.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Write a moral for the top of "The Fox and the Grapes."

1. What is the fable about? A fox who pretends she did not want what she could not get.
2. Say it as advice.

Answer: Sample: Do not pretend you did not want what you failed to get.

Example 2. Find the three parts in this short fable: "Be careful what you wish for. A boy wished for a giant cake and ate it all at once. He was sick for two days. Be careful what you wish for."

1. First sentence: advice, so it is the moral.
2. Middle: the boy and the cake, so it is the story.
3. Last sentence: the moral again.

Answer: Moral, story, moral. (A better writer would say the last moral in new words.)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Who was Aphthonius?
2. **EASY** What is the first exercise in his book?
3. **EASY** In the Greek fable, which insect sang all summer?
4. **EASY** Name Aphthonius' three parts of a fable.
5. **MEDIUM** Why did the ants say the grasshopper must "dance supperless to bed"?
6. **MEDIUM** Write a moral for the fable in your own words.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing the same moral twice word for word. Say it again in new words.
- Thinking the moral must always come last. Aphthonius put it first and last.

Make it a game • Moral Ping-Pong. One player says a moral. The other must say the same moral in different words within ten seconds. Then switch. Keep going until someone is stuck.

Scripture. “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:” (Proverbs 6:6, KJV)

Solomon told lazy people to learn from the ant long before the fable was written down.

Practice: answers

1. A Greek teacher who wrote a book of writing exercises about A.D. 400.
2. The fable.
3. The cicada.
4. Moral, story, moral.
5. They were teasing him: he sang all summer, so now he could dance, but he would have no supper.
6. Sample: Prepare in good times for hard times.

1.2 AMPLIFY

OBJECTIVES

- Define amplification: making a story longer without changing it.
- Add dialogue, detail and feeling to a short fable.
- Grow “The Dog and the Shadow” to about twice its length.

Warm-up. Your teacher says, “A dog lost his bone.” Ask five questions about it (Where? Why? What did he do?). Each answer makes the story bigger.

Video slot. Video coming. “The Dog and His Reflection” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

amplify

To make a story longer and richer by adding speech, detail and feeling, without changing what happens.

dialogue

The words characters say to each other.

detail

A small fact that helps the reader see, hear or feel.

quotation marks

The marks “ ” that go around the exact words someone says.

CORE IDEAS

Same story, more of it. To amplify is to make bigger. The old teachers had students take a three-line fable and stretch it to a page, without changing the characters, the problem or the ending.

Three tools. (1) *Dialogue*: let the characters speak. (2) *Detail*: what did things look, sound and smell like? (3) *Feeling*: what did the character think or feel?

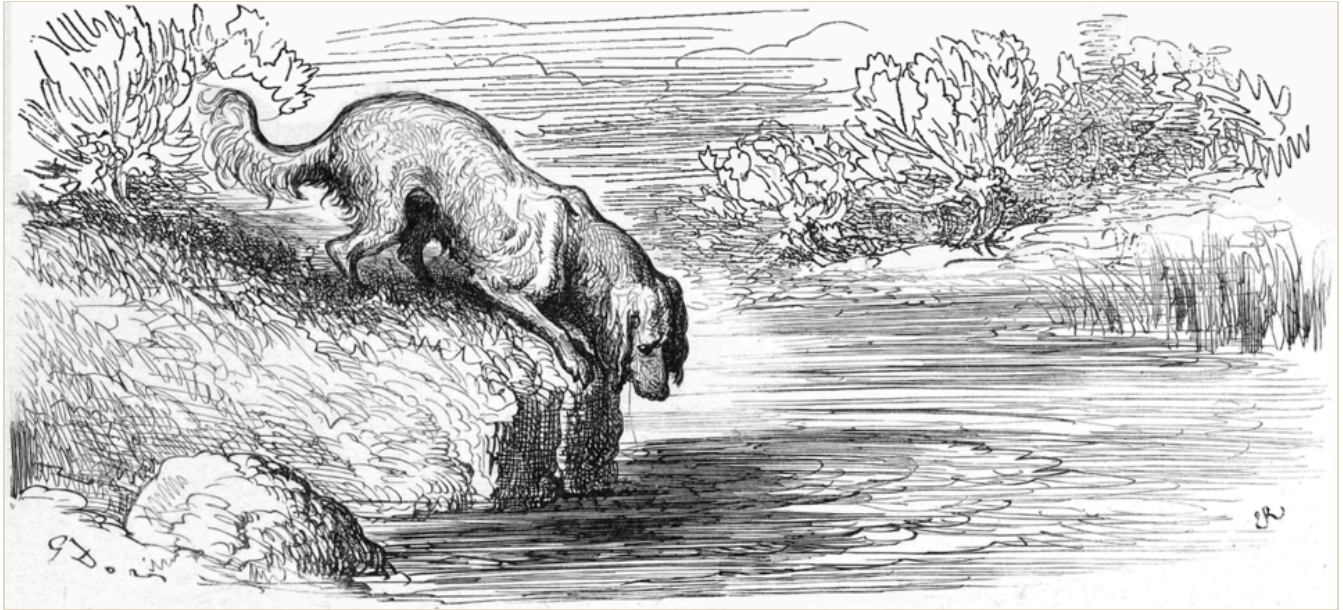
Do not add a new plot. If the dog meets a dragon, you have written a new story. Amplifying keeps the old story and fills it out.

The model. *Aesop, translated by George Fyler Townsend (1867), “The Dog and the Shadow”*

A Dog, crossing a bridge over a stream with a piece of flesh in his mouth, saw his own shadow in the water and took it for that of another Dog, with a piece of meat double his own in size. He immediately let go of his own, and fiercely attacked the

other Dog to get his larger piece from him. He thus lost both: that which he grasped at in the water, because it was a shadow; and his own, because the stream swept it away.

PICTURE STUDY



The Dog Who Carried Meat (Le Chien qui lâche sa proie pour l'ombre), Gustave Doré, 1868 · Wood engraving · From Doré's illustrated *La Fontaine* (1868)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

La Fontaine retold Aesop's dog fable in French verse, and Doré drew the moment just before the dog drops his meat.

Look closely

- Find the dog and the water.
- What does the dog see?
- What will happen in the next second?

Talk about it

1. Why did Doré pick this moment?
2. What could the dog say to himself here? Write it as dialogue.

WRITING PROJECT: THE DOG, TWICE AS LONG

Amplify the model fable to about twice its length (about 160 words).

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The model fable

Steps

1. Read the model and count its sentences.
2. After the first sentence, add a detail: what did the bridge, the stream or the meat look like?
3. Add one line of dialogue: what did the dog growl at the “other dog”?
4. Add one sentence of feeling at the end: how did the dog feel walking home with nothing?
5. Read it aloud. Did the story stay the same?

Tips

- Put a speaker’s exact words inside quotation marks.

Check your work

- My story has the same characters, problem and ending.
- I added at least one detail, one line of dialogue and one feeling.
- My sentences are complete.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model.
2. Write three “add-ons”: a detail, a line of dialogue and a feeling.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 5.2 “Direct Objects.” In “The dog dropped his meat,” what did he drop? *Meat* is the direct object.

For families. Amplification (Latin *amplificatio*) was a core school skill from Quintilian to Erasmus, whose *De Copia* (1512) taught boys to say one thing in many ways.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Amplify: “A crow found some cheese.”

1. Detail: where? On a farmhouse windowsill.
2. Feeling: she was proud of her prize.
3. Dialogue: “What a fine breakfast!” she cawed.

Answer: A crow found a yellow piece of cheese on a farmhouse windowsill. “What a fine breakfast!” she cawed, and flew proudly to a high branch.

Example 2. Is this amplifying? “The dog crossed the bridge, met a wizard and turned into a cat.”

1. Are the characters the same? No, a wizard is new.
2. Is the ending the same? No.

Answer: No. It changes the story instead of filling it out.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does amplify mean?
2. **EASY** Name the three tools of amplifying.
3. **EASY** What did the dog think he saw?
4. **MEDIUM** Write one line of dialogue for the dog.
5. **MEDIUM** Write one detail about the stream.
6. **MEDIUM** What is the moral of the fable?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Adding a new event that changes the ending.
- Piling up adjectives instead of adding speech and feeling.

Make it a game · Grow the Sentence. Start with “A dog crossed a bridge.” Each player adds one detail. Whoever changes the story (instead of filling it out) is out.

Scripture. “But godliness with contentment is great gain.” (1 Timothy 6:6, KJV)

The greedy dog wanted more and lost what he had. Contentment is a treasure.

Practice: answers

1. To make a story longer and richer without changing what happens.
2. Dialogue, detail and feeling.
3. Another dog with a bigger piece of meat.
4. Sample: “Give me that bigger piece!” he growled.
5. Sample: The stream was brown and fast after the spring rain.
6. Sample: If you are greedy, you may lose what you already have.

1.3 CONDENSE

OBJECTIVES

- Define condensing: making a story shorter without losing what matters.
- Find the most important events in a long fable.
- Shrink “The Miller, His Son, and Their Ass” to three sentences.

Warm-up. Tell what you did this morning in exactly one sentence. Then in exactly three. What did you leave out?

Video slot. Video coming. “The Miller, His Son and the Donkey” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

condense

To make a story shorter while keeping the characters, the main events and the lesson.

main event

A part of the story that cannot be left out without changing it.

summary

A short telling of the main points.

CORE IDEAS

The other half of the skill. A good writer can make a story longer, and he can also make it shorter. Condensing teaches you to see what matters most.

Keep the bones. When you condense, keep the characters, the problem, the turning point and the ending. Drop the extra speeches and details.

Count the sentences. If you must use three sentences, try: (1) who and what they wanted, (2) what went wrong, (3) how it ended.

The model. *Aesop, translated by George Fyler Townsend (1867), “The Miller, His Son, and Their Ass”*

A Miller and his son were driving their Ass to a neighboring fair to sell him. They had not gone far when they met with a troop of women collected round a well, talking and laughing. “Look there,” cried one of them, “did you ever see such fellows, to be trudging along the road on foot when they might ride?” The old man hearing this, quickly made his son mount the Ass, and continued to walk along merrily by his side. Presently they came up to a group of old men in earnest debate. “There,” said one of them, “it proves what I was a-saying. What respect is

shown to old age in these days? Do you see that idle lad riding while his old father has to walk? Get down, you young scapegrace, and let the old man rest his weary limbs." Upon this the old man made his son dismount, and got up himself. In this manner they had not proceeded far when they met a company of women and children: "Why, you lazy old fellow," cried several tongues at once, "how can you ride upon the beast, while that poor little lad there can hardly keep pace by the side of you?" The good-natured Miller immediately took up his son behind him. They had now almost reached the town. "Pray, honest friend," said a citizen, "is that Ass your own?" "Yes," replied the old man. "O, one would not have thought so," said the other, "by the way you load him. Why, you two fellows are better able to carry the poor beast than he you." "Anything to please you," said the old man; "we can but try." So, alighting with his son, they tied the legs of the Ass together and with the help of a pole endeavored to carry him on their shoulders over a bridge near the entrance to the town. This entertaining sight brought the people in crowds to laugh at it, till the Ass, not liking the noise nor the strange handling that he was subject to, broke the cords that bound him and, tumbling off the pole, fell into the river. Upon this, the old man, vexed and ashamed, made the best of his way home again, convinced that by endeavoring to please everybody he had pleased nobody, and lost his Ass in the bargain.

PICTURE STUDY



The Miller, His Son and the Donkey (Le Meunier, son Fils et l'Âne), Gustave Doré, 1868 · Wood engraving ·
From Doré's illustrated *La Fontaine* (1868)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Doré drew this busy fable with a crowd of people watching the miller and his son.

Look closely

- Who are the people watching?
- Who is riding, if anyone?

- Which part of the fable is this?

Talk about it

1. Why do you think the miller kept changing his mind?
2. Whose opinion should matter most when you decide what is right?

WRITING PROJECT: THE THREE-SENTENCE MILLER

Condense the long model fable to exactly three sentences.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Read the model aloud and list every event in order (there are about six).
2. Circle the events you cannot leave out.
3. Write sentence 1: who they were and where they were going.
4. Write sentence 2: what kept happening on the road.
5. Write sentence 3: how it ended.
6. Add a one-line moral.

Check your work

- I used exactly three sentences for the story.
- I kept the characters, the problem and the ending.
- My moral fits the story.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. List the events of the model in order.
2. Write your three-sentence version.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 7.2 “Compound Subjects and Compound Predicates.” “The miller and his son walked” has a compound subject. Use one to save words when you condense.

For families. Condensing (the opposite of amplifying) was practiced alongside it in the ancient schools; Theon’s handbook says a student should be able to tell a story at length or briefly.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Condense “The Ants and the Grasshopper” to two sentences.

1. Who and what? Ants were drying grain; a hungry grasshopper begged.
2. Ending? They refused because he had sung all summer.

Answer: A hungry Grasshopper begged the Ants for food in winter. They refused, saying that he had sung all summer instead of storing food.

Example 2. Which sentence could be left out? (a) A miller and his son took their donkey to market. (b) The road was dusty. (c) They tried to please everyone they met. (d) In the end they lost the donkey.

1. Which one does not change the story if removed?

Answer: (b) The road was dusty.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does condense mean?
2. **EASY** Where were the miller and his son going?
3. **EASY** How many times did they change how they traveled?
4. **MEDIUM** What happened to the ass at the end?
5. **MEDIUM** Write the moral in one sentence.
6. **MEDIUM** Name one detail you left out when you condensed.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Keeping the first half in detail and rushing the ending.
- Leaving out the ending, which is the most important part.

Make it a game · Story in a Breath. Tell a fable you know in one breath. If you run out of air before the ending, try again with fewer words.

Scripture. “For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” (Galatians 1:10, KJV)

The miller tried to please everyone. Paul says to seek first to please God.

Practice: answers

1. To make a story shorter while keeping what matters.
2. To a fair, to sell their ass (donkey).

3. Four times (son rides, father rides, both ride, both carry it).
4. It broke loose, fell off the pole and into the river.
5. Sample: If you try to please everybody, you will please nobody.
6. Answers vary: the women at the well, the old men, the bridge.

1.4 MORAL FIRST, MORAL LAST

OBJECTIVES

- Arrange a fable two ways: with the moral first and with the moral last.
- Explain how the order changes the effect on the reader.
- Rewrite “Hercules and the Wagoner” with the moral first.

Warm-up. Your teacher tells a joke twice: once with the punch line at the end, once with it at the start. Which is funnier? Why?

Video slot. Video coming. “Hercules and the Wagoner” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

arrangement

The order in which the parts of a piece of writing are placed.

moral first

Stating the lesson at the start, so the reader watches for it in the story.

moral last

Saving the lesson for the end, so the reader discovers it.

CORE IDEAS

Two arrangements. Aphthonius taught that a fable’s moral can come first (before the story) or last (after it). Both are right. Each does a different job.

Moral first tells the reader what to watch for. It is clear and good for teaching. **Moral last** lets the reader discover the lesson. It is good for surprise.

Change the joining words. When the moral comes first, link it to the story: “Self-help is the best help, as a certain wagoner learned.”

The model. *Aesop, translated by George Fyler Townsend (1867), “Hercules and the Wagoner”*

A carter was driving a wagon along a country lane, when the wheels sank down deep into a rut. The rustic driver, stupefied and aghast, stood looking at the wagon, and did nothing but utter loud cries to Hercules to come and help him. Hercules, it is said, appeared and thus addressed him: “Put your shoulders to the wheels, my man. Goad on your bullocks, and never more pray to me for help, until you have done your best to help yourself, or depend upon it you will henceforth pray in vain.”

Self-help is the best help.

PICTURE STUDY



The Haywain, Hieronymus Bosch, c. 1516 · Oil on panel (triptych) · Museo del Prado, Madrid
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain (Museo del Prado image) · center panel cropped for this course

This old Dutch painting shows a great hay wagon and a crowd grabbing hay from it. Painters of the time used the haywain to teach a moral: people scramble after things that do not last.

Look closely

- Find the wagon. Look closely at the strange creatures pulling it at the right. Where are they taking it?
- What are the people doing around it?
- Look high in the sky. Who is watching?

Talk about it

1. What moral do you think the painter wanted to teach?
2. Would you put that moral first or last if you wrote it as a fable?

WRITING PROJECT: TWO ARRANGEMENTS

Write “Hercules and the Wagoner” twice: once with the moral last, as Townsend has it, and once with the moral first.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Copy the model as it is (moral last).
2. On the facing page, start with the moral in your own words.
3. Join the moral to the story with a linking phrase (“as a wagoner once learned”).
4. Tell the story in your own words, about five sentences.
5. Underline the moral in both versions.

Check your work

- Both versions tell the same story.
- The moral is first in one and last in the other.
- I used a linking phrase.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model.
2. Write two linking phrases you could use to join a moral to a story.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 7.3 “Interjections and Commands.” Hercules gives a command: “Put your shoulders to the wheels.” Commands have an understood subject, *you*.

For families. “Hercules and the Wagoner” is a pagan fable. The Scripture verse shows the true point, that we pray and also work. Christians do not pray to Hercules; the fable is used for its lesson about effort.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Move the moral to the front: “A hare mocked a tortoise and lost the race. Slow and steady wins.”

1. Start with the moral.
2. Link it.

Answer: Slow and steady wins the race, as a proud hare once discovered when he mocked a tortoise and lost.

Example 2. Which arrangement fits a story for little children who might miss the point?

1. Moral first tells them what to watch for.

Answer: Moral first.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the two places a moral can go.
2. **EASY** What did the wagoner do when his wheels stuck?
3. **EASY** What did Hercules tell him?
4. **EASY** What is Townsend's moral?
5. **MEDIUM** Why might a writer put the moral last?
6. **MEDIUM** Write a linking phrase for a moral-first fable.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Putting the moral first and then repeating it word for word at the end.
- Forgetting a linking phrase, so the moral and story feel like two separate pieces.

Make it a game • Front or Back? The teacher reads a fable without its moral. Players race to say a moral and whether they would put it first or last, with a reason.

Scripture. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thessalonians 3:10, KJV)

God hears our prayers, and he also expects us to do our part. Pray, then push the wheel.

Practice: answers

1. First (before the story) or last (after it).
2. He stood and cried to Hercules for help.
3. To put his shoulders to the wheels and goad on his oxen.
4. Self-help is the best help.
5. So the reader discovers the lesson; it can surprise.
6. Sample: "...as a certain wagoner learned one rainy day."

UNIT 1 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (2 pts) What is the first exercise in Aphthonius' book?
2. (3 pts) Name Aphthonius' three parts of a fable.
3. (3 pts) What are the three tools of amplifying?
4. (3 pts) What must you keep when you condense?
5. (4 pts) Rewrite with the moral first: "A dog dropped his meat to grab its reflection and lost both. Greed loses what it has."
6. (5 pts) Condense "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing" (your teacher reads it) to two sentences.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: ONE FABLE, THREE SIZES

Choose a fable from Townsend's Aesop. Write it three ways on one page: condensed to two sentences, as Townsend wrote it, and amplified to twice its length. Put the moral first in one version and last in the others.

- **Same story:** All three versions keep the same characters, problem and ending.
- **Amplified:** The long version adds dialogue, detail and feeling.
- **Arrangement:** The moral is first in one version and last in another.
- **Mechanics:** Capitals, end marks, complete sentences.

Answer key

1. The fable.
2. Moral, story, moral.
3. Dialogue, detail and feeling.
4. The characters, the main events and the ending (and the lesson).
5. Sample: Greed loses what it has, as a dog once learned when he snapped at his own reflection and lost his meat.
6. Two complete sentences keeping the disguise and the ending.

NARRATIVE: THE SIX QUESTIONS

A fable is made up to teach; a narrative tells what happened. In this unit you learn Theon's six questions (who, what, when, where, how, why), find them in Luke's account of Christ's birth and in David and Goliath, follow Paul Revere through the night of April 18, 1775, and learn the three virtues of every good narrative.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has finished Unit 1.
- Can use capital letters for names of people and places.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name the six parts of a narrative.
- ☐ I can answer the six questions for a Bible narrative and a history narrative.
- ☐ I can tell a first-hand account from a retelling.
- ☐ I can make a narrative clear, brief and believable.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **A KJV Bible:** For Luke 2, 1 Samuel 17 and Mark 4.
- **Paul Revere's letter to Jeremy Belknap (Massachusetts Historical Society):** Optional. Read Revere's own account online with a parent.

2.1 WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, HOW, WHY ★

OBJECTIVES

- Name Theon's six parts of a narrative.
- Find all six in a short Bible narrative.
- Fill in a six-question chart.

Warm-up. Your teacher says, "Something happened at the store." Ask questions until you know the whole story. Which questions did you need?

Video slot. Video coming. The six questions of a good story (who, what, when, where, how, why) for children. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

narrative

A true or made-up account of things that happened, told in order.

Theon

A Greek teacher of writing (first century A.D.) who listed the parts every narrative needs.

six questions

Who, what, when, where, how and why.

census

An official counting of people.

CORE IDEAS

The second exercise. After the fable comes the narrative. A fable is made up to teach a lesson; a narrative tells what happened.

Theon's six parts. The Greek teacher Theon said every narrative has six parts: the person (who), the action (what), the time (when), the place (where), the manner (how) and the cause (why). Newspaper reporters still use the same six questions.

Short but complete. A narrative can be very short and still answer all six. Luke tells the birth of Jesus in seven verses, and every question is answered.

The model. *Luke 2:1–7 (KJV)*

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth,

into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

PICTURE STUDY



The Census at Bethlehem, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1566 · Oil on panel · Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Bruegel painted the census in Bethlehem as if it happened in his own snowy village in Flanders. Can you find Mary and Joseph? They are easy to miss!

Look closely

- Find the man leading a donkey with a woman riding on it.
- What are the people at the inn doing?
- What season is it?

Talk about it

1. Which of the six questions does the painting answer?
2. Why do you think Bruegel set the story in his own village?

WRITING PROJECT: THE SIX-QUESTION CHART

Make a chart that answers the six questions for Luke 2:1-7.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A ruler

Steps

1. Draw a chart with six rows: Who, What, When, Where, How, Why.
2. Read Luke 2:1-7 aloud.
3. Answer each row in a short sentence, using the verse number as proof.
4. Write a two-sentence summary using all six answers.

Check your work

- All six rows are answered.
- Each answer gives its verse number.
- My summary is two complete sentences.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Luke 2:7.
2. Make the six-question chart.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 6.2 “Prepositional Phrases.” Many “where” and “when” answers are prepositional phrases: *in a manger*, *in those days*.

For families. Theon’s *Progymnasmata* (1st century A.D.) lists the six elements of narrative: person, action, place, time, manner and cause. The modern “5 W’s and H” are the same list.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Answer the six questions for: “Last Saturday, Dad and I fixed the fence in the back field with new boards because the calf kept getting out.”

1. Who: Dad and I.
2. What: fixed the fence.
3. When: last Saturday.
4. Where: the back field.
5. How: with new boards.
6. Why: the calf kept getting out.

Answer: All six answered in one sentence.

Example 2. Which question is missing? “Grandma baked bread in the kitchen on Monday with her old recipe.”

1. Who, what, where, when, how are there.
2. Why did she bake it?

Answer: Why.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name Theon’s six parts.
2. **EASY** In Luke 2, why did Joseph go to Bethlehem?
3. **EASY** Where was the baby laid?
4. **MEDIUM** Why was He laid in a manger?
5. **MEDIUM** What is the difference between a fable and a narrative?
6. **MEDIUM** Write one sentence about your morning that answers all six questions.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Forgetting “why.” It is the question most often left out.
- Mixing up “how” (the manner) and “why” (the cause).

Make it a game · Six-Question Relay. One player says a short event. The next asks one of the six questions, and the first player answers. Keep going until all six are asked.

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 tells us he wrote “in order.” Good narratives are careful and orderly.

Practice: answers

1. Who (person), what (action), when (time), where (place), how (manner), why (cause).
2. To be taxed (enrolled) because of Caesar’s decree, and he was of the house of David.
3. In a manger.
4. There was no room in the inn.
5. A fable is made up to teach a lesson; a narrative tells what happened.
6. Answers vary.

2.2 A BIBLE NARRATIVE: DAVID AND GOLIATH ★

OBJECTIVES

- Answer the six questions for 1 Samuel 17.
- See how a short narrative builds to its main action.
- Retell David and Goliath in a six-sentence narrative.

Warm-up. Name the biggest, strongest thing you have ever seen. Now imagine facing it with only a sling and five stones.

Video slot. Video coming. David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17) for children. Use a Bible-story source that follows the KJV; preview first.

KEY TERMS

Philistines

A people who lived by the sea west of Israel and often fought against it.

champion

One warrior who fights for a whole army.

sling

A strap with a pouch for throwing stones, used by shepherds.

climax

The most exciting moment of a story, where the problem is decided.

CORE IDEAS

The setting. The armies of Israel and the Philistines faced each other across the valley of Elah. For forty days the giant Goliath came out and dared any Israelite to fight him. No one would.

Who and why. Young David, a shepherd, came with food for his brothers. He heard Goliath defy “the armies of the living God” (verse 26) and offered to fight. His reason is the “why” of the story: God’s name was being mocked.

How. David would not wear King Saul’s armor. He took his staff, five smooth stones and his sling. The narrative slows down at the climax, as the model shows.

The model. *1 Samuel 17:48–50 (KJV)*

And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell

upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.

PICTURE STUDY



David and Goliath, Osmar Schindler, c. 1888 · Oil on canvas
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The German painter Osmar Schindler showed the moment before the fight: the boy and the giant face to face.

Look closely

- Compare the sizes of David and Goliath.
- What does David hold? What does Goliath carry?
- Look at David's face. Is he afraid?

Talk about it

1. Which of the six questions does this painting answer best?
2. Why do you think the painter chose the moment before the stone flew?

WRITING PROJECT: DAVID IN SIX SENTENCES

Write the story of David and Goliath in six sentences, one for each question.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible (1 Samuel 17)

Steps

1. Read 1 Samuel 17:1–11 and 17:32–50 with your teacher.
2. Fill a six-question chart.
3. Turn each row into one sentence, then put them in story order.
4. Read it aloud. Does it still make sense?

Check your work

- My narrative answers all six questions.
- The events are in the right order.
- Each sentence is complete.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy 1 Samuel 17:45.
2. Make a six-question chart for the story.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 5.4 “Irregular Verbs.” *Slew, smote* and *took* are irregular past-tense verbs in the model.

For families. The lesson mentions Goliath’s death plainly but briefly and does not dwell on verse 51.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Answer “why” for David.

1. What did Goliath do? He defied the armies of the living God.
2. What did David want? For all the earth to know there is a God in Israel (verse 46).

Answer: David fought because Goliath mocked God, and so that all would know the LORD saves.

Example 2. Put in order: (a) David chose five stones. (b) Goliath challenged Israel. (c) David struck Goliath. (d) David came with food for his brothers.

1. What came first? The challenge.

Answer: b, d, a, c.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Who was Goliath?

2. **EASY** Where did the armies camp?
3. **EASY** How many stones did David choose?
4. **EASY** Why did David refuse Saul's armor?
5. **MEDIUM** What is the climax of the story?
6. **MEDIUM** Write the "how" of the story in one sentence.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Telling every detail at the same speed. Slow down at the climax.
- Leaving out the "why," which is the heart of this story.

Make it a game • Stone Toss. Place six cups labeled Who, What, When, Where, How, Why. Toss a beanbag into a cup and answer that question about David and Goliath.

Scripture. "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." (1 Samuel 17:45, KJV)

David's courage came from trusting God, not himself.

Practice: answers

1. A giant champion of the Philistines, from Gath.
2. On either side of the valley of Elah.
3. Five smooth stones.
4. He had not tested (proved) it.
5. The stone strikes Goliath and he falls.
6. Sample: David killed Goliath with a sling and a stone, trusting the LORD.

2.3 A HISTORY NARRATIVE: PAUL REVERE’S RIDE

OBJECTIVES

- Answer the six questions for Paul Revere’s ride.
- Tell the difference between a first-hand account and a retelling.
- Write a short history narrative in order.

Warm-up. If you had to warn your whole street that a storm was coming, and there were no phones, how would you do it?

Video slot. Video coming. Paul Revere’s ride (April 18, 1775) for children, from a museum or historical society. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

first-hand account

A narrative written by someone who was there.

retelling

A narrative written later by someone else.

patriot

In 1775, an American colonist who resisted British rule.

Regulars

What the colonists called the British soldiers.

CORE IDEAS

Revere wrote it down. More than twenty years after his ride, Paul Revere wrote a letter telling what happened that night. Because he was there, it is a *first-hand account*. Historians trust it more than stories written later.

It was not a solo ride. Revere was one of several riders. William Dawes rode out by another road, and Dr. Samuel Prescott carried the warning to Concord after Revere was caught.

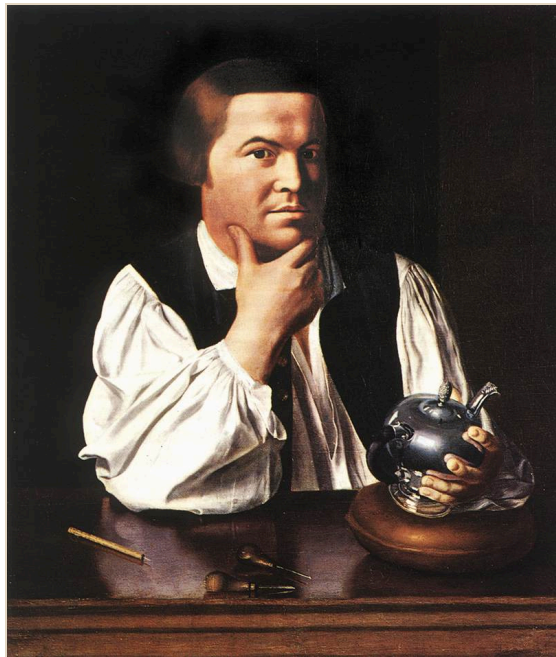
Time words. A history narrative needs clear time words: *on the night of, late that night, then, later*.

The model. *Paul Revere’s ride: a retelling for this course*

A retelling written for this course from Paul Revere’s own account (his letter to Jeremy Belknap, about 1798). Revere’s words are not quoted here.

On the night of April 18, 1775, Dr. Joseph Warren sent for Paul Revere in Boston. British soldiers were about to march toward Lexington and Concord. Revere had already arranged a signal: friends would hang lanterns in the steeple of the North Church, so that patriots across the river in Charlestown would know which way the soldiers were coming. Two friends rowed Revere quietly across the Charles River, past a British warship, the *Somerset*. In Charlestown he borrowed a horse. On the road he was nearly caught by two British officers, but he galloped away by another road. He reached Lexington and warned Samuel Adams and John Hancock. Then, riding on toward Concord with William Dawes and Dr. Samuel Prescott, he was stopped by a British patrol. Prescott escaped and carried the warning on. Revere was questioned by the soldiers and later let go near Lexington, without his horse.

PICTURE STUDY



Paul Revere, John Singleton Copley, 1768 · Oil on canvas · Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Before he was a famous rider, Paul Revere was a silversmith. Copley painted him at his work table seven years before the ride, holding a teapot he was making.

Look closely

- What is Revere holding? What tools lie on the table?
- What is he wearing? Is he dressed up or dressed for work?
- Look at his face. What kind of man does he seem?

Talk about it

1. Why would Copley paint a silversmith with his work instead of on a horse?

2. What does this painting tell you about Revere that the story of the ride does not?

WRITING PROJECT: THE NIGHT OF APRIL 18

Write a seven-sentence narrative of Revere's ride in order, using time words.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A map of Boston and Lexington (optional)

Steps

1. Read the model aloud.
2. List the events in order: the signal, the boat, the horse, the officers, Lexington, the capture, Prescott.
3. Write one sentence for each event.
4. Begin at least four sentences with a time word or phrase.
5. Underline your time words.

Check your work

- My events are in the right order.
- I used at least four time words.
- I named the other riders.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Make a six-question chart for Revere's ride.
2. List five time words.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.1 "Capital Letters." Names of people, places and months need capitals: *Paul Revere, Lexington, April.*

For families. The outline asked for Revere's 1798 letter as the model. It is not on Project Gutenberg, so this lesson retells it and quotes nothing. The letter is held by the Massachusetts Historical Society, which publishes a transcription online if you want to read Revere's own words together.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Which is a first-hand account? (a) Revere's letter about his ride. (b) A 1950 children's book about the ride.

1. Who was there? Revere.

Answer: (a).

Example 2. Add a time word: "Revere warned Adams and Hancock."

1. When? Late that night.

Answer: Late that night, Revere warned Adams and Hancock.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** When did Revere ride?
2. **EASY** Whom did he warn in Lexington?
3. **EASY** Name the two other riders.
4. **MEDIUM** Why were the lanterns hung?
5. **MEDIUM** Who carried the warning to Concord?
6. **MEDIUM** Why is Revere's letter a first-hand account?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking Revere rode alone all the way to Concord. He was stopped; Prescott got through.
- Mixing up the order of events. Use a list first.

Make it a game • Lantern Signal. One lantern (or flashlight) means "stand up," two means "sit down." Then switch: one means "tell the next event," two means "ask a question."

Scripture. "But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand." (Ezekiel 33:6, KJV)

A watchman's duty is to warn. Revere and his friends acted as watchmen.

Practice: answers

1. The night of April 18, 1775.

2. Samuel Adams and John Hancock.
3. William Dawes and Samuel Prescott.
4. To signal which way the British were coming.
5. Dr. Samuel Prescott.
6. He was there and wrote about it himself.

2.4 TELLING IT CLEARLY

OBJECTIVES

- Name the three virtues of a narrative: clarity, brevity and believability.
- Find them in Mark's account of the storm.
- Revise a muddled narrative to make it clear, brief and believable.

Warm-up. Your teacher tells a story the wrong way: too long, out of order and with a wild exaggeration. What went wrong?

Video slot. Video coming. Jesus calms the storm (Mark 4) for children. Use a Bible-story source that follows the KJV; preview first.

KEY TERMS

clarity

Being easy to understand: plain words, clear order.

brevity

Saying only what is needed.

believability

Telling things so the reader trusts you: true details, nothing wildly overstated.

virtue

A good quality.

CORE IDEAS

Three virtues. The old teachers said a good narrative has three virtues: it is clear, brief and believable. Theon wrote about them in his handbook.

Clear and brief. Use plain words and tell things in order. Leave out what does not matter. Mark tells the storm on the sea in a few verses.

Believable. Give true details that show you know the facts: the boat was full, Jesus was asleep on a pillow. Do not exaggerate (“a billion waves”).

The model. *Mark 4:37–39 (KJV)*

And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

PICTURE STUDY



The Storm on the Sea of Galilee, Rembrandt van Rijn, 1633 · Oil on canvas · Stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, in 1990; still missing
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

This is Rembrandt's only painting of the sea. It was stolen from a museum in 1990 and has never been found, so today we can see it only in photographs.

Look closely

- Find Jesus. Is he calm or afraid?
- Count the men in the boat. How many can you find?
- Where does the light fall?

Talk about it

1. How does Rembrandt show that the storm is dangerous?
2. Compare the painting with Mark 4. Which details match?

WRITING PROJECT: FIX THE MUDDLED STORY

Revise a long, muddled narrative so it is clear, brief and believable.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The muddled story in Example 2

Steps

1. Read the muddled story aloud.

2. Cross out what does not matter (brevity).
3. Put the events in order (clarity).
4. Replace any exaggeration with a true detail (believability).
5. Write the clean version in five sentences or fewer.

Check your work

- My version is in order.
- I cut what did not matter.
- I replaced exaggerations with true details.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Mark 4:39.
2. Write the three virtues and one sentence explaining each.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 5.1 “Adverbs.” One exact adverb or verb beats several uses of “very.”

For families. Theon names clarity, conciseness and plausibility as the virtues of narrative. The Rembrandt painting was stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in March 1990 and remains missing.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Make it brief: “Then after that, at the end, finally, the boat got to the shore.”

1. Cut the repeated time words.

Answer: At last the boat reached the shore.

Example 2. Fix this muddled story: “We caught a million fish. First, Dad bought bait, I think it was Tuesday or maybe Wednesday, oh and before that we drove to the lake. It was the best day ever in the whole universe.”

1. Order: drive, bait, fishing.
2. Cut the uncertain day; choose one.
3. Replace “a million” with a true number.

Answer: On Tuesday, Dad and I drove to the lake. We bought bait at the shop by the dock. By noon we had caught six bluegill.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three virtues of a narrative.
2. **EASY** Where was Jesus during the storm?
3. **EASY** What did Jesus say to the sea?
4. **MEDIUM** Which detail in Mark 4 makes the story believable?
5. **MEDIUM** Make this brief: “He was very, very, very, very tired.”
6. **MEDIUM** Why should a writer avoid exaggerating?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking brief means leaving out the ending.
- Using “very” many times instead of one strong word.

Make it a game · Cut It Down. The teacher reads a wordy sentence. Players race to say it in half as many words without losing the meaning.

Scripture. “And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:41, KJV)

The disciples’ question is the point of the narrative: who is this man? Clear writing leads the reader to the important question.

Practice: answers

1. Clarity, brevity, believability.
2. In the back (hinder part) of the ship, asleep on a pillow.
3. “Peace, be still.”
4. Answers vary: the pillow, the ship filling with water.
5. He was exhausted.
6. Readers stop trusting a story that overstates things.

UNIT 2 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (3 pts) Name the six questions of a narrative.
2. (2 pts) What is a first-hand account?
3. (3 pts) Name the three virtues of a narrative.
4. (2 pts) Why did David fight Goliath?
5. (2 pts) Who carried the warning to Concord in 1775?
6. (8 pts) Write a five-sentence narrative of something that happened to you this week that answers all six questions.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A FAMILY NARRATIVE

Ask a parent or grandparent to tell you about one day they remember (a move, a storm, a first job). Take notes with the six questions. Write it as a clear, brief, believable narrative of one page.

- **Six questions:** All six are answered.
- **Order:** Events are in order, with time words.
- **Three virtues:** Clear, brief and believable.
- **Mechanics:** Capitals for names and places; complete sentences.

Answer key

1. Who, what, when, where, how, why.
2. A narrative by someone who was there.
3. Clarity, brevity, believability.
4. Goliath defied the armies of the living God; David trusted the LORD.
5. Dr. Samuel Prescott.
6. Five complete sentences; all six questions answered; clear order.

STORY: CHARACTER AND SETTING

Stories need people (or animals) we can see and places we can feel. With Kenneth Grahame's *Mole and Toad* as your guides, you will learn to show a character instead of naming his traits, to give him a want and an obstacle, to build a setting with a mood, and to put them together in a one-page story.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can write a story with a beginning, middle and end (Grade 3, Unit 3).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can show a character through speech, action, looks and others' reactions.
- ☐ I can give a character a want and an obstacle.
- ☐ I can write a setting that tells where and when and sets a mood.
- ☐ I can write a one-page story with all of these.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- ***The Wind in the Willows* (Project Gutenberg #289)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/289>): Free. Read Chapters 1–3 aloud this month.

3.1 A CHARACTER YOU CAN SEE 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Show a character through what he says and does, not only by naming his traits.
- Find how Grahame shows that Toad is boastful and excitable.
- Write a paragraph that shows a character without naming the trait.

Warm-up. Act out “proud” without saying a word. Then act out “shy.” How did your audience know which was which?

Video slot. Video coming. *The Wind in the Willows*: Kenneth Grahame and the riverbank, a read-aloud of Chapter 2. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

character

A person or animal in a story.

trait

A quality of a character, such as boastful, kind or timid.

show, don’t tell

Let the reader see a trait through what the character says and does, instead of just naming it.

Toad Hall

Mr. Toad’s grand house by the river.

CORE IDEAS

Meet the riverbank. *The Wind in the Willows* (1908) tells of four friends: shy, curious Mole; sensible Water Rat; wise old Badger; and rich, boastful, foolish Mr. Toad.

Telling and showing. Grahame could have written, “Toad was boastful.” Instead he lets Toad dance, shout and brag. We see it ourselves, so we believe it.

Four ways to show. A writer shows a character by (1) what he says, (2) what he does, (3) how he looks and (4) how others react to him. In the model, notice how the Rat nudges the Mole.

The model. *Kenneth Grahame, The Wind in the Willows (1908), Chapter 2, “The Open Road”*

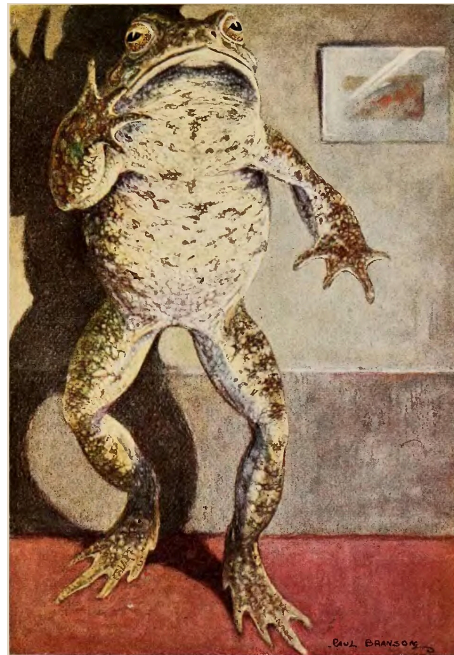
“Hooray!” he cried, jumping up on seeing them, “this is splendid!” He shook the paws of both of them warmly, never waiting for an introduction to the Mole. “How

kind of you!" he went on, dancing round them. "I was just going to send a boat down the river for you, Ratty, with strict orders that you were to be fetched up here at once, whatever you were doing. I want you badly—both of you. Now what will you take? Come inside and have something! You don't know how lucky it is, your turning up just now!"

"Let's sit quiet a bit, Toady!" said the Rat, throwing himself into an easy chair, while the Mole took another by the side of him and made some civil remark about Toad's "delightful residence."

"Finest house on the whole river," cried Toad boisterously. "Or anywhere else, for that matter," he could not help adding.

PICTURE STUDY



Mr. Toad, Paul Bransom, 1913 · Color plate · From the 1913 American edition (Charles Scribner's Sons)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Paul Bransom was an American animal artist who made the first color pictures for *The Wind in the Willows* in 1913. (E. H. Shepard's famous drawings came later and are still under copyright, so we use Bransom's.)

Look closely

- How is Toad standing?
- How did the artist dress him?
- Look at his face. What is he feeling?

Talk about it

1. How does Bransom show Toad's character without words?
2. If you drew Toad, what would he be doing?

WRITING PROJECT: SHOW, DON'T TELL

Write a paragraph of five or six sentences about an animal character with one trait. Never name the trait.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Choose an animal and one trait: greedy, brave, nervous, bossy or cheerful.
2. Write what he says (one line of dialogue).
3. Write what he does (two actions).
4. Write how he looks (one detail).
5. Write how another character reacts (one sentence).
6. Read it to someone. Can they guess the trait?

Check your work

- I never named the trait.
- I used at least three of the four ways to show.
- My listener guessed the trait.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy two sentences from the model that show Toad is boastful.
2. Write three telling sentences and change each into a showing sentence.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 7.3 "Interjections and Commands."
"Hooray!" is an interjection. Toad uses many of them!

For families. The Wind in the Willows (1908) is public domain in the U.S. E. H. Shepard's 1931 illustrations are still under copyright, so the lesson uses Paul Bransom's 1913 color plates.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Change telling to showing: "The dog was happy."

1. What does a happy dog do? Wags, jumps, barks.

Answer: The dog spun in circles and thumped his tail against the door.

Example 2. Which sentence shows that Toad is boastful?

1. Find where Toad praises himself.

Answer: “Finest house on the whole river,” cried Toad boisterously. “Or anywhere else, for that matter.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the four friends of the riverbank.
2. **EASY** What is Toad’s house called?
3. **EASY** Name the four ways to show a character.
4. **MEDIUM** What does Toad do when he sees his friends?
5. **MEDIUM** Why does the Rat nudge the Mole?
6. **MEDIUM** Change to showing: “Grandpa was tired.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Naming the trait and then showing it too. Trust the reader.
- Showing many traits at once. In a short piece, show one.

Make it a game · Guess the Trait. Each player writes a trait on a slip. Draw one and act it out or say one line as that character. Others guess.

Scripture. “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.” (Proverbs 27:2, KJV)

Toad praises himself, and his friends smile. Solomon gives wiser advice.

Practice: answers

1. Mole, Rat, Badger and Toad.
2. Toad Hall.
3. What he says, what he does, how he looks, how others react.
4. He jumps up, shakes their paws and dances around them.
5. Because Toad is bragging; the Rat is sharing a quiet joke.
6. Sample: Grandpa sank into his chair and closed his eyes before his boots were off.

3.2 WHAT A CHARACTER WANTS 🍷

OBJECTIVES

- Explain that every main character wants something.
- Find what the Mole wants at the start of the book.
- Give a character a want and an obstacle.

Warm-up. Name something you wanted very badly once. What stood in your way?

Video slot. Video coming. *The Wind in the Willows*, Chapter 1 “The River Bank,” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

want

What a character wishes for or is trying to get.

obstacle

Something that stands in the way of the want.

motive

The reason behind what a character does.

CORE IDEAS

Wants move stories. A character who wants nothing just sits. A character who wants something gets up and goes, and the story goes with him.

The Mole’s want. In the very first paragraph, the Mole is tired of spring-cleaning. Something “up above” is calling him. He wants to get out into the sunshine, and that want starts the whole book.

Add an obstacle. A want becomes a story when something stands in the way. The Mole’s tunnel is long and steep; later, he cannot row a boat.

The model. *Kenneth Grahame, The Wind in the Willows (1908), Chapter 1, “The River Bank”*

The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms. Spring was moving in the air above and in the earth below and around him, penetrating even his dark and lowly little house with its spirit of divine discontent and longing. It was small wonder, then, that he suddenly flung down his brush on

the floor, said “Bother!” and “O blow!” and also “Hang spring-cleaning!” and bolted out of the house without even waiting to put on his coat.

PICTURE STUDY



“It was the Water Rat”, Paul Bransom, 1913 · Color plate (frontispiece) · From the 1913 Scribner’s edition
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

This was the frontispiece of the 1913 edition. Its caption was “It was the Water Rat.” The Mole, out in the spring air, has found the river and a new friend.

Look closely

- Find the Water Rat. Where is his home?
- What plants grow around the hole?
- What does the water look like?

Talk about it

1. What did the Mole want at the start of the book? Does this picture show that he got it?
2. What new want might he have now?

WRITING PROJECT: A CHARACTER CARD

Make a character card for your own animal character: name, look, trait, want and obstacle. Then write the first paragraph of his story.

You will need

- An index card
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. On the card, write: Name, Looks, Trait, Wants, Obstacle.
2. Fill in each line.
3. In your notebook, write a first paragraph that shows what the character wants.
4. End the paragraph with the character starting toward the want.

Check your work

- My card has all five lines.
- My paragraph shows the want.
- The character moves toward it at the end.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Mole's three words: "Bother!" "O blow!" "Hang spring-cleaning!"
2. Fill in a character card.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 7.2 "Compound Subjects and Compound Predicates." "He scraped and scratched and scrabbled" has a compound predicate.

For families. Grahame's word "scrooged" (an old dialect word for squeezing) and his fondness for long lists are a good chance to talk about playful sound in prose.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. What does Peter Rabbit want, and what is his obstacle?

1. Want: the vegetables in Mr. McGregor's garden.
2. Obstacle: Mr. McGregor.

Answer: He wants the vegetables; Mr. McGregor is in the way.

Example 2. Give a want and an obstacle to "a young squirrel."

1. Want: to reach the last walnut.
2. Obstacle: it is at the end of a thin branch over a creek.

Answer: A young squirrel wants the last walnut, but it hangs at the tip of a thin branch over the creek.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What was the Mole doing at the start?

2. **EASY** What did he say when he flung down his brush?
3. **EASY** What does a character need to move a story?
4. **MEDIUM** What is an obstacle?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the want and obstacle of David in 1 Samuel 17.
6. **MEDIUM** Why does a story need an obstacle?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Giving a character a want that is too small to matter.
- Forgetting the obstacle.

Make it a game · Want and Wall. One player names a character and a want. The next names an obstacle (“the wall”). The third tells how the character gets past it.

Scripture. “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” (Psalm 37:4, KJV)

Good stories show that what we want matters. God cares about the desires of our hearts.

Practice: answers

1. Spring-cleaning his home.
2. “Bother!” “O blow!” and “Hang spring-cleaning!”
3. A want.
4. Something in the way of the want.
5. Want: to defend God’s name; obstacle: the giant Goliath (and others’ doubts).
6. Without one, the character gets what he wants at once and there is no story.

3.3 A SETTING YOU CAN FEEL

OBJECTIVES

- Define setting: where and when a story happens.
- See how Grahame makes the Wild Wood feel cold and frightening.
- Write a setting paragraph that sets a mood.

Warm-up. Close your eyes. Your teacher names a place (a barn at night, a beach at noon). Say three things you would hear and feel there.

Video slot. Video coming. *The Wind in the Willows*, Chapter 3 “The Wild Wood,” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

setting

Where and when a story happens.

mood

The feeling a place or scene gives the reader: cozy, gloomy, frightening.

simile

A comparison using “like” or “as.”

copse

A small group of trees.

CORE IDEAS

Setting is more than a place. A good setting makes the reader feel something. The Wild Wood is not just “a forest.” It is bare, cold, still and darkening.

Senses and time. Grahame tells the season (winter), the time (afternoon, then dusk) and what the Mole sees and hears: twigs crackling, logs tripping him.

Changing mood. Notice how the mood moves from cheerful to uneasy. At first it is “all fun.” Then the light drains away “like flood-water.”

The model. *Kenneth Grahame, The Wind in the Willows (1908), Chapter 3, “The Wild Wood”*

It was a cold still afternoon with a hard steely sky overhead, when he slipped out of the warm parlour into the open air. The country lay bare and entirely leafless around him, and he thought that he had never seen so far and so intimately into the insides of things as on that winter day when Nature was deep in her annual slumber and seemed to have kicked the clothes off. Copses, dells, quarries and all

hidden places, which had been mysterious mines for exploration in leafy summer, now exposed themselves and their secrets pathetically, and seemed to ask him to overlook their shabby poverty for a while, till they could riot in rich masquerade as before, and trick and entice him with the old deceptions. It was pitiful in a way, and yet cheering—even exhilarating. He was glad that he liked the country undecorated, hard, and stripped of its finery. He had got down to the bare bones of it, and they were fine and strong and simple. He did not want the warm clover and the play of seeding grasses; the screens of quickset, the billowy drapery of beech and elm seemed best away; and with great cheerfulness of spirit he pushed on towards the Wild Wood, which lay before him low and threatening, like a black reef in some still southern sea.

There was nothing to alarm him at first entry. Twigs crackled under his feet, logs tripped him, funguses on stumps resembled caricatures, and startled him for the moment by their likeness to something familiar and far away; but that was all fun, and exciting. It led him on, and he penetrated to where the light was less, and trees crouched nearer and nearer, and holes made ugly mouths at him on either side.

Everything was very still now. The dusk advanced on him steadily, rapidly, gathering in behind and before; and the light seemed to be draining away like flood-water.

PICTURE STUDY



Hunters in the Snow, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1565 · Oil on panel · Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Bruegel's winter is cold you can almost feel. Bare trees, gray-green sky and tired hunters coming home with very little.

Look closely

- What time of day is it? What season?
- Find the bare trees and the black birds.
- What are the people on the frozen ponds doing?

Talk about it

1. What is the mood near the hunters? Is it different down on the ice?
2. Which details make you feel cold?

WRITING PROJECT: A PLACE IN WINTER

Write a setting paragraph of six sentences about a real place in winter (or at night) that sets a clear mood.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A real place to visit or remember

Steps

1. Choose a place and a mood: cozy, lonely, spooky or peaceful.
2. Write the time and season in your first sentence.
3. Add two things you see, one you hear and one you feel.
4. Use one simile.
5. End with a sentence that names no feeling but makes the reader feel it.

Check your work

- My paragraph tells where and when.
- I used at least three senses.
- I used one simile.
- Every detail fits my mood.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Grahame's simile: "like a black reef in some still southern sea."
2. List five details for your winter place.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 6.1 "Prepositions." Setting words are often prepositional phrases: *into the open air, towards the Wild Wood.*

For families. The Wild Wood chapter has a frightening stretch (the “faces” and the Mole hiding in a tree). The model stops before it. Badger later rescues Mole and Rat, which makes a good ending to read aloud.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Make this setting feel cozy: “It was a kitchen at night.”

1. Add warmth, light and sound.

Answer: The kitchen was warm and yellow with lamplight, and the kettle hummed on the stove while snow ticked against the window.

Example 2. Which detail does not fit a frightening mood? (a) shadows crept closer, (b) a branch scraped the window, (c) a puppy yawned happily, (d) the wind moaned.

1. Which one feels safe?

Answer: (c).

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a setting?
2. **EASY** What season is it in the model?
3. **EASY** Find one simile in the model.
4. **MEDIUM** How does the mood change in the model?
5. **MEDIUM** Name two sounds or feelings the Mole notices.
6. **MEDIUM** Write a simile for a winter sky.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Listing details that do not fit the mood.
- Forgetting to tell when the story happens.

Make it a game • Mood Swap. Describe one place (the backyard) three times: cozy, spooky and cheerful. Others guess which mood you are doing.

Scripture. “He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.” (Psalm 147:16, KJV)

The psalmist uses similes for winter too. God made the seasons, and every one has its own beauty.

Practice: answers

1. Where and when a story happens.
2. Winter.
3. "Like a black reef in some still southern sea" or "like flood-water."
4. From cheerful and exciting to still and frightening.
5. Twigs crackling; logs tripping him.
6. Sample: The sky was as gray as an old tin pail.

3.4 MY CHARACTER IN MY PLACE 🍷

OBJECTIVES

- Combine a character, a want, an obstacle and a setting into a one-page story.
- Plan the story with a beginning, middle and end.
- Revise for showing, not telling.

Warm-up. Draw your character from Lesson 3.2 standing in your place from Lesson 3.3. What is he about to do?

Video slot. Video coming. How animals help on a farm: sheepdogs at work. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

plot

The events of a story, in order.

beginning, middle, end

The three parts of a story: the want, the struggle, the outcome.

draft

A first try at a piece of writing.

CORE IDEAS

Put it together. You have a character who wants something and a setting with a mood. Now let the character meet the obstacle in that place.

Plan in three boxes. Beginning: show the character and what he wants. Middle: the obstacle, and what he tries. End: how it turns out.

Read the model. The model was written for this course. Notice the want in the first sentence, the setting details, the obstacle and the ending that shows (not tells) Hector's joy.

The model. *"Hector and the Twentieth Lamb"*

A model written for this course.

Old Hector the sheepdog wanted only one thing: to bring every lamb home before dark. On the last evening of March the wind turned cold, and the sky over Cobb's Hill went the color of a bruise. Hector counted the flock at the gate. Nineteen. There should have been twenty. He trotted back up the hill, past the stone wall where the brambles grew thick and the sheep had pulled tufts of wool from the thorns. The light was going fast. Then, from somewhere under the brambles,

came a thin, cross little “Maa!” Hector lay flat, wormed his way in, and nosed the lamb out backward, inch by inch. When the two of them came down to the gate, the farmer’s lantern was swinging in the dusk. “Twenty,” said the farmer, and Hector thumped his tail.

PICTURE STUDY



Shepherdess with Her Flock, Jean-François Millet, 1863–1864 · Oil on canvas · Musée d’Orsay, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Millet painted country people at their work. This young shepherdess keeps her flock on a wide plain as the evening light fades.

Look closely

- What is the shepherdess doing with her hands?
- Find the dog.
- What time of day is it?

Talk about it

1. What might this shepherdess want? What could stand in her way?
2. Write a first sentence for her story.

WRITING PROJECT: MY ONE-PAGE STORY

Write a one-page story about your character in your place.

You will need

- Writing notebook

- Your character card and setting paragraph

Steps

1. Fill three planning boxes: beginning, middle, end.
2. Write the beginning: show the character and his want.
3. Write the middle: the obstacle, in your setting, with at least two sense details.
4. Write the end: show how it turns out.
5. Revise: change two telling sentences into showing sentences.
6. Give it a title.

Check your work

- My story has a beginning, middle and end.
- My character wants something and meets an obstacle.
- My setting has a mood.
- Every sentence starts with a capital and ends with an end mark.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Your three planning boxes.
2. Your draft.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 7.4 “Compound Sentences.” Join two short sentences with a comma and *and*, *but* or *or*.

For families. This is the first 📁 portfolio-ready story of the year. Praise specific choices (“I love ‘thumped his tail’”) before suggesting one fix.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Plan a story: a kitten wants to catch the barn swallow.

1. Beginning: the kitten watches the swallow from the hayloft.
2. Middle: it climbs a beam, slips and dangles.
3. End: the farmer’s boy lifts it down; the swallow goes on swooping.

Answer: A three-box plan.

Example 2. Find the want, obstacle and setting in the model.

1. Want: bring every lamb home before dark.
2. Obstacle: one lamb is caught in the brambles and darkness is coming.
3. Setting: a cold March evening on Cobb's Hill.

Answer: All three found.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does Hector want?
2. **EASY** How many lambs should there be?
3. **EASY** Where was the lost lamb?
4. **MEDIUM** Find a showing sentence in the ending.
5. **MEDIUM** Find a simile or comparison in the model.
6. **MEDIUM** What are the three planning boxes?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Spending the whole page on the beginning.
- Ending with "and then I woke up." Solve the problem.

Make it a game · Story Dice. Make three lists of six: characters, wants and places. Roll a die three times and tell a quick story from the result.

Scripture. "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" (Luke 15:4, KJV)

Hector went back for one lamb. Jesus told of a shepherd who did the same, and he is that Good Shepherd.

Practice: answers

1. To bring every lamb home before dark.
2. Twenty.
3. Under the brambles by the stone wall.
4. "Twenty," said the farmer, and Hector thumped his tail.
5. The sky "went the color of a bruise."
6. Beginning, middle, end.

UNIT 3 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (2 pts) What is a trait?
2. (4 pts) Name the four ways to show a character.
3. (2 pts) What two things make a story move?
4. (2 pts) What is a setting?
5. (3 pts) Change to showing: "The boy was scared."
6. (7 pts) Write a setting paragraph of four sentences with a gloomy mood.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: MY ONE-PAGE STORY

Make a clean copy of your story from Lesson 3.4, with a title and a picture of your character in his place.

- **Character:** Shown, not told; has a want.
- **Setting:** Where, when and a mood.
- **Plot:** Beginning, middle and end; the obstacle is faced.
- **Mechanics:** Complete sentences, capitals and end marks.

Answer key

1. A quality of a character.
2. What he says, does, looks like, and how others react.
3. A want and an obstacle.
4. Where and when a story happens.
5. Sample: The boy's knees shook and he clutched the railing.
6. Four sentences; where and when; details fit the mood.

NARRATIVE II: CHANGING THE ORDER

A narrative does not always have to begin at the beginning. Homer began the *Odyssey* in the middle; newspapers begin with the end. In this unit you will learn all three orders and use them to tell one great true story: the Wright brothers' first flight at Kitty Hawk on December 17, 1903.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has finished Unit 2 (the six questions).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell a narrative in chronological order with time words.
- ☐ I can begin in the middle and use a flashback.
- ☐ I can lead with the outcome.
- ☐ I can tell one story three ways and choose the best order for my reader.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- ***Wright Brothers National Memorial* (National Park Service, 1961; Project Gutenberg #57725)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/57725>): Free. The models in this unit come from it.
- **Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. Samuel Butler (Project Gutenberg #1727)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1727>): Free. For a parent to preview; read selected adventures aloud.

4.1 START AT THE BEGINNING ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell a narrative in straight time order.
- Find the time words that keep events in order.
- Write the morning of December 17, 1903, from beginning to end.

Warm-up. Lay out five photos or drawings of your day in the wrong order. Have a partner put them right. What clues did they use?

Video slot. Video coming. The Wright brothers' first flight, December 17, 1903, from the National Park Service or the Smithsonian. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

chronological order

Telling events in the order they happened, from first to last.

time words

Words and phrases that show when: first, at 10 in the morning, then, after, at last.

Kitty Hawk

A village on the Outer Banks of North Carolina near the Kill Devil Hills, where the Wrights flew.

CORE IDEAS

The simplest order. The plainest way to tell a narrative is to start at the beginning and go to the end. This is called chronological order, from the Greek word *chronos*, time.

Wilbur and Orville. Two brothers from Dayton, Ohio, who ran a bicycle shop, spent four years testing gliders on the windy sand hills near Kitty Hawk. On Thursday, December 17, 1903, they flew a powered airplane for the first time.

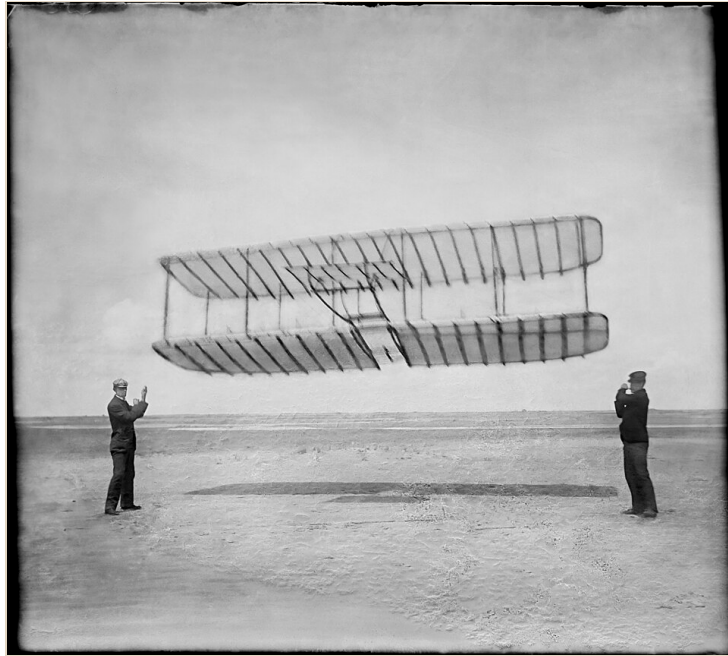
Clocks and weather. The model gives the day, the weather and the hour. Good chronological narratives give the reader a clock.

The model. *Omega G. East, Wright Brothers National Memorial (National Park Service, 1961; a U.S. government work)*

Thursday, December 17 dawned, and was to go down in history as a day when a great engineering feat was accomplished. It was a cold day with winds of 22 to 27 miles an hour blowing from the north. Puddles of water near the camp were covered with ice. The Wrights waited indoors, hoping the winds would diminish. But they continued brisk, and at 10 in the morning the brothers decided to

attempt a flight, fully realizing the difficulties and dangers of flying a relatively untried machine in so high a wind.

PICTURE STUDY



*The Wright glider being flown as a kite, 1901, Wilbur or Orville Wright, 1901 · Glass-plate negative (photograph) · Library of Congress, Wright Brothers Negatives
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain*

The Wrights took photographs of their own experiments. Before the airplane, they spent years testing gliders like this one at Kitty Hawk.

Look closely

- What holds the glider up?
- Describe the land around it.
- How many wings can you count?

Talk about it

1. Why did the Wrights test gliders for years before adding an engine?
2. What does this photo tell you about how they worked?

WRITING PROJECT: DECEMBER 17, IN ORDER

Write a six-sentence chronological narrative of the morning of December 17, 1903.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The model

Steps

1. List events in order: the cold morning, the decision at 10, laying the track, the visitors, the first flight.
2. Begin each sentence with a time word or phrase.
3. Include the weather and one exact time.
4. End with the first flight.

Check your work

- My events are in time order.
- Each sentence has a time word.
- I included the weather and an exact time.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the first sentence of the model.
2. List eight time words.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 6.2 “Prepositional Phrases.” *At 10 in the morning* and *near the camp* are prepositional phrases of time and place.

For families. The model comes from a National Park Service booklet (1961). Works of the U.S. government are in the public domain.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Put in order: (a) they laid the track, (b) the day dawned cold, (c) Orville flew, (d) at 10 they decided to try.

1. Which came first? The dawn.

Answer: b, d, a, c.

Example 2. Add a time word: “The visitors arrived from the life-saving station.”

1. When? Before the brothers were ready.

Answer: Before the brothers were quite ready, the visitors arrived from the life-saving station.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does chronological mean?

2. **EASY** Where were the Wrights from?
3. **EASY** What was the weather on December 17, 1903?
4. **MEDIUM** At what hour did they decide to try?
5. **MEDIUM** Why did they wait indoors?
6. **MEDIUM** Name three time words.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Skipping a step, so the reader is lost.
- Using “and then” for every sentence. Vary the time words.

Make it a game • Human Timeline. Write each event on a card. Each player takes a card, and together you line up in the right order without talking.

Scripture. “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, KJV)

God made time and order. Chronological writing follows the order he made.

Practice: answers

1. In time order.
2. Dayton, Ohio.
3. Cold, with winds of 22 to 27 miles an hour; ice on puddles.
4. 10 in the morning.
5. They hoped the wind would die down.
6. Answers vary: first, then, at last, after, before.

4.2 START IN THE MIDDLE

OBJECTIVES

- Define *in medias res*: beginning in the middle of the action.
- See how Homer opens the *Odyssey* in the middle.
- Rewrite a narrative to begin in the middle.

Warm-up. Which opening makes you want to hear more? (a) “I woke up and ate breakfast.” (b) “The canoe tipped, and I was in the river.”

Video slot. Video coming. The *Odyssey* for children: who was Odysseus (Ulysses)? Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

in medias res

Latin for “into the middle of things”: starting a story in the middle of the action.

flashback

Going back to tell what happened earlier.

Ulysses

The Latin name for Odysseus, the Greek hero of the *Odyssey*.

Homer

The ancient Greek poet of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

CORE IDEAS

Homer’s trick. The *Odyssey* tells of Ulysses’ ten-year journey home from the Trojan War. But Homer does not begin at Troy. He begins near the end, with Ulysses stuck on an island, and later lets Ulysses tell the earlier adventures himself.

Why start in the middle? It grabs the reader at once. The Roman poet Horace praised Homer for rushing his reader “into the middle of things.”

Then go back. After an exciting opening, the writer uses a flashback (“Two hours earlier...”) to explain how things got that way.

The model. *Homer, The Odyssey, Book I, translated by Samuel Butler (1900)*

So now all who escaped death in battle or by shipwreck had got safely home except Ulysses, and he, though he was longing to return to his wife and country, was detained by the goddess Calypso, who had got him into a large cave and wanted to marry him. But as years went by, there came a time when the gods

settled that he should go back to Ithaca; even then, however, when he was among his own people, his troubles were not yet over; nevertheless all the gods had now begun to pity him except Neptune, who still persecuted him without ceasing and would not let him get home.

PICTURE STUDY



Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus, J. M. W. Turner, 1829 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Turner painted one of Ulysses' adventures, the escape from the giant Cyclops, as a blaze of sunrise colors.

Look closely

- Find the ship. What colors are its sails?
- Find the giant in the clouds over the cliffs.
- Where is the sun?

Talk about it

1. Is this painting from the beginning, middle or end of an adventure?
2. If you started a story with this picture, what would you tell next?

WRITING PROJECT: INTO THE MIDDLE

Retell the Wright brothers' first flight beginning in the middle, at the moment the machine lifts off, then go back.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Write an opening sentence at the exciting moment: “After forty feet on the track, the machine rose into the wind.”
2. Write two more sentences of the flight.
3. Write a flashback sentence: “That morning had begun with ice on the puddles.”
4. Tell two or three earlier events.
5. End with the landing.

Check your work

- I began in the middle of the action.
- I used a flashback phrase.
- The reader can follow the order.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Butler’s first sentence of the model.
2. Write three exciting “middle” opening sentences for stories you know.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 3.4 “Past, Present and Future.” A flashback uses *had* to show an earlier past: “He *had* waited all morning.”

For families. Samuel Butler’s prose translation (1900) is public domain. It uses the Latin names (Ulysses, Jove, Neptune). The *Odyssey* is pagan literature; Calypso’s “marriage” offer is mentioned only in passing.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Rewrite to start in the middle: “We drove to the lake. We rented a canoe. A wave tipped us over.”

1. Start with the exciting moment.
2. Then flash back.

Answer: The canoe tipped, and suddenly I was in the cold lake. An hour before, we had rented it at the dock.

Example 2. Which is a flashback phrase? (a) “Two days earlier,” (b) “Next,” (c) “At last.”

1. Which goes back in time?

Answer: (a).

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does *in medias res* mean?
2. **EASY** Who wrote the *Odyssey*?
3. **EASY** Where is Ulysses when the story opens?
4. **MEDIUM** Which god would not let Ulysses go home?
5. **MEDIUM** What is a flashback?
6. **MEDIUM** Why might a writer start in the middle?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Starting in the middle and never going back, so the reader is confused.
- Using too many flashbacks.

Make it a game · Jump In. The teacher names a familiar story. Players race to give an opening line from its most exciting moment.

Scripture. “Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.” (Genesis 37:28, KJV)

Joseph’s story could begin here, in the middle, and flash back to the coat and the dreams.

Practice: answers

1. Into the middle of things.
2. Homer.
3. Detained by Calypso in a cave on her island.
4. Neptune.
5. Going back to tell what happened earlier.
6. To grab the reader’s attention at once.

4.3 START AT THE END

OBJECTIVES

- Tell a narrative by stating the outcome first.
- Read the Wrights' telegram as an "ending first" narrative.
- Write a news-style narrative that leads with the result.

Warm-up. Read a newspaper headline with your teacher. Does it tell the beginning or the end of the story?

Video slot. Video coming. The Wright brothers' telegram home, December 17, 1903. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

outcome

How things turned out.

lead

The first sentence of a news story, which tells the most important fact.

telegram

A short message sent by wire and printed out for the receiver; each word cost money.

CORE IDEAS

Ending first. Sometimes the most important thing is how it turned out. Newspapers tell the outcome in the first sentence (the lead), then explain how it happened.

The telegram. That afternoon the brothers sent a telegram to their father in Dayton. Every word cost money, so it is very short. The first word is the outcome: "Success." (The telegraph office got two things wrong: the longest flight was really 59 seconds, and Orville's name was misspelled.)

Then explain. After the outcome, tell the story in order. Orville's own description of the first flight, below the telegram, starts with the result, too.

The model. *Omega G. East, Wright Brothers National Memorial (National Park Service, 1961; a U.S. government work): the telegram as printed there, and Orville Wright's words*

Success four flights Thursday morning all against twenty-one mile wind started from level with engine power alone average speed through air thirty-one miles longest 57 seconds inform press home Christmas.
Orevelle Wright.

This flight lasted only 12 seconds, but it was nevertheless the first in the history of the world in which a machine carrying a man had raised itself by its own power into the air in full flight, had sailed forward without reduction of speed, and had finally landed at a point as high as that from which it started.

PICTURE STUDY

Form No. 168.

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.
INCORPORATED
23,000 OFFICES IN AMERICA. CABLE SERVICE TO ALL THE WORLD.

This Company TRANSMITS and DELIVERS messages only on conditions limiting its liability, which have been assented to by the sender of the following message. Errors can be guarded against only by repeating a message back to the sending station for comparison, and the Company will not hold itself liable for errors or delays in transmission or delivery of Unrepeated Messages, beyond the amount of tolls paid thereon, nor in any case where the claim is not presented in writing within sixty days after the message is filed with the Company for transmission.
This is an UNREPEATED MESSAGE, and is delivered by request of the sender, under the conditions named above.

ROBERT C. CLOWRY, President and General Manager.

RECEIVED at 170

176 C KA GS 33 Paid. Via Norfolk Va
Kitty Hawk N C Dec 17
Bishop M Wright
7 Hawthorne St

Success four flights thursday morning all against twenty one mile
wind started from Level with engine power alone average speed
through air thirty one miles longest 57 seconds inform Press
home ~~press~~ Christmas . Orevelle Wright 525P

*Telegram from Orville Wright, December 17, 1903, Western Union / Orville Wright, 1903 · Telegram · Library of Congress
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain*

This is the real telegram the Wrights' father received. Telegraph clerks typed messages onto forms like this.

Look closely

- Find the first word of the message.
- Find the place and the date.
- Find the misspelled name.

Talk about it

1. Why is the telegram so short?
2. If you had only twelve words to tell your family about your best day, what would they be?

WRITING PROJECT: LEAD WITH THE RESULT

Write the story of the first flight as a newspaper story that starts with the outcome.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Write a headline of six words or fewer.
2. Write a lead sentence with the outcome: who did what, when and where.
3. Write three more sentences telling how it happened, in order.
4. End with what the brothers did next (the telegram home).

Check your work

- My headline and lead tell the outcome.
- The rest explains how, in order.
- I used names, dates and places with capital letters.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the telegram.
2. Write a twelve-word “telegram” about your week.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.1 “Capital Letters.” The telegram leaves out capitals and periods to save words. In your writing, put them back.

For families. The telegram text is quoted exactly as printed in the National Park Service booklet, including “Orevelle,” which the booklet explains was a transmission error.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Write a lead for: The church picnic was held Saturday at Miller’s Pond. Rain started at noon. Everyone moved into the barn. They still had the pie contest.

1. What is the outcome? The picnic went on in the barn.

Answer: Rain did not stop Saturday’s church picnic, which moved into a barn at Miller’s Pond.

Example 2. What two mistakes did the telegraph office make?

1. Read the course text.

Answer: 57 seconds instead of 59, and “Orevelle” for Orville.

PRACTICE

1.  What is a lead?

2. **EASY** What is the first word of the telegram?
3. **EASY** How many flights were made that day?
4. **MEDIUM** How long was the first flight?
5. **MEDIUM** Why did Orville call it the first in history?
6. **MEDIUM** Why is a telegram short?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Telling the outcome and then repeating it at the end word for word.
- Leaving out where and when in the lead.

Make it a game · Twelve-Word Telegram. Each player tells a story in exactly twelve words. Others count. Over twelve, try again.

Scripture. “As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.”
(Proverbs 25:25, KJV)

Their father must have rejoiced at that one word: Success.

Practice: answers

1. The first sentence of a news story, with the most important fact.
2. Success.
3. Four.
4. 12 seconds.
5. A machine carrying a man raised itself by its own power, flew forward without losing speed and landed as high as it started.
6. Each word cost money.

4.4 THE WRIGHT BROTHERS AT KITTY HAWK ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell one true narrative three ways: beginning, middle and end first.
- Choose the best order for a reader and explain why.
- Prepare a polished narrative for a showcase or contest.

Warm-up. Name one thing you learned about the Wrights this unit that surprised you.

Video slot. Video coming. The Wright brothers: from bicycle shop to Kitty Hawk, from the Smithsonian or the National Park Service. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

version

One way of telling a story.

audience

The people who will read or hear your writing.

polish

To revise and make a clean final copy.

CORE IDEAS

One story, three orders. You now know three ways to arrange a narrative. A writer chooses the order that fits his reader and purpose.

Which order when? Beginning-first is clearest, good for a history report. Middle-first is most exciting, good for a story. End-first is quickest, good for news.

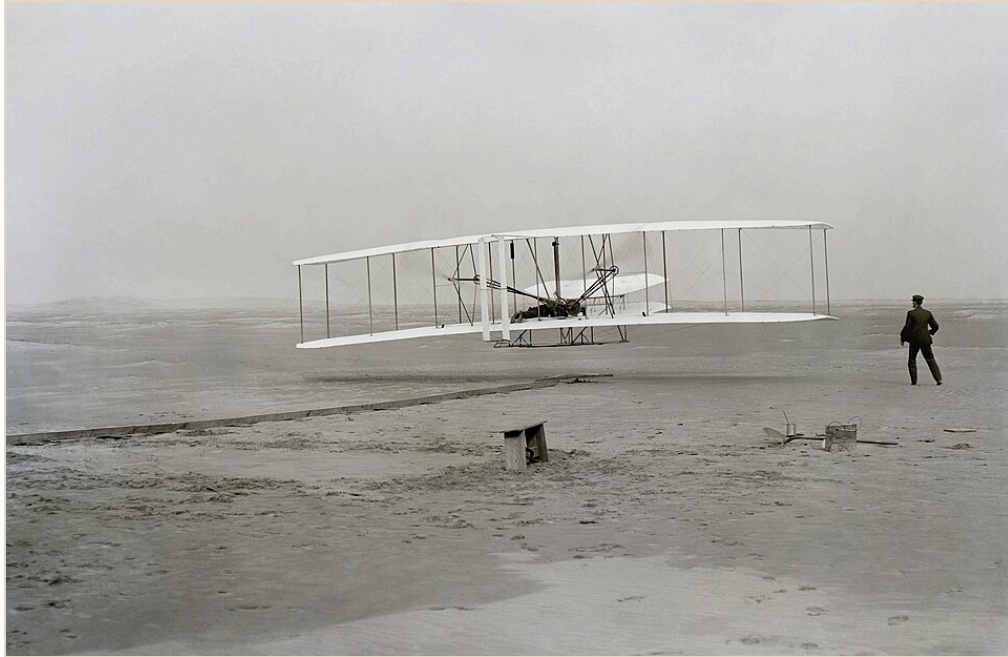
A contest piece. The School Launch directory lists the Catholic Textbook Project History Essay Contest for Grades 4–5, with homeschool divisions. Its 2027 rules were not yet posted when this course was written, so this lesson ends with a polished narrative you can enter in a family showcase now and adapt to the contest topic when the rules appear.

The model. *Omega G. East, Wright Brothers National Memorial (National Park Service, 1961; a U.S. government work)*

At 10:35 a.m., Orville lay prone on the lower wing with hips in the cradle that operated the control mechanisms. He released the restraining wire and the machine started down the 60-foot track, traveling slowly into the headwind at about 7 or 8 miles an hour--so slow that Wilbur was able to run alongside holding the right wing to balance the machine on the track. After a run of 40 feet on the track, the machine took off. When the airplane had risen about 2 feet above

ground, Daniels snapped the famous photograph of the conquest of the air. The plane then climbed 10 feet into the sky, while Orville struggled with the controlling mechanisms to keep it from rising too high in such an irregular, gusty wind.

PICTURE STUDY



*First flight, December 17, 1903, John T. Daniels (camera set up by Orville Wright), 1903 · Glass-plate negative (photograph) · Library of Congress
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain*

Orville set up his camera on a tripod and asked John T. Daniels of the life-saving station to squeeze the bulb if the machine left the ground. Daniels was not a photographer, yet he caught the most famous moment in the history of flight.

Look closely

- Find Orville. How is he lying?
- Find Wilbur. What is he doing?
- Look at the ground. What do you see near the track?

Talk about it

1. Which order (beginning, middle or end first) does this photograph suggest?
2. What would you write as a caption for this photo?

WRITING PROJECT: ONE FLIGHT, THREE WAYS

Write three short versions (four or five sentences each) of the first flight, then polish the best one.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Clean paper

Steps

1. Version A: beginning first (the cold morning).
2. Version B: middle first (the takeoff), with a flashback.
3. Version C: end first ("Success.").
4. Read all three aloud. Choose one and say why.
5. Revise it and make a clean copy with a title.

Tips

- Before entering any contest, read its rule sheet (see the Contest Lab, Unit 9).

Check your work

- I wrote all three versions.
- My chosen version has a clear order.
- My clean copy has a title, capitals and end marks.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Your three versions.
2. One sentence: which order you chose and why.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.2 "Commas." Use a comma after a long opening phrase: "After a run of 40 feet on the track, the machine took off."

For families. The Catholic Textbook Project contest lists homeschool divisions; whether non-Catholic homeschoolers may enter should be confirmed when 2027 rules appear (the directory flags this). The 1903 photograph is public domain; its Library of Congress record names John T. Daniels.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Write the first sentence of each version.

1. A: "Thursday, December 17, 1903, dawned cold and windy at Kitty Hawk."
2. B: "After forty feet on the track, the machine rose into the air."
3. C: "Two brothers from Dayton made the first powered airplane flight in history."

Answer: Three different openings for one story.

Example 2. Which version would you choose for a history report for your grandparents? Why?

1. Who is the audience? Grandparents who want the facts.
2. What is the purpose? To inform.

Answer: Beginning-first or end-first, because it is clear and gives the facts quickly.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three orders.
2. **EASY** Who took the famous photograph?
3. **EASY** How high did the plane climb?
4. **MEDIUM** How far did the first flight go?
5. **MEDIUM** Who ran alongside holding the wing?
6. **MEDIUM** Which order is best for a news report?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Changing the facts between versions. Only the order changes.
- Mixing two orders in one version without a clear flashback.

Make it a game · Order Up!. The teacher calls “Beginning!”, “Middle!” or “End!”
Players must give a first sentence for the Wright story in that order.

Scripture. “But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31, KJV)

The Wrights studied birds for years. God made eagles fly first.

Practice: answers

1. Beginning first, middle first, end first.
2. John T. Daniels.
3. About 10 feet.
4. 120 feet.
5. Wilbur.
6. End first.

UNIT 4 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (2 pts) What is chronological order?
2. (2 pts) What does *in medias res* mean?
3. (2 pts) What is a flashback?
4. (2 pts) What is a lead?
5. (2 pts) What was the first word of the Wrights' telegram?
6. (6 pts) Write the first sentence of a story about your last birthday three ways: beginning, middle and end first.
7. (4 pts) Which order would you use for a news report? Why?

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: THE FIRST FLIGHT, POLISHED

A clean copy of your chosen version from Lesson 4.4, with a title and a drawing or printed copy of the 1903 photograph.

- **Order:** One clear order, with a flashback if needed.
- **Accuracy:** Facts match the sources.
- **Style:** Clear, brief and believable.
- **Mechanics:** Capitals, commas after long openers, end marks.

Answer key

1. Telling events in the order they happened.
2. Into the middle of things.
3. Going back to tell what happened earlier.
4. The first sentence of a news story, with the outcome.
5. Success.
6. Three sentences, one in each order.
7. End first, because readers want the outcome quickly.

POETRY: THE BALLAD

A ballad is a story told in a poem. In this unit you will gallop through Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride," learn the four-line ballad stanza from "The Wreck of the Hesperus," hear refrains in an old ballad and in Psalm 136, and write a ballad of your own family's or town's history.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can hear rhyme and clap a beat (Grade 3, Unit 5).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell what a ballad is.
- ☐ I can write a ballad stanza that rhymes on lines 2 and 4.
- ☐ I can use a refrain.
- ☐ I can write a four-stanza ballad about true history.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Longfellow, *Complete Poetical Works* (Project Gutenberg #1365)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1365>): Free. Both Longfellow poems in this unit.
- **A hymnbook:** Look for hymns in common meter (C.M.).

5.1 STORY POEMS 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Define a ballad: a poem that tells a story.
- Read and recite the opening of “Paul Revere’s Ride.”
- Compare the poem with the history narrative from Lesson 2.3.

Warm-up. Clap the rhythm of “LIS-ten, my CHIL-dren, and YOU shall HEAR.” Can you gallop to it like a horse?

Video slot. Video coming. Longfellow’s “Paul Revere’s Ride” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

ballad

A poem or song that tells a story, usually in short stanzas with rhyme.

stanza

A group of lines in a poem, like a paragraph in prose.

rhythm

The beat of a poem.

poetic license

A poet’s freedom to change facts for the sake of the poem.

CORE IDEAS

Poems that tell stories. Long before books were common, people told history and adventure in songs and story poems called ballads. They were easy to remember because of their rhythm and rhyme.

Longfellow’s ride. In 1860 Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote “Paul Revere’s Ride.” It made Revere famous across America. Its galloping rhythm sounds like hoofbeats.

Poem versus history. Longfellow changed some facts. In the poem, Revere waits for the lantern signal himself and rides all the way to Concord. In history (Lesson 2.3) the signal was for others, and Revere was caught before Concord. A poet may use *poetic license*; a historian may not.

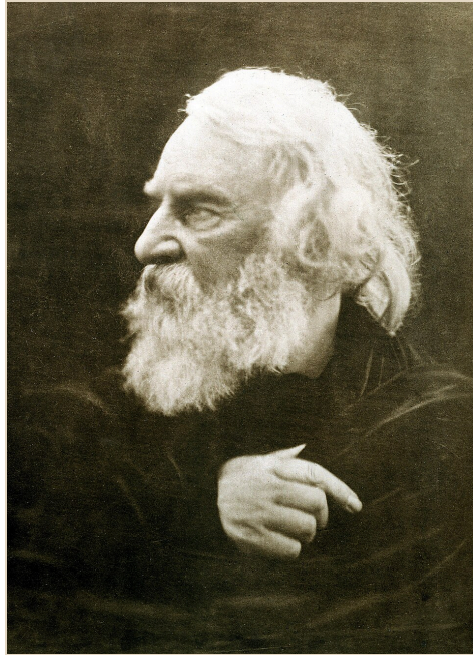
The model. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “Paul Revere’s Ride” (1860), from *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, opening stanzas

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm
For the country folk to be up and to arm,"

Then he said, "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

PICTURE STUDY



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Julia Margaret Cameron, 1868 · Albumen photograph · Photographed at Freshwater, Isle of Wight
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The English photographer Julia Margaret Cameron photographed Longfellow in 1868, eight years after he wrote “Paul Revere’s Ride.” By then he was the most famous poet in America.

Look closely

- Describe his hair and beard.
- Where is he looking?
- How did the photographer use light and dark?

Talk about it

1. Does he look like a man who would write a galloping poem? Why or why not?
2. What would you ask Longfellow about his poem?

WRITING PROJECT: RECITE AND COMPARE

Memorize the first stanza and write a comparison of the poem and the history.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Read the model aloud three times, clapping the beat.
2. Memorize the first stanza (five lines) and recite it.

3. Make a T-chart: “In the poem” and “In history.”
4. Write two differences.
5. Write one sentence: why might Longfellow have changed them?

Check your work

- I recited the first stanza.
- My chart has two differences.
- I gave a reason for poetic license.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the first stanza.
2. Your T-chart.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.2 “Commas.” Poets use commas to show pauses. Pause at each comma when you recite.

For families. Longfellow’s poem (1860) is public domain. Its historical liberties are well known; the lesson uses them to teach the difference between poetry and history.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Find the rhyming words in the first stanza.

1. Look at the ends of lines.

Answer: hear/Revere/year; five/alive.

Example 2. In the poem, who hangs the lantern, and who waits for it?

1. Read stanza 2.

Answer: His friend hangs it; Revere waits on the opposite shore.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a ballad?
2. **EASY** Who wrote “Paul Revere’s Ride”?
3. **EASY** What date does the poem give?
4. **MEDIUM** What does “One, if by land, and two, if by sea” mean?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the British warship in the poem.
6. **MEDIUM** Name one fact Longfellow changed.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking the poem is exact history.
- Reading in a sing-song way that hides the meaning.

Make it a game · Gallop Rhythm. Slap your knees in a gallop beat while reciting the first stanza. Speed up and slow down together.

Scripture. “We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.” (Psalm 78:4, KJV)

Israel told its history in songs and psalms so children would remember. Ballads do the same.

Practice: answers

1. A poem that tells a story.
2. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.
3. The eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five.
4. One lantern if the British come by land, two if by water.
5. The Somerset.
6. Revere did not reach Concord (or he did not wait for the signal himself).

5.2 THE BALLAD STANZA

OBJECTIVES

- Describe the ballad stanza: four lines, rhyming on lines 2 and 4.
- Count beats in a ballad stanza.
- Write two ballad stanzas.

Warm-up. Sing or say “Amazing Grace” together. Clap the beats in each line. Which lines have four beats, and which have three?

Video slot. Video coming. Longfellow’s “The Wreck of the Hesperus” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

ballad stanza

Four lines; lines 1 and 3 usually have four beats, lines 2 and 4 have three; lines 2 and 4 rhyme.

rhyme scheme

The pattern of rhymes, shown with letters (a b c b).

beat

A strong syllable in a line of poetry.

schooner

A sailing ship with two or more masts.

CORE IDEAS

The pattern. Most old ballads use a simple stanza: four lines, with a rhyme on lines 2 and 4. We write it *a b c b*.

Four and three. Lines 1 and 3 usually have four beats; lines 2 and 4 have three. Many hymns use the same pattern (it is called common meter in hymnbooks).

Hesperus. Longfellow’s “The Wreck of the Hesperus” (1840) is a sad sea ballad. A proud skipper ignores an old sailor’s warning and sails into a storm.

The model. *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Wreck of the Hesperus” (1840), stanzas 1 and 4*

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,

To bear him company.

Then up and spake an old Sailor,
Had sailed to the Spanish Main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

PICTURE STUDY



The Life Line, Winslow Homer, 1884 · Oil on canvas · Philadelphia Museum of Art
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Winslow Homer lived by the sea in Maine and painted its storms. Here a lifesaver carries a woman from a wrecked ship along a rope over the waves.

Look closely

- Find the rope. What holds it up?
- Look at the waves. How dangerous is the sea?
- Why do you think the man's face is hidden?

Talk about it

1. How is this rescue different from the end of "The Wreck of the Hesperus"?
2. Write a ballad line about this picture.

WRITING PROJECT: TWO BALLAD STANZAS

Write two ballad stanzas about a storm, a rescue or a journey.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Choose a subject.
2. Write line 2 first, ending with an easy rhyme word (sea, day, home).
3. Write line 4 to rhyme with it.
4. Fill in lines 1 and 3.
5. Clap the beats: about 4, 3, 4, 3.
6. Write a second stanza.

Check your work

- Each stanza has four lines.
- Lines 2 and 4 rhyme.
- The beat is close to 4, 3, 4, 3.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy stanza 1 of the model and mark the rhyme scheme.
2. List ten rhyming pairs.



Grammar link. Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.4 “Words Often Confused.” Watch for sea and see, and for to, too and two, when you rhyme.

For families. The Hesperus ballad ends in tragedy (the skipper and his daughter drown). The lesson quotes only stanzas 1 and 4; read the whole poem aloud only if your child is ready. Stanza 3 in the Gutenberg text has a misprint (“month” for “mouth”) and is not quoted.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Mark the rhyme scheme of stanza 1.

1. Line endings: Hesperus, sea, daughter, company.
2. Which rhyme? sea/company.

Answer: a b c b.

Example 2. Finish the stanza: “The farmer walked the frozen field / Before the break of day; / He found the calf beside the fence / ____.”

1. Need a three-beat line rhyming with day.

Answer: Sample: “And carried it away.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How many lines in a ballad stanza?
2. **EASY** Which lines rhyme?
3. **EASY** Write the rhyme scheme.
4. **MEDIUM** What did the old sailor warn?
5. **MEDIUM** Count the beats in “That sailed the wintry sea.”
6. **MEDIUM** Name a hymn in the same pattern.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Forcing an odd word just to rhyme.
- Making every line rhyme. In a ballad, only 2 and 4 must.

Make it a game · Rhyme Chain. Say a word. Each player adds a rhyme. Whoever cannot think of one starts a new chain.

Scripture. “He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.” (Psalm 107:29, KJV)

The skipper trusted himself. The psalmist trusts the God who calms the storm.

Practice: answers

1. Four.
2. Lines 2 and 4.
3. a b c b.
4. That a hurricane was coming, so they should put into port.
5. Three.
6. Answers vary: “Amazing Grace.”

5.3 REFRAINS

OBJECTIVES

- Define a refrain: a line repeated through a poem or song.
- Find refrains in an old ballad and in Psalm 136.
- Add a refrain to your own stanzas.

Warm-up. Sing a song you know that has a chorus. Why is the chorus the easiest part to remember?

Video slot. Video coming. Psalm 136 (KJV) read aloud or sung. Use a source that follows the KJV; preview first.

KEY TERMS

refrain

A line or phrase repeated through a poem or song.

chorus

A refrain that everyone sings together.

repetition

Saying something again on purpose.

CORE IDEAS

Repetition on purpose. In everyday writing we avoid saying the same thing twice. In poetry and song, repeating a line can make it strong and easy to remember.

Old ballads. Many old English and Scottish ballads have refrains that everyone could join in. In “Binnorie,” the lines “Binnorie, O Binnorie” and “By the bonny mill-dams o’ Binnorie” come back again and again.

The Psalms. Psalm 136 has the oldest refrain you will ever sing: every verse ends “for his mercy endureth for ever.” God’s people answered each line together.

The model. *Psalm 136:1–4 (KJV); and the refrain from “Binnorie,” an old ballad, in Joseph Jacobs, English Fairy Tales (1890)*

O give thanks unto the LORD ; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever. To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.

“O yonder sits my father, the king,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;

And yonder sits my mother, the queen;
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie,

“And yonder stands my brother Hugh,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And by him, my William, false and true;
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.”

PICTURE STUDY



The Lady of Shalott, John William Waterhouse, 1888 · Oil on canvas · Tate Britain, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Waterhouse painted a scene from Tennyson’s ballad-like poem “The Lady of Shalott.” In that poem, the name “Shalott” comes back at the end of many stanzas like a refrain.

Look closely

- Find the candles. How many are still burning?
- What is draped over the side of the boat?
- What season is it by the river?

Talk about it

1. What feeling does this painting give you?
2. If this picture had a refrain, what would it be?

WRITING PROJECT: MY REFRAIN

Add a refrain to your two ballad stanzas from Lesson 5.2 and write a third stanza.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Choose a short line that sums up your ballad (“And the wind blew cold and wild”).
2. Add it after each stanza.
3. Write a third stanza.
4. Read it aloud with someone joining in on the refrain.

Check your work

- My refrain sums up the poem.
- It comes after each stanza.
- I have three stanzas.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Psalm 136:1.
2. Write three possible refrains for your ballad.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 4.1 “Personal Pronouns.” Psalm 136 uses *his* and *he* for God. Find the antecedent: whom does *his* refer to?

For families. “Binnorie” is a sad old ballad (one sister drowns another). Only the harp’s refrain verse is quoted; the story itself is not retold here. Read the full tale in Jacobs only if you choose.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Find the refrain in Psalm 136:1–4.

1. What words repeat at the end of each verse?

Answer: “for his mercy endureth for ever.”

Example 2. Write a refrain for a ballad about a lost lamb.

1. Short, easy to remember.

Answer: Sample: “Come home, come home, my lamb.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a refrain?
2. **EASY** What is the refrain in Psalm 136?
3. **EASY** What is the refrain in the Binnorie verse?
4. **MEDIUM** Why do songs have refrains?
5. **MEDIUM** How many verses does Psalm 136 have?
6. **MEDIUM** Name a hymn with a chorus.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Making the refrain too long to remember.
- Using a refrain that does not fit every stanza.

Make it a game • Call and Answer. The teacher reads each verse of Psalm 136; everyone answers with the refrain. Then try it with your own ballad.

Scripture. “O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.” (Psalm 136:26, KJV)

The psalm ends as it began. A refrain can hold a whole poem together.

Practice: answers

1. A line repeated through a poem or song.
2. For his mercy endureth for ever.
3. “Binnorie, O Binnorie” and “By the bonny mill-dams o’ Binnorie.”
4. They are easy to remember and let everyone join in.
5. Twenty-six.
6. Answers vary.

5.4 MY BALLAD 🍷

OBJECTIVES

- Write a four-stanza ballad about family or local history.
- Gather true facts by interviewing a relative or reading a local history.
- Revise for rhyme, beat and true facts.

Warm-up. Ask a parent: “What is the oldest story you know about our family or our town?”

Video slot. Video coming. How a family history is told: a museum or historical-society video on local history for children. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

family history

The true story of your ancestors and relatives.

local history

The true story of your town or county.

interview

Asking someone questions and writing down the answers.

CORE IDEAS

Ballads keep memories. Long ago, families and villages kept their history in ballads. You can do the same.

Start with facts. Interview a grandparent or read about your town. Use the six questions. A ballad may use poetic license with small things, but keep the main facts true.

The model. The model was written for this course about an imaginary great-grandfather. Notice the four stanzas: the arrival, the work, the family, and a final stanza that speaks to the reader today.

The model. “*The Old Stone Wall*”

A model ballad written for this course.

In eighteen hundred eighty-one
Great-grandpa crossed the sea,
With one tin trunk and seven coins
And a Bible on his knee.

He walked from Philadelphia
To Lancaster in May,
And hired out to a farmer there
For fifty cents a day.

He cleared the stones from Hollow Field
And built the wall we see;
He married Anna Hershberger
Beneath the walnut tree.

So when you pass the old stone wall
That runs beside the lane,
Remember him who laid it there
Through summer sun and rain.

PICTURE STUDY



The Hatch Family, Eastman Johnson, 1871 · Oil on canvas · Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Wikimedia Commons · CC0 · Eastman Johnson

Eastman Johnson painted everyday American family life. Here three generations of one New York family fill a parlor: grandparents, parents and eleven children.

Look closely

- Find the grandparents. Where are they sitting?
- What are the children doing?
- What clues tell you when it was painted?

Talk about it

1. What story might this family tell their grandchildren?
2. Write the first line of a ballad about it.

WRITING PROJECT: MY FAMILY BALLAD

Write a ballad of four stanzas about a true event in your family or town.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A relative to interview or a local history book

Steps

1. Interview a relative with the six questions. Take notes.
2. Plan four stanzas: beginning, middle, end, and a closing stanza to the reader.
3. Write each stanza in the a b c b pattern.
4. Add a refrain if you like.
5. Read it to the person you interviewed. Did you get the facts right?

Tips

- If a rhyme will not come, change line 2 to end on an easier word.

Check your work

- Four stanzas, a b c b.
- The main facts are true.
- The last stanza speaks to the reader.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Interview notes.
2. Your draft ballad.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 2.4 “Possessive Nouns.” “Grandpa’s farm,” “the family’s Bible”: use an apostrophe for ownership.

For families. If family history is painful or unknown, choose local history (the founding of your church or town) instead.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn a fact into a stanza: “Grandma learned to drive a tractor at age ten.”

1. Line 2 and 4 rhyme.
2. Beats 4, 3, 4, 3.

Answer: When Grandma was a girl of ten / She drove the tractor round; / She planted corn in crooked rows / And never lost her ground.

Example 2. Find the closing stanza’s purpose in the model.

1. Who is “you”?

Answer: It speaks to the reader today and asks him to remember.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How many stanzas will your ballad have?
2. **EASY** Who came across the sea in the model?
3. **EASY** What did he build?
4. **MEDIUM** Find two rhymes in the model.
5. **MEDIUM** Why interview someone before writing?
6. **MEDIUM** May a ballad change facts?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Making up the main facts.
- Forgetting the closing stanza.

Make it a game • Ballad Night. Read your ballads to the family after supper. Everyone joins in the refrains.

Scripture. “One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.” (Psalm 145:4, KJV)

Telling family history is one way to remember God’s faithfulness.

Practice: answers

1. Four.
2. Great-grandpa.
3. A stone wall.
4. sea/knee; May/day; see/tree; lane/rain.

5. To get true facts.

6. Small things for rhyme, but the main facts should stay true.

UNIT 5 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (2 pts) What is a ballad?
2. (2 pts) Which lines rhyme in a ballad stanza?
3. (2 pts) What is a refrain?
4. (2 pts) What is poetic license?
5. (4 pts) Recite the first stanza of “Paul Revere’s Ride.”
6. (8 pts) Write one ballad stanza about a farm animal.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: MY FAMILY BALLAD

A clean copy of your ballad from Lesson 5.4, illustrated, with a note at the bottom naming who told you the story.

- **Form:** Four a b c b stanzas.
- **Truth:** Main facts are accurate.
- **Sound:** Steady beat; natural rhymes.
- **Mechanics:** Capitals at line starts and for names.

Answer key

1. A poem that tells a story.
2. Lines 2 and 4.
3. A line repeated through a poem or song.
4. A poet’s freedom to change facts for the poem.
5. Five lines, accurately.
6. Four lines; 2 and 4 rhyme; about 4-3-4-3 beats.

DESCRIPTION OF PERSONS AND THINGS

Description helps the reader see. In this unit you will order a description of a person from head to toe with Longfellow's village blacksmith, describe a tool by purpose, parts and use with Robinson Crusoe's spade, compare with similes like Washington Irving, and make an exact wanted poster for a fable villain.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can use adjectives (Grammar Level 1, Lesson 4.2).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can describe a person in a clear order.
- ☐ I can describe a tool by its purpose, parts and use.
- ☐ I can write fresh similes.
- ☐ I can write an exact description for a purpose.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Washington Irving, *The Sketch-Book* (Project Gutenberg #2048)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2048>): Free. Parents may preview "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" before reading it aloud.
- **Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Project Gutenberg #521)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/521>): Free.

6.1 HEAD TO TOE ★

OBJECTIVES

- Describe a person in a clear order: head to toe, or the whole and then the parts.
- See how Longfellow orders his description of the blacksmith.
- Describe a real person who works with his hands.

Warm-up. Your teacher describes someone in the room in a jumbled order (shoes, then hair, then shirt, then eyes). Then in order from head to toe. Which was easier to picture?

Video slot. Video coming. A village blacksmith at work: a living-history museum demonstration. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

description

Writing that helps the reader see a person, place or thing.

spatial order

Describing in the order of space: top to bottom, left to right, near to far.

smithy

A blacksmith's workshop.

sinewy

Strong and tough, with cords of muscle.

CORE IDEAS

Order helps the reader. A description that jumps around is hard to picture. Choose an order and keep it: head to toe, or the whole figure first and then the parts.

Longfellow's smith. Longfellow first shows the place (the smithy under a tree), then the man as a whole ("a mighty man"), then his hands, arms, hair, face and brow, and finally his character: "he owes not any man."

Looks and character. The best descriptions of people show what kind of person they are. The smith's "honest sweat" tells us he works hard and pays his debts.

The model. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *"The Village Blacksmith"* (1840), stanzas 1–2

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.

PICTURE STUDY



The Gleaners (Des glaneuses), Jean-François Millet, 1857 · Oil on canvas · Musée d'Orsay, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Millet painted three poor women gleaning: picking up the grain left behind after the harvest. Gleaning was allowed by God's law in the Bible so that the poor could eat (Leviticus 19:9-10; Ruth 2).

Look closely

- Describe one woman from head to foot: her cap, her clothes, her hands.
- What is far away behind them?
- How is the light?

Talk about it

1. What kind of people do these women seem to be? How can you tell?
2. Which Bible woman gleaned in a field?

WRITING PROJECT: A WORKER, HEAD TO TOE

Describe a real person who works with his or her hands (a farmer, a mechanic, a cook, a carpenter) in one paragraph, in a clear order.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A person to watch at work (with permission)

Steps

1. Watch the person work for a few minutes.
2. Write one sentence about the place.
3. Write one sentence about the whole person.
4. Describe from head to toe in three or four sentences.
5. End with a sentence that shows what kind of person he or she is.

Check your work

- I kept one order.
- I described the place, the whole person and the parts.
- My last sentence shows character.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the first stanza of the model.
2. List eight words that describe hands.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 4.4 “Comparing with Adjectives.” Strong, stronger, strongest: choose the right form when you compare.

For families. Gleaning is commanded in Leviticus 19:9-10 and pictured in Ruth 2; Millet’s painting is a good way to read Ruth together.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Put in head-to-toe order: boots, cap, beard, apron.

1. Top first.

Answer: cap, beard, apron, boots.

Example 2. Find a detail in the model that shows character, not just looks.

1. Look at stanza 2.

Answer: “His brow is wet with honest sweat... he owes not any man.” It shows he is hardworking and honest.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is spatial order?
2. **EASY** Where does the smithy stand?
3. **EASY** What are the smith’s arms compared to?
4. **MEDIUM** Describe the smith’s hair.
5. **MEDIUM** What does “he owes not any man” mean?
6. **MEDIUM** Why describe the whole person before the parts?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Jumping back and forth (hat, shoes, hat again).
- Describing only clothes and nothing about the person.

Make it a game · Who Am I? Describe a family member head to toe without saying the name. Others guess.

Scripture. “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” (Romans 13:8, KJV)

Longfellow’s smith “owes not any man.” Paul gives the same advice, and adds the one debt we always owe: love.

Practice: answers

1. Describing in the order of space, such as top to bottom.
2. Under a spreading chestnut-tree.
3. Iron bands.
4. Crisp, black and long.
5. He has paid all his debts.
6. The reader gets the big picture first.

6.2 DESCRIBING A TOOL

OBJECTIVES

- Describe a tool by its purpose, parts and use.
- See how Robinson Crusoe describes making a spade.
- Write a clear description of a real tool.

Warm-up. Hold a tool (a hammer, a whisk, a trowel). Without naming it, tell what it is for. Can your partner guess?

Video slot. Video coming. How a hand plow or a garden spade works, from a farm museum. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

purpose

What a tool is for.

parts

The pieces a tool is made of, such as handle and blade.

use

How a person works the tool.

iron-tree

A very hard wood Crusoe found on his island.

CORE IDEAS

Three questions. To describe a tool, answer: What is it for (purpose)? What is it made of, and what are its parts? How do you use it?

Crusoe's spade. In Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), a man shipwrecked alone on an island must make his own tools. He needs a spade so badly that he "could do nothing effectually without it." He carves one from very hard wood, and tells us its shape and its weakness.

Be exact. Name the parts with the right words: handle, shaft, blade, edge, head. Give size or weight if you can.

The model. *Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (1719), journal entry for November 18*

The next day, in searching the woods, I found a tree of that wood, or like it, which in the Brazils they call the iron-tree, for its exceeding hardness. Of this, with great labour, and almost spoiling my axe, I cut a piece, and brought it home, too,

with difficulty enough, for it was exceeding heavy. The excessive hardness of the wood, and my having no other way, made me a long while upon this machine, for I worked it effectually by little and little into the form of a shovel or spade; the handle exactly shaped like ours in England, only that the board part having no iron shod upon it at bottom, it would not last me so long; however, it served well enough for the uses which I had occasion to put it to; but never was a shovel, I believe, made after that fashion, or so long in making.

PICTURE STUDY



Man with a Hoe, Jean-François Millet, 1860–1862 · Oil on canvas · J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Millet showed the hard work of farming. This man has been breaking stony ground with a heavy hoe and stops for a moment to rest.

Look closely

- Describe the hoe: its handle and blade.
- How is the man holding it?
- What is the ground like?

Talk about it

1. What is the hoe for? How can you tell from the field?
2. What does the man's pose tell you about his work?

WRITING PROJECT: A TOOL CARD

Write a description of a real tool from your home, barn or kitchen in one paragraph, and draw it with labels.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A real tool (with a parent's permission)

Steps

1. Choose a tool and hold it.
2. Write one sentence about its purpose.
3. Write two sentences naming its parts and what they are made of.
4. Write two sentences about how to use it, step by step.
5. Draw it and label the parts.

Tips

- Ask a parent before handling any sharp tool.

Check your work

- I gave the purpose, parts and use.
- I used exact names for parts.
- My drawing is labeled.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model's sentence about the handle "exactly shaped like ours in England."
2. Your labeled tool drawing.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 5.2 "Direct Objects." "A hammer drives nails." *Nails* is the direct object. Purpose sentences often have one.

For families. Defoe's 18th-century spelling and long sentences are kept exactly. Help your child read the passage aloud slowly.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Describe a hammer in three sentences.

1. Purpose: driving nails.
2. Parts: wooden handle, steel head with a flat face and a claw.
3. Use: grip the end of the handle and swing from the elbow.

Answer: A hammer drives and pulls nails. It has a wooden handle and a steel head with a flat face on one side and a curved claw on the other. Grip the end of the handle and swing from the elbow, keeping your eye on the nail.

Example 2. What was the weakness of Crusoe's spade?

1. Read the model.

Answer: It had no iron on the bottom of the blade, so it would not last as long.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three things to tell about a tool.
2. **EASY** What wood did Crusoe use?
3. **EASY** Why was the wood hard to work?
4. **MEDIUM** Why did Crusoe need a spade?
5. **MEDIUM** Name two parts of a spade.
6. **MEDIUM** Write the purpose of a plow in one sentence.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Describing only how a tool looks, not what it does.
- Using "thing" instead of the real name of a part.

Make it a game • Mystery Tool. Put a tool in a bag. One player feels it and describes it without looking. Others guess.

Scripture. "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:4, KJV)

Isaiah describes a day of peace when weapons become farm tools.

Practice: answers

1. Purpose, parts, use.
2. Wood like the Brazilian "iron-tree."
3. It was exceedingly hard and heavy.
4. He could do nothing effectually (to dig) without it.
5. Handle, blade (board part).
6. Sample: A plow turns over the soil to prepare a field for planting.

6.3 DESCRIBING BY COMPARISON

OBJECTIVES

- Define a simile: a comparison using *like* or *as*.
- Find the comparisons in Irving’s description of Ichabod Crane.
- Write fresh similes of your own.

Warm-up. Finish these: “as quiet as...,” “as cold as...,” “as tall as...” Now try to think of an ending nobody has used before.

Video slot. Video coming. Similes for kids: comparing with “like” and “as.” Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

simile

A comparison of two unlike things using *like* or *as*.

cliché

A comparison used so often it has gone stale (“as busy as a bee”).

lank

Tall and thin.

weathercock

A weather vane shaped like a rooster.

CORE IDEAS

Comparing helps the reader see. If you say a man is thin, the reader sees a little. If you say he looks like “some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield,” the reader laughs and sees exactly.

Ichabod Crane. In “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” (1820), Washington Irving describes a gangly country schoolmaster. He compares Ichabod’s feet to shovels, his head to a weathercock and his whole self to a scarecrow.

Fresh, not stale. “As busy as a bee” was fresh once, but now it is a cliché. Try to compare with something you have really seen.

The model. *Washington Irving, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” The Sketch-Book of Geoffrey Crayon (1820)*

He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for

shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snip nose, so that it looked like a weathercock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of Famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

PICTURE STUDY



The Headless Horseman Pursuing Ichabod Crane, John Quidor, 1858 · Oil on canvas · Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

John Quidor painted the most famous scene from Irving's story. Look how he made Ichabod as long and thin as Irving described him.

Look closely

- Find Ichabod. How did the painter make him look thin and gangly?
- Describe his horse.
- What makes the woods look spooky?

Talk about it

1. Which of Irving's comparisons can you see in the painting?
2. Write a simile for Ichabod's horse.

WRITING PROJECT: A COMPARISON PORTRAIT

Describe a funny or unusual animal or person (real or imagined) in one paragraph with at least three fresh similes.

You will need

- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Choose a subject: a gangly colt, a fat old cat, a bossy rooster.
2. Describe it in head-to-toe order.
3. Use at least three similes, each comparing to something you have really seen.
4. Underline your similes.
5. Cross out any cliché and replace it.

Check your work

- I used at least three similes.
- None is a cliché.
- My description has an order.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Irving's scarecrow sentence.
2. Write five fresh similes.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 4.2 "Adjectives." Irving piles up adjectives: *small, flat, huge, large green glassy*. Find them.

For families. "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" has a spooky climax (the Headless Horseman, revealed by hints to be a prank by Brom Bones). The model is only the comic description.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Find the similes in "feet that might have served for shovels."

1. Is it a comparison? Yes, feet to shovels.
2. Does it use like or as? No.

Answer: It is a comparison but not a simile, since it has no *like* or *as*. Irving's weathercock ("so that it looked like a weathercock") is a simile.

Example 2. Make a cliché fresh: “as cold as ice.”

1. Think of something cold you have touched.

Answer: Sample: as cold as the pump handle on a January morning.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a simile?
2. **EASY** What did Irving compare Ichabod’s head to?
3. **EASY** What might someone mistake Ichabod for?
4. **MEDIUM** What is a cliché?
5. **MEDIUM** Is this a simile? “Her voice was music.”
6. **MEDIUM** Write a simile for a thunderstorm.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Comparing a thing to itself (“the dog was like a dog”).
- Using too many similes in one sentence.

Make it a game • Simile Slam. The teacher names a thing. Players have ten seconds to give a fresh simile. No clichés allowed.

Scripture. “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” (Psalm 1:3, KJV)

The Bible is full of similes. The godly man is like a tree by the water.

Practice: answers

1. A comparison using like or as.
2. A weathercock on his spindle neck.
3. A scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.
4. A comparison used so often it is stale.
5. No; it has no like or as (it is a metaphor).
6. Sample: Thunder rolled like barrels down a cellar stair.

6.4 WANTED POSTER

OBJECTIVES

- Write an exact description of a fable character for a “wanted poster.”
- Use order, exact adjectives and a simile.
- Describe both looks and behavior.

Warm-up. Look at an old “wanted” poster from a history book or website with a parent. What kinds of facts does it give?

Video slot. Video coming. “The Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing” read aloud. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

wanted poster

A notice describing a person so others can recognize him.

disguise

Clothes or a covering that hides who someone really is.

distinguishing mark

A feature that sets one person apart from others.

CORE IDEAS

Description with a job. A wanted poster must be exact enough that a stranger could recognize the person. Every word must help.

Looks and habits. Good posters give looks (size, color, marks) and habits (where he goes, what he does).

The wolf. In the model fable, the wolf hides in a sheepskin. Your poster must warn shepherds what to look for, even in disguise.

The model. *Aesop, translated by George Fyler Townsend (1867), “The Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing”*

Once upon a time a Wolf resolved to disguise his appearance in order to secure food more easily. Encased in the skin of a sheep, he pastured with the flock deceiving the shepherd by his costume. In the evening he was shut up by the shepherd in the fold; the gate was closed, and the entrance made thoroughly secure. But the shepherd, returning to the fold during the night to obtain meat for the next day, mistakenly caught up the Wolf instead of a sheep, and killed him instantly.

Harm seek, harm find.

PICTURE STUDY



The Wolf Turned Shepherd (Le Loup devenu berger), Gustave Doré, 1868 · Wood engraving · From Doré's illustrated La Fontaine (1868)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In La Fontaine's version of the fable, the wolf dresses as a shepherd, with a hat and a crook. Doré drew him creeping among the sheep.

Look closely

- What disguise is the wolf wearing?
- What gives him away?
- What are the sheep and the shepherd doing?

Talk about it

1. Which detail would you put on a wanted poster?
2. What is the danger of a disguise?

WRITING PROJECT: WANTED: THE WOLF

Make a wanted poster for the wolf (or another fable villain: the fox, the cat who belled the mice).

You will need

- A large sheet of paper

- Colored pencils

Steps

1. Write WANTED at the top and draw the character.
2. Write a description of five or six sentences: size, color, distinguishing marks (head to toe), disguise, habits.
3. Use one simile.
4. Add “Last seen:” and “Warning:”.

Check your work

- My description is in order.
- I gave looks and habits.
- I used one simile.
- A stranger could recognize the character.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model’s moral.
2. List six exact adjectives for a wolf.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 4.3 “Articles.” Use *a* before consonant sounds and *an* before vowel sounds: *a* torn ear, *an* old scar.

For families. Townsend’s moral “Harm seek, harm find” is quoted exactly. Matthew 7:15 links the fable to Christ’s warning.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Make it exact: “He is a big wolf.”

1. How big? What color? Marks?

Answer: He is a gray wolf about the size of a large sheepdog, with a torn left ear.

Example 2. Write a “Warning” line for the poster.

1. What does he do?

Answer: Warning: may be wearing a sheepskin and grazing with the flock.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What did the wolf wear?

2. **EASY** What happened to the wolf?
3. **EASY** What is the moral?
4. **MEDIUM** What is a distinguishing mark?
5. **MEDIUM** Why must a wanted poster be exact?
6. **MEDIUM** Write a simile for the wolf's eyes.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Vague words like “big,” “scary” or “weird.”
- Forgetting habits and disguise.

Make it a game • Lineup. Draw four wolves that differ in small ways. Read a poster description. Can players pick the right one?

Scripture. “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” (Matthew 7:15, KJV)

Jesus used the same picture. Know people by their fruits, not their disguises (Matthew 7:16).

Practice: answers

1. The skin of a sheep.
2. The shepherd caught him by mistake for a sheep and killed him.
3. Harm seek, harm find.
4. A feature that sets one person apart, like a scar.
5. So a stranger can recognize the person.
6. Sample: yellow as two lamps in a dark barn.

UNIT 6 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (2 pts) What is spatial order?
2. (3 pts) Name three things to tell about a tool.
3. (2 pts) What is a simile?
4. (2 pts) What is a cliché?
5. (3 pts) Write a fresh simile for a rooster's crow.
6. (8 pts) Describe a family member head to toe in four sentences, ending with one that shows character.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: WANTED POSTER

Your finished wanted poster from Lesson 6.4, with drawing and description.

- **Exact:** Specific size, color and marks.
- **Order:** Head-to-toe or whole-to-parts.
- **Simile:** At least one fresh simile.
- **Mechanics:** Complete sentences; a/an used correctly.

Answer key

1. Describing in order of space, e.g., head to toe.
2. Purpose, parts, use.
3. A comparison using like or as.
4. A stale, overused comparison.
5. Any fresh comparison with like or as.
6. Four sentences, clear order, last shows character.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE: THE FRIENDLY LETTER

A letter is a personal narrative sent to one reader. In this unit you will read Abigail Adams's letter written the day after Bunker Hill and Paul's letters to Timothy and the Philippians, and you will write and mail real letters to a grandparent and to someone serving far from home.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can write a paragraph of real news.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name and place the five parts of a friendly letter.
- ☐ I can tell real news and ask open questions.
- ☐ I can write a letter of encouragement.
- ☐ I can address and mail an envelope.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- ***Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife Abigail Adams* (Project Gutenberg #34123)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/34123>): Free. A parent may choose more letters to read aloud.
- **Stamps and envelopes:** At least two of each.

7.1 LETTERS THAT MADE HISTORY 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of a friendly letter: heading, greeting, body, closing and signature.
- Read Abigail Adams's letter of June 18, 1775.
- Write a letter that tells real news.

Warm-up. When did your family last get a handwritten letter? Who sent it, and what did it say?

Video slot. Video coming. Abigail and John Adams: letters during the American Revolution, from a museum or historical society. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

friendly letter

A personal letter to someone you know.

heading

Your address and the date, at the top right.

greeting

The opening, such as “Dear Grandpa,” followed by a comma.

body

The main part of the letter.

closing and signature

A farewell, such as “Your loving son,” and your name.

CORE IDEAS

Letters as history. Before telephones, people wrote letters. John Adams was away in Philadelphia at the Continental Congress, and his wife Abigail ran their farm in Braintree, Massachusetts, and wrote to him often. More than a thousand of their letters survive, and historians still read them.

The Battle of Bunker Hill. On June 17, 1775, British and American soldiers fought at Bunker and Breed's Hills across from Boston. The next day Abigail wrote to John. Her friend Dr. Joseph Warren, who had sent Paul Revere on his ride, had been killed.

Real news and real feeling. Abigail tells what happened and how she feels, and she turns to God's Word for comfort. A good friendly letter does all three.

The model. *Abigail Adams to John Adams, Sunday, June 18, 1775, in Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife Abigail Adams During the Revolution (1876)*

The day--perhaps the decisive day--is come, on which the fate of America depends. My bursting heart must find vent at my pen. I have just heard that our dear friend, Dr. Warren, is no more, but fell gloriously fighting for his country; saying, Better to die honorably in the field, than ignominiously hang upon the gallows. Great is our loss. He has distinguished himself in every engagement, by his courage and fortitude, by animating the soldiers, and leading them on by his own example. A particular account of these dreadful, but I hope glorious days, will be transmitted you, no doubt, in the exactest manner.

PICTURE STUDY



Abigail Adams, Benjamin Blyth, c. 1766 · Pastel on paper · Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

This is the earliest portrait of Abigail Adams, drawn in pastel when she was about twenty-two, soon after her marriage.

Look closely

- Describe her face. What is her expression?
- What is she wearing?
- How is she posed? (This old photograph of the pastel is black and white; the real portrait is in soft colors.)

Talk about it

1. Does she look like a person who would write strong, clear letters? Why?
2. What questions would you ask her in a letter?

WRITING PROJECT: A LETTER WITH REAL NEWS

Write a friendly letter to a relative or friend that tells real news from your week.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Writing paper

Steps

1. Write the heading (address and date) at the top right.
2. Write the greeting with a comma.
3. Body paragraph 1: real news, with details.
4. Body paragraph 2: a question for the reader.
5. Write a closing with a comma, and sign your name.

Check your work

- My letter has all five parts.
- I told real news with details.
- I asked a question.
- Commas after the greeting and closing.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Label the five parts of a letter on a drawing.
2. Copy Abigail's first sentence.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.2 “Commas.” Commas go after the greeting and closing, and between the day and year in a date.

For families. The letter is quoted exactly from the 1876 edition, whose double hyphens (“--”) stand for dashes. Abigail's quotation of Psalm 62:8 is her own paraphrase mixed with Ecclesiastes 9:11. The lesson's Scripture gives the KJV wording. Abigail's 1776 “Remember the ladies” letter is not used.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Fix the greeting: “dear grandma”

1. Capitals and a comma.

Answer: Dear Grandma,

Example 2. Which is real news? (a) “Things are fine.” (b) “Our cow had twin calves on Tuesday night.”

1. Which tells what happened?

Answer: (b).

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five parts of a friendly letter.
2. **EASY** Where was John Adams in 1775?
3. **EASY** Whose death did Abigail report?
4. **MEDIUM** What is the date of the letter?
5. **MEDIUM** What punctuation follows a greeting?
6. **MEDIUM** Why do historians read the Adamses’ letters?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Forgetting the date.
- Writing “I am fine, how are you” and nothing more. Tell real news.

Make it a game · Letter Puzzle. Cut a letter into its five parts. Shuffle and race to put it back together.

Scripture. “Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.” (Psalm 62:8, KJV)

Abigail quoted this psalm in her letter (in slightly different words). In hard days she poured out her heart to God, and to her husband.

Practice: answers

1. Heading, greeting, body, closing, signature.
2. Philadelphia, at the Continental Congress.
3. Dr. (Joseph) Warren.
4. Sunday, June 18, 1775.
5. A comma.
6. They tell what happened and how people felt at the time, from people who were there.

7.2 WRITING TO GRANDPARENTS

OBJECTIVES

- Write a letter to a grandparent with real news and real questions.
- See how Paul wrote to Timothy about his grandmother Lois.
- Ask questions that invite a long answer.

Warm-up. Name one thing you would like to know about your grandparents when they were your age.

Video slot. Video coming. Timothy, Lois and Eunice (2 Timothy 1) for children. Use a Bible-story source that follows the KJV; preview first.

KEY TERMS

open question

A question that needs more than “yes” or “no” to answer.

closed question

A question that can be answered “yes” or “no.”

unfeigned

Real; not pretended.

CORE IDEAS

Grandparents in the Bible. The apostle Paul wrote two letters to young Timothy. In the second, he remembers Timothy’s grandmother Lois and mother Eunice, whose faith came first.

News and questions. A letter to a grandparent should give real news (what you are learning, making, doing) and ask real questions.

Open questions. “Did you like school?” gets “Yes.” “What was your school like when you were nine?” gets a story.

The model. *2 Timothy 1:2–5 (KJV)*

To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

PICTURE STUDY



Grandmother with a Bible (Grossmutter mit Bibel), Albert Anker, 1905 · Watercolor · Wikimedia Commons
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Albert Anker was a Swiss painter who loved to paint village children and their grandparents. Here an old grandmother rests with her Bible, like Lois, the grandmother of Timothy.

Look closely

- What is the grandmother holding?
- Describe her clothes from head to toe.
- Look at her hands and face. What has her life been like?

Talk about it

1. What could this grandmother tell her grandchildren about her life and faith?
2. What would you write to her?

WRITING PROJECT: LETTER TO A GRANDPARENT

Write a letter to a grandparent (or an older friend) with two pieces of news and three open questions.

You will need

- Writing paper
- An envelope

Steps

1. Write the heading and greeting.
2. Paragraph 1: two pieces of real news.
3. Paragraph 2: three open questions about their childhood.
4. Closing and signature.
5. Ask a parent to help you mail it in Lesson 7.4.

Check your work

- All five parts.
- Two pieces of news.
- Three open questions.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy 2 Timothy 1:5.
2. Turn three closed questions into open ones.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 1.2 “Four Kinds of Sentences.” Questions end with a question mark.

For families. If grandparents have died, write to an older church member or neighbor.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Make it open: “Did you have a dog?”

1. Ask what, how or tell me.

Answer: What was the best animal you ever had when you were young?

Example 2. Whose faith does Paul name in 2 Timothy 1:5?

1. Read the verse.

Answer: Lois (Timothy’s grandmother) and Eunice (his mother).

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Who was Timothy’s grandmother?
2. **EASY** Who was his mother?
3. **EASY** What is an open question?
4. **MEDIUM** Make it open: “Was your house big?”
5. **MEDIUM** What does “unfeigned” mean?
6. **MEDIUM** Why ask questions in a letter?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Only asking closed questions.
- Telling no news of your own.

Make it a game • Question Flip. The teacher asks a closed question. Players race to turn it into an open one.

Scripture. “Children’s children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.” (Proverbs 17:6, KJV)

Grandparents delight in grandchildren. A letter is a gift to them.

Practice: answers

1. Lois.
2. Eunice.
3. One that needs more than yes or no.
4. Sample: What was your house like when you were my age?
5. Real, not pretended.
6. So the reader writes back and shares stories.

7.3 LETTERS TO A SOLDIER OR MISSIONARY

OBJECTIVES

- Write a letter of encouragement.
- See how Paul encourages the Philippians.
- Use thanks, news and a blessing.

Warm-up. Think of someone far from home serving others. What would cheer them up?

Video slot. Video coming. Writing letters to soldiers or missionaries: how a church or family can do it. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

encouragement

Words that give someone courage and hope.

missionary

A person sent to tell others about Christ, often far from home.

blessing

Words asking God to do good to someone.

CORE IDEAS

Paul's pattern. Paul wrote to the church at Philippi from prison. He begins with thanks, tells them he prays for them with joy and expresses confidence that God will finish his work in them.

Three parts. A letter of encouragement can follow the same pattern: (1) thanks for what the person is doing, (2) a little cheerful news from home, (3) a blessing or a verse.

Be specific. “Thank you for your service” is good. “Thank you for standing guard over Christmas so that we could be home together” is better.

The model. *Philippians 1:3–6 (KJV)*

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

PICTURE STUDY



A Lady Writing, Johannes Vermeer, c. 1665 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art, Washington
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Vermeer painted quiet moments indoors. This woman has paused in the middle of writing a letter and looks up, as if we had just come in.

Look closely

- What is on the table?
- What color is her jacket?
- Where is the light coming from?

Talk about it

1. Whom might she be writing to?
2. What does her face tell you about her letter?

WRITING PROJECT: A LETTER OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Write a letter of encouragement to a serviceman or missionary your family or church knows.

You will need

- Writing paper
- An address from your church or a parent

Steps

1. Write the heading and greeting.

2. Paragraph 1: specific thanks.
3. Paragraph 2: cheerful news from home.
4. Paragraph 3: a blessing or verse.
5. Closing and signature.

Check your work

- Specific thanks.
- Cheerful news.
- A blessing or verse.
- All five letter parts.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Philippians 1:6.
2. Write three specific thank-you sentences.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 2.1 “Common and Proper Nouns.” Capitalize proper nouns: *Philippi*, *Paul*, a person’s name.

For families. Many churches have missionaries or members in the armed forces who welcome letters. Some military mail programs have rules; check with the organization before sending.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Make specific: “Thanks for what you do.”

1. What do they actually do?

Answer: Thank you for teaching the children in your village to read the Bible.

Example 2. Find the thanks in the model.

1. Verse 3.

Answer: “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** To whom did Paul write this letter?
2. **EASY** Where was Paul when he wrote it?
3. **EASY** Name the three parts of an encouragement letter.
4. **MEDIUM** What was Paul confident of?

5. **MEDIUM** Write a one-sentence blessing.
6. **MEDIUM** Why is specific thanks better?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing about sad or worrying news.
- Forgetting to sign the letter.

Make it a game • Thank-You Toss. Toss a ball. Whoever catches it says a specific thank-you to someone who serves.

Scripture. “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,” (Philippians 1:3, KJV)

Paul’s first words to the Philippians are thanks. Begin your letter the same way.

Practice: answers

1. The church at Philippi.
2. In prison (in bonds).
3. Thanks, news, blessing.
4. That God would finish (perform) the good work he had begun.
5. Sample: May the Lord keep you safe and give you joy.
6. It shows you really know and care what they do.

7.4 MAIL IT

OBJECTIVES

- Address an envelope correctly.
- Place the return address, mailing address and stamp.
- Mail a real letter.

Warm-up. Look at an envelope that came in the mail. Where is the stamp? Where is the address? Where is the sender's address?

Video slot. Video coming. How mail travels: from mailbox to post office to doorstep, from the U.S. Postal Service or a postal museum. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

return address

Your name and address, top left of the envelope.

mailing address

The receiver's name and address, in the center.

ZIP code

The five-digit number that helps the post office sort mail.

postage

The stamp that pays for delivery.

CORE IDEAS

Three things on the front. Return address at top left, mailing address in the middle and the stamp at top right.

Three lines. Each address has three lines: name; street; city, state abbreviation and ZIP code.

Check twice. Read the address twice. A wrong ZIP code can send a letter to the wrong state.

The model. *A sample letter and envelope*

A model written for this course.

The letter

412 Mill Road

Hartsville, Ohio 44632

March 3, 2027

Dear Aunt Ruth,

Thank you for the book about birds. I have already found the cardinal and the blue jay at our feeder, and yesterday I saw a red-tailed hawk on the fence post by the barn. Mother says you used to keep a bird list when you were my age. Do you still have it? What was the rarest bird you ever saw?

We are all well. Dad finished the new chicken coop, and the hens laid eleven eggs on Saturday.

Your loving nephew,
Samuel

The envelope

Return address (top left): Samuel Brooks / 412 Mill Road / Hartsville, OH 44632

Mailing address (center): Mrs. Ruth Keller / 18 Cedar Lane / Bowling Green, KY 42101

Stamp: top right corner.

PICTURE STUDY



A Man Writing a Letter, Gabriel Metsu, c. 1664–1666 · Oil on panel · National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Gabriel Metsu painted a pair of pictures: a man writing a letter and a woman reading one. This is the writer.

Look closely

- What is on the table?
- Where does the light come from?
- What is the man using to write?

Talk about it

1. How long do you think it took a letter to arrive in his day?
2. What would he need to send it?

WRITING PROJECT: ADDRESS AND MAIL

Address an envelope for your letter from Lesson 7.2 or 7.3 and mail it.

You will need

- An envelope
- A stamp
- Your letter

Steps

1. Write your return address at the top left.
2. Write the mailing address in the center on three lines.
3. Put the stamp at the top right.
4. Check both addresses twice with a parent.
5. Fold the letter neatly, seal it and mail it.

Check your work

- Both addresses are complete.
- The stamp is at top right.
- The letter is mailed!

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw an envelope and label the three parts.
2. Write your own address on three lines.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.1 “Capital Letters.” Names, streets, cities and state abbreviations all take capitals.

For families. The sample addresses are made up. Do not post your child’s full address publicly if you share their work online.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Fix: “Mr. john smith 22 oak st springfield il”

1. Capitals and three lines; add the ZIP.

Answer: Mr. John Smith / 22 Oak St. / Springfield, IL 62701 (ZIP from a real address).

Example 2. Where does the stamp go?

1. Top right.

Answer: The top right corner.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where does the return address go?
2. **EASY** Where does the stamp go?
3. **EASY** How many lines in an address?
4. **MEDIUM** What is a ZIP code?
5. **MEDIUM** Why include a return address?
6. **MEDIUM** Write the state abbreviation for Ohio.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Swapping the return and mailing addresses.
- Forgetting the ZIP code.

Make it a game · Post Office. Set up a family post office with boxes for each person. Write and “deliver” short notes all week.

Scripture. “As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.”
(Proverbs 25:25, KJV)

A letter in the mailbox is like cold water on a hot day.

Practice: answers

1. Top left.
2. Top right.
3. Three.
4. A five-digit number that helps sort mail.
5. So the letter can come back if it cannot be delivered, and so the receiver can reply.

6. OH.

UNIT 7 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (5 pts) Name the five parts of a friendly letter.
2. (1 pts) What punctuation follows the greeting?
3. (2 pts) What is an open question?
4. (2 pts) Where do the return address and stamp go?
5. (2 pts) What news did Abigail Adams send on June 18, 1775?
6. (8 pts) Write a short friendly letter to a friend with one piece of news and one open question.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A LETTER MAILED

Keep a copy (or a photo) of one letter you mailed, and any reply you receive.

- **Parts:** All five letter parts.
- **Content:** Real news and open questions, or specific thanks.
- **Envelope:** Correct addresses and stamp.
- **Mechanics:** Capitals and commas in the right places.

Answer key

1. Heading, greeting, body, closing, signature.
2. A comma.
3. One that needs more than yes or no.
4. Return address top left; stamp top right.
5. The battle had begun and Dr. Warren was killed.
6. All five parts; news; open question; commas.

REVIEW, REVISE, READ ALOUD

The year ends the way good writers work: by revising. You will learn Franklin's way of teaching himself to write, revise with a five-pass checklist, give and receive notes with a sibling, hold a family showcase and gather your best work in a portfolio.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has a notebook full of this year's writing.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can revise one thing at a time with a checklist.
- ☐ I can give two stars and a wish.
- ☐ I can read my work aloud clearly.
- ☐ I can choose and reflect on my best work.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (Project Gutenberg #20203)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20203>): Free. The *Spectator* passage is in Chapter 1.

8.1 THE REVISION CHECKLIST ★

OBJECTIVES

- Revise a piece of writing one thing at a time with a checklist.
- Use Franklin’s method: compare your work with a model and fix faults.
- Revise one piece from this year.

Warm-up. Look at a piece you wrote in September. Name one thing you would do better now.

Video slot. Video coming. Benjamin Franklin teaches himself to write: the *Spectator* method. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

revise

To “see again” and improve a piece of writing.

checklist

A list of things to check, one at a time.

proofread

To read slowly for mistakes in spelling, capitals and punctuation.

the *Spectator*

A London paper of short essays (1711–1712) that Franklin used as his model.

CORE IDEAS

Franklin’s method. As a boy, Benjamin Franklin taught himself to write. He took notes on an essay from the *Spectator*, waited a few days, rewrote it from his notes, then compared his version with the original and fixed his faults.

One thing at a time. Do not try to fix everything at once. Read your piece several times, each time looking for just one thing.

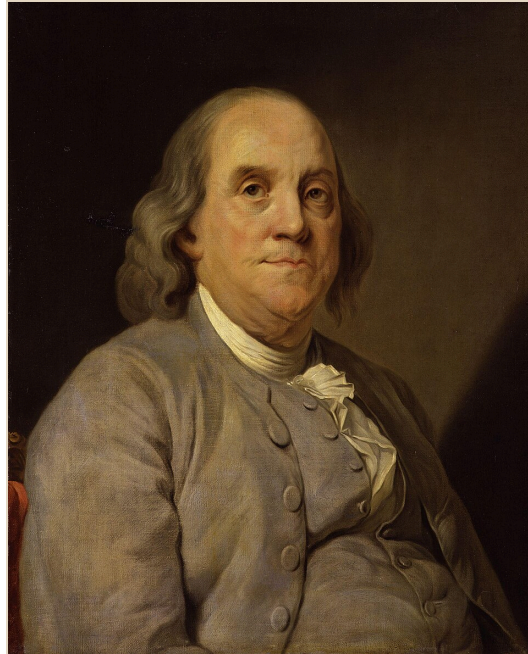
The Grade 4 checklist. (1) Does it have a clear order? (2) Is every sentence complete? (3) Are my verbs strong, and in the right tense? (4) Capitals for sentences and names? (5) End marks and commas in place?

The model. *Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (written 1771; this edition 1909)*

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.

PICTURE STUDY



Benjamin Franklin, After Joseph Siffred Duplessis, original c. 1778 · Oil on canvas (a copy of Duplessis's portrait)

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The French painter Joseph Duplessis painted Franklin when he was in France as America's ambassador, about seventy years old. Franklin had taught himself to write as a teenager.

Look closely

- Describe Franklin's face. What is his expression?
- What is he wearing?
- What is missing that rich men often wore in portraits?

Talk about it

1. Does Franklin look like a man who worked hard to learn? Why?
2. What would you ask him about learning to write?

WRITING PROJECT: FIVE PASSES

Revise one piece from this year with the Grade 4 checklist, reading it five times for five different things.

You will need

- A piece from your notebook
- Colored pencils

Steps

1. Pass 1 (order): Is it in a clear order? Fix with arrows.
2. Pass 2 (sentences): Is every sentence complete?
3. Pass 3 (verbs): Circle verbs. Change one weak verb to a strong one. Check tense.
4. Pass 4 (capitals): Check every sentence start and name.
5. Pass 5 (punctuation): End marks, commas in dates, after greetings and long openers.
6. Write a clean copy.

Check your work

- I did all five passes.
- I made at least one fix in each pass.
- I wrote a clean copy.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Grade 4 checklist.
2. List three faults you found and fixed.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 3.4 “Past, Present and Future.” Keep one tense through a narrative unless the time really changes.

For families. Franklin’s 18th-century spellings (“try’d,” “compleat”) are kept exactly. They are a fun way to show that spelling has changed.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise for verbs: “The horse went across the field.”

1. Weak verb: went.
2. Stronger: galloped, trotted, plodded.

Answer: The horse galloped across the field.

Example 2. Fix tense: “Yesterday we walk to the creek and catch a frog.”

1. Yesterday means past.

Answer: Yesterday we walked to the creek and caught a frog.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does revise mean?
2. **EASY** What did Franklin use as his model?
3. **EASY** Name the five checks.
4. **MEDIUM** Why wait a few days before rewriting, as Franklin did?
5. **MEDIUM** Fix: “the dog barked at the mailman on tuesday”
6. **MEDIUM** Change the weak verb: “She said loudly.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Trying to fix everything in one reading.
- Only fixing spelling and ignoring order and verbs.

Make it a game • Error Hunt. The teacher writes a paragraph with five planted mistakes, one of each kind. First to find all five wins.

Scripture. “The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.” (Ecclesiastes 12:10, KJV)

Solomon worked to find the right words. Revising is that same work.

Practice: answers

1. To see again and improve writing.
2. Essays from the *Spectator*.
3. Order, sentences, verbs, capitals, punctuation.
4. So he would not just copy from memory and could see his own faults.
5. The dog barked at the mailman on Tuesday.
6. She shouted (or called).

8.2 PEER READING WITH A SIBLING

OBJECTIVES

- Read a brother's or sister's writing and give kind, useful notes.
- Use "two stars and a wish."
- Receive notes graciously and use one.

Warm-up. How do you feel when someone points out a mistake? What makes it easier to hear?

Video slot. Video coming. Giving kind feedback: "two stars and a wish" for children. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

peer reader

Someone your age (or close) who reads your work and gives notes.

two stars and a wish

Two specific things you liked and one thing to improve.

gracious

Kind and thankful, even when receiving correction.

CORE IDEAS

Iron sharpens iron. Writers help each other. A brother or sister can catch what you missed.

Two stars and a wish. Name two specific things you liked and one wish. Be specific: not "It was good," but "I loved the word 'thumped.'"

Receiving notes. Say "Thank you." You do not have to use every note, but think about each one.

The model. *Peer notes*

A model written for this course: a sister's notes on her brother's fable.

Two stars: (1) I loved "the fox licked his lips like a man counting money." (2) Your moral comes first, and it made me watch for the lesson.

One wish: In the middle, I got lost. Who said "Not today"? Could you add "said the hen"?

PICTURE STUDY



Sunday Afternoon (Sonntagnachmittag), Albert Anker, 1861 · Oil on canvas
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Albert Anker often painted children and grandparents learning together at home on quiet Sunday afternoons.

Look closely

- Who is reading? Who is listening?
- Where are they sitting?
- What does the old man seem to be doing?

Talk about it

1. How can an older child help a younger one learn?
2. How could a younger child help an older one?

WRITING PROJECT: SWAP AND STAR

Swap a piece of writing with a sibling, parent or friend and give two stars and a wish. Then revise using one note you received.

You will need

- A piece of writing
- Sticky notes

Steps

1. Read your partner's piece twice.
2. Write two stars (specific things you liked).
3. Write one wish (one thing to improve).
4. Give your notes kindly.
5. Receive your notes and say thank you.
6. Revise your own piece using one note.

Check your work

- My stars were specific.
- My wish was kind and clear.
- I used one note to revise.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. The notes you gave.
2. The notes you got, and which one you used.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 7.4 "Compound Sentences." A wish can use *but*: "I liked the ending, but I wanted to know how the farmer felt."

For families. For an only child, a parent, grandparent or friend from a co-op can be the peer reader.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Make it specific: "Your story was good."

1. What exactly was good?

Answer: I liked how the lamb said "Maa!" at the very moment the light was going.

Example 2. Make it kind: "Your ending is bad."

1. Make it a wish, not a verdict.

Answer: I wish I knew how the farmer felt at the end. Could you add one sentence?

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What are "two stars and a wish"?
2. **EASY** What should you say when you get notes?
3. **EASY** Must you use every note?
4. **MEDIUM** Make specific: "Nice poem."

5. **MEDIUM** Why start with stars?
6. **MEDIUM** What does “iron sharpeneth iron” mean?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Giving only praise, or only criticism.
- Arguing with every note.

Make it a game • Star Hunt. Read a famous passage from this year. Everyone finds two “stars” in it. Read the stars aloud.

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

Good friends, brothers and sisters make each other better.

Practice: answers

1. Two specific things you liked and one thing to improve.
2. “Thank you.”
3. No, but think about each one.
4. Sample: Your refrain was easy to join in on.
5. It encourages the writer and shows what to keep.
6. People help each other improve.

8.3 FABLE AND NARRATIVE SHOWCASE

OBJECTIVES

- Plan and hold a family showcase of this year’s writing.
- Read aloud clearly, with expression.
- Answer questions about your work.

Warm-up. Read one sentence three ways: whispering, shouting and in a normal clear voice. Which is best for an audience?

Video slot. Video coming. Reading aloud with expression, for children. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

showcase

An event to show your best work.

expression

Changing your voice to fit the meaning.

program

A list of what will happen at an event.

eye contact

Looking up at your listeners.

CORE IDEAS

Writing is for readers. Words written down are meant to be read and heard. A showcase lets your family enjoy your year’s work.

Read well. Practice three times. Read slowly, look up at the end of each sentence and change your voice for dialogue.

A program. Plan the evening: welcome, readings, questions and something to eat.

The model. *A sample showcase program*

A model program written for this course.

Brooks Family Fable and Narrative Showcase

Friday evening, May 14, in the front room

1. Welcome and prayer (Dad)

2. "The Dog and the Shadow," amplified, read by Samuel
3. "The Old Stone Wall," a family ballad, read by Samuel, with everyone on the refrain
4. "The First Flight," a narrative in three orders, read by Samuel
5. Questions from the audience
6. Lemonade and pie

PICTURE STUDY



A Father Reading the Bible to His Children (La Lecture de la Bible), Jean-Baptiste Greuze, 1755 · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Before radio and television, families spent evenings reading aloud. Greuze, a French painter, shows a whole family gathered while the father reads the Bible.

Look closely

- Who is reading?
- Who is listening, and how?
- What time of day does it seem to be?

Talk about it

1. Why did families read aloud together?
2. What would you read to your family?

WRITING PROJECT: OUR SHOWCASE

Plan and hold a family showcase with at least three pieces from this year.

You will need

- Your best pieces
- Paper for a program
- Snacks

Steps

1. Choose three pieces: one fable, one narrative and one ballad or letter.
2. Write a program.
3. Practice each reading three times.
4. Hold the showcase.
5. Answer one question about each piece.

Check your work

- I read three pieces clearly.
- I looked up at my listeners.
- I answered questions.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Your program.
2. One sentence: what you liked best about the evening.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 1.2 “Four Kinds of Sentences.” Let your voice show the end mark: rise for questions, strength for exclamations.

For families. Invite grandparents or another family. Praise first, especially for effort and clear reading.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. How should you read Toad’s line “Hooray! This is splendid!”?

1. Toad is excited.

Answer: Loudly and happily, with energy.

Example 2. Put in order: questions, welcome, readings, snacks.

1. What comes first?

Answer: Welcome, readings, questions, snacks.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a showcase?
2. **EASY** How many times should you practice?
3. **EASY** What is eye contact?
4. **MEDIUM** Why read slowly?
5. **MEDIUM** How should you read a ballad refrain?
6. **MEDIUM** Write one question a listener might ask about your ballad.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading too fast.
- Hiding your face behind the paper.

Make it a game • Expression Charades. Read one sentence as happy, sad, scared or angry. Others guess the feeling.

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 and the Levites read so the people understood. Read distinctly.

Practice: answers

1. An event to show your best work.
2. Three times.
3. Looking up at your listeners.
4. So listeners can understand.
5. Clearly, inviting listeners to join in.
6. Sample: Who told you this story?

8.4 PORTFOLIO

OBJECTIVES

- Choose your best pieces of the year.
- Write a short reflection on each.
- Assemble a portfolio.

Warm-up. Look back through your whole notebook. Which page makes you proudest?

Video slot. Video coming. How to make a writing portfolio, for children. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

portfolio

A collection of your best work.

reflection

A few sentences about what you learned.

growth

How your writing improved.

CORE IDEAS

A year of work. You have written fables, narratives, stories, ballads, descriptions and letters. A portfolio gathers the best.

Choose wisely. Include one piece from each kind of writing, and one early piece to show your growth.

Reflect. For each piece, write two sentences: what you did well and what you learned.

The model. *A sample reflection (written for this course)*

“Hector and the Twentieth Lamb.” I am proud of the setting, especially “the sky went the color of a bruise.” I learned that a story needs a want and an obstacle, or nothing happens.

PICTURE STUDY



The Geographer, Johannes Vermeer, 1669 · Oil on canvas · Städel Museum, Frankfurt
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Vermeer's geographer pauses from his maps to think. Good work needs pauses to look back and think.

Look closely

- What tools is he holding?
- What is on the table and the wall?
- Where is he looking?

Talk about it

1. What might he be thinking about?
2. What will you think about as you look back at your year?

WRITING PROJECT: MY GRADE 4 PORTFOLIO

Assemble a portfolio of five pieces with reflections.

You will need

- A folder
- Your best pieces
- Paper for a cover

Steps

1. Choose five pieces: a fable, a narrative, a story, a ballad and a letter or description.
2. Add one early piece to show growth.
3. Write a two-sentence reflection for each.
4. Make a cover with your name, the year and a drawing.
5. Show it to your family.

Check your work

- Five pieces plus one early piece.
- A reflection for each.
- A cover.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Your list of portfolio pieces.
2. Your reflections.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.3 “Contractions and Apostrophes.” In formal reflections, write *did not* instead of *didn’t*.

For families. Keep the portfolio with Grade 3’s so you can compare. Grade 5 begins the chreia.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Write a reflection for a fable.

1. What did you do well? What did you learn?

Answer: I amplified the fable with dialogue. I learned that the moral can come first.

Example 2. Which early piece shows growth?

1. Compare September and May.

Answer: Answers vary; any early piece compared with a later one.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a portfolio?
2. **EASY** How many pieces go in?
3. **EASY** What is a reflection?
4. **MEDIUM** Why include an early piece?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the six kinds of writing from this year.

6. **MEDIUM** What is the next exercise after narrative in the progymnasmata?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Choosing only the longest pieces.
- Writing “I liked it” as a reflection.

Make it a game • Portfolio Tour. Give a family member a “tour” of your portfolio, one minute per piece.

Scripture. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalm 19:1, KJV)

God’s creation tells his story. Your work tells of the gifts he gave you.

Practice: answers

1. A collection of your best work.
2. Five, plus one early piece.
3. A few sentences about what you learned.
4. To show growth.
5. Fable, narrative, story, ballad, description, letter.
6. The chreia (Grade 5).

UNIT 8 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (5 pts) Name the five passes of the Grade 4 checklist.
2. (4 pts) Describe Franklin's method in two sentences.
3. (2 pts) What are two stars and a wish?
4. (5 pts) Revise: "yesterday me and dad goes to the store and buyed apples"
5. (4 pts) Write a two-sentence reflection on your favorite piece.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: MY GRADE 4 PORTFOLIO

Five pieces, one early piece and reflections, in a folder with a cover.

- **Range:** Different kinds of writing.
- **Revision:** Clean, revised copies.
- **Reflection:** Specific reflections.
- **Presentation:** Neat cover and order.

Answer key

1. Order, sentences, verbs, capitals, punctuation.
2. He made notes on an essay, rewrote it later from the notes, then compared and fixed his faults.
3. Two specific praises and one thing to improve.
4. Yesterday Dad and I went to the store and bought apples.
5. What I did well and what I learned.

BONUS: CONTEST LAB

An optional lab for students who want to enter a real contest. The School Launch directory lists the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Education Contest for Grades 4–12: free, open to students of any church, with poetry and essay categories. You will read its rules, then write an eight-line poem and a one-page essay on the theme.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has finished Units 1–5 (ballad stanza) and Unit 8.1 (revision checklist).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can turn a rule sheet into a checklist.
- ☐ I can write a poem to a line limit.
- ☐ I can write an essay to a word limit.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Catholic Daughters of the Americas** (<https://catholicdaughters.org/2026-contests>): National contest page. Rules and entry forms come through local courts.

9.1 READING A REAL RULE SHEET

OBJECTIVES

- Read a real contest rule sheet and find the rules that matter.
- Turn the rules into a checklist.
- Choose a category: poem or essay.

Warm-up. Name three rules for a game you play. What happens if someone breaks one?

Video slot. Video coming. What is a writing contest? A short introduction for children. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

theme

The idea every entry must be about.

division

A group of entrants by grade.

rubric

The list of what judges score and how many points each is worth.

court

A local chapter of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

CORE IDEAS

A real contest. The Catholic Daughters of the Americas hold a yearly Education Contest for Grades 4–12. It is free, and students of any church may enter through a local court.

Read the rubric. The judges give 40 of 100 points for showing the theme clearly and 30 for originality. Only 15 are for grammar and spelling. That tells you what matters most: say something true and your own about the theme.

Make a checklist. Theme, length, typed, one page, your own work, deadline, entry form.

The model. *Catholic Daughters of the Americas National Education Contest, Division 1 (rules summarized)*

A summary of the 2025–2026 rule sheet (as posted by the Virginia State Court of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas). The 2026–2027 theme and rules may differ; get the current sheet from your local court.

Who: Division 1 is Grades 4–5. Catholic and non-Catholic students may enter.

Theme (choose one): “The Least of These. Matthew 25:40” or “The Least of These: Lifting Others Up.”

Essay: typed only, not more than 450 words, on one page, not front and back.

Poetry: any style, typed, not more than eight lines.

Rule for all: entries must be the contestant’s own imagination and creation.

Judges’ rubric for poems and essays: follows rules such as length 5; neatness 10; grammar, spelling and punctuation 15; originality 30; clear depiction of the theme 40 (total 100).

How to enter: through a local Catholic Daughters court, by its deadline (the 2026 Virginia deadline was February 1).

PICTURE STUDY



The Seven Works of Mercy, Master of Alkmaar, 1504 · Oil on panel (seven panels) · Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Long ago, a Dutch painter showed Matthew 25 in seven panels: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, burying the dead, sheltering travelers, visiting the sick and visiting prisoners. In each panel, Christ stands quietly in the crowd.

Look closely

- Choose one panel. What good work is being done?
- Find Christ in a panel.
- Look at the clothes. When and where does this seem to be?

Talk about it

1. Why did the painter put Christ among the poor?
2. Which work of mercy could your family do this month?

WRITING PROJECT: FROM RULES TO CHECKLIST

Turn the rule sheet into a checklist and pick your category.

You will need

- Writing notebook

- The current rule sheet from your local court, if available

Steps

1. Read the rules aloud with a parent.
2. Write a checklist with a box for each rule.
3. Circle the two rubric parts worth the most points.
4. Choose poem or essay.
5. Write down your deadline.

Check your work

- My checklist covers every rule.
- I know which rubric parts matter most.
- I chose a category.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Your checklist.
2. Copy Matthew 25:40.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 1.1 “What Is a Sentence?”

For families. The rules here are from the 2025–2026 contest, read from a state court’s posted rule sheet (the national site would not load for us). The 2026–2027 theme was not posted when this course was written; the School Launch directory estimates a February 1, 2027 local deadline. Confirm with your local court.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Is a 520-word essay allowed?

1. Limit: 450 words.

Answer: No. Cut at least 70 words.

Example 2. Which counts more: neatness or originality?

1. Neatness 10, originality 30.

Answer: Originality.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Which grades are in Division 1?

2. **EASY** How long may a poem be?
3. **EASY** How long may an essay be?
4. **MEDIUM** What part of the rubric is worth the most?
5. **MEDIUM** Where do you send an entry?
6. **MEDIUM** Why should you check for a new rule sheet each year?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Using last year's theme.
- Writing a great piece that misses the theme.

Make it a game • Rule Detective. The teacher makes three "entries," each breaking one rule. Find the broken rule.

Scripture. "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."
(Matthew 25:40, KJV)

The 2025-2026 theme came from this verse.

Practice: answers

1. Grades 4-5.
2. Eight lines or fewer.
3. 450 words or fewer, one page.
4. Clear depiction of the theme (40 points).
5. To a local Catholic Daughters court.
6. The theme and rules may change.

9.2 AN EIGHT-LINE POEM 🍷 🏆

OBJECTIVES

- Write an original poem of eight lines or fewer on the contest theme.
- Use two ballad stanzas or another form you know.
- Count lines and check every rule.

Warm-up. Name a person you know who is often overlooked: an elderly neighbor, a new family, someone who is sick. How could you help?

Video slot. Video coming. The parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25) for children. Use a Bible-story source that follows the KJV; preview first.

KEY TERMS

original

Your own, not copied.

line count

The number of lines in a poem.

concrete

Real and specific, something you can see.

CORE IDEAS

Two ballad stanzas = eight lines. You already know the ballad stanza. Two of them make exactly eight lines.

Concrete, not vague. Judges see many poems that say “help others” in general words. Write about one real person and one real deed.

The turn. Let the last two lines turn: show what you received, or what Christ said.

The model. *A sample contest poem*

A sample poem written for this course (eight lines).

Mrs. Hale’s Porch

Old Mrs. Hale can’t climb the hill
To fetch her mail or pills,
So Dad and I walk up the lane
Past Peterson’s two mills.
She saves us peppermints and tales
Of winters long ago.

We carry mail; she carries more:
The things we didn't know.

PICTURE STUDY



The Good Samaritan, Vincent van Gogh (after Delacroix), 1890 · Oil on canvas · Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Van Gogh copied a painting by Delacroix of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan. One man stops to help; the others walk away.

Look closely

- Who is helping? How?
- Find the two who walk away.
- What colors stand out?

Talk about it

1. Who are "the least of these" in this painting?
2. Write one line of a poem about it.

WRITING PROJECT: MY CONTEST POEM

Write an eight-line poem on the theme.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Your checklist from 9.1

Steps

1. Choose one real person and one real deed.
2. Write stanza 1: the person and the need.
3. Write stanza 2: the deed and the turn.
4. Count lines (eight or fewer).
5. Type it neatly. Check every rule on your checklist.

Check your work

- Eight lines or fewer.
- About one real person and deed.
- Clearly on the theme.
- My own work.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Your draft.
2. Your line count.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.3 “Contractions and Apostrophes.” In poems, contractions like *can’t* are fine; check the apostrophe.

For families. The sample poem was written for this course. Do not let a child enter it or copy it; the contest requires original work.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Count the lines in the model.

1. Two stanzas of four.

Answer: Eight.

Example 2. Make concrete: “We should always help people in need.”

1. Who? What deed?

Answer: We carry Mrs. Hale her mail up the steep lane.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How many lines may a contest poem have?
2. **EASY** How many ballad stanzas make eight lines?

3. **EASY** In the model, what do they carry?
4. **MEDIUM** What is the turn in the model?
5. **MEDIUM** Why write about one real person?
6. **MEDIUM** Which rubric parts does a concrete poem help?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Going over eight lines.
- Writing only general words like “help” and “kind.”

Make it a game • Line Count Race. Shuffle the lines of the model poem. Race to put them back in order.

Scripture. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27, KJV)

James names who “the least of these” often are.

Practice: answers

1. Eight or fewer.
2. Two.
3. Mail (and pills).
4. She gives them more than they give: stories and things they did not know.
5. It is concrete and original.
6. Originality and clear depiction of the theme.

9.3 A ONE-PAGE ESSAY 🏆

OBJECTIVES

- Write an essay of 450 words or fewer on the theme.
- Use a true story as the heart of the essay.
- Count words and fit the essay on one page.

Warm-up. Tell a parent about a time someone helped you when you needed it.

Video slot. Video coming. How to count words and fit a page, for children. Search approved channels (e.g., Homeschool Pop (Alternate), a library or museum read-aloud); preview first.

KEY TERMS

essay

A short piece of writing that makes one main point.

word count

The number of words in a piece.

main point

The one idea the whole essay supports.

CORE IDEAS

A narrative essay. You already know how to tell a true narrative. Use one true story to show the theme, then say what it means.

Plan in three parts. Beginning: the story starts, with the six questions. Middle: what happened. End: what it means, with Matthew 25:40.

Count and cut. Count your words with a word processor or by hand. If you are over 450, cut repeated words and extra details (Lesson 1.3 skills).

The model. *A sample contest essay (opening paragraph)*

The opening of a sample essay written for this course.

The Least of These on Route 9

Every Thursday after supper, my family drives to the county food pantry on Route 9. My job is to sort cans. Green beans go on the left shelf, soup on the right. It does not feel like much, but Jesus said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). That means the can of soup I stack is not only for a hungry family. It is for Christ himself.

PICTURE STUDY



Saint Diego of Alcalá Feeding the Poor, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, c. 1645–1646 · Oil on canvas · Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The Spanish painter Murillo showed a kitchen friar about to serve soup to the poor of Seville. The hungry children in front were painted from real street children.

Look closely

- Who is giving? Who is receiving?
- What food is shared?
- Look at the faces.

Talk about it

1. How does this painting show “the least of these”?
2. What true story from your life does it remind you of?

WRITING PROJECT: MY CONTEST ESSAY

Write a true narrative essay of 450 words or fewer on the theme.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A computer or typewriter for the final copy

Steps

1. Choose one true story about serving or being served.

2. Plan three parts.
3. Draft without counting.
4. Count words. Cut to 450 or fewer.
5. Revise with the five-pass checklist (Lesson 8.1).
6. Type it on one page and check every rule.

Check your work

- 450 words or fewer on one page.
- A true story at the center.
- The theme is clear.
- Revised and typed.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Your plan.
2. Your word count before and after cutting.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 1, Lesson 8.2 “Commas.” Put commas around a direct quotation’s speaker tag and in dates.

For families. The word count in Example 1 (15) was counted from the sample as printed here. The essay opening is a sample written for this course; the entry must be the child’s own.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Count the words in the model’s first sentence.

1. Every, Thursday, after, supper, my, family, drives, to, the, county, food, pantry, on, Route, 9.

Answer: 15 words (counting “9” as a word).

Example 2. Cut: “I really, truly think that it is very important to help.”

1. Remove filler words.

Answer: Helping matters.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the word limit?
2. **EASY** How many pages?

3. **EASY** What is the job in the model?
4. **MEDIUM** Name the three parts of the plan.
5. **MEDIUM** How do you cut words?
6. **MEDIUM** Where should Matthew 25:40 appear?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing an essay of general ideas with no story.
- Going over the limit or onto a second page.

Make it a game • Word Budget. Each player gets 25 words to tell what they did yesterday. Count. Over budget? Cut.

Scripture. “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10, KJV)

Look for opportunities to do good, then write about them truthfully.

Practice: answers

1. 450 words.
2. One, not front and back.
3. Sorting cans at a food pantry.
4. The story begins, what happened, what it means.
5. Remove repeats, filler and extra details.
6. In the meaning part (it may also appear earlier).

UNIT 9 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Writing tasks are scored with the checklist from the unit, not for spelling alone.

1. (4 pts) What are the poem and essay limits for Division 1 (2025–26)?
2. (2 pts) Which rubric part is worth the most?
3. (2 pts) Why must you get a new rule sheet each year?
4. (4 pts) Cut to 10 words or fewer: “On Saturday morning my sister and I went over to the neighbor’s house to rake all of the leaves.”

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A CONTEST ENTRY

Your finished poem or essay, typed, with the checklist showing every rule met.

- **Rules:** Length, format, theme.
- **Theme:** Clearly shown.
- **Originality:** A real person and deed.
- **Mechanics:** Clean and correct.

Answer key

1. Poem: 8 lines; essay: 450 words, one page.
2. Clear depiction of the theme (40).
3. Themes and rules change.
4. Sample: Saturday, my sister and I raked our neighbor’s leaves. (9 words)