

GRADE 7 COMPOSITION & CREATIVE WRITING: COMMONPLACE, ENCOMIUM AND INVECTIVE

The fifth year of classical writing: amplify a virtue or a vice with the commonplace, praise a worthy person or thing with the encomium, blame a vice fairly with invective, tell a story from three points of view, write a first sonnet, build a five-paragraph essay, and sketch a real life in the manner of Plutarch.

First edition

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.
Philippians 4:8 (KJV)

COURSE GUIDE

Grade 7 continues the progymnasmata, the “first exercises” of the Greek and Roman schools described by Theon, Hermogenes and Aphthonius, with three new ones. The commonplace amplifies a virtue or vice everyone already knows, against the tyrant, the thief and the coward, using contrary, comparison, intention, digression and the rejection of pity. You will also begin a commonplace book, as Milton and Jefferson kept theirs. The encomium praises a person or thing by origin, upbringing, deeds and comparison: William Wilberforce, the plow, the book and the bridge, and the great roll of faith in Hebrews 11. Invective turns the same method to blame the deed, not slander the person, with Cicero’s “How long, O Catiline?” (63 B.C.) as the model and Ephesians 4:15, “speaking the truth in love,” as the rule.

The creative track teaches point of view (first person in Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, the change of narrator in Stevenson’s *Treasure Island*, and the omniscient narrator of Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol*) and gives a first look at the sonnet with Shakespeare’s Sonnet 18 and Milton’s “On His Blindness.” A practical unit uses the encomium heads to build a five-paragraph essay and prepares an entry for the VFW Patriot’s Pen or the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The personal narrative unit reads Plutarch’s *Lives*, interviews a grandparent and writes a biographical sketch.

Each lesson has a model passage, a picture study of fine art (David, Hickel, Maccari, John Leech and Munkácsy), a writing project, worked examples, practice, a game and a verse from the King James Bible. The year ends with an encomium delivered as a speech and a finished portfolio.

WHO IT IS FOR

Written for students in grade 7 (about ages 12–13) who write a full paragraph and a short essay on their own. A parent reads along, listens and helps with revision. Pairs with Grammar Level 3, Units 17–20. Grade 6 Composition is helpful but not required; Lesson 1.1 reviews the heads used in earlier exercises.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

1. **The weekly rhythm.** One lesson a week in two sessions of 40–45 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 by hand, then an imitation that follows the model’s pattern, then a piece of your own. Good sentences you meet along the way go into your commonplace book.
3. **The quarter path.** Short on time? The ★ lessons (1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1 and 8.1), plus 3.4 and 7.4 to finish an invective and a sketch, make a ten-lesson, one-quarter course that touches every exercise once.
4. **With Grammar.** Every lesson names the Grammar Level 3 lesson it uses (🔗). The revision checklist asks only for skills Grammar has taught.

5. **Speaking.** Each unit includes reading aloud: Cicero against Catiline, the two sonnets and your own work. Unit 8 ends with an encomium delivered as a short speech to the family.
6. **Contests.** Lesson 6.4 and the optional Contest Lab prepare an entry for two contests. As of October 2026, the VFW Patriot's Pen (grades 6–8) asks for a 300–400 word essay on the 2026–27 theme “What a Veteran Taught Me About America,” due to a local VFW Post by October 31, 2026, so families starting in late summer should do 6.4 and 9.1 early. The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards (grades 7–12, age 13 and up) opened October 1, 2026; regional deadlines for the 2027 Awards fall between early December and early January, entries cost \$10 each, and a fee waiver is available. Rules, themes and fees change, so always get the official entry form and current rules from the VFW and from artandwriting.org before you write.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Unit 1: Commonplace (1–4)

The seventh classical exercise: the commonplace, a speech that amplifies a wrong everyone already admits. You will learn to amplify tyranny and theft by their effects with Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, master Aphthonius's arrangement (contrary, exposition, comparison, intention, digression, rejection of pity and the final heads), write a full commonplace against cowardice with Thomas Paine's *American Crisis* as your model, and begin a commonplace book of your own, as Milton and Jefferson did. Picture study: Jacques-Louis David's *Oath of the Horatii*.

Unit 2: Encomium (Praise) (5–8)

The encomium is the classical exercise of praise. You will learn its six parts (prooemium, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue) from Xenophon's praise of King Agesilaus, write a full encomium of William Wilberforce, adapt the method to praise a thing (the plow, the book or the bridge) with Milton's great praise of books as your model, and discover that Hebrews 11 is an encomium of faith and of the faithful. Picture study begins with Karl Anton Hickel's portrait of the young Wilberforce.

Unit 3: Invective (Blame) and Fairness (9–12)

Invective is encomium turned around: the same heads (prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue) used to blame instead of praise. In this unit you learn to blame deeds rather than birth, to tell fair blame from slander, and to grant an honest concession. You will watch Cicero accuse Catiline before the Roman Senate in 63 B.C. and see Catiline answer with slander, study Nathan's rebuke of David and Paul's rebuke of Peter as models of “speaking the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15), and finish with a full invective against a vice, taught by Bassanio's speech against false show in *The Merchant of Venice*. Invective in this course is aimed only at vices and long-dead wrongdoers, never at a living person.

Unit 4: 📖 Story: Point of View (13–16)

Every story has a teller, and the teller decides what the reader can know. In this creative-writing unit you will learn three points of view from three great books: first person from

Crusoe's own account of his shipwreck in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, the limited view from Jim Hawkins's first sight of Blind Pew in Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (and Stevenson's famous handing of the story to Dr. Livesey), and the all-knowing narrator from Dickens's portrait of Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, with John Leech's 1843 plates for picture study. You will finish by telling one event three ways, as Jesus' parable of the prodigal son shows one homecoming through more than one pair of eyes.

Unit 5: 🦋 Poetry: The Sonnet, First Look (17-20)

The sonnet is the most famous fixed form in English poetry: fourteen lines, five beats to the line, and a strict rhyme scheme. In this unit you will read four masters, each by copying first. Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 shows the English form (three quatrains and a couplet). Milton's "On His Blindness" shows the Italian form (octave and sestet) and a Christian answer to loss. Keats's "On first looking into Chapman's Homer" trains your ear to hear iambic pentameter, and Wordsworth's "Nuns fret not" explains why a strict form can free a writer. The unit ends with a sonnet of your own. Picture study begins with Munkácsy's *Milton Dictating Paradise Lost to His Daughters* (1878).

Unit 6: The Five-Paragraph Essay as Scaffold (21-24)

This unit sets the classical exercises you have learned (commonplace, encomium and invective) on the frame every school essay and contest expects: an introduction ending in a thesis, three body paragraphs and a conclusion. You will learn to write a thesis with a forecast from the Declaration of Independence, build body paragraphs from the encomium heads with Stephen's praise of Moses in Acts 7, open and close an essay with Lincoln's Gettysburg Address as your guide, and finish with an entry for the VFW Patriot's Pen or the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The five-paragraph essay is a scaffold: put it up to build straight, and you will know later when it can come down.

Unit 7: 🦋 Personal Narrative: The Biographical Sketch (25-28)

In this creative unit you become a biographer. You will read Plutarch, the ancient master of the "life," and learn his rule that a small deed can show a person's character better than a great battle. Then you will interview a grandparent or another older person, sort what you learn under the heads of encomium, choose a controlling idea, and write a biographical sketch of 600-800 words in the manner of Benjamin Franklin's portrait of his father. The finished sketch is both a portfolio piece and a gift to the person whose life it tells, and a record of God's providence in your own family.

Unit 8: Review (29-32)

The year closes by bringing all five canons together. You will review the year's exercises and draft an encomium speech modeled on David's lament for Saul and Jonathan, deliver it with Hamlet's advice to the players as your guide, revise it and two other pieces by Benjamin Franklin's method of comparing and correcting, and finally gather a portfolio of eight pieces and answer for it in an oral examination.

Unit 9: Bonus: Contest Lab (Bonus)

This optional unit takes the year's writing to real readers. You will reshape your 6.4 essay for the VFW Patriot's Pen contest (2026–27 theme: "What a Veteran Taught Me About America," 300–400 words, due October 31, 2026), choose a piece and category for the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards (grades 7–12, age 13 and up; regional deadlines December 2026–January 2027), and then polish and send your entry with a rules checklist, an exact word count and honest work that is wholly your own. Models come from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* and Pope's *Essay on Criticism*. Contest rules are summarized as of October 2026; always get the official forms.

MATERIALS

- **A writing notebook (composition book)** One for the whole year.
- **A second notebook for your commonplace book** Begun in Lesson 1.4 and kept all year.
- **A KJV Bible** For every lesson's verse and Lessons 2.4 and 3.3.
- **Library copies of Robinson Crusoe, Treasure Island and A Christmas Carol (optional)** For Unit 4. The lessons print the passages you need.
- **A phone or recorder** For the grandparent interview (7.2) and the encomium speech (Unit 8).
- **A timer** For the speech and the timed writing in Unit 8.
- **A folder for the portfolio** Unit 8.

GRADING

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

- Writing projects: 50%
- Writing notebook and commonplace book: 15%
- Unit reviews: 15%
- Unit portfolio pieces and oral work: 20%

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

- Mechanics are graded only on skills Grammar Level 3 has taught.
- Invective is graded for fairness as well as force: it must blame a vice or a deed, never slander a person.
- A timed writing sample at mid-year and in Unit 8 shows growth.

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 before suggesting one change. In Unit 7, your child will interview a grandparent or another older relative or friend; a little help arranging the visit or call goes a long way.

Each lesson has a *For families* note with background, sources and cautions. Public-domain model passages were copied from downloaded Project Gutenberg texts (never typed from memory), and Scripture was checked against the King James Version. Models written for this course are labeled. Invective is aimed only at vices and at long-dead historical wrongdoers such as Catiline, never at a living person or group, and the unit is taught alongside Ephesians 4:15 and Colossians 4:6 so that strong words stay true and seasoned with grace.

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9.2 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards: Choosing a Category 🏆

9.3 Polish and Send: Rules Checklist, Word Count, Honest Work 🏆

★ quarter path (10 lessons) · 📝 creative writing track · 🏆 ends with a piece for a contest in the School Launch directory · 🔗 Grammar Level 3 link in every lesson

COMMONPLACE

The seventh classical exercise: the commonplace, a speech that amplifies a wrong everyone already admits. You will learn to amplify tyranny and theft by their effects with Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, master Aphthonius's arrangement (contrary, exposition, comparison, intention, digression, rejection of pity and the final heads), write a full commonplace against cowardice with Thomas Paine's *American Crisis* as your model, and begin a commonplace book of your own, as Milton and Jefferson did. Picture study: Jacques-Louis David's *Oath of the Horatii*.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written a refutation or confirmation (Grade 6) or can write a clear multi-paragraph piece.
- Can tell an independent clause from a dependent clause (Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.1).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can define a commonplace and tell how it differs from refutation.
- ☐ I can amplify a vice by its effects, pictures, size and building sentences.
- ☐ I can name and write the eight heads of a commonplace in order.
- ☐ I can write a full commonplace against a vice without aiming it at a real person.
- ☐ I can keep a commonplace book with exact, sourced entries under heads.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Project Gutenberg #1533)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1533>): Model for Lesson 1.1 (Act IV, scene 3). Parents may preview the rest of the play.
- **Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis* (Project Gutenberg #3741)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3741>): Model for Lesson 1.3; Crisis No. I is short and read well aloud.
- **Francis Bacon, *Essays* (Project Gutenberg #575)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/575>): Short essays full of sayings worth copying into a commonplace book (Lesson 1.4).
- **The Oath of the Horatii (Wikimedia Commons)**
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jacques-Louis_David,_Le_Serment_des_Horaces.jpg): Large free image for the unit's picture study.

1.1 AMPLIFYING A KNOWN VIRTUE OR VICE: AGAINST THE TYRANT, AGAINST THE THIEF ★

OBJECTIVES

- Define the commonplace and tell how it differs from refutation and confirmation.
- Show how Shakespeare amplifies tyranny by its effects in *Macbeth*, Act IV, scene 3.
- Write the introduction and the exposition of a commonplace against the thief.

Warm-up. Everyone in the room already agrees that stealing is wrong. So why would a judge, a pastor or a father ever give a whole speech against it? List three reasons in two minutes, then compare lists.

Video slot. Video coming. *Macbeth* Act 4 scene 3, “Alas, poor country” performed or read aloud (choose a clean stage or audio reading of the single speech). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

commonplace

The seventh of the progymnasmata: a speech that amplifies a wrong (or a good deed) that everyone already admits. From the Greek *koinos topos*, Latin *locus communis*, “common place.”

amplification

Making the size of a thing felt: showing how great a good is or how heavy a wrong is, by its effects, pictures, comparisons and details.

tyrant

A ruler who governs for himself and not for his people, and who rules by fear instead of by law.

vice

A settled habit of doing wrong, such as theft, cruelty or cowardice. Its opposite is a virtue.

exposition

The part of a commonplace that sets the deed itself before the hearers’ eyes, told plainly and vividly.

CORE IDEAS

The next exercise. Last year you learned refutation and confirmation: you argued whether a story was believable or not. The commonplace comes next in Aphthonius’s list, and it changes the question. The guilt is no longer in doubt. The thief has been caught with the goods; the tyrant’s crimes are known to all. Your work is not to *prove* the wrong but to make your hearers *feel its weight*. The ancient teachers compared it to the speech a prosecutor gives after the facts are settled, when he asks the court to see how serious the deed really is.

Why “common”? A commonplace is aimed at a *kind* of wrongdoer, not at one named man. A speech against the thief fits every thief; a speech against the tyrant fits every tyrant. That is why it is “common”: it can be carried from case to case. This keeps your writing fair. In this course you will never write a commonplace against a living person or a group of people. You will write against vices, and against types: the thief, the tyrant, the coward.

Against the tyrant, against the thief. Aphthonius’s own model commonplace is a speech against a tyrant, and other teachers, such as Hermogenes, name the temple-robber, the traitor and the murderer. Some teachers, such as Theon, allowed the student to amplify a known good deed as well, such as the courage of the man who freed his city from a tyrant. The method is the same either way. In this unit you will practice on the vice, because a wrong that everyone admits is the easiest place to learn amplification.

How to amplify. “Stealing is bad” is true, but it moves no one. Amplification works by four tools. *Effects*: follow the wrong outward to everyone it touches. *Pictures*: show one scene the reader can see. *Size*: count the days, the people, the cost. *Building*: stack clauses so the sentence grows as the harm grows. A thief does not only take a bicycle. He takes the paper route that paid for it, the boy’s trust in his own street, and the neighbors’ habit of leaving doors unlocked.

Shakespeare’s Scotland. Just before the model, Macduff asks, “Stands Scotland where it did?” Ross never says “Macbeth is a bad king.” Instead he shows a country where no one smiles but those who know nothing, where screams are so common that no one notices them, where the funeral bell rings and no one asks whose it is, and where good men die before the flowers in their caps can wilt. Every line is an effect. Notice how many clauses begin with *where*. Each one adds a new room to the picture of a ruined house.

Amplify, never invent. Paul tells us to think on “whatsoever things are true” and “whatsoever things are just” (Philippians 4:8). Amplification makes a true thing look as large as it really is; it never adds false facts. If you say a thief “ruined a family,” you must be able to show how. A commonplace that lies is no longer rhetoric. It is slander.

The model. *William Shakespeare, Macbeth (about 1606), Act IV, scene 3, Project Gutenberg #1533*

Alas, poor country,
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be call’d our mother, but our grave, where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks, that rent the air,
Are made, not mark’d; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy. The dead man’s knell
Is there scarce ask’d for who; and good men’s lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

MACDUFF.

O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!

MALCOLM.
What's the newest grief?

ROSS.
That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one

PICTURE STUDY



The Oath of the Horatii, Jacques-Louis David, 1784 (shown at the Salon of 1785) · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The Roman historian Livy tells how Rome and the city of Alba Longa agreed to settle a war by a fight between two sets of three brothers: the Horatii for Rome and the Curiatii for Alba. David painted a moment Livy does not describe: the three Horatii swearing before their father to win or die. The picture is a commonplace in paint. It takes a virtue everyone already admires, loyalty to one's country, and makes it as large and hard as stone. Even the grieving women at the right help: their sorrow shows what the oath will cost.

Look closely

- Count the arches, the brothers, the swords and the women. What number keeps returning?
- Compare the straight lines of the men's arms and legs with the curved, drooping lines of the women. What does each kind of line say?
- Find the father's face. Where is he looking: at his sons, or above them?

Talk about it

1. Write three sentences that amplify the brothers' courage by its *effects*: what will it mean for Rome, for their father, for the women?
2. The painting sets two feelings side by side, resolve and grief. Why might a painter (or a writer) show the cost of a virtue as well as the virtue?

WRITING PROJECT: AGAINST THE THIEF, PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND EXPOSITION

You will write the first two parts of a commonplace against the thief: an introduction that tells your hearers why this wrong deserves their attention, and an exposition that sets the deed before their eyes. You will finish the speech in Lesson 1.2.

Write against a type ("the thief who robs a widow," "the man who breaks into a farmer's barn"), never against a real, named person.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible
- The model passage, copied or printed

Steps

1. Read Ross's speech aloud twice. Underline every effect of Macbeth's tyranny you can find.
2. Choose your thief: one kind of theft, such as the barn robber, the pickpocket at a fair, or the clerk who takes from the till.
3. Make an effects list of at least ten harms. Follow the theft outward: the owner, his family, his neighbors, the town, and the thief himself.
4. Write an introduction of three to five sentences. Tell your hearers that the guilt is not in question and that you will show how heavy the wrong is.
5. Write an exposition of one or two paragraphs. Tell the deed itself plainly and vividly, step by step, using at least three effects from your list.
6. Read the two parts aloud. Cut any sentence that only says "bad" or "wrong" without showing anything.

Check your work

- I wrote against a kind of wrongdoer, not a real, living person.
- My exposition shows at least three concrete effects of the theft.
- I used at least two adjective clauses ("who...", "which...", "where...") to build a picture.
- Every sentence is complete; there are no fragments or run-ons.
- My verbs are strong and specific ("pries," "drags," "empties"), not only "is" and "does."
- Everything I amplified is true to the kind of deed; I invented no false facts.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copywork: copy Ross's speech from "Alas, poor country" to "Dying or ere they sicken," keeping every line break and apostrophe.
2. Imitation: write five lines in Ross's pattern about a town robbed by a gang of thieves, each beginning "where..."
3. List: "Ten effects of a tyrant." Keep the list; you will use it in Lesson 1.2.

History note. David painted *The Oath of the Horatii* in Rome in 1784 on a commission from the French crown, and it was shown at the Paris Salon of 1785. It now hangs in the Louvre. The story comes from Livy's *History of Rome*, Book 1; the oath scene itself is David's invention.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.2 "Adjective Clauses." Ross builds his picture with adjective clauses ("our grave, where nothing... is once seen to smile"); use them in your exposition to add one effect after another.

For families. The commonplace (*koinos topos*) follows refutation and confirmation in Aphthonius's *Progymnasmata* (fourth century A.D.), whose own model is a speech against a tyrant. *Macbeth* contains murders and witchcraft; this lesson uses only Ross's speech about the suffering of Scotland, which needs no further context than "a cruel king has seized the throne." Please keep all writing aimed at vices and types, never at a living person, a neighbor or a group.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Amplify this plain sentence: "Stealing from a farmer is wrong."

1. Effects: what does the farmer lose besides the grain? (a year of work, his family's winter food, his seed for spring)
2. Picture: one scene the reader can see. (the empty barn floor at dawn)
3. Building: join the effects with clauses so the sentence grows. ("which...", "so that...")

Answer: The farmer opens his barn at dawn and finds the floor swept bare: the wheat that took him a year to grow, which was to feed his children through the winter and give him seed in the spring, is gone in a single night.

Example 2. Revise this student introduction: “Tyrants are really, really bad. Everybody knows that. In this speech I will tell you why tyrants are bad.”

1. “Really, really bad” is weak: it names a judgment but shows nothing.
2. “Everybody knows that” is the right idea (the guilt is admitted) but needs to be said with purpose.
3. Promise the hearers what you will show them: the weight of the wrong, not a proof of it.

Answer: No one in this hall needs to be told that the tyrant is guilty; his crimes are written on every street of the city. I ask you instead to look closely at what he has done, to count the widows and the empty houses, until you feel how heavy his wrong truly is.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a commonplace?
2. **EASY** How is a commonplace different from a refutation?
3. **EASY** Why is the commonplace called “common”?
4. **EASY** Name the four tools of amplification from this lesson.
5. **MEDIUM** Find two effects of tyranny in Ross’s speech and say each in plain words.
6. **MEDIUM** What does “good men’s lives / Expire before the flowers in their caps” mean?
7. **MEDIUM** Write one sentence that amplifies the theft of a widow’s savings by its effects.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write three “where” clauses, in Ross’s pattern, about a town ruled by a tyrant.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Arguing that the thief is guilty. In a commonplace the guilt is already settled; spend your words on the weight of the wrong.
- Repeating “bad,” “evil” and “terrible” instead of showing effects and pictures.
- Aiming the speech at a real, named person instead of at a vice or a type.
- Inventing facts to make the wrong look bigger. Amplify what is true.

Make it a game • Effect Chain. The parent names a small wrong (“He took the last apple”). Each player in turn adds one more effect that really could follow, each one reaching a little farther out (“so his sister went to school hungry,” “so she could not think in her arithmetic lesson”...). A player who repeats an effect or adds one that could not really happen is out. The last player left gives the closing sentence.

Scripture. “As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.” (Proverbs 28:15, KJV)

Solomon amplifies the tyrant with two pictures and a comparison, exactly as a commonplace does.

Practice: answers

1. A speech that amplifies a wrong (or good deed) that everyone already admits, aimed at a kind of person such as the thief or the tyrant.
2. A refutation argues whether something is true; a commonplace assumes the guilt is settled and shows how serious the wrong is.
3. Because it is aimed at a type, not one person, so it fits every case of that kind.
4. Effects, pictures, size, and building (stacking clauses).
5. Sample: Screams are so common no one notices them (“made, not mark'd”); people die so often that no one asks whose funeral bell is ringing.
6. Good men are killed so quickly that the flowers they pinned on in the morning have not even wilted.
7. Sample: The coins he took were not spare money but her rent for the winter, the medicine for her cough, and the gift she had saved for her grandson.
8. Sample: ...a town where shutters close at noon, where children are hushed when a horse passes, and where a man looks over his shoulder before he greets his own brother.

1.2 THE ARRANGEMENT OF A COMMONPLACE

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of a commonplace in Aphthonius's order and tell what each one does.
- Find the contrary, comparison, intention, digression and rejection of pity in a model commonplace.
- Finish the commonplace against the thief begun in Lesson 1.1.

Warm-up. A boy broke his neighbor's window. Say one sentence for each: What should he have done instead? What is his deed worse than? Did he mean it? Has he done this before? Should we feel sorry for him?

Video slot. Video coming. Classical rhetoric: the parts of a speech, or the progymnasmata commonplace exercise explained for students. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

contrary

The head that first shows the opposite virtue and the good person who practices it, so the vice looks darker beside it.

comparison

The head that sets the wrong beside other wrongs and shows that it is as bad or worse.

intention

The head that shows the wrongdoer chose and planned his deed; it was not an accident.

digression

A short step aside, usually to the wrongdoer's past habits, showing that this deed grew out of a life.

rejection of pity

The head that answers in advance the plea "Pity him!" and shows why the deed itself deserves no excuse.

CORE IDEAS

Arrangement. Invention finds things to say; arrangement puts them in the best order. Aphthonius gave the commonplace a fixed order of heads, and students from Rome to Shakespeare's Stratford learned it by heart. With the heads in hand you never stare at a blank page. You simply ask the next question.

1. Introduction
2. Contrary
3. Exposition (the deed itself)

4. Comparison
5. Intention
6. Digression
7. Rejection of pity
8. Final heads: is the deed lawful, just, useful, honorable? What will follow if it goes unpunished?

Contrary first. Before you describe the thief, describe the honest worker. Light makes shadow visible. A judge who first praises the farmer who rises before dawn has already made the man who steals his harvest look small. You wrote the exposition in Lesson 1.1; in a finished commonplace it comes right after the contrary, so the two stand side by side.

Comparison and intention. Comparison measures the wrong against others: the thief is worse than the locust, because the locust does not know what it eats. Intention removes the excuse of accident. The thief who watched the barn for a week, chose a moonless night and brought a cart did not stumble into sin. Scripture weighs intention too: the law of Moses treated a man who killed another by accident differently from one who lay in wait (Numbers 35:22-25).

Digression. Here the speaker steps aside from the deed to the man's past. Has he done this before? Usually a great wrong grows out of small ones. The digression must still be honest. In a commonplace against a type, speak of how such a man usually begins ("the boy who took coins from his mother's purse"), not of gossip about a real neighbor.

Rejection of pity. Near the end the defender will cry, "He is poor! He has children! Have mercy!" The commonplace answers before he can speak. Many are poor and do not steal; the victim's children will be hungrier still. This is not a hard heart. Solomon himself admits that men do not despise a hungry thief, and in the same breath says he must restore sevenfold (Proverbs 6:30-31). Mercy belongs to the one who confesses and makes things right, as Zacchaeus did when he restored fourfold (Luke 19:8), not to the one who weeps only because he was caught.

The final heads. Aphthonius ends with short, hammering questions: Is it lawful? Is it just? Is it useful to anyone? Is it honorable? What will happen if it goes unpunished? These are short on purpose. After the long pictures of the middle, a few strong, plain sentences close the case. The model below, written for this course, labels each head so you can see the whole arrangement at once.

The model. *"A Commonplace Against the Thief," written for this course on Aphthonius's plan*

[Introduction] Friends, we have not come to ask whether this thief is guilty; that is settled. We have come to weigh what he has done.

[Contrary] Think first of the honest farmer. He rises before the sun, plows in the cold, and waits all summer on the rain; when harvest comes, he shares his bread with the stranger at his gate.

[Exposition] The thief does none of this. He waits until the barn is full, slips in by night, and carries off in an hour what took a year to grow.

[Comparison] He is worse than the locust, for the locust does not know what it eats, and the thief knows exactly.

[Intention] Nor did he stumble into it. He watched the farm for a week, he chose the night when the dog was sick, and he brought a cart.

[Digression] Was this his first theft? A man who plans so well has practiced. The boy who took a coin from his mother's purse became the man who takes the harvest.

[Rejection of pity] Some will say, "He is poor; pity him." But many are poor and do not steal, and the farmer's children will be poorer this winter than he. Mercy belongs to the one who confesses and restores, not to the one who weeps only because he was caught.

[Final heads] His deed breaks the law of God, which says, "Thou shalt not steal." It is unjust, for it takes wages he never earned. It helps no one, not even himself. And if it goes unpunished, who will plant a field next spring?

PICTURE STUDY



The Lictors Bring to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons, Jacques-Louis David, 1789 · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Five years after the Horatii, David painted another Roman story from Livy. Lucius Junius Brutus helped drive out Rome's last king and became one of the first consuls of the new

republic. When his own sons were caught plotting to bring the tyrant back, Brutus, as judge, did not spare them. David shows the moment when the lictors (the officers who served the consuls) bring their bodies home. This is the rejection of pity in paint: the father has set aside his own grief for the sake of justice, while the light falls on the grief of the women.

Look closely

- Find Brutus. Is he in light or in shadow? Why might David have put him there?
- Look at the women at the right. How do their arms and faces differ from Brutus's still, folded pose?
- Find the statue above Brutus. What might it stand for?

Talk about it

1. Write the plea for pity that one of the women might cry out, then write Brutus's answer in two sentences.
2. Is it right for a judge to set aside his feelings? Where does mercy belong in justice? Discuss, using Proverbs 6:30–31 and Luke 19:8.

WRITING PROJECT: AGAINST THE THIEF, PART TWO: THE FULL ARRANGEMENT

Finish the commonplace you began in Lesson 1.1. Keep your introduction and exposition, add a contrary before the exposition, and write the remaining heads after it. The finished speech should be 450–650 words, one paragraph per head.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Your introduction and exposition from Lesson 1.1
- A KJV Bible

Steps

1. On one page, write the eight heads down the left margin. Beside each, jot two or three notes for your thief.
2. Write the contrary: a short picture of the honest worker the thief has wronged.
3. Write the comparison: name one or two other wrongs and show why this one is as bad or worse.
4. Write the intention and the digression: show that the deed was chosen and planned, then step aside to how such a man usually begins.
5. Write the rejection of pity: state the plea fairly in one sentence, then answer it.
6. Write the final heads in four or five short, strong sentences, and end with a question or command that stays with the hearer.
7. Read the whole speech aloud to a parent, who should name each head as it goes by.

Check your work

- All eight heads are present, in Aphthonius's order, each in its own paragraph.

- My rejection of pity states the plea fairly before answering it.
- I used at least three adverb clauses (“because...,” “although...,” “if...,” “when...”) to show cause, condition and time.
- Every sentence is complete; no fragments or run-ons.
- Scripture is quoted exactly from the KJV, with the reference.
- The speech attacks the vice and the type, never a real person.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copywork: copy the eight heads of the commonplace in order, with one line on what each does.
2. Imitation: using the model as a pattern, write one sentence for each head against the tyrant, using your “Ten effects of a tyrant” list from Lesson 1.1.
3. Copy Proverbs 6:30–31 and underline the word that shows the thief must make things right.

History note. Livy tells the story of Brutus and his sons in Book 2 of his *History of Rome*. David showed the painting at the Salon of 1789, the year the French Revolution began. It now hangs in the Louvre.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.3 “Adverb Clauses.” The intention and rejection of pity run on adverb clauses of cause, condition and concession (“because he planned it,” “although he is poor”); find them in the model and use them in your own.

For families. Aphthonius’s order is introduction, contrary, exposition, comparison, intention, digression (on the wrongdoer’s past life), rejection of pity, and the final heads of legality, justice, advantage, possibility, honor and result. The rejection of pity can sound harsh; it is worth talking with your student about the difference between excusing a wrong and forgiving a repentant sinner. Brutus’s sons were executed (offstage in the painting; the bier is covered), so preview the picture if you have a sensitive child.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote this rejection of pity: “Some people might feel sorry for him but they shouldn’t because he is a thief.” Revise it.

1. State the plea fairly and specifically: what exactly will the defender say?
2. Answer it with a reason, not just a label (“because he is a thief” proves nothing).
3. Add a contrast with the victim, whose need is greater.

Answer: Someone will say, “He has a family to feed; pity him.” But the farmer also has a family, and his children will go hungry so that the thief’s need could be served first. If hunger excused theft, every hungry man in the county would be a thief, and yet most of them are not.

Example 2. Label each sentence with its head: (a) “He chose the hour when the shop was empty.” (b) “The shopkeeper opens before dawn and gives credit to the poor.” (c) “He is worse than a beggar, for the beggar at least asks.” (d) “If this is allowed, what shopkeeper will open tomorrow?”

1. (a) shows a plan, so it is about purpose.
2. (b) praises the honest opposite.
3. (c) measures the thief against another person; (d) asks what will follow.

Answer: (a) intention; (b) contrary; (c) comparison; (d) final heads (result).

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** List the eight heads of a commonplace in order.
2. **EASY** Why does the contrary come before the exposition?
3. **EASY** What does the intention head show?
4. **EASY** What does the digression usually turn to?
5. **MEDIUM** Name four of the final heads.
6. **MEDIUM** Write a comparison sentence against the tyrant.
7. **MEDIUM** How does Proverbs 6:30–31 both admit and limit pity for a thief?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a rejection of pity, in two or three sentences, for a commonplace against the tyrant who says he “only wanted order.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Skipping the contrary, so the vice has nothing to stand against.
- Mixing two heads in one paragraph, such as intention and digression.
- Setting up a weak plea for pity that no one would really make, so the answer proves nothing.
- Letting the digression turn into gossip about a real person.

Make it a game · Heads in the Hat. Write the eight heads on slips of paper and put them in a hat. The parent names a vice (greed, lying, laziness). Each player draws a slip and must say one sentence for that head within ten seconds. Then everyone lines up in Aphthonius’s order and says their sentences as one speech.

Scripture. “Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.” (Proverbs 6:30–31, KJV)

Solomon weighs pity and justice together, as the rejection of pity must: hunger may move us, but the wrong must still be made right.

1. Introduction, contrary, exposition, comparison, intention, digression, rejection of pity, final heads.
2. The good opposite, set first, makes the vice look darker when it comes, as light makes shadow visible.
3. That the wrongdoer chose and planned the deed; it was no accident.
4. The wrongdoer's past life or habits, showing how this deed grew out of earlier ones.
5. Four of: lawful, just, useful (advantageous), possible, honorable, and the result if it goes unpunished.
6. Sample: The tyrant is worse than a wolf, for the wolf takes one sheep to eat, but the tyrant takes the whole flock and calls himself the shepherd.
7. It admits that men do not despise a man who steals because he is hungry, but it still requires him to restore sevenfold.
8. Sample: He will plead that he only wanted order, and that a strong hand was needed. But a graveyard is orderly too. The order of a good king comes from just laws, while his comes from fear.

1.3 A COMMONPLACE AGAINST COWARDICE

OBJECTIVES

- Tell courage from cowardice and from rashness, and say why cowardice is a vice and not just a feeling.
- Find the contrary, comparison and maxim in Thomas Paine’s opening of *The American Crisis*.
- Write a full eight-head commonplace against the coward who deserts his post.

Warm-up. Is the brave man the one who feels no fear? Think of a soldier, a fireman and a boy who tells the truth when it will cost him. Write one sentence on what each one feels and what each one does.

Video slot. Video coming. Washington crosses the Delaware and the Battle of Trenton, December 1776 (a history documentary or museum talk for students). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

courage

The virtue that does what is right in spite of fear. The brave man feels fear but does not let it rule him.

cowardice

The vice of letting fear rule the will, so that one abandons duty, friends or the truth to keep oneself safe.

rashness

The opposite error: rushing into danger with no good reason. Courage stands between cowardice and rashness.

summer soldier

Paine’s phrase for the man who serves only while the weather is fair and the cause is winning.

antithesis

Setting two opposite ideas side by side in balanced words: “too cheap... too lightly.”

CORE IDEAS

A vice of the will. Fear is not a sin. Our Lord Himself prayed in Gethsemane with great sorrow, and then rose and went to meet His betrayer. Cowardice begins when fear takes the reins: when a man leaves his post, denies a friend or keeps silent about the truth because he is afraid. That is why cowardice can be the subject of a commonplace. It is a chosen wrong, admitted by everyone, and its effects spread far beyond the coward himself.

Between two errors. The ancient philosophers taught that courage stands between two vices. On one side is cowardice, which fears too much; on the other is rashness, which fears too little and rushes in for show. A commonplace against cowardice should not praise rashness by accident. Your contrary is not the daredevil but the steady man who stays where duty has put him.

Cowardice spreads. Amplify cowardice by its effects, as you amplified theft. Moses commanded that before a battle the officers should send home any man who was fearful and fainthearted, "lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart" (Deuteronomy 20:8). One man running from the line can break a whole company. One friend who slips away from the playground when a smaller boy is being mocked teaches the others that slipping away is normal. That spreading harm is your richest material.

Paine's winter. In December 1776 the American army had lost New York and retreated across New Jersey. Enlistments were running out, and many men were going home. Thomas Paine, marching with the army, wrote the first number of *The American Crisis*, and Washington is said to have had it read to his troops shortly before they crossed the Delaware to attack Trenton. Read the model and notice the heads at work. The *contrary* comes in the first sentence: the summer soldier against "he that stands it now." The *comparison* follows: "Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered." Then a maxim with a perfect antithesis: "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly."

Short and long sentences. Paine opens with a short sentence of eight words that anyone could remember. Then he lets the next sentences grow long, with clauses joined by semicolons and colons. That rhythm, a hammer blow followed by a long reason, is worth imitating. Use it in your introduction and again in your final heads.

Your coward. As before, write against a type, not a person. Choose a coward whose desertion harms others: the sentry who leaves his post, the ship's officer who takes the first lifeboat, the friend who disowns a friend when he is in trouble. Peter's denial (Luke 22:54-62) shows both the vice and its cure: he went out and wept bitterly, and the risen Lord restored him. Your rejection of pity may grant that fear is natural, and still insist that the post must be kept.

The model. *Thomas Paine, The American Crisis, No. I (December 1776), Project Gutenberg #3741*

THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated.

PICTURE STUDY



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

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

On the night of December 25-26, 1776, Washington led his army across the icy Delaware River to attack the Hessian garrison at Trenton. Leutze, a German-American painter, painted the scene in Düsseldorf seventy-five years later. Some details are not exact (the flag shown was not yet in use, and the real boats were larger), but the painting is true to the night's spirit: a small, cold army that did not go home. It is the contrary of Paine's summer soldier.

Look closely

- Count the men in the boat. How many different kinds of men (farmer, frontiersman, sailor, gentleman) can you tell apart by their clothes?
- Find the ice. What are the men doing about it?
- Look at Washington's face and posture. Is he rash, afraid or steady?

Talk about it

1. Write the contrary head for your commonplace using this boat: describe one man in it who stayed when he could have gone home.
2. Imagine a soldier who went home the week before. Write three sentences amplifying the effects of his leaving on the men in this boat.

WRITING PROJECT: A COMMONPLACE AGAINST THE DESERTER

Write a complete commonplace against the coward who deserts his post, using all eight heads from Lesson 1.2. Choose your type: the sentry, the officer who takes the first lifeboat, or the friend who disowns a friend in trouble.

Length: 500–700 words, one paragraph per head. Borrow Paine’s rhythm: open with a short, memorable sentence.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The Paine passage, copied or printed
- A KJV Bible

Steps

1. Make an effects list: at least eight harms that follow when your coward runs, reaching from those beside him to those far away.
2. Plan the eight heads on one page. For the contrary, choose a steady, faithful man, not a daredevil.
3. Write your introduction: begin with one short sentence (eight to twelve words), then a long one that tells why this wrong matters.
4. Write the contrary, exposition, comparison and intention. In the intention, show the moment he chose to go.
5. Write the digression and the rejection of pity. Grant that fear is natural; then show why the post still had to be kept.
6. Write the final heads and close with an antithesis of your own in Paine’s pattern (“too... too...”).
7. Read the speech aloud standing up, as if to a company of soldiers. Mark any sentence you stumble on and revise it.

Check your work

- All eight heads are present, in order, each in its own paragraph.
- My contrary praises steady courage, not rashness.
- I wrote at least two compound-complex sentences (two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause).
- My verbs are in the active voice except where I chose the passive on purpose.
- Every sentence is complete; there are no fragments or run-ons.
- I wrote against a type of coward, not a real person, and quoted Scripture exactly.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copywork: copy Paine’s first two sentences exactly, including the capital THESE and the apostrophe in men’s.
2. Imitation: write your own sentence in Paine’s pattern: “The ___ and the ___ will, in this ___, shrink from ___; but he that ___ now, deserves ___.”
3. Antithesis list: write three “too... too...” sayings of your own (e.g., “What we learn too fast, we forget too soon”).

History note. Paine's first *Crisis* paper appeared in December 1776. On December 26 Washington's army crossed the Delaware and captured about nine hundred Hessian soldiers at Trenton, the victory that kept the Revolution alive that winter. Leutze painted his picture in Düsseldorf in 1851; it has hung in the Metropolitan Museum since 1897.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 19.3 "Compound-Complex." Paine's second sentence joins two independent clauses with a semicolon and adds a dependent clause ("that stands it now"); write at least two sentences built the same way.

For families. Thomas Paine (1737–1809) served the American cause well with *Common Sense* and *The Crisis*; years later he wrote *The Age of Reason*, an attack on Christianity and the Bible, which you may wish to discuss as your student grows older. This lesson uses only his famous opening. The story that Washington ordered the paper read to his troops is long-standing tradition. For the Scripture on fear and courage, see Deuteronomy 20:8, Joshua 1:9 and Luke 22:54–62.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Take apart Paine's second sentence: "The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

1. Two pictures of the coward, alliterated: summer soldier, sunshine patriot. Both name men who serve only in fair weather.
2. The semicolon and "but" turn to the contrary: the man who stays.
3. Each half has its own verb and reward: shrink from service / deserves love and thanks.

Answer: It is a contrary head in one sentence: the coward and the faithful man set side by side in balanced halves, so each makes the other clearer.

Example 2. Revise this student exposition: "The sentry got scared and left. This was bad because the enemy came."

1. Show the scene: the hour, the cold, the sound that frightened him.
2. Show the choice: the moment he stepped away (an active, specific verb).
3. Show the effect, reaching outward: the camp, the sleeping men.

Answer: At two in the morning the sentry heard branches crack in the dark wood. He gripped his musket, looked once toward the sleeping tents, and walked away down the road. Behind him the fire burned low, and two hundred men slept on, trusting a post that no one was keeping.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the difference between fear and cowardice?
2. **EASY** What two vices does courage stand between?
3. **EASY** What does Paine mean by a “summer soldier”?
4. **EASY** According to Deuteronomy 20:8, why were the fainthearted sent home?
5. **MEDIUM** Find the comparison in the Paine passage.
6. **MEDIUM** Find the antithesis in the Paine passage and say it in plain words.
7. **MEDIUM** Write an intention head for a commonplace against the officer who takes the first lifeboat.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a rejection of pity for the deserter that grants fear is natural but still holds him guilty.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Praising rashness in the contrary instead of steady courage.
- Treating fear itself as the sin rather than the choice to abandon one’s duty.
- Forgetting the effects on others; cowardice is amplified chiefly by what it does to those left behind.
- Writing about a real classmate or neighbor instead of a type.

Make it a game • Summer or Winter?. The parent reads short situations (“He kept practicing after he lost the first game,” “She stopped visiting her sick friend when it became tiresome”). Players call “Winter!” for the faithful one who stays and “Summer!” for the one who serves only in fair weather, then give a one-sentence reason. For a bonus, name the rash choice too.

Scripture. “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” (Joshua 1:9, KJV)

God does not command Joshua to feel nothing, but to be of good courage because He is present; that is the contrary every commonplace against cowardice should hold up.

Practice: answers

1. Fear is a feeling; cowardice is letting fear rule the will so that one abandons one’s duty.
2. Cowardice and rashness.
3. A man who serves only while things are easy and leaves when hardship comes.
4. Lest his brethren’s heart faint as well as his heart: fear spreads to others.
5. “Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered.”
6. “What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly”: we do not value what costs us little.
7. Sample: He did not stumble into the boat in the dark. He saw the women and children waiting at the rail, he weighed his own life against theirs, and he climbed over the side.
8. Sample: Someone will say, “He was only afraid, and who is not?” Every man on that line was afraid. The difference is that they let their fear stand guard beside them, while he let it lead

him home.

1.4 THE COMMONPLACE BOOK: MILTON’S, JEFFERSON’S AND YOUR OWN

OBJECTIVES

- Explain what a commonplace book is and how it grew out of the commonplace “heads.”
- Describe how John Milton and Thomas Jefferson kept their notebooks.
- Begin your own commonplace book with an index of heads and at least ten exact entries.

Warm-up. Where do you keep things you want to find again: a drawer, a box, a shelf? Now think of the best sentence you read this month. Where is it? Could you find it again if you needed it for a speech tomorrow?

Video slot. Video coming. Commonplace books: how readers like Jefferson and Milton kept notebooks of quotations (a library or archive talk). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

commonplace book

A notebook in which a reader copies passages worth keeping and sorts them under heads (topics), so they can be found and used again.

head

A topic heading in a commonplace book, such as Courage, Justice or Work. The Latin *locus*, “place,” is a place to store material.

entry

One passage copied into the book, exactly as written, with the author and source.

index

A list of heads with page numbers, kept at the front or back of the book, so any entry can be found quickly.

copia

Latin for “abundance”: a full store of words, examples and sayings ready for use. Erasmus wrote a famous schoolbook on it.

CORE IDEAS

From speech to notebook. In Lessons 1.1–1.3 you wrote commonplaces: speeches that amplify a known vice. Where did you find your comparisons, examples and Scripture? The old teachers had an answer. A *locus* or “place” was a heading under which a speaker stored material, the way a farmer stores grain in bins. A student who had copied twenty sayings about courage under the head *Courage* could write a commonplace against cowardice in an afternoon. The notebook of such places came to be called a *commonplace book*.

A school habit. In the 1500s the Dutch scholar Erasmus taught schoolboys to read with a notebook open, sorting what they found under heads of virtues and vices. English grammar schools, like the one at Stratford where Shakespeare studied, trained boys this way. Later John Locke published a method for indexing a commonplace book by the first letter and first vowel of each head, so that hundreds of pages could be searched in a moment.

Milton's notebook. John Milton, the poet of *Paradise Lost*, kept a commonplace book as a young man and went on adding to it for years. He sorted his reading from historians, church fathers and poets under three great divisions: the ethical (a man's own virtues and vices), the economic (the household: marriage, children, the use of money) and the political (rulers, laws and the commonwealth). The notebook was lost for two centuries, found in 1874 in a country house in the north of England, and printed in 1876. It is now in the British Library. Much of the learning in Milton's prose works was first gathered there.

Jefferson's notebook. As a student and young lawyer, Thomas Jefferson copied passages from Greek and Latin authors and from English poets such as Milton and Pope into what scholars now call his *Literary Commonplace Book*; he kept a separate one for the law. He copied many lines in the original Greek and Latin. Years later, when he wrote the Declaration of Independence, he said he had aimed to express "the American mind," drawing on what the best authors had already written. A full notebook makes a ready pen.

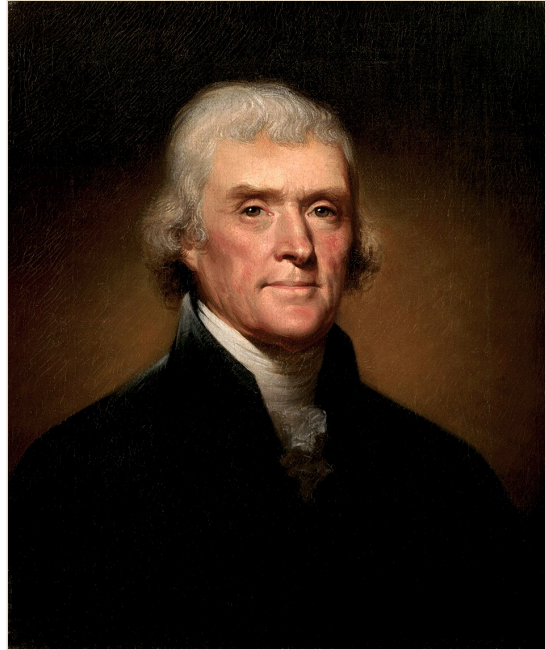
The Preacher's method. Long before Erasmus, the Preacher in Ecclesiastes "gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs." That is a commonplace book in three verbs: read with attention, collect, arrange. He also warns that "of making many books there is no end." The point of the notebook is not to collect everything but to keep the best: "acceptable words," "words of truth." Philippians 4:8 is the rule for choosing: whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report.

Rules for your book. Copy exactly, every comma and old spelling, as you have done with your model passages. Always write the author and source. Put each entry under one head (you may cross-reference it under another). Leave room to grow. And reread it: a commonplace book is a tool, not a trophy.

The model. *Ecclesiastes 12:9-12 (KJV)*

And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd. And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

PICTURE STUDY



Thomas Jefferson, Rembrandt Peale, 1800 · Oil on canvas · The White House, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Rembrandt Peale, son of the painter Charles Willson Peale, painted this portrait in 1800, when Jefferson was Vice President and about to be elected the third President. There are no books or pens in the picture, only a quiet, thoughtful face. But behind that face was a mind stocked for forty years by careful reading and copying. Painters show what a man looks like; a commonplace book shows what a man has read and kept.

Look closely

- Describe Jefferson's expression in three adjectives.
- Look at the plain background. Why might Peale have left out books, furniture and scenery?
- Look at the clothes. Are they showy or plain? What might that tell you about the man?

Talk about it

1. If a painter made your portrait and could include one book beside you, which would you choose, and which passage from it would you copy into your commonplace book first?
2. Jefferson wrote noble words about liberty and yet held men in slavery all his life. Copy one true saying of his into your book and, beside it, write a sentence on why a true saying must still be lived.

WRITING PROJECT: BEGIN YOUR COMMONPLACE BOOK

You will set up a commonplace book that you can keep through high school and beyond, and make your first ten entries. Choose a sturdy notebook with numbered pages, or number them yourself.

You will need

- A sturdy bound notebook (at least 100 pages)
- A pen you like writing with
- A KJV Bible and two or three books you have read this year
- Your model passages from Lessons 1.1-1.3

Steps

1. Leave the first four pages blank for the index. On page 5, write a title page: your name, the date, and Philippians 4:8 as your rule for choosing.
2. Choose at least eight heads to begin with. Include Courage, Cowardice, Justice, Theft, Tyranny, Work and Truth, and add at least one of your own.
3. Give each head two facing pages. Write the head at the top and enter it with its page number in the index.
4. Make your first ten entries: Ross's lines from *Macbeth*, Paine's opening, Proverbs 28:15, Joshua 1:9, and six more passages from your own reading. Copy each one exactly, with author, title and chapter or page.
5. Under at least three entries, write one line telling how you might use it in a commonplace (contrary, comparison, testimony...).
6. Show the book to a parent and read aloud your favorite entry under each head.

Check your work

- Every entry is copied exactly: spelling, capitals and punctuation match the source.
- Every entry has an author and source.
- Quotation marks are used correctly around any words quoted inside my own notes.
- My notes under entries are complete sentences.
- Each head is in the index with the right page number.
- I chose passages that are true, honest and just (Philippians 4:8).

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copywork: copy Ecclesiastes 12:9-11 as the first entry under the head *Wisdom*.
2. Franklin's method: choose one entry, close the book, and rewrite it from memory in your own words. Then compare with the original and note what the author did better.
3. List twenty possible heads for your book, ten virtues and ten vices.

History note. Milton's commonplace book was found in 1874 among the papers of Sir Frederick Graham at Netherby Hall in Cumberland, and printed by the Camden Society in 1876; it is now in the British Library. Jefferson's *Literary Commonplace Book* is in the Library of Congress and was published in a scholarly edition in 1989. John Locke's method, first printed in French in 1686, appeared in English as *A New Method of Making Common-Place-Books* in 1706.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.3 “Mood.” Many entries you copy will be imperative (“be not afraid”) or will state a wish or condition; label the mood of three entries in the margin.

For families. A commonplace book is one of the oldest and most useful habits in classical education, and it will serve your student in every later unit (encomium, comparison, thesis) and in college. Guide the choice of entries gently toward Philippians 4:8. Jefferson’s portrait raises the plain fact that he wrote of liberty while holding slaves; the second picture-study question gives a way to name that wrong honestly without dismissing what was true in his words. Peale’s portrait is in the White House collection.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student copied this entry: “Be strong and courageous, don’t be afraid, God is with you. — the Bible.” What is wrong, and how should it look?

1. It is not exact: the KJV reads “Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid,” and the student dropped part of the verse.
2. The source is too vague: “the Bible” must become a book, chapter and verse.
3. It belongs under a head (Courage) and can carry a use note.

Answer: Head: Courage. “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” Joshua 1:9 (KJV). Use: contrary or testimony in a commonplace against cowardice.

Example 2. Under which head would you file Paine’s “What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly,” and where else might it go?

1. Ask what the saying is mainly about: the value of things that cost us effort.
2. Choose the main head: Work (or Value).
3. Add a cross-reference under a second head where it could serve.

Answer: Main head: Work. Cross-reference under Courage (“see Work, p. 24”), since it explains why a hard-won cause is worth the cost.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is a commonplace book?
2. **EASY** What does the Latin *locus* mean, and why does it fit?
3. **EASY** Under what three divisions did Milton sort his notebook?
4. **EASY** What three things did the Preacher do with proverbs in Ecclesiastes 12:9?
5. **MEDIUM** Name two things every entry must have.

6. **MEDIUM** How does a commonplace book help you write a commonplace speech?
7. **MEDIUM** Name four heads you might use for a commonplace against the tyrant.
8. **CHALLENGE** The Preacher warns that “of making many books there is no end.” Write two sentences on how this warning should shape your commonplace book.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Copying from memory, so words and punctuation drift from the original.
- Leaving off the author and source, so the entry cannot be quoted later.
- Filing everything under one or two heads, or making so many heads that each has one entry.
- Treating the book as a scrapbook of anything; the rule for choosing is Philippians 4:8.

Make it a game · Find It Fast. After a week of entries, the parent calls out a commonplace head and a part (“Comparison for Cowardice!”). The student has thirty seconds to find a usable entry in the commonplace book through the index and read it aloud. Score one point for a find, two if the entry is copied exactly with its source.

Scripture. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Philippians 4:8, KJV)

This year’s faith verse is the rule for every commonplace book: keep what is true, honest and just, and think on it.

Practice: answers

1. A notebook where a reader copies passages worth keeping and sorts them under heads so they can be found and used again.
2. “Place.” Each head is a place where material is stored, like a bin in a barn.
3. Ethical, economic (household) and political.
4. He gave good heed, sought out, and set in order.
5. The exact words, and the author and source.
6. It stores comparisons, examples and testimony under heads, so you can find material for the contrary, comparison or final heads quickly.
7. Sample: Tyranny, Justice, Pride, Courage (also Law, Mercy, Kings).
8. Sample: I should not try to copy everything I read, but only what is true and worth using again. A short book of the best sayings, often reread, is better than a long one I never open.

UNIT 1 REVIEW

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

1. (2 pts) Define a commonplace.
2. (2 pts) How is a commonplace different from a refutation?
3. (8 pts) Name the eight heads of a commonplace in order.
4. (3 pts) Name two tools of amplification and give an example of one.
5. (2 pts) In Ross's speech, what does "sighs, and groans, and shrieks... Are made, not mark'd" show about Scotland under the tyrant?
6. (3 pts) What is the rejection of pity, and why must it state the plea fairly?
7. (2 pts) Why is cowardice a vice and not only a feeling?
8. (2 pts) Find the antithesis in Paine's "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly" and say it in plain words.
9. (2 pts) Name two rules for a commonplace book entry.
10. (3 pts) Identify the structure and underline the dependent clause: "The sentry heard a sound that frightened him, and he left his post."
11. (4 pts) Write an intention head (two or three sentences) for a commonplace against the liar.
12. (4 pts) Write a contrary head (three or four sentences) for a commonplace against the tyrant.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A COMMONPLACE AGAINST COWARDICE

Copy your finished commonplace from Lesson 1.3 on clean paper (or type it) with a title, and attach the first page of your commonplace book index. It begins your Grade 7 portfolio.

- **Arrangement:** All eight heads present, in Aphthonius's order, each in its own paragraph.
- **Amplification:** The vice is shown by concrete effects and pictures, not by repeated labels; nothing false is invented.
- **Fairness and accuracy:** Aimed at a vice or type, never a living person; Scripture and any quotation copied exactly with sources.
- **Mechanics:** Complex and compound-complex sentences used correctly; active voice; no fragments or run-ons.

Answer key

1. A speech that amplifies a wrong (or good deed) that everyone already admits, aimed at a type such as the thief or the tyrant.
2. A refutation argues whether a thing is true; a commonplace takes the guilt as settled and shows how serious the wrong is.
3. Introduction, contrary, exposition, comparison, intention, digression, rejection of pity, final heads.

4. Two of: effects, pictures, size, building. Sample example: "He took not just the wheat but the seed for next spring."
5. Cries of suffering are so common that no one even notices them anymore.
6. It answers in advance the plea to excuse the wrongdoer; it must state the plea fairly, or the answer proves nothing.
7. Fear is a feeling; cowardice is letting fear rule the will so that one abandons duty, friends or the truth.
8. "Too cheap" is balanced against "too lightly": we do not value what costs us little.
9. Two of: copy exactly; give author and source; file it under a head; choose what is true and good (Philippians 4:8).
10. Compound-complex; dependent clause: "that frightened him."
11. Sample: He did not misspeak by accident. He thought out his story the night before, chose the words that would hide the truth, and told it twice, once to his father and once to his teacher.
12. Sample: Think first of the good king. He rises early to hear the poor, he keeps the law he makes, and he spends the treasury on roads and granaries, not on palaces. His people sleep with open doors.

ENCOMIUM (PRAISE)

The encomium is the classical exercise of praise. You will learn its six parts (prooemium, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue) from Xenophon's praise of King Agesilaus, write a full encomium of William Wilberforce, adapt the method to praise a thing (the plow, the book or the bridge) with Milton's great praise of books as your model, and discover that Hebrews 11 is an encomium of faith and of the faithful. Picture study begins with Karl Anton Hickel's portrait of the young Wilberforce.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written a commonplace (Unit 1) and can amplify a virtue with examples and comparison.
- Writes a clear, multi-paragraph piece and can identify phrases, participles and clauses (Grammar Level 3, Unit 17).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name the six parts of an encomium in order and tell what each does.
- ☐ I can sort a person's deeds by the virtues they show.
- ☐ I can write a fair, true comparison that raises my subject.
- ☐ I can adapt the encomium to praise a thing.
- ☐ I can find the encomium's parts in Hebrews 11 and imitate its "By faith" catalogue.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Xenophon, Agesilaus, tr. H. G. Dakyns (Project Gutenberg #1169)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1169>): The whole encomium, free and short; read Chapter I with a parent.
- **John Milton, Areopagitica (Project Gutenberg #608)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/608>): Source of the 2.3 model; the praise of books is near the start.
- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): For Hebrews 11 and every Scripture in the unit.
- **Works by and about William Wilberforce (Project Gutenberg search)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/search/?query=wilberforce>): Older public-domain biographies and Wilberforce's own writings; a parent should choose and preview.

2.1 PRAISING A PERSON: ORIGIN, UPBRINGING, DEEDS, COMPARISON ★

OBJECTIVES

- Define the encomium and name its six parts in order: prooemium, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
- Read the opening of Xenophon's *Agesilaus* and find where the author praises origin.
- Plan an encomium of a worthy person from history and draft its first three parts.

Warm-up. Think of someone you admire who has died: a grandparent, a pastor, a figure from history. Say three true sentences in praise of that person. Then ask: did you praise where the person came from, how the person was raised, or what the person did?

Video slot. Video coming. The progymnasmata and the encomium in classical education (an introduction to the ancient writing exercises). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

encomium

A speech or essay that praises the good qualities and deeds of a person or thing. The word is Greek; the plural is *encomia*.

prooemium

The opening of an encomium, which tells the hearer who will be praised and why the praise is worth giving.

origin

The head that praises where a person came from: nation, homeland, ancestors and parents.

upbringing

The head that praises how a person was raised and trained: education, early habits and teachers.

comparison

The head that sets the person beside another famous figure to show that the one praised is equal or greater.

CORE IDEAS

The eighth exercise. Last unit you learned the commonplace, which amplifies a virtue or vice that everyone already knows. The encomium turns from the general to the particular. Instead of praising courage, you praise one courageous man. Aphthonius, the teacher whose textbook schoolboys used for more than a thousand years, defined the encomium as speech that sets forth the excellences belonging to its subject. His own model praised the historian Thucydides. Unit 3 will turn the same method around and teach invective, which blames.

The six parts. An encomium follows a fixed order, and the order is what makes it easy to write. (1) The *prooemium* introduces the subject. (2) *Origin* praises nation, homeland, ancestors and parents. (3) *Upbringing* praises education and early habits. (4) *Deeds*, the longest part, praises the person's actions, sorted by the virtues they show: wisdom, courage, justice and self-control. (5) *Comparison* sets the person beside another great figure. (6) The *epilogue* closes, often by urging the hearers to imitate what they have heard.

Deeds show virtues. A list of events is a timeline, not an encomium. Each deed should be named for the virtue it shows. Do not write, "He fought at Coronea." Write, "His courage was proved at Coronea, where he fought on though wounded." Group several deeds under one virtue, then move to the next virtue. This makes the longest part of the speech orderly and keeps it from sounding like a list.

When the origin is humble. Not every hero has royal ancestors. The ancient teachers said that a humble origin can be praised too: the person rose by his own labor and by the grace of God, not by his father's name. Joseph was a shepherd's son sold as a slave, and he became the second man in Egypt. If you know nothing worth praising in a person's origin, say little and move on. Never invent facts. An encomium chooses what to say, but everything it says must be true.

Comparison raises the subject. The comparison head works only if the other person is already admired. Comparing your hero to a coward proves nothing. Comparing him to Alexander or David, and showing that in one point he did even better, lifts him up. Keep comparisons fair: praise your subject without sneering at the other man.

Why Christians praise. Scripture is full of praise of men and women: Hebrews 11, the "virtuous woman" of Proverbs 31, Paul's thanks for Timothy. We praise the good in people because every good gift comes from God (James 1:17). This year's verse tells us to think on whatsoever things are honest, just, pure and lovely; the encomium is a way of doing just that, out loud and in order. The model below is the opening of Xenophon's *Agesilaus*, an encomium of a Spartan king written by a soldier who had served with him. Notice how Xenophon admits that his praise will fall short, then turns at once to origin.

The model. *Xenophon, Agesilaus (about 360 B.C.), translated by H. G. Dakyns, Project Gutenberg #1169*

To write the praises of Agesilaus in language equalling his virtue and renown is, I know, no easy task; yet must it be essayed; since it were but an ill requital of pre-eminence, that, on the ground of his perfection, a good man should forfeit the tribute even of imperfect praise.

As touching, therefore, the excellency of his birth, what weightier, what nobler testimony can be adduced than this one fact? To the commemorative list of famous ancestry is added to-day the name (1) Agesilaus as holding this or that numerical descent from Heracles, and these ancestors no private persons, but kings sprung from the loins of kings. Nor is it open to the gainsayer to contend that they were kings indeed but of some chance city. Not so, but even as their family holds

highest honour in their fatherland, so too is their city the most glorious in Hellas, whereby they hold, not primacy over the second best, but among leaders they have leadership

PICTURE STUDY



William Wilberforce, Karl Anton Hickel, about 1794 · Oil on canvas · Wilberforce House Museum, Hull, England
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Karl Anton Hickel was a portrait painter from Bohemia, trained in Vienna, who worked in London in the 1790s. There he painted a great group picture of the House of Commons and many of its members one by one. This portrait shows William Wilberforce in his mid-thirties, a few years after he took up the cause of ending the slave trade. It hangs today in the house in Hull where Wilberforce was born. A portrait is a kind of encomium in paint: the painter chooses what to show so that we see the sitter at his best.

Look closely

- Look at his face. What do his eyes and mouth suggest about his character?
- Look at his clothes. Are they showy or plain? What does that tell you about the man or the time?
- Look at the background. Did the painter fill it with objects or keep it simple, and why might he have chosen that?

Talk about it

1. If this portrait were the prooemium of an encomium, what one sentence would introduce the man in it?
2. A painter praises by what he shows; a writer praises by what he tells. Name one thing a writer can praise that a painter cannot show.

WRITING PROJECT: AN ENCOMIUM PLAN

Choose a worthy person from history who has died, someone whose life you can learn about from a good biography or encyclopedia: George Washington, Johann Sebastian Bach, George Washington Carver, Hudson Taylor, or another your parent approves. (You will praise Wilberforce in 2.2, so choose someone else here.)

You will plan all six parts and write the first three. You will finish the deeds, comparison and epilogue later in the unit or in Unit 6.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- One biography or encyclopedia article about your person
- A KJV Bible

Steps

1. Read about your person and take notes under four labels: Origin, Upbringing, Deeds, Possible comparisons.
2. Sort the deeds by virtue. Write *Wisdom*, *Courage*, *Justice* and *Self-control* on four lines and put at least one deed under two or more of them.
3. Choose one famous person to compare with yours, and write one sentence telling in what point your person was equal or greater.
4. Write the prooemium (three to five sentences). Like Xenophon, say who you will praise and why the praise is deserved.
5. Write the origin paragraph: nation, home town, parents. If the origin is humble, praise how the person rose above it.
6. Write the upbringing paragraph: schooling, teachers, early habits that pointed to the person's later deeds.
7. Read your three paragraphs aloud to a parent and mark any sentence that is only a date or fact, with no praise in it.

Check your work

- Every paragraph keeps to one part of the encomium.
- Every fact I give comes from my source, and I invented nothing.
- I used at least two participial phrases (for example, "Raised by a careful mother, he ..."), and each one sits next to the noun it describes.
- I wrote at least one complex sentence with a dependent clause beginning *because*, *although* or *when*.
- My verb tenses stay in the past when I tell what the person did.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the first paragraph of the Xenophon model by hand.
2. List the six parts of the encomium in order, with one sentence on what each does.

3. Imitate Xenophon's first sentence for your own person: "To write the praises of ___ in language equalling ___ is no easy task; yet ..."

History note. Agesilaus II was king of Sparta from about 400 to 360 B.C. Xenophon, an Athenian, served with him on campaign and wrote this encomium after the king died. It is one of the oldest prose encomia that survives, and later teachers used it as a pattern.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 17.2 "Participles." Participial phrases ("Born in a merchant's house," "Trained by his mother") let you pack origin and upbringing into smooth sentences.

For families. The six parts follow Aphthonius's *Progymnasmata* (about A.D. 400); Theon and Hermogenes give nearly the same order. Choose a subject with a reliable biography; a children's encyclopedia is fine. Steer away from living public figures, so that the lesson stays on virtue rather than current debate. The model is the Dakyns translation (1890s), which uses some old forms such as "to-day" and "it were." Xenophon traces Agesilaus to Heracles, as Spartan kings claimed; you may point out that this is the ancient boast, not history.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote this origin paragraph about George Washington: "George Washington was born on February 22, 1732. He was born in Virginia. His father was Augustine Washington. He had brothers." Revise it so that it praises.

1. Ask what is praiseworthy in each fact. Virginia was a colony that would help found a nation; his father was a planter who worked the land.
2. Cut the fact that adds no praise ("He had brothers") or turn it into praise: his older half-brother Lawrence was a model to him.
3. Join short sentences with a participial phrase and a dependent clause.

Answer: Born in 1732 on a farm in the colony of Virginia, George Washington came from a family that had worked the land of the New World for three generations. Although his father died when he was only eleven, he had in his older half-brother Lawrence a model of the soldier and gentleman he would become.

Example 2. Turn this list of deeds into a deeds paragraph sorted by virtue: “Washington crossed the Delaware. He refused to be made king. He gave up command after the war. He kept the army together at Valley Forge.”

1. Sort: crossing the Delaware and Valley Forge show courage and endurance; refusing a crown and giving up command show self-control and justice.
2. Name the virtue first, then give the deeds as proof.
3. End the paragraph with a sentence that tells why the second virtue is rarer than the first.

Answer: His courage was proved in the hard winter at Valley Forge, where he held a hungry army together, and on the icy Delaware, which he crossed by night to strike at Trenton. Yet his self-control was greater still. When the war was won, he gave his commission back to Congress, and when some wished to make him king, he refused. Many men can win a war; few can lay down power when it is in their hands.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is an encomium?
2. **EASY** Name the six parts of an encomium in order.
3. **EASY** Which part is usually the longest?
4. **EASY** In the model, what does Xenophon praise in his second paragraph?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the four virtues used to sort deeds.
6. **MEDIUM** Xenophon’s first sentence admits that his praise will fall short. Why would a writer begin that way?
7. **MEDIUM** Combine with a participial phrase: “Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach in 1685. He came from a family of musicians.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a comparison sentence for any hero you choose, setting him or her beside a famous figure and showing one point of greater excellence.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing a timeline of dates instead of deeds grouped by virtue.
- Inventing a noble origin or a pious childhood that the sources do not support.
- Comparing the hero to someone unknown or despised, so the comparison proves nothing.

Make it a game · Name That Head. The parent reads sentences from an encomium one at a time (“His mother taught him to read from the Bible,” “He was greater than Caesar, for ...”). The student calls out the head: prooemium, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison or epilogue. Five right in a row wins.

Scripture. “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not

thine own lips.” (Proverbs 27:2, KJV)

Praise belongs in another’s mouth; the encomium is that other mouth, giving honor where it is due.

Practice: answers

1. A speech or essay that praises the good qualities and deeds of a person or thing.
2. Prooemium, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
3. Deeds.
4. Agesilaus’s origin: his royal ancestors and his city, Sparta (Lacedaemon), the most glorious in Greece.
5. Wisdom, courage, justice and self-control (temperance).
6. It shows humility and makes the subject seem greater than words can tell, which wins the hearer’s goodwill.
7. Sample: Born in Eisenach in 1685, Johann Sebastian Bach came from a family that had made music for generations.
8. Sample: Alexander conquered the world and wept that there were no more lands to take; Washington won his country’s freedom and went home gladly to his farm.

2.2 ENCOMIUM OF A HERO: WILLIAM WILBERFORCE ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell the main facts of William Wilberforce's life and his fight against the slave trade.
- Sort Wilberforce's deeds under the virtues they show and choose a fitting comparison.
- Write a complete six-part encomium of Wilberforce, about 500–700 words.

Warm-up. Some fights take a single day; some take a lifetime. Name one good thing that took years of patient work to build or win. Why do long fights need a special kind of courage?

Video slot. Video coming. William Wilberforce and the abolition of the British slave trade (a biography for students). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

slave trade

The business of capturing men, women and children in Africa and carrying them across the Atlantic in ships to be sold as slaves. Britain's Parliament outlawed British trading in slaves in 1807.

abolition

The act of ending something by law. Wilberforce first sought the abolition of the slave trade, and later of slavery itself in the British colonies.

Parliament

The lawmaking body of Great Britain. Wilberforce sat in its lower house, the House of Commons, for about forty-five years.

perseverance

Keeping on at a good work in spite of delay, defeat and weariness.

Clapham

A village near London where Wilberforce and a circle of Christian friends lived and planned their work; they were later called the Clapham Sect.

CORE IDEAS

Why this hero. The ancient teachers chose kings and generals for their encomia. A Christian school can do better. William Wilberforce (1759–1833) won no battles and wore no crown, yet he spent most of his life on one of the great works of justice in history: ending the British slave trade. He is a fit subject because his deeds were public, well recorded and plainly good, and because he did them out of faith in Christ.

Origin and upbringing. Wilberforce was born in 1759 in Hull, a port on the Yorkshire coast, into a family of prosperous merchants. His father died when he was eight, and for a time he

lived with an aunt and uncle near London, where he heard the preaching of John Newton, a former slave-ship captain who had become a pastor and who wrote “Amazing Grace.” He studied at St John’s College, Cambridge, and at twenty-one was elected to Parliament for Hull. James Boswell, hearing him speak at York a few years later, wrote that he saw “a mere shrimp” mount the table, but as he listened, the shrimp became a whale.

The turn. In 1785 Wilberforce came to a living faith in Christ. He thought of leaving politics for the ministry, but Newton urged him to serve God in Parliament. In October 1787 he wrote in his journal: “God Almighty has set before me two great objects, the suppression of the Slave Trade and the Reformation of Manners.” Here is a gift for the encomium writer: a deed that shows *wisdom*, because he chose his life’s work and held to it.

Deeds sorted by virtue. His *courage*: he faced rich merchants, angry crowds and threats against his life. His *perseverance*, a part of courage: he brought motions against the trade year after year, losing in 1791 by 163 votes to 88 and losing again and again after that. His *justice*: with his friends Thomas Clarkson and Henry Thornton he gathered evidence, published the facts and pressed for law. In 1807 the trade was abolished; when the bill passed, the House rose and cheered him. His *charity*: he gave away a large part of his income, much of it in secret. He kept working against slavery itself, and three days before he died in 1833 he heard that the House of Commons had passed the bill to end it in the British colonies.

Comparison. During the 1807 debate Sir Samuel Romilly set Wilberforce beside Napoleon, then master of Europe. For all his splendor, said Romilly, Napoleon’s rest would be troubled by the blood of his wars; Wilberforce would go home to his family, with the blessings of multitudes he had helped to free. Romilly found the comparison ready-made; you may borrow it or find your own (Moses, who also asked a ruler to let a people go).

Honest praise. Wilberforce was a man with faults and limits, and he did not work alone. An encomium does not need to list every failing, but it must not make him a saint without flaws or claim the whole victory for him. Give due credit to Clarkson, to the Clapham friends and to the many Christians, black and white, who signed petitions, refused slave-grown sugar and told what they had suffered. The model below shows the six parts in brief.

The model. “*A Short Encomium of William Wilberforce.*” Written for this course.

Prooemium. Some men are remembered for the cities they took; William Wilberforce is remembered for the chains he helped to break, and it is right that we should praise him.

Origin. He was born in 1759 in Hull, a busy port on the Yorkshire coast, the son of a merchant house that had grown rich by honest trade.

Upbringing. Left fatherless at eight, he was sent to relatives near London, where the preaching of John Newton first stirred his heart. At Cambridge he was quick and witty, more fond of cards and company than of books, yet he learned there the gift of speech that God would later put to use.

Deeds. At twenty-one he entered Parliament. At twenty-six he gave his life to Christ, and at twenty-eight he wrote that God had set before him the suppression of the slave trade. His courage did not fail when he was threatened, and his perseverance did not fail when he was defeated. For twenty years he rose in the House of Commons to plead for men he would never meet, until in 1807 the trade was ended by law.

Comparison. Napoleon in those same years made himself master of Europe by the sword; Wilberforce, with no weapon but the truth, set multitudes free. The emperor died in exile, and the statesman died in honor.

Epilogue. Let us, then, learn from him that one faithful life, joined with faithful friends, can change a nation, and let us not grow weary in well doing.

PICTURE STUDY



William Wilberforce (unfinished), Sir Thomas Lawrence, 1828 · Oil on canvas · National Portrait Gallery, London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Thomas Lawrence, the leading English portrait painter of his day, began this portrait when Wilberforce was nearly seventy. Lawrence died in 1830 before he could finish it, so only the face is complete. Wilberforce's weak spine made his head lean forward and to one side, and Lawrence painted him so. Compare it with the young man in Hickel's portrait from 2.1: between the two pictures lie the long years of the struggle.

Look closely

- Find the parts that are finished and the parts that are only sketched. Where did the painter put his best work?
- Look at the tilt of the head. What does it tell you about the man's body after a long life?
- Look at his expression. Is it proud, weary, kind or something else?

Talk about it

1. Write a sentence for the epilogue of your encomium that this old face might inspire.
2. Set this portrait beside Hickel's. Write a two-sentence comparison of the young and the old Wilberforce.

WRITING PROJECT: A FULL ENCOMIUM OF WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

Write a complete encomium of Wilberforce in six parts, about 500–700 words. This is a quarter-path piece and may become your unit portfolio entry.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A short biography of Wilberforce (a children's or encyclopedia article is fine)
- Your notes from the core ideas

Steps

1. Make a six-line outline: one line for each part, with the facts you will use.
2. Under Deeds, write at least three virtues (for example courage, perseverance, justice, charity) and one or two deeds under each.
3. Choose your comparison: Romilly's Napoleon, Moses before Pharaoh, or another fair one.
4. Write the proemium and origin in the first session; then upbringing and deeds.
5. In the second session write the comparison and the epilogue. End by urging the reader to some act of imitation.
6. Read the whole piece aloud. Underline every verb in the deeds section and change any needless passive verb to active.

Check your work

- All six parts are present, in order, each in its own paragraph (deeds may take two).
- Each deed is tied to a named virtue.
- Every fact and date matches my source; I quoted Wilberforce's 1787 journal sentence exactly if I used it.
- Deeds are told mostly in the active voice ("Wilberforce pressed the bill," not "The bill was pressed").
- I used at least two complex sentences and one compound-complex sentence.
- Commas set off introductory participial phrases.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Wilberforce's journal sentence of October 1787 exactly.
2. Copy the comparison paragraph from the model, then write your own comparison with a different figure.
3. List five verbs strong enough for Wilberforce's deeds (pleaded, pressed, endured ...).

History note. The Slave Trade Act received the royal assent on March 25, 1807. It ended British trading in slaves but not slavery itself. The Slavery Abolition Act passed in 1833, a few days after Wilberforce's death, and took effect in 1834. Wilberforce is buried in Westminster Abbey.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.2 "Active and Passive Voice." Deeds belong in the active voice, so that the hero does the acting; save the passive for when the doer is unknown or unimportant.

For families. The slave trade involved great cruelty. This lesson names it plainly without dwelling on details; a parent may add as much as fits the child. Good sources include John Pollock's biography *Wilberforce* (1977) and, for older readers, Eric Metaxas's *Amazing Grace* (2007); preview before handing them over. The Boswell and Romilly anecdotes are told in most biographies. The sample encomium is written for this course; students should write their own and not copy it.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote: "The slave trade was fought by Wilberforce for twenty years. Many speeches were given. In 1807 a law was passed." Revise the deeds paragraph.

1. Find the passive verbs: was fought, were given, was passed. In each, the hero is hidden or missing.
2. Make Wilberforce the subject and use strong active verbs.
3. Name the virtue the deed shows.

Answer: Wilberforce fought the slave trade for twenty years, and his perseverance never failed. He rose in the House of Commons year after year, though he lost more often than he won, until in 1807 Parliament at last abolished the trade.

Example 2. Write an epilogue for an encomium of Wilberforce.

1. Sum up in one sentence what made him praiseworthy.
2. Turn to the hearers and urge imitation.
3. End with a short, strong sentence or a fitting Scripture.

Answer: Wilberforce had no army, only a voice, a pen and a conscience ruled by the Word of God. We will never sit in Parliament, most of us, but we may each speak for someone who cannot speak for himself. “Open thy mouth for the dumb.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where and when was Wilberforce born?
2. **EASY** Which pastor, a former slave-ship captain, influenced Wilberforce?
3. **EASY** In what year did Parliament abolish the British slave trade?
4. **EASY** What were the “two great objects” Wilberforce named in 1787?
5. **MEDIUM** Under which virtue would you place his years of motions in Parliament after repeated defeats?
6. **MEDIUM** Rewrite in the active voice: “The petition was signed by thousands of Christians.”
7. **MEDIUM** Why should an honest encomium mention Clarkson and the Clapham friends?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a comparison of Wilberforce with Moses in two sentences.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Telling the whole life story and forgetting to name the virtues.
- Letting passive verbs hide the hero (“a law was passed”).
- Getting dates wrong or giving Wilberforce sole credit for abolition.

Make it a game · Timeline Scramble. Write these on cards: born in Hull; Cambridge; elected to Parliament; conversion; journal entry of 1787; defeat of 1791; abolition of the trade, 1807; death, 1833. Shuffle them. The student lays them in order against a timer, then says which virtue each event shows.

Scripture. “Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.” (Proverbs 31:8, KJV)

Wilberforce opened his mouth for men and women who had no voice in Parliament; that is the heart of his praise.

Practice: answers

1. In Hull, Yorkshire, in 1759.
2. John Newton, who wrote “Amazing Grace.”
3. 1807.

4. The suppression of the slave trade and the reformation of manners (morals).
5. Perseverance (a part of courage).
6. Thousands of Christians signed the petition.
7. Because Wilberforce did not work alone; giving credit where it is due keeps the praise true.
8. Sample: Moses stood before Pharaoh and said, "Let my people go"; Wilberforce stood before Parliament and asked the same for a people not his own. Moses had signs and wonders to help him; Wilberforce had only patience and the truth, and he kept on for twenty years.

2.3 ENCOMIUM OF A THING: THE PLOW, THE BOOK, THE BRIDGE

OBJECTIVES

- Adapt the six parts of the encomium to praise a thing instead of a person.
- Read Milton’s praise of books in *Areopagitica* and find its comparison.
- Write an encomium of the plow, the book or the bridge.

Warm-up. Look around the room and choose one ordinary object: a chair, a lamp, a spoon. In one minute, list everything good it does for you. Was it hard to praise something so plain?

Video slot. Video coming. How the plow, the printing press or the stone bridge changed history (a short history for students). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

encomium of a thing

An encomium whose subject is not a person but an object, place, creature or virtue: a tool, a city, a horse, wisdom.

invention

In rhetoric, the finding of things to say. For a thing’s origin, it may also mean the first making of the thing itself.

use

What a thing does for people. In an encomium of a thing, uses take the place of a person’s deeds.

personification

Speaking of a thing as though it were a person: “The bridge carries the farmer to market.”

CORE IDEAS

Praising what cannot hear. The ancient teachers did not limit the encomium to people. Hermogenes explains how to praise animals, plants and cities as well as men, and other writers praised virtues, seasons and tools. A thing cannot blush at your praise, but praising it well teaches you to see the goodness of God’s world and of the work of human hands.

The heads, adapted. Keep the same six parts, but change what each one asks. The *prooemium* still introduces the subject. *Origin* asks where the thing came from: who first made it, or where in nature it is found. *Upbringing* becomes the making of the thing: the forge that shapes the plowshare, the press that prints the page, the masons who set the arch. *Deeds* become *uses*: what good the thing does, sorted, if you can, into goods for the body, the

mind and the soul. *Comparison* sets it beside another thing (the plow beside the sword). The *epilogue* urges the reader to value it.

The plow. Its origin is as old as Genesis: Adam was sent “to till the ground from whence he was taken.” Its making goes from a forked stick to the iron share to the steel plow that John Deere made in 1837 to cut the sticky prairie soil. Its use feeds the world. And Isaiah gives the comparison ready-made: the day will come when men “beat their swords into plowshares.”

The book. Its origin lies in clay tablets, scrolls and the parchment codex, which the early Christians used for the Scriptures. Its making changed when Johannes Gutenberg printed the Bible with movable type in the 1450s. Its use carries the thoughts of the dead to the living. Milton, in the model below, praises books by comparing them with men: to destroy a good book is almost worse than to kill a man.

The bridge. Its origin is a log over a creek. Its making is the art of the arch, which the Romans perfected: the Pons Fabricius in Rome, built in 62 B.C., still carries people across the Tiber. Its use joins what nature divides, so that farmer and market, town and town, can meet. Its comparison is easy: a wall divides, but a bridge unites. A bridge is also a picture used by many Christian writers: what man cannot cross by his own strength, God has crossed for him.

Keep it a praise. The danger in praising a thing is drifting into a report. “The plow has a share, a moldboard and a beam” is a description. “The plow’s humble share has fed more men than all the armies of history have killed” is praise. Use personification, strong verbs and adjective clauses that carry a judgment, as Milton does when he speaks of “that living intellect that bred them.”

The model. *John Milton, Areopagitica (1644), Project Gutenberg #608*

For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.

PICTURE STUDY



Ploughing in the Nivernais, Rosa Bonheur, 1849 · Oil on canvas · Musée d'Orsay, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Rosa Bonheur was the most famous animal painter in nineteenth-century France. The French government ordered this picture, and it was shown at the Paris Salon of 1849. It shows the first autumn plowing in the Nivernais, a farming region in central France, where great white Charolais oxen still drew the plows. Bonheur makes the oxen and the turned earth the heroes of the picture; the men are small beside them.

Look closely

- Count the oxen in the nearer team. How are they joined together?
- Look at the furrows in the foreground. What colors did the painter use for the fresh earth?
- Find the drivers. What are they holding, and how large are they compared with the animals?

Talk about it

1. Write the “uses” head of an encomium of the plow, using two details from this painting.
2. The painting praises the plow without words. Which part of an encomium does it do best, and which can it not do?

WRITING PROJECT: AN ENCOMIUM OF THE PLOW, THE BOOK OR THE BRIDGE

Choose one of the three things and write a six-part encomium of about 400–600 words.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- An encyclopedia article on the history of your thing
- A KJV Bible (for testimony and comparison)

Steps

1. Choose your thing and read a short history of it. Note its first form, the people who improved it and the dates.
2. Fill in the adapted heads: origin (first making), upbringing (how it is made), uses, comparison.
3. Sort the uses into goods for the body, the mind and the soul, or by the people it serves.
4. Find one verse of Scripture that mentions your thing (plow: Isaiah 2:4, Luke 9:62; book: Ecclesiastes 12:12, John 21:25; bridge: none in the KJV, so use a river crossing such as Joshua 3).
5. Write the encomium, one part to a paragraph, and give at least one sentence of personification.
6. Read it aloud. Mark any sentence that only describes, and rewrite it so that it also praises.

Check your work

- All six parts are present and adapted to a thing.
- Every historical fact and date comes from my source.
- I used at least three adjective clauses (who, which, that), and each one sits next to the noun it describes.
- I punctuated nonessential clauses with commas and left essential clauses without them.
- Any Scripture I quoted is exact, with its reference.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the last sentence of the Milton model by hand.
2. Imitate it for your thing: “Many a ____; but a good ____ is ____.”
3. List ten uses of a bridge, then circle the three greatest.

History note. Milton wrote *Areopagitica* in 1644 to urge Parliament not to require government permission before a book could be printed. The title points to the Areopagus, the hill and council of ancient Athens, where Paul also spoke (Acts 17). The passage praises books as a means to argue for their freedom.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.2 “Adjective Clauses.” Milton’s “that living intellect that bred them” uses an adjective clause to praise; yours can do the same: “the bridge that joins two towns.”

For families. The model uses a modernized-spelling edition. In it Milton refers to the Greek myth of Cadmus, who sowed dragon’s teeth that sprang up as armed men; you may

tell the story briefly. The Bonheur painting is fully suitable. If your student prefers, any useful made thing (the lamp, the loaf, the well) may be praised by the same method.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote this as the “uses” paragraph of an encomium of the bridge: “A bridge has piers and an arch. It goes over water. Cars use it.” Revise it into praise.

1. Separate description (piers, arch) from use (crossing).
2. Name who is served: the farmer, the doctor, the child going to school.
3. Add personification and an adjective clause that judges.

Answer: The bridge asks nothing and gives everything. It carries the farmer whose wagon holds a season’s wheat, the doctor who is hurrying to a sickbed, and the child who would otherwise never reach a school. Where the river once said “No farther,” the bridge says “Come across.”

Example 2. Write the comparison head for an encomium of the plow.

1. Choose a famous thing to compare with: the sword.
2. Show in what point the plow is greater.
3. Use Isaiah 2:4 as testimony.

Answer: The sword has had more poems written about it, but the plow has done more good. The sword takes bread from the mouths of nations; the plow puts it there. That is why the prophet, foretelling the reign of peace, said that men “shall beat their swords into plowshares,” and never the other way around.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** In an encomium of a thing, what takes the place of a person’s deeds?
2. **EASY** What does “upbringing” become in an encomium of a thing?
3. **EASY** Besides people, name two kinds of subjects Hermogenes says can be praised.
4. **EASY** According to Milton, what does he who destroys a good book kill?
5. **MEDIUM** Find the comparison in Milton’s passage.
6. **MEDIUM** Find the adjective clause in Milton’s phrase “that living intellect that bred them.” What noun does it describe?
7. **MEDIUM** Turn this description into praise: “The book has pages and a cover.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a prooemium (three sentences) for an encomium of the bridge.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Describing the parts of the thing instead of praising its uses.

- Skipping origin and making because they seem to belong to a person only.
- Inventing history (dates, inventors) instead of checking a source.

Make it a game · Praise the Pencil. A parent hands the student an ordinary object. The student has sixty seconds to give one sentence for each head: origin, making, use, comparison. Then trade: the student hands the parent an object.

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)

The prophet gives the plow its highest praise: in the peace of God’s kingdom, the sword is remade into the plowshare.

Practice: answers

1. Its uses: the good it does.
2. The making of the thing: how it is shaped or built.
3. Two of: animals, plants, cities.
4. “Reason itself,” “the image of God, as it were in the eye.”
5. He compares killing a man with destroying a good book, and a man who is “a burden to the earth” with a good book that is “the precious life-blood of a master spirit.”
6. The clause “that bred them” describes “intellect.”
7. Sample: Between two plain covers the book keeps the voice of a man long dead, ready to speak to anyone who opens it.
8. Sample: We praise generals for crossing rivers, but seldom the bridge that let them cross. It stands in the cold and the flood and asks for no thanks. Let us give it the thanks it has earned.

2.4 HEBREWS 11 AS ENCOMIUM

OBJECTIVES

- Read Hebrews 11 as an encomium of faith and of the faithful, and find its prooemium, deeds, comparison and epilogue.
- Find the encomium heads (origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison) in the verses on Moses.
- Write a “By faith” encomium of a believer who lived after Bible times.

Warm-up. Without looking, name as many people from Hebrews 11 as you can in one minute. Then open your Bible and check. Whom did you forget?

Video slot. Video coming. Hebrews 11, the hall of faith (a Bible overview for students from a trusted ministry or church). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

anaphora

Repeating the same word or words at the start of several sentences or clauses: “By faith Abel ... By faith Enoch ... By faith Noah ...”

catalogue

A list of examples, one after another, that together build a single point.

paralipsis

Saying that you will not speak of something, and so mentioning it: “the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak ...” (Hebrews 11:32).

good report

The KJV phrase for a good name or approval: “For by it the elders obtained a good report” (Hebrews 11:2).

cloud of witnesses

The faithful of Hebrews 11, pictured as a great crowd who have finished their race and now witness to us (Hebrews 12:1).

CORE IDEAS

An encomium in Scripture. Hebrews 11 is often called the “hall of faith.” It is also a perfect encomium, of two kinds at once. It praises a *thing*, the virtue of faith, and it praises *persons*, the elders who lived by it. The writer knew the habits of good Greek speech, and the whole Epistle is written in polished, careful prose. When you read Hebrews 11 with the encomium in mind, you see its order and its art.

Prooemium and definition. The chapter opens as an encomium of a virtue should, by saying what the thing is: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not

seen.” Then comes the reason it is worth praising: “For by it the elders obtained a good report.” In three verses the writer has named his subject, defined it and given its glory.

Deeds, in a catalogue. The body of the chapter is deeds: Abel offered, Enoch pleased God, Noah prepared an ark, Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went. Each deed is introduced by the same two words, *By faith*. This anaphora ties every deed back to the one virtue, which is just what you learned in 2.1: deeds are praised for the virtue they show. When the list grows long, the writer uses paralipsis in verse 32 (“the time would fail me to tell”) and then races through deeds by the dozen: subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire.

Moses: the full heads in miniature. The model below gives five verses on Moses, and nearly every head is there. *Origin*: “when he was born,” hidden by parents who would not fear the king. *Upbringing*: “when he was come to years,” raised in Pharaoh’s house yet refusing to be called his daughter’s son. *Deeds*: choosing affliction, forsaking Egypt, enduring. *Comparison*: he esteemed “the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.” The comparison shows his wisdom: he weighed two goods and chose the lasting one.

Comparison and epilogue. The whole chapter is full of comparison, and its key word is *better*: a better country (verse 16), a better resurrection (verse 35), some better thing (verse 40). The highest comparison of all is a single line: “Of whom the world was not worthy” (verse 38). The epilogue spills into chapter 12, and it does what a good epilogue should. It turns to the hearers and urges them to imitate: “let us run with patience the race that is set before us,” looking to Jesus.

Praise that points beyond. Hebrews 11 is different from Xenophon in one great way. Xenophon praised Agesilaus for Agesilaus’s sake. Hebrews praises the elders so that we will look past them to God, who “is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (verse 6), and to Christ, “the author and finisher of our faith.” A Christian encomium always does the same: it praises the man and gives glory to God.

The model. *Hebrews 11:23-27 (KJV)*

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

PICTURE STUDY



Noah's Ark, Edward Hicks, 1846 · Oil on canvas · Philadelphia Museum of Art
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Edward Hicks was a Quaker preacher and sign painter from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, best known for his many pictures of *The Peaceable Kingdom* from Isaiah 11. He painted *Noah's Ark* in 1846, a few years before his death. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Hebrews 11:7). Hicks shows the moment that verse praises: the work is done, and the creatures are going in.

Look closely

- Find the animals that walk in pairs. Which ones can you name?
- Look at the sky. What is coming, and how did the painter show it?
- Look for Noah or his family. Where are they, and how large are they in the picture?

Talk about it

1. Hebrews says Noah acted on "things not seen as yet." What in this painting is not yet seen, and what is?
2. Write one "By faith" sentence about Noah in your own words, then one about the animals' part in the story.

WRITING PROJECT: A "BY FAITH" ENCOMIUM

Write an encomium of a Christian who lived after Bible times, in the manner of Hebrews 11: about 300–500 words.

Good subjects with reliable biographies include Polycarp, Augustine, William Tyndale, John Bunyan, William Carey, Hudson Taylor, George Müller and William Wilberforce. Choose

someone who has died, and check your facts.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible
- A short biography of your subject

Steps

1. Read all of Hebrews 11 and Hebrews 12:1–2 aloud.
2. Note your subject's origin, upbringing, three or four deeds of faith, and one comparison (a choice between two goods, like Moses' choice).
3. Write a prooemium that names the faith you will praise, as Hebrews 11:1–2 does.
4. Write the deeds as a catalogue of four to six sentences, each beginning "By faith ...". Put origin and upbringing into the first one or two, as Hebrews 11:23–24 does.
5. Add a comparison sentence that weighs what your subject gave up against what he chose.
6. Close with an epilogue that turns to the reader and urges imitation, and that gives glory to God.

Check your work

- My catalogue uses anaphora: at least four sentences begin "By faith."
- Each "By faith" sentence names a true deed from my source.
- I can point to the prepositional phrase "by faith" and the dependent clause (such as "when he was young") in at least two sentences.
- Each sentence has a clear subject and verb after the opening phrase.
- Any Scripture I quote is exact, with its reference.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Hebrews 11:1–2 by hand and learn it by heart.
2. Copy Hebrews 11:24–26 and label origin, upbringing, deeds and comparison in the margin.
3. List ten people named in Hebrews 11 and one deed of faith for each.

History note. The King James Bible titles this book "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews." Since the early church, Christians have discussed who wrote it, because the letter does not name its author. All agree that its Greek is among the finest in the New Testament.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 17.1 "Phrases and Clauses." "By faith" is a phrase; "when he was born" is a clause. Hebrews 11 opens sentence after sentence with both, and you will imitate the pattern.

For families. This lesson treats Scripture as Scripture: we study its art the way the church has long done (Augustine did so in *On Christian Doctrine*) without ever placing it beneath the rules of rhetoric. Hebrews 11:35–38 names the sufferings of martyrs briefly; read them together. If your student chooses a martyr such as Polycarp or Tyndale, keep the focus on faithfulness rather than the manner of death.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Label the encomium heads in Hebrews 11:23–26.

1. Verse 23, “when he was born ... of his parents”: origin.
2. Verse 24, “when he was come to years”: upbringing, ending in his first great choice.
3. Verses 25–26: deeds, ending in a comparison (“greater riches than the treasures in Egypt”).

Answer: Origin (v. 23), upbringing (v. 24), deeds (vv. 25, 27), comparison (v. 26).

Example 2. A student wrote: “William Carey was a shoemaker. He went to India. He translated the Bible.” Rewrite it as a “By faith” catalogue.

1. Put origin into the first sentence with a participial phrase or dependent clause.
2. Begin each sentence with “By faith” and name what was hoped for or not yet seen.
3. Add a comparison of what he left with what he gained.

Answer: By faith William Carey, when he was a poor shoemaker in an English village, kept a map of the world above his bench and prayed over it. By faith he sailed to India in 1793, not knowing whether one soul would hear him. By faith he labored for years at Serampore to put the Scriptures into the languages of India. He counted the comfort of home a small thing beside the joy of giving the Word to nations that had never read it.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Quote Hebrews 11:1.
2. **EASY** What two words begin most of the deeds in Hebrews 11, and what is that device called?
3. **EASY** Which verse uses paralipsis, saying the time would fail to tell?
4. **EASY** Name four people praised in Hebrews 11:4–12.
5. **MEDIUM** Find the comparison in Hebrews 11:26.
6. **MEDIUM** Hebrews 11 praises both a thing and persons. What are they?
7. **MEDIUM** Which verse acts as the epilogue, urging the hearers to imitate?
8. **CHALLENGE** How is the purpose of praise in Hebrews 11 different from Xenophon’s purpose in Agesilaus?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing “By faith” sentences that tell a deed but never show what the person was trusting God for.
- Making every sentence the same length; vary them as Hebrews does, with short lines and long ones.
- Ending without an epilogue that urges the reader and gives glory to God.

Make it a game · Hall of Faith Riddles. One player describes a person from Hebrews 11 by a deed without saying the name (“By faith I left my country, not knowing where I was going”). The others guess, then give the verse number. Score a point for the name and a point for the verse.

Scripture. “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,” (Hebrews 12:1, KJV)

The epilogue of the great encomium of faith: its heroes are praised so that we will run as they ran.

Practice: answers

1. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
2. “By faith”; anaphora.
3. Hebrews 11:32.
4. Four of: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara.
5. Moses esteemed “the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.”
6. The thing is faith; the persons are the elders who lived by faith.
7. Hebrews 12:1 (with 12:2): “let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”
8. Xenophon praises the king for his own glory; Hebrews praises the faithful so that readers will imitate their faith and look to God and to Christ, the author and finisher of faith.

UNIT 2 REVIEW

The student may answer in writing or aloud, except item 10, which is written. Score item 10 with the unit rubric. Scripture answers should be exact KJV.

1. (2 pts) Define encomium.
2. (6 pts) Name the six parts of an encomium in order.
3. (4 pts) Name the four virtues used to sort deeds.
4. (2 pts) In an encomium of a thing, what takes the place of upbringing, and what takes the place of deeds?
5. (3 pts) Give three facts about William Wilberforce, with dates where you can.
6. (2 pts) Rewrite in the active voice: "The slave trade was abolished by Parliament in 1807."
7. (3 pts) Complete Milton's sentence: "Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is ..."
8. (3 pts) Quote Hebrews 11:1 and tell which part of an encomium it serves as.
9. (4 pts) What are anaphora and paralipsis? Give an example of each from Hebrews 11.
10. (12 pts) Write a short encomium (five paragraphs or more) of a person or thing not used in the unit, with all six parts.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: AN ENCOMIUM OF A HERO

Revise your encomium of William Wilberforce (2.2), or of the person you planned in 2.1, and copy it cleanly with a title. You will deliver it as a speech in Unit 8.

- **Six parts:** Prooemium, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison and epilogue are all present, in order, each in its own paragraph.
- **Deeds and virtues:** Deeds are grouped under named virtues, and the comparison is fair and raises the subject.
- **Truth:** Every fact and date is accurate; quotations, including Scripture, are exact; credit is given to others where due.
- **Style and mechanics:** Deeds are told in the active voice; the piece uses participial phrases and complex sentences correctly and punctuates them well.

Answer key

1. A speech or essay that praises the good qualities and deeds of a person or thing.
2. Prooemium, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
3. Wisdom, courage, justice, self-control (temperance).
4. The making of the thing; its uses.
5. Three of: born in Hull in 1759; elected to Parliament at twenty-one (1780); turned to Christ in 1785; named the suppression of the slave trade as his great object in 1787; saw the slave trade abolished in 1807; died in 1833, just after the Commons passed the bill to end slavery in the British colonies.
6. Parliament abolished the slave trade in 1807.

7. "... the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."
8. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is the prooemium (a definition of the subject).
9. Anaphora repeats words at the start of sentences ("By faith Abel ... By faith Enoch ..."); paralipsis says one will not tell what one then mentions ("the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon ...," 11:32).
10. Sample outline for the lighthouse: prooemium (the sailor's friend deserves praise); origin (the Pharos of Alexandria); making (stone, lamp, lens); uses (guides ships, warns of rocks, saves lives); comparison (a fortress threatens, a lighthouse protects); epilogue (let us be lights, Matthew 5:16). Score with the rubric.

INVECTIVE (BLAME) AND FAIRNESS

Invective is encomium turned around: the same heads (prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue) used to blame instead of praise. In this unit you learn to blame deeds rather than birth, to tell fair blame from slander, and to grant an honest concession. You will watch Cicero accuse Catiline before the Roman Senate in 63 B.C. and see Catiline answer with slander, study Nathan's rebuke of David and Paul's rebuke of Peter as models of "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15), and finish with a full invective against a vice, taught by Bassanio's speech against false show in *The Merchant of Venice*. Invective in this course is aimed only at vices and long-dead wrongdoers, never at a living person.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Knows the heads of encomium (origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison) from Unit 2.
- Has written a commonplace (Unit 1) and can tell a complex sentence from a compound one.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name the six heads of invective and explain how they mirror encomium.
- ☐ I can tell fair blame for chosen deeds from slander, and revise slander into fair blame.
- ☐ I can explain how Cicero blamed Catiline and why Catiline's reply was slander.
- ☐ I can explain Ephesians 4:15 and use Nathan's and Paul's rebukes as models.
- ☐ I can write a full invective against a vice that is true, vivid and fair.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Sallust, *The Conspiracy of Catiline*, trans. J. S. Watson (Project Gutenberg #7990)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7990>): Free. Chapters 5 and 31 are the portrait of Catiline and the Senate scene; preview the rest before assigning.
- **Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (Project Gutenberg #1515)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1515>): Free. Act III, Scene 2 holds the casket scene and Bassanio's speech.
- **Cicero, *First Oration Against Catiline*, Latin text with notes (Project Gutenberg #24967)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/24967>): Free. For families studying Latin; includes short lives of Cicero and Catiline and a timeline of the conspiracy.
- **Wikimedia Commons: Cicero Denounces Catiline (Cesare Maccari)** (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Cicero_Denounces_Catiline): Free, high-resolution images of the unit's picture study, including details.

3.1 THE SAME METHOD, TURNED: BLAME THE DEED ★

OBJECTIVES

- Name the heads of invective and show how they mirror the heads of encomium.
- Tell fair blame (for deeds a man chose) from slander (lies, or blame for what he never chose).
- Outline an invective against the deed of a long-dead wrongdoer, with an honest concession.

Warm-up. In Unit 2 you praised a person by origin, upbringing, deeds and comparison. Now turn those heads around to blame someone. Which head would be unfair to use against a man, and why? Talk it over for three minutes before you open the lesson.

Video slot. Video coming. Benedict Arnold and the plot to surrender West Point (a history overview for students). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

invective

A speech or essay of blame; the mirror of the encomium. The Greek teachers called it *psogos*.

slander

False or unfair blame that harms someone's good name: invented facts, guessed motives, or mockery of things a person never chose.

deed

Something a person chose to do. In invective, deeds are the only fair target of blame.

concession

Honestly granting what was good in the person you blame. It makes your blame more believable, not less.

treason

Betraying your own country, especially by helping its enemies in war.

CORE IDEAS

The same heads, run backward. Aphthonius set invective right after encomium and gave it the very same heads: prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison and epilogue. His own sample invective was against Philip of Macedon, the king who took away the freedom of the Greek cities. Aphthonius also showed how invective differs from the commonplace you wrote in Unit 1: a commonplace argues that a criminal should be punished, while an invective only blames. You already know the method. This week you learn to turn it, and to turn it fairly.

Blame the deed, not the birth. A Roman lawyer would use every head as a club. He mocked his enemy's family, his hometown, his looks and his poverty. A Christian writer cannot. No man chooses his parents, his country, his face or his bank account, so none of these can be his fault. Origin and upbringing still have a use, but only one: to show what advantages a man was given and then wasted. Jesus said, "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48). The more a man received, the darker his betrayal looks.

What slander looks like. Slander is blame that is false or unfair. It invents facts. It guesses at secret motives no one can know. It blames a whole family or nation for one man's deed. It calls names instead of telling what happened. The ninth commandment forbids it: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Slander also fails as rhetoric. A reader who catches you in one lie or one cheap shot stops trusting the rest.

The concession makes the blame stronger. Take Benedict Arnold. At Saratoga in 1777 he fought bravely for the American cause and was badly wounded in the leg. Three years later, in command of the fortress at West Point, he agreed to hand it to the British for money and a British general's rank. The plot was uncovered when his go-between, Major John André, was captured with the plans. Arnold escaped to a British ship and later led British troops against his own countrymen. A fair invective admits Saratoga. That honest admission sharpens the blame: Arnold knew what courage and loyalty were, and he sold them anyway.

Name the doer; keep the target safe. Write blame in plain, strong, active sentences: "Arnold sold the plans," not "the plans were sold." Do not exaggerate; true facts told plainly are heavy enough. End with an epilogue that warns the reader, not one that gloats. Last, aim invective only at vices or at wrongdoers long dead, whose deeds are settled in history. A classmate, a neighbor or a living public figure is never your target. With them, Scripture gives a different path, which you will study in Lesson 3.3.

The model. *"Against the Treason of Benedict Arnold," a sample invective. Written for this course.*

Against the Treason of Benedict Arnold

Every nation keeps a few names as warnings, and America keeps this one. I do not write to mock a dead man. I write to make his deed hateful, so that no one who reads of it will wish to copy it.

Arnold was born in Connecticut in 1741, the son of a godly mother, and he rose from a shopkeeper to a general. He was given much; that is why his fall is so great.

He was brave, and it would be dishonest to deny it. At Saratoga in 1777 he rode into the hottest fire and took a wound in the leg for his country. Yet three years later the same man was trusted with the fortress at West Point, and he agreed to hand it to the enemy for money and a general's rank. When his messenger, Major André, was caught with the plans, Arnold fled to a British ship and left André to

hang.

Compare him with the soldiers who wintered at Valley Forge. They had no shoes and no pay, and they did not sell their country. They had less than Arnold, and they kept faith; he had more, and he broke it.

Let his name teach us this: courage without loyalty is only a sharper sword in the wrong hand.

PICTURE STUDY



Cicero Denounces Catiline, Cesare Maccari, 1889 · Fresco · Sala Maccari, Palazzo Madama (the Italian Senate), Rome

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Cesare Maccari painted this scene on the wall of the hall where Italy's Senate still meets. It shows November of 63 B.C., when the consul Cicero rose to accuse the senator Catiline of plotting against Rome. Cicero stands in the light and speaks straight at the accused. Catiline sits apart; the senators have moved away from him and left his bench empty. Cicero mentioned those empty seats in his speech, so the painter is following the history closely.

Look closely

- Find Catiline. How does the empty space around him show blame without a single word?
- Follow Cicero's outstretched arm and his eyes. Where do they lead you?
- Look at the senators' faces and hands. Who seems convinced? Who seems uneasy?

Talk about it

1. Write three sentences that Cicero might be speaking at this moment. Blame only deeds, not Catiline's family or looks.
2. Maccari makes Cicero bright and Catiline shadowed. Is that fair to the facts, or is the painter taking sides? Explain.

WRITING PROJECT: AN INVECTIVE OUTLINE: BLAME THE DEED

Outline an invective against the deed of a long-dead wrongdoer, using the six heads.

Choose Benedict Arnold, Absalom (2 Samuel 15), or King Ahab's theft of Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21). Your parent must approve any other choice.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible or a good history of the American War for Independence
- Colored pencils (optional)

Steps

1. Read or reread the story of your wrongdoer. List every deed you can check in your source.
2. Under *Origin* and *Upbringing*, write only what he was given (rank, training, trust), not what he could not help.
3. Under *Deeds*, write the chief wrong in one active sentence that names the doer.
4. Write one honest concession: a true good thing about him.
5. Under *Comparison*, name someone who had less and did better, or who had the same chance and kept faith.
6. Write a one-sentence epilogue that warns the reader.
7. Circle in red any word that is name-calling or a guess at a secret motive, and replace it with a fact.

Check your work

- Every fact in my outline is true and comes from my source.
- I blamed only deeds the person chose, never his birth, looks or poverty.
- I included one honest concession.
- My deed sentence is in the active voice and names the doer.
- My sentences are complete, with subjects and verbs that agree.
- Introductory phrases and clauses are followed by commas where needed.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the six heads of invective in one column and the six heads of encomium beside them. Draw an arrow between each pair.
2. Copy the last sentence of the Arnold model, then write your own sentence on the same pattern: "___ without ___ is only ___."

3. List five things a person cannot choose (fair to leave alone) and five things a person does choose (fair to praise or blame).

History note. Benedict Arnold (1741–1801) was wounded at Saratoga in October 1777. In September 1780 his plot to surrender West Point was uncovered when Major John André was captured; André was hanged as a spy, and Arnold served the British for the rest of the war. He died in London in 1801.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.2 “Active and Passive Voice.” Fair blame names the doer, so write your deed sentences in the active voice: “Arnold sold the plans,” not “The plans were sold.”

For families. Aphthonius (about A.D. 400) placed invective (*psogos*) right after encomium and used the same heads; his sample was against Philip of Macedon. This unit keeps the classical method but adds a Christian rule: blame deeds, not birth, and tell the truth (Exodus 20:16; Ephesians 4:25). Students write invective only against vices or long-dead wrongdoers, never against classmates, relatives or living public figures. If your child picks a Bible figure, read the chapter together first.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this slanderous sentence into fair blame: “Arnold was a greedy rat from a family of drunks, and he probably hated America from the start.”

1. “Greedy rat” is name-calling. Replace it with the deed: he took money to betray a fort.
2. “A family of drunks” blames his birth, which he did not choose. Cut it.
3. “Probably hated America from the start” guesses a secret motive and is false: he fought bravely for America at Saratoga. Replace it with a concession.

Answer: Arnold, who had bled for America at Saratoga, later agreed to sell West Point to the enemy for money and rank.

Example 2. Write a concession and a comparison for an invective against Absalom, who “stole the hearts of the men of Israel” and rose against his father David (2 Samuel 15).

1. Find a true good thing: Scripture says no one in Israel was so praised for his beauty (2 Samuel 14:25), and he was the king’s son, trusted at court.
2. Turn the gift into weight for the blame: he used his charm to deceive.
3. Compare with someone in the same story who kept faith: Ittai the Gittite, a foreigner, swore to stay with David “in death or life” (2 Samuel 15:21).

Answer: Absalom was the king’s son, admired in all Israel, and he spent that favor stealing his father’s people. Ittai, a stranger from Gath who owed David far less, chose to stand by him in death or life.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is invective?
2. **EASY** Name the six heads of invective.
3. **EASY** According to Aphthonius, how is invective different from commonplace?
4. **EASY** Name three things a person cannot choose and therefore should never be blamed for.
5. **MEDIUM** Fair or slander? “Arnold, a man from a poor family, betrayed his country.” Explain.
6. **MEDIUM** Rewrite in the active voice: “The plans of West Point were handed to the British.”
7. **MEDIUM** Why does an honest concession make an invective stronger?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a two-sentence epilogue for an invective against King Ahab’s theft of Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kings 21).

COMMON MISTAKES

- Mocking the person’s family, hometown, looks or money instead of blaming his deeds.
- Guessing at secret motives (“he always hated...”) that no source can prove.
- Leaving out the concession because it seems to “help the other side.”
- Hiding the doer behind the passive voice (“mistakes were made”).

Make it a game · Fair or Foul?. The parent reads ten short sentences of blame about historical wrongdoers (Arnold, Ahab, Absalom, Haman). After each, the student holds up a card: FAIR (a true deed) or FOUL (name-calling, birth, looks or a guessed motive). For every FOUL, the student must restate it fairly in one sentence to score a point.

Scripture. “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (Isaiah 5:20, KJV)

Invective exists to call evil what it is, so it must never call good evil or invent a wrong.

1. A speech or essay of blame; the mirror of the encomium.
2. Prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
3. A commonplace argues that a wrongdoer should be punished; invective only blames.
4. Sample: his parents, his country of birth, his face (also his height, his poverty at birth).
5. Unfair as written: it slips in his family's poverty, which he did not choose. (In fact his father's business failed when he was young.) Cut the phrase and blame only the betrayal.
6. Arnold handed the plans of West Point to the British. (More exactly: Arnold gave the plans to André to carry to the British.)
7. The reader trusts a writer who admits the truth on both sides, and the good the man had makes his wrong choice look worse.
8. Sample: Ahab had a kingdom and still wanted one small vineyard, and he let a man die to get it. Let every reader who feels envy rising remember that a king lost everything for a garden of herbs.

3.2 CICERO AGAINST CATILINE

OBJECTIVES

- Tell the story of Catiline’s conspiracy and Cicero’s speech of November 63 B.C.
- Name Cicero’s tools of blame (apostrophe, the storm of questions, the exclamation, the list of deeds) and show that Catiline’s reply was slander of birth.
- Write a paragraph of blame that imitates Cicero’s opening, aimed at a deed from history.

Warm-up. Say this sentence aloud three ways: calmly, angrily and sadly: “How long will you go on abusing our patience?” Which way would make a room full of listeners turn and stare at the person addressed?

Video slot. Video coming. Cicero and the Catiline conspiracy, 63 B.C. (Roman history for students). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

consul

One of the two chief officers of the Roman Republic, elected for one year. Cicero was consul in 63 B.C.

conspiracy

A secret plan by a group to do something unlawful, such as overthrowing a government.

apostrophe

Turning to speak straight to a person (present or absent): “O Catiline!” Not the punctuation mark.

rhetical question

A question asked for force, not for an answer, because the answer is already plain.

new man

In Latin *novus homo*: the first man in his family to reach the Senate or the consulship, as Cicero was.

CORE IDEAS

The crisis. In 63 B.C. Marcus Tullius Cicero was consul of Rome. Lucius Sergius Catilina, whom we call Catiline, was a nobleman from an old family who had lost the election for consul more than once. Deep in debt and bitter, he gathered other ruined men and planned to seize the city: an army was forming in Etruria under Manlius, fires were to be set in Rome, and the consul was to be killed. Cicero learned the plans through informers, and an attempt on his life at his own door failed. On November 8, Catiline boldly walked into the Senate as if nothing were wrong.

The opening. Cicero did not begin with a polite introduction. He turned and spoke straight at the man: *Quo usque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra?* In C. D. Yonge's translation: "When, O Catiline, do you mean to cease abusing our patience? How long is that madness of yours still to mock us? When is there to be an end of that unbridled audacity of yours, swaggering about as it does now?" Notice the tools: *apostrophe* ("O Catiline"), a storm of rhetorical questions, and soon the famous exclamation *O tempora, o mores!* ("O the times! O the customs!").

Blame built on deeds. Cicero's questions had force because they rested on facts. He told Catiline where he had been the night before, whom he had called together, and what they had decided; he dared him to deny it. Then he commanded him to leave the city and go to his army. Catiline left Rome that very night. The speech did not need name-calling, because the deeds themselves were the accusation.

The reply that proved the point. Sallust, a Roman historian who lived through these years, tells what Catiline said back. He did not answer a single charge. He boasted of his noble family and sneered that Cicero was only "a mere adopted citizen of Rome." Cicero was a *new man* from the country town of Arpinum, the first in his family to sit in the Senate. Catiline attacked the one thing Cicero had not chosen, his birth, and the senators shouted him down as "an enemy and a traitor." Slander is often the last weapon of someone who cannot answer the facts.

Fair to the whole story. A fair student tells the truth about the heroes too. In December, five captured conspirators were put to death by the Senate's vote without a regular trial; Julius Caesar argued for prison instead, and Cato argued for death. Years later, in 58 B.C., Cicero was driven into exile partly for that decision. Even Sallust admits that Catiline was "of eminent mental and personal endowments." Catiline died fighting at Pistoria early in 62 B.C. Gifts wasted, a city nearly burned: that is the matter of a true invective.

The model. *Sallust, The Conspiracy of Catiline, ch. 31, trans. John Selby Watson, Project Gutenberg #7990*

Yet the unrelenting spirit of Catiline persisted in the same purposes, notwithstanding the precautions that were adopted against him, and though he himself was accused by Lucius Paullus under the Plautian law. At last, with a view to dissemble, and under pretense of clearing his character, as if he had been provoked by some attack, he went into the senate-house. It was then that Marcus Tullius, the consul, whether alarmed at his presence, or fired with indignation against him, delivered that splendid speech, so beneficial to the republic, which he afterward wrote and published.

When Cicero sat down, Catiline, being prepared to pretend ignorance of the whole matter, entreated, with downcast looks and suppliant voice, that "the Conscript Fathers would not too hastily believe any thing against him;" saying "that he was sprung from such a family, and had so ordered his life from his youth, as to have every happiness in prospect; and that they were not to suppose that he, a patrician, whose services to the Roman people, as well as those of his ancestors,

had been so numerous, should want to ruin the state, when Marcus Tullius, a mere adopted citizen of Rome, was eager to preserve it." When he was proceeding to add other invectives, they all raised an outcry against him, and called him an enemy and a traitor. Being thus exasperated, "Since I am encompassed by enemies," he exclaimed, "and driven to desperation, I will extinguish the flame kindled around me in a general ruin."

PICTURE STUDY



Cicero Discovering the Tomb of Archimedes, Benjamin West, 1797 · Oil on canvas · Private collection (a later version is at the Yale University Art Gallery)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Twelve years before he faced Catiline, Cicero served as a young official in Sicily. In the city of Syracuse he went looking for the grave of Archimedes, the great mathematician, which the townspeople had forgotten. He found it under thorns and brambles, and knew it by the carving of a sphere and a cylinder. Cicero tells the story himself in his *Tusculan Disputations*. The American painter Benjamin West shows the moment the workmen clear the tomb. The same man who blamed a traitor honored a great man his city had forgotten.

Look closely

- Find Cicero. How does West show that he is the one in charge?
- Find the tomb and the brambles being cut away. What tools are the workmen using?
- Look at the townspeople. Do they seem to have known the tomb was there?

Talk about it

1. Praise and blame came from the same man. Write two sentences explaining how honoring Archimedes and accusing Catiline could spring from one love of what is good.
2. Write a short apostrophe, as Cicero might, to the forgotten tomb: "O Archimedes, ..."

WRITING PROJECT: “HOW LONG?”: A PARAGRAPH IN CICERO’S MANNER

Imitate Cicero’s opening: an apostrophe and a storm of questions, built on true deeds.

Aim it at a deed from history that is long settled: Arnold’s plot at West Point, Haman’s plot against the Jews (Esther 3), or Pharaoh’s refusal to let Israel go (Exodus 5–10).

You will need

- Writing notebook
- A KJV Bible or history source for your chosen deed
- The model passage and the Yonge opening (in Core Ideas)

Steps

1. Copy the Yonge translation of Cicero’s first three questions in your best hand.
2. List four deeds of your wrongdoer that you can prove from your source.
3. Begin with an apostrophe: “O Haman,” “O Pharaoh,” or “O Arnold.”
4. Turn each deed into a rhetorical question (“Did you not ...?” “How long will you ...?”).
5. Add one exclamation in Cicero’s manner (“O the times! O the pride of kings!”).
6. End with a command in the imperative mood, as Cicero commanded Catiline to leave.
7. Read it aloud standing up, as a speech.

Check your work

- Every question rests on a deed I can prove from my source.
- I blamed no one for birth, family, looks or nation.
- My paragraph has an apostrophe, at least three rhetorical questions, one exclamation and one command.
- Each question ends with a question mark, and the exclamation with an exclamation point.
- My command is in the imperative mood and my questions do not shift tense without reason.
- My sentences are complete; no fragments slipped in between the questions.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Latin *Quo usque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra?* and the English beneath it.
2. Copy Catiline’s sneer, “a mere adopted citizen of Rome,” and write one sentence explaining why it is slander.
3. Make a two-column list from the model: what Catiline *did* and what Catiline *said about himself*.

History note. Cicero delivered the First Oration against Catiline on November 8, 63 B.C., at a Senate meeting in the temple of Jupiter Stator. He gave four speeches against Catiline

in all. The Senate later hailed him as *pater patriae*, “father of his country.” Sallust (86–about 35 B.C.) wrote his history some twenty years after the events.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.3 “Mood.” Cicero ends his questions with a command; check that your closing command is in the imperative mood and that your questions and statements stay in the indicative.

For families. Project Gutenberg has Cicero’s Catiline speeches only in Latin (#226, #24967, #39355); the model is therefore Sallust’s account in J. S. Watson’s public-domain translation, and the opening lines are given in C. D. Yonge’s 1856 translation. The lesson deliberately notes Cicero’s own faults (the executions without trial) so that students see fairness applied to heroes too. Catiline’s plans included arson and murder; nothing graphic is described.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Take apart Cicero’s opening: “When, O Catiline, do you mean to cease abusing our patience? How long is that madness of yours still to mock us?”

1. Apostrophe: “O Catiline” turns the speech straight at the man in the room.
2. Rhetorical questions: no one expects Catiline to answer “next Tuesday.” The questions say, “You have done this too long.”
3. Target: “abusing our patience” and “madness” point to his conduct, not to his family or his face.

Answer: Cicero blames conduct (abuse, madness, audacity) and uses apostrophe and rhetorical questions to make the whole Senate look at Catiline.

Example 2. A student wrote: “O Pharaoh, you ugly Egyptian, how long will you be so evil?” Revise it in Cicero’s manner.

1. “Ugly” mocks looks and “Egyptian” blames a nation. Cut both.
2. “So evil” is vague. Replace it with deeds from Exodus 5: more bricks, no straw, beatings of the Hebrew officers.
3. Keep the apostrophe and the question; add a command at the end.

Answer: O Pharaoh, how long will you demand the same tale of bricks from men to whom you give no straw? How long will you beat the officers for a work you made impossible? Let the people go.

PRACTICE

1.  In what year did Cicero speak against Catiline, and what office did Cicero hold?
2.  What does *O tempora, o mores!* mean?

3. **EASY** What is an apostrophe in rhetoric?
4. **EASY** In the model, what did Catiline do right after Cicero sat down?
5. **MEDIUM** Why is “a mere adopted citizen of Rome” slander rather than fair blame?
6. **MEDIUM** What does Sallust grant in Catiline’s favor, and why should a fair writer keep it?
7. **MEDIUM** Name one fault of Cicero’s that a fair historian should not hide.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write three rhetorical questions against Haman’s plot (Esther 3), blaming deeds only.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Asking rhetorical questions with no facts behind them, so they sound like shouting.
- Mocking the wrongdoer’s family or nation, the very mistake Catiline made.
- Treating Cicero as flawless; fair writers tell the truth about heroes too.
- Mixing moods: starting a command and drifting into a statement (“Leave the city, and you will be going now”).

Make it a game · The Senate Floor. Set up two chairs: one for the consul, one (alone, a few feet off) for the accused. The student, as consul, has sixty seconds to accuse a parent-chosen historical wrongdoer using only true deeds, opening with “How long ...?” The parent, as a senator, bangs a book on the table each time the consul uses name-calling or blames birth. Fewer than two bangs wins.

Scripture. “The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.” (Proverbs 28:1, KJV)

Catiline fled Rome by night once his deeds were spoken aloud; truth told plainly is often enough.

Practice: answers

1. 63 B.C.; he was consul.
2. “O the times! O the customs!”
3. Turning to speak straight to a person, present or absent: “O Catiline!”
4. He pretended to know nothing, begged the senators not to believe the charges, and boasted of his noble family.
5. It mocks Cicero’s birth and family (he was a new man from Arpinum), which he did not choose, and it does not answer any charge.
6. That he had eminent gifts of mind and body. It is true, and it shows how much he wasted.
7. He carried out the Senate’s vote to execute five conspirators without a regular trial (and was later exiled partly for it).
8. Sample: O Haman, because one man would not bow, will you destroy a whole people? Did you not buy their lives with ten thousand talents of silver? How long did you think the king’s ring would hide your pride?

3.3 SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE

OBJECTIVES

- Explain Ephesians 4:15 and name the two errors it guards against: flattery and cruelty.
- Study Nathan’s rebuke of David and Paul’s rebuke of Peter as models of blame that aims to heal.
- Revise a harsh piece of blame so that it stays fully true but is fair, specific and seasoned with grace.

Warm-up. A friend shows you a model boat he built. The mast is crooked and the glue is showing. Write two replies: one that is kind but not true, and one that is true but not kind. Then try a third that is both.

Video slot. Video coming. Nathan and King David, 2 Samuel 12 (a Bible lesson from a trusted church or ministry). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

rebuke

Blame spoken directly to a person, about a wrong he has done, in order to turn him from it.

flattery

Praise that is false or overblown, given to please. It is truth left out for fear or gain.

parable

A short story that teaches a truth by comparison, as Nathan’s story of the ewe lamb does.

proportion

Blame that fits the size of the wrong: no “always” or “never” when once is the truth.

restoration

The goal of Christian rebuke: the wrongdoer turned back to God and to those he wronged.

CORE IDEAS

Two ditches. Paul tells the Ephesians to grow up into Christ by “speaking the truth in love.” In Greek, “speaking the truth” is one word, something like “truthing.” The verse has two ditches on either side of the road. On one side is flattery: love that has lost the truth, so it never says the hard thing. On the other side is cruelty: truth that has lost love, so it says the hard thing to wound. A Christian writer of blame keeps to the road between them. Ten verses later Paul adds, “speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another” (Ephesians 4:25).

Nathan’s method. King David had taken another man’s wife and arranged for her husband to be killed in battle. God sent the prophet Nathan to rebuke him. Nathan did not open with an accusation. He told a parable of a rich man who stole a poor man’s only lamb. David,

hearing only the deed, judged it rightly and in anger. Then Nathan said, “Thou art the man.” The story let David see the deed plainly before he could defend himself. David answered, “I have sinned against the LORD,” and Nathan told him, “The LORD also hath put away thy sin” (2 Samuel 12:13). The rebuke aimed at repentance, and it reached it.

To his face. Years later Peter, the chief of the apostles, stopped eating with Gentile believers because he feared what some visitors would think. Paul wrote, “I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed” (Galatians 2:11). Notice three things. Paul blamed a deed, not Peter’s person. He spoke openly, because the deed was public and was misleading others. And the friendship survived: Peter later called him “our beloved brother Paul” (2 Peter 3:15). True blame is not the end of love.

Rules for fair blame. From these passages we can draw rules for every invective you write. Make it *true*: “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” Make it about the *deed*. Keep it in *proportion*: no “always” and “never” unless they are literally true. Prefer the *face* to the back: with a living person, go to him first and privately (Matthew 18:15), never to an audience. Let it be *seasoned*: “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt” (Colossians 4:6). Salt stings a little and preserves; it is not sugar and not poison.

Love is not softness. Some people think love means never blaming. But Christ himself spoke the sharpest invective in Scripture against hypocrisy (Matthew 23), and “Faithful are the wounds of a friend” (Proverbs 27:6). Love does not lower the truth; it chooses the right target, the right words and the right aim. That is why your school invectives aim at vices and at wrongdoers long dead. You practice the sharp tool where it cannot wound a neighbor, so that when you must rebuke a living person someday, you will know how to do it in love.

The model. *2 Samuel 12:1-7 (KJV)*

And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man’s lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

PICTURE STUDY



Two Old Men Disputing (probably Saint Peter and Saint Paul), Rembrandt van Rijn, 1628 · Oil on oak panel ·
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The young Rembrandt, about twenty-two, painted two old scholars deep in argument. The pair is usually identified as the apostles Peter and Paul. One man points to a passage in a large book; the other, lit by the window, listens hard. They sit knee to knee. Whatever the disagreement, they settle it face to face, with the Scriptures open between them.

Look closely

- Find the finger pointing to the page. What does that tell you about how this argument will be settled?
- Look at the listener's face. Is he angry, ashamed, thinking, or something else?
- How close are the two men? What does the distance between them suggest about their friendship?

Talk about it

1. Imagine this is Paul speaking to Peter after Antioch (Galatians 2:11–14). Write the first three sentences Paul might say: true, about the deed, and seasoned with grace.
2. Rembrandt puts the light on the listener, not the speaker. Why might a painter do that in a picture about rebuke?

WRITING PROJECT: SALT, NOT POISON: REVISING BLAME

Revise a harsh paragraph of blame so that every true point remains, but it follows the rules of Ephesians 4:15.

Use the practice paragraph below, then apply the same rules to your Lesson 3.2 “How Long?” paragraph.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Your “How Long?” paragraph from Lesson 3.2
- A KJV Bible
- Two colored pencils

Steps

1. Copy this harsh paragraph: “Jonah was a total coward and a hypocrite. He always ran from God and never cared about anybody. He was the worst prophet ever, and he sulked like a baby over a plant.”
2. Read Jonah 1 and 4. With one color, underline every claim that is true and provable.
3. With the other color, circle every word that is false, exaggerated (“always,” “never,” “worst ever”) or name-calling.
4. Rewrite the paragraph so that it blames Jonah’s real deeds: fleeing to Tarshish, and being angry when God spared Nineveh.
5. Add one sentence of honest concession (for example, what Jonah said to the sailors in 1:12).
6. Now mark your Lesson 3.2 paragraph the same way and revise it.
7. Read both revisions aloud to a parent and ask, “Is this true? Is it fair? Does it aim to correct?”

Check your work

- Every claim is true and comes from the text.
- No “always,” “never” or “worst ever” remains unless it is literally true.
- I blamed deeds, not the person’s worth, looks or nation.
- I included one honest concession.
- At least one sentence uses an adverb clause (“Although ...,” “Because ...,” “When ...”) to set the blame in its true situation, with a comma after the introductory clause.
- Pronouns clearly point to the right person (Jonah, God, the sailors).

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Ephesians 4:15 and Colossians 4:6 from the KJV.
2. Draw a road with a ditch on each side. Label one ditch “flattery” and the other “cruelty,” and write “the truth in love” on the road. Under each ditch write one example sentence.
3. Copy Nathan’s four words, “Thou art the man,” and write two sentences on why they hit so hard after the parable.

History note. Rembrandt painted *Two Old Men Disputing* in Leiden in 1628, when he was about twenty-two. The National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne acquired it through the

Felton Bequest in 1936. The identification of the two men as Peter and Paul is traditional and widely accepted, though the painting itself carries no names.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.3 “Adverb Clauses.” Clauses beginning with *although*, *because* and *when* let you state blame in its true setting (“Although Jonah warned the city as God commanded, he...”); put a comma after an introductory adverb clause.

For families. The model is 2 Samuel 12:1-7; the background (David’s sin with Bathsheba and the death of Uriah, 2 Samuel 11) is mentioned plainly but without detail. You may wish to read 2 Samuel 11-12 and Psalm 51 together. This lesson is the hinge of the unit: it explains why students write invective only against vices and long-dead wrongdoers, and how Matthew 18:15 governs blame toward living people. A good family discussion: when have you been helped by someone who told you a hard truth kindly?

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Take apart Nathan’s rebuke. Why did he tell a story first?

1. The story shows the deed with the names taken off: a rich man, a poor man, a stolen lamb.
2. David judges the deed fairly because he does not yet know it is his own; his own words condemn the act.
3. “Thou art the man” joins the judgment to the doer in four words. No name-calling is needed.
4. The aim is restoration: David repents (12:13) and writes Psalm 51.

Answer: Nathan let David see and judge the deed honestly before self-defense could blind him; the blame was true, about the deed, and aimed at repentance.

Example 2. Revise for Ephesians 4:15: “Peter was a two-faced fake who never had any courage.”

1. “Two-faced fake” is name-calling. Name the deed: he stopped eating with Gentile believers when certain men came from Jerusalem (Galatians 2:12).
2. “Never had any courage” is false: Peter preached boldly at Pentecost and before the council (Acts 2; Acts 4). Turn it into a concession.
3. State the fault in proportion: it was fear, and it misled others (2:13).

Answer: Although Peter had preached boldly before the council, at Antioch he drew back from the Gentile believers because he feared certain men from Jerusalem, and his example led others astray.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Quote Ephesians 4:15 (KJV) from “But speaking ...” to “... even Christ.”
2. **EASY** Name the two errors (“ditches”) on either side of speaking the truth in love.
3. **EASY** What did the rich man in Nathan’s parable take?
4. **EASY** What did David say after Nathan told him, “Thou art the man”?
5. **MEDIUM** Name three things Paul’s rebuke of Peter teaches about fair blame.
6. **MEDIUM** What does Matthew 18:15 tell you to do first if a brother wrongs you?
7. **MEDIUM** Fix the proportion: “The sailors in Jonah 1 were always faithless pagans.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a three-sentence rebuke, in the spirit of Nathan, that a father might give a son who copied a friend’s homework. Make it true, about the deed, and aimed at restoration.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking that love means never blaming at all (the ditch of flattery).
- Using “always,” “never” and “worst ever” when the truth is smaller.
- Blaming a living person in front of an audience instead of going to him privately first.
- Softening the truth until the real wrong disappears; grace seasons the truth, it does not replace it.

Make it a game • Salt or Sugar or Poison?. The parent reads short responses to everyday wrongs (a broken promise, a careless chore, a rude word). The student calls each one SUGAR (flattery, truth missing), POISON (cruel, name-calling or exaggerated) or SALT (true, about the deed, with grace). For each SUGAR or POISON, the student turns it into SALT aloud. Three good SALT revisions in a row wins.

Scripture. “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:” (Ephesians 4:15, KJV)

Every invective in this unit must pass this test: the whole truth, spoken with love for the good.

Practice: answers

1. “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:”
2. Flattery (love without truth) and cruelty (truth without love).
3. The poor man’s one little ewe lamb.
4. “I have sinned against the LORD” (2 Samuel 12:13).
5. It was about a deed; it was spoken to his face, openly, because the deed was public; and the friendship survived (2 Peter 3:15).
6. Go and tell him his fault between you and him alone.
7. Sample: The sailors at first cried each to his own god, yet before the storm ended they feared the LORD and offered a sacrifice to Him (Jonah 1:5, 16).
8. Sample: Son, you handed in work that was not yours and put your name on it. When you did that, you told your teacher something false and made your friend a part of it. Tomorrow I want

you to tell her the truth and do the work yourself, and I will sit with you while you do.

3.4 WRITING INVECTIVE AGAINST A VICE

OBJECTIVES

- Adapt the six heads of invective to a vice instead of a person.
- Read Bassanio's speech against false show and name how it strips the mask from a vice.
- Write a complete invective of 450–650 words against one vice, fair, vivid and aimed at no living person.

Warm-up. Vices like to wear the clothes of virtues. Match each vice with the virtue it pretends to be: stinginess, cowardice, flattery, stubbornness (choices: kindness, thrift, firmness, prudence). Then add one pair of your own.

Video slot. Video coming. The casket scene in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* explained (a student guide from a theater, library or classical school). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

vice

A settled habit of doing wrong, such as envy, sloth, greed or hypocrisy; the opposite of a virtue.

hypocrisy

Pretending to a goodness you do not have; wearing the outward show of virtue over an inward fault.

personification

Speaking of a thing as if it were a person: "Sloth is a thief that comes by inches."

ornament

In Bassanio's speech, outward decoration or show that hides what a thing really is.

exhortation

An urgent appeal to the reader to act; in invective, usually a call to flee the vice and pursue its opposite virtue.

CORE IDEAS

From a person to a vice. Aphthonius taught that one may praise or blame not only persons but things, times, places, animals and plants. In Unit 2 you praised a thing (the plow, the book or the bridge). Now you turn the same method against a thing that deserves blame: a vice. This is different from your commonplace against cowardice in Unit 1. A commonplace attacks the doer of a wrong and asks for his punishment. An invective against a vice attacks the vice itself, so that every reader, including the writer, will learn to hate it and flee it.

The heads, fitted to a vice. *Prologue:* why this vice deserves to be exposed. *Origin:* where it comes from. Scripture traces sin to its root: "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin:

and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). *Upbringing*: how it grows, from a small allowance to a master. *Deeds*: what it does to the one who keeps it, to his neighbors and to his walk with God; give true examples from Scripture, history or fable. *Comparison*: set it beside its opposite virtue, or show it worse than a thing everyone already fears. *Epilogue*: an exhortation to flee it.

Strip the mask. Bassanio, in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, must choose among three caskets of gold, silver and lead. He refuses the gold because "The world is still deceiv'd with ornament." Then he gives an invective against false show. He walks through law, religion and war, and in each one shows a fault hiding behind a fair face. His key line is "There is no vice so simple but assumes / Some mark of virtue on his outward parts." That is your best weapon: every vice wears a disguise, and your invective tears it off. In Sallust, Cato complains that Rome has "lost the real name of things; for to lavish the property of others is called generosity, and audacity in wickedness is called heroism." Give the vice back its real name.

Make it vivid. Bassanio does not say "cowards pretend to be brave." He says they have hearts "as false / As stairs of sand" and wear "The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars." Personify your vice: let sloth be a thief, envy a worm, flattery a sweet poison. Use one strong picture in each paragraph, and back every picture with a true example: Cain for envy (Genesis 4), the sluggard's field for sloth (Proverbs 24:30-34), Gehazi for greed (2 Kings 5).

Fair even to a vice. Fairness still rules. Do not blame the neighboring virtue: thrift is not stinginess, and rest is not sloth. Keep proportion. Never use a living person, a classmate or a family member as your example; use Scripture, history, fable or "a certain man." And remember Lesson 3.3: you write against the vice partly because you find its seed in your own heart. The best invectives sound less like a sneer and more like a warning from someone who has seen the danger close up.

The model. William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (about 1596), Act III, Scene 2, Bassanio's speech, Project Gutenberg #1515

So may the outward shows be least themselves.
The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who inward search'd, have livers white as milk,
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted

PICTURE STUDY



Woe unto You, Scribes and Pharisees, James Tissot, 1886-1894 · Opaque watercolor over graphite on gray wove paper · Brooklyn Museum, New York
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The French painter James Tissot traveled to the Holy Land to study its people and places, and then painted hundreds of small pictures of the life of Christ. Here he shows the scene of Matthew 23, where Jesus speaks the longest invective in the Gospels. Its target is a vice, hypocrisy: men who “outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ... are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” Christ names deeds again and again (they tithe the mint but neglect justice and mercy; they make long prayers for show), and he ends not with a sneer but with a lament over Jerusalem.

Look closely

- Find Jesus. How does Tissot make him stand out from the crowd?
- Look at the clothing of the religious leaders. What does Tissot want you to notice about their outward show?
- Find someone in the picture who seems to be listening and someone who seems offended. How can you tell?

Talk about it

1. Read Matthew 23:23-28. List three deeds Jesus blames. Are any of them about birth, looks or nation?
2. Jesus ends his invective with “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ... how often would I have gathered thy children together” (Matthew 23:37). What does that ending teach you about the epilogue of your own invective?

WRITING PROJECT: AGAINST A VICE: A FULL INVECTIVE

Write a complete invective of 450–650 words, in six paragraphs, against one vice.

Choose from: hypocrisy, sloth, envy, flattery, gossip, ingratitude, greed or pride. (Cowardice belongs to Unit 1; choose something new.)

You will need

- Writing notebook and clean paper
- A KJV Bible and a concordance (or a Bible app's word search)
- Your invective outline from Lesson 3.1 (for the heads)
- The model passage

Steps

1. Gather matter: use a concordance to find three to five verses about your vice, and choose two true examples from Scripture, history or fable.
2. Name the disguise: what virtue does your vice pretend to be? Write it at the top of your page.
3. Write the prologue and origin (where the vice comes from), then upbringing (how it grows from small to great).
4. Write the deeds paragraph: what the vice does to its owner, to his neighbors and to his walk with God, with your two examples.
5. Write the comparison (with its opposite virtue or with something worse) and an epilogue that exhorts the reader to flee it.
6. Add one personification and one strong picture in the manner of “stairs of sand.”
7. Revise with the checklist, then read it aloud to your family as a speech.

Check your work

- All six heads are present, in order, each in its own paragraph.
- I named the virtue my vice pretends to be and tore off the mask.
- Every example is true and comes from Scripture, history or fable; no living person is named or hinted at.
- Scripture is quoted exactly from the KJV, with references.
- At least two sentences are compound-complex, and they are punctuated correctly.
- I used active voice for the vice's deeds and kept my verb tenses consistent.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the two lines “There is no vice so simple but assumes / Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.”
2. Imitate Bassanio: write three lines that begin “How many ____ ...” and show a vice hiding behind a fair face.
3. List eight vices and, beside each, the virtue it pretends to be.

History note. *The Merchant of Venice* was written about 1596–1597. In the casket test, the suitor who chooses the lead casket wins Portia’s hand; the gold casket holds a skull and the silver a fool’s portrait. James Tissot (1836–1902) made his 350 gouaches of the life of Christ after trips to the Holy Land in the 1880s; the Brooklyn Museum bought the series in 1900.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 19.3 “Compound-Complex Sentences.” Long invectives need sentences that hold a cause and a contrast together: “Envy begins as a small sigh when a friend succeeds, but it grows into a hatred that cannot rest.”

For families. Glosses for the model: *still* = always; *season’d* = flavored; *damned error* = a false teaching condemned by God; *text* = a verse of Scripture; *livers white as milk* = cowardly (courage was once thought to live in a red liver); *excrement* = an outgrowth, here the beard; *redoubted* = feared. Bassanio’s point about religion is that false teaching often hides behind a solemn face and a Bible verse, a warning Scripture also gives (2 Corinthians 11:14–15). The Tissot picture shows Matthew 23; reading the chapter together is the best preparation.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Write the origin and upbringing heads for an invective against envy.

1. Origin: where does envy come from? From comparing ourselves with others and resenting God’s gifts to them. Cain is the first example (Genesis 4:4–5).
2. Upbringing: how does it grow? From a sour look, to a grudge, to a deed. Cain’s countenance fell before his hand rose.
3. Add a picture: envy as a worm in the bone (Proverbs 14:30, “envy the rottenness of the bones”).

Answer: Envy is born the moment we look at another man’s gift and wish God had not given it. It begins small, as a fallen face, and Cain’s face fell long before his hand rose against his brother. Fed in secret, it does not stay a feeling; it becomes, as Solomon says, “the rottenness of the bones,” eating from the inside what the world still sees as whole.

Example 2. Revise this deeds paragraph, which has drifted from the vice to a kind of person: “Lazy people are losers. Everybody knows someone like that, like my cousin. They never do anything right.”

1. “Losers” is name-calling, and “lazy people” turns the target from the vice to a group of people. Make sloth the subject.
2. “My cousin” points at a living person. Remove him and use Proverbs 24:30–34 instead.
3. “Never do anything right” is out of proportion. Name what sloth actually does.

Answer: Sloth does its work quietly. Solomon passed the field of the slothful and found it “all grown over with thorns,” its stone wall broken down. No enemy had attacked it; sloth had only said, “Yet a little sleep,” day after day, until poverty came “as one that travelleth.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How is an invective against a vice different from a commonplace?
2. **EASY** Name the six heads as fitted to a vice.
3. **EASY** In the model, what does “The world is still deceiv’d with ornament” mean?
4. **EASY** What do cowards wear on their chins, according to Bassanio?
5. **MEDIUM** Name the virtue each vice pretends to be: (a) stinginess, (b) flattery, (c) gossip.
6. **MEDIUM** Write a personification of greed in one sentence.
7. **MEDIUM** Find a true example of greed in 2 Kings 5:20–27 and state the deed in one active sentence.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a compound-complex epilogue (one or two sentences) for an invective against ingratitude.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Attacking a kind of person (“lazy people”) instead of the vice itself.
- Using a relative, classmate or living public figure as an example.
- Blaming the neighboring virtue (calling thrift “stinginess” or rest “laziness”).
- Piling up angry adjectives instead of true examples and one strong picture per paragraph.

Make it a game · Unmask the Vice. Write eight vices on cards and eight “masks” (the virtues they pretend to be) on other cards. Shuffle and lay all sixteen face down. Players take turns turning over two cards; a vice and its mask make a match only if the player can give, in one sentence, a true example of the vice wearing that mask. Most matches wins.

Scripture. “Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” (Matthew 23:28, KJV)

Christ’s own invective strips the mask from a vice, just as yours must.

Practice: answers

1. A commonplace attacks the doer of a wrong and asks for punishment; an invective against a vice blames the vice itself so readers will flee it.
2. Prologue, origin (where it comes from), upbringing (how it grows), deeds (what it does), comparison, epilogue (exhortation).
3. People are always fooled by outward show and decoration.
4. The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars, the look of heroes.
5. (a) Thrift; (b) kindness or encouragement; (c) concern or "just sharing news."
6. Sample: Greed is a guest who eats the whole feast and still asks what is for supper.
7. Gehazi ran after Naaman, lied to get silver and clothing, and hid them, and he was struck with leprosy.
8. Sample: Ten lepers were cleansed, but only one came back to give thanks, and the Lord asked where the nine were; let us, who have been given more than they, not be counted among the nine.

UNIT 3 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud, except items 10 and 11, which are written. Writing tasks are scored with the unit checklists: truth, fairness, the heads and the grammar skills named in the lessons.

1. (3 pts) Name the six heads of invective.
2. (2 pts) How is invective different from commonplace?
3. (3 pts) Define slander and give two of its marks.
4. (3 pts) What is a concession, and why does it strengthen an invective?
5. (2 pts) Who was consul of Rome in 63 B.C., and whom did he accuse in the Senate?
6. (2 pts) Name two of Cicero's tools of blame in the opening of the First Oration.
7. (3 pts) According to Sallust, how did Catiline answer Cicero, and why was it slander?
8. (4 pts) Quote Ephesians 4:15 (KJV) and name the two errors it guards against.
9. (2 pts) Why did Nathan tell David a parable before saying "Thou art the man"?
10. (4 pts) Revise into fair blame, in the active voice: "That traitor Arnold was a worthless liar from a bad family, and West Point was nearly given away."
11. (8 pts) Write the deeds paragraph (four to six sentences) of an invective against a vice of your choice. Include one true example from Scripture or history, one personification and one compound-complex sentence.
12. (2 pts) Why does this course aim invective only at vices and long-dead wrongdoers?

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: AGAINST A VICE

Copy your revised invective against a vice (from Lesson 3.4) on clean paper with a title, such as "Against Envy." Under the title, write the virtue your vice pretends to be. Add it to your Grade 7 portfolio after your encomium from Unit 2, so the two pieces stand side by side as praise and blame.

- **Heads and arrangement:** All six heads are present, in order, each in its own paragraph; 450–650 words.
- **Truth and fairness:** Every example is true; the vice, not a kind of person, is the target; no living person is named or hinted at; the mask of the vice is named and removed.
- **Vividness:** At least one personification and one strong picture; Scripture quoted exactly from the KJV with references.
- **Mechanics:** Compound-complex sentences punctuated correctly; active voice for the vice's deeds; consistent tense and mood.

Answer key

1. Prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
2. A commonplace argues that a wrongdoer should be punished; invective only blames (a person or a vice).
3. False or unfair blame that harms a good name. Marks (any two): invented facts, guessed motives, mockery of birth, looks or nation, name-calling, exaggeration.

4. An honest admission of what was good in the one blamed. It earns the reader's trust and makes the wrong choice look worse.
5. Cicero; Catiline.
6. Any two: apostrophe ("O Catiline"), rhetorical questions, the exclamation "O tempora, o mores!", a list of proven deeds.
7. He pretended innocence, boasted of his noble family and called Cicero "a mere adopted citizen of Rome." It attacked Cicero's birth, which he did not choose, and answered none of the charges.
8. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:" Flattery and cruelty.
9. So David would see and judge the deed honestly before he could defend himself; the rebuke aimed at repentance.
10. Sample: Arnold, who had fought bravely at Saratoga, plotted to hand West Point to the British for money and rank.
11. Sample (gossip): Gossip calls itself concern, but it is a fire carried from house to house. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth" (Proverbs 26:20). It whispers a half-truth on Monday, and by Friday a friendship that took years to build is ash. When Ziba told David a slanted tale about Mephibosheth, the king believed it at once, and an innocent man lost half his land (2 Samuel 16 and 19). Gossip never needs to lie outright; it only needs a listener who will not ask, "Is this true?"
12. To practice blame where no living neighbor is wounded; with living people Scripture tells us to go to them privately first (Matthew 18:15) and to speak the truth in love.

STORY: POINT OF VIEW

Every story has a teller, and the teller decides what the reader can know. In this creative-writing unit you will learn three points of view from three great books: first person from Crusoe's own account of his shipwreck in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, the limited view from Jim Hawkins's first sight of Blind Pew in Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (and Stevenson's famous handing of the story to Dr. Livesey), and the all-knowing narrator from Dickens's portrait of Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, with John Leech's 1843 plates for picture study. You will finish by telling one event three ways, as Jesus' parable of the prodigal son shows one homecoming through more than one pair of eyes.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Writes a clear multi-paragraph narrative with a beginning, middle and end (Grades 3-6 narrative work).
- Can find participial phrases and adverb clauses, and knows simple and compound sentences (Grammar Level 3, Units 17-19, or is studying them now).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can define point of view and name first person, third person limited and omniscient.
- ☐ I can tell what each kind of narrator can and cannot know, and find slips in a piece of writing.
- ☐ I can write a first-person narrative with a clear voice and an exact detail, as Crusoe does.
- ☐ I can write a scene limited to one character's eyes and an omniscient character sketch in Dickens's manner.
- ☐ I can tell one event three ways without changing the facts or shifting tense, voice or point of view.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (Project Gutenberg #521)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/521>): Free text; the landing is in Chapter III.
- **Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island (Project Gutenberg #120)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/120>): Free text; Blind Pew comes in Chapter III, and Dr. Livesey narrates Chapters 16-18.
- **Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol (Project Gutenberg #46)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/46>): Free text; the portrait of Scrooge is in Stave One. A good December read-aloud.
- **John Leech's illustrations for A Christmas Carol (Wikimedia Commons)**
(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=John+Leech+Christmas+Carol+1843&title=Special:MediaSearch&type=image>): Free images of the 1843 plates for picture study.

- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): For Luke 15 and the unit's Scripture verses.

4.1 FIRST PERSON: CRUSOE TELLS HIS OWN STORY 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Define point of view and explain what a first-person narrator can and cannot tell.
- Read and copy Crusoe's landing from *Robinson Crusoe* and find the two Crusoes in it: the man on the beach and the older man writing.
- Write a three- to four-paragraph first-person narrative of arriving somewhere after danger or hardship.

Warm-up. Tell a parent, in two or three sentences, about the last time you were caught in hard rain or a storm. Now tell the same moment as if you were your mother or father watching you come in the door. Which telling knew more about what you felt?

Video slot. Video coming. Daniel Defoe and Robinson Crusoe (a short introduction to the book and its author). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

point of view

The position from which a story is told: who is telling it and how much that teller can know.

narrator

The voice that tells the story. The narrator is not always the author: Crusoe narrates *Robinson Crusoe*, but Defoe wrote it.

first person

A point of view in which a character inside the story tells it and calls himself “I.”

looking-back narrator

A first-person narrator who tells events years after they happened, so he can add what he understands now (“I do not wonder now...”).

voice

The narrator's own way of speaking: his word choices, habits and manner (Crusoe's “as I may say”).

CORE IDEAS

Who is telling? Every story has a teller. Before you write a single sentence, you must decide whose voice your reader will hear and through whose eyes he will look. That choice is called *point of view*. The old teachers of narrative, Theon and Aphthonius, taught you to ask who acted, what was done, when, where, how and why. Point of view adds one more question: who is telling it, and how much does he know? In this unit you will learn three answers: first person, third person limited and omniscient. Then you will tell one story all three ways.

“I” tells the tale. In first person, the narrator is a character inside the story and calls himself “I.” Daniel Defoe published *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719 without his own name on it. The title page said the book was “Written by Himself,” that is, by Crusoe. The whole book is built to sound like a real sailor’s memoir, and first person is what makes that possible. You hear a man, not an author.

What first person gives. First person gives you three gifts. The first is *nearness*: the narrator can tell his own thoughts, fears and prayers from the inside. Notice that the first thing Crusoe does on shore is “look up and thank God that my life was saved.” No outside watcher could know what was in his heart; Crusoe can. The second is *trust*: we believe an eyewitness. The third is *voice*: Crusoe talks like himself, with his “as I may say,” his long breathless sentences and his sudden cry, “Lord! how was it possible I could get on shore?”

What first person costs. A first-person narrator may tell only what he saw, heard, thought, or learned later. Crusoe cannot tell us what his drowned shipmates thought in their last minute. All he knows is what the sea gave back: “three of their hats, one cap, and two shoes that were not fellows.” Look how Defoe turns the limit into strength. Those few odd things, two shoes that do not even match, tell the loss more sharply than a page of explanation.

Two Crusoes. Read closely and you will find two Crusoes in the passage. One is the half-drowned man walking the beach. The other is the older man writing years later, who says, “I do not wonder *now* at the custom.” This is a looking-back narrator. He can add a wise comment the younger man could not have made, such as the old saying that sudden joys, like griefs, “confound at first.” When you write in first person, decide which you are: the person living through it, or the person remembering it.

Keep the camera steady. Three rules will keep your first person honest. (1) Stay inside your narrator. Do not write “Tom was terrified” as a fact; your narrator cannot see inside Tom. Write what he could see: “Tom’s hands shook on the oar.” (2) Keep one tense, usually the past. (3) Give your narrator a voice, but let him tell the truth about what happened. A storyteller who says “I” is making a promise to the reader, and “putting away lying” (Ephesians 4:25) applies even to a narrator.

The model. *Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (1719), Chapter III, Project Gutenberg #521*

I was now landed and safe on shore, and began to look up and thank God that my life was saved, in a case wherein there was some minutes before scarce any room to hope. I believe it is impossible to express, to the life, what the ecstasies and transports of the soul are, when it is so saved, as I may say, out of the very grave: and I do not wonder now at the custom, when a malefactor, who has the halter about his neck, is tied up, and just going to be turned off, and has a reprieve brought to him—I say, I do not wonder that they bring a surgeon with it, to let him blood that very moment they tell him of it, that the surprise may not drive the animal spirits from the heart and overwhelm him.

“For sudden joys, like griefs, confound at first.”

I walked about on the shore lifting up my hands, and my whole being, as I may say, wrapped up in a contemplation of my deliverance; making a thousand gestures and motions, which I cannot describe; reflecting upon all my comrades that were drowned, and that there should not be one soul saved but myself; for, as for them, I never saw them afterwards, or any sign of them, except three of their hats, one cap, and two shoes that were not fellows.

I cast my eye to the stranded vessel, when, the breach and froth of the sea being so big, I could hardly see it, it lay so far off; and considered, Lord! how was it possible I could get on shore

PICTURE STUDY



Mr. Fezziwig's Ball (frontispiece to A Christmas Carol), John Leech, 1843 · Hand-colored etching · Printed in the first edition of A Christmas Carol (Chapman and Hall, London, 1843)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

John Leech, a cartoonist for *Punch* and a friend of Dickens, made the pictures for the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*. This one faced the title page. It shows the Christmas Eve party that old Mr. Fezziwig gave for his apprentices and neighbors when Scrooge was a young man learning the trade. In the story, the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge back to watch it. Every person in the room saw the same dance, but each would tell it differently.

Look closely

- Find Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig. How does Leech show that they are the hosts and the heart of the party?
- Find one person who is not dancing. What is he or she doing or watching?
- Look at the faces around the edges of the room. Pick one and decide what that person is thinking.

Talk about it

1. Choose one person in the picture and tell the ball in three first-person sentences, as that person. Tell only what he or she could see, hear and feel.
2. Young Scrooge was an apprentice at this party. Write two sentences as young Scrooge, then two as the old Scrooge remembering it. How is the looking-back voice different?

WRITING PROJECT: A LANDING, TOLD BY ME

Write a first-person narrative of three or four paragraphs about arriving somewhere after danger or hardship. It may be a true event (coming home through a storm, reaching camp after a long hike, the night the power went out) or an imagined castaway's landing.

Tell only what your narrator could know, and give him or her a voice.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The model passage
- A pencil for marking

Steps

1. Copy the first paragraph of the model by hand. Underline every "I" and circle every word that tells a thought or feeling only Crusoe could know.
2. Choose your event. Decide: is your narrator living through it, or remembering it years later?
3. List what your narrator saw, heard, felt (touch), smelled and thought. Cross out anything he or she could not have known.
4. Paragraph 1: the danger or hardship. Paragraph 2: the arrival and the first thing you did. Paragraph 3: one small, telling detail (like Crusoe's two shoes that were not fellows). Paragraph 4 (optional): what you understand now, looking back.
5. Use at least two participial phrases, as Defoe does ("lifting up my hands," "reflecting upon all my comrades").
6. Read the piece aloud. Wherever you wrote another person's thoughts as fact, change it to what your narrator could see or hear.

Check your work

- The narrator says "I" and stays inside his or her own head the whole time.
- No other character's thoughts are told as fact; they are shown by what the narrator sees and hears.
- The tense stays in the past (or stays in the present) from start to finish.
- I used at least two participial phrases, and each one clearly describes the right noun.
- An introductory participial phrase is followed by a comma ("Shaking with cold, I...").
- There is at least one small, exact detail that tells more than an explanation would.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the second paragraph of the model exactly, with Defoe's spelling and semicolons.
2. Make a two-column list: "What Crusoe can tell" and "What Crusoe cannot tell." Put at least four items in each.
3. Imitate Crusoe's list of what the sea gave back: write one sentence that ends with three or four small objects that tell a whole loss or a whole joy.

History note. *Robinson Crusoe* was published in London in April 1719 without Defoe's name. Readers often connect it with the Scottish sailor Alexander Selkirk, who lived alone for over four years on an island off Chile before he was rescued in 1709. Defoe's Crusoe is far longer on his island (twenty-eight years) and, unlike Selkirk's story as it was reported, Defoe makes Crusoe's turning to God and the Bible the center of the book.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 17.2 "Participles." Defoe's second paragraph is carried by participial phrases ("lifting up my hands," "making a thousand gestures," "reflecting upon all my comrades"); use at least two in your landing.

For families. The model is copied exactly from Project Gutenberg #521, Chapter III. Two old words may need a gloss: a *malefactor* is a criminal, and a *reprieve* is a last-minute pardon from execution; to "let him blood" is the old medical practice of bleeding a patient. Crusoe's point is simply that sudden good news can overwhelm a person as much as bad news. The full novel is suitable for this age; the early chapters include Crusoe's rebellion against his father, which the book treats as sin he later repents of.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote: "The wave threw me onto the sand. My little brother on the dock was terrified and thought I had drowned. I crawled up the beach." What is wrong with the point of view, and how can it be fixed?

1. The narrator is "I," lying on the sand. Can he see inside his brother's head? No.
2. "Was terrified and thought I had drowned" is a fact only the brother could know.
3. Replace it with what the narrator could see or hear from the beach.

Answer: The wave threw me onto the sand. Somewhere behind me I heard my little brother screaming my name, over and over, his voice cracking. I crawled up the beach.

Example 2. Take this flat first-person sentence and give it Crusoe’s looking-back voice: “I got home after the storm and was very happy.”

1. Add the living moment: what the narrator did on arriving (like Crusoe lifting up his hands).
2. Add one exact, small detail.
3. Add the older narrator’s comment with a word like “now.”

Answer: Reaching our porch at last, I stood dripping on the mat and could not say a word; my mother had left the lamp burning in the window, and my boots were full of water. I understand now why my grandfather used to say that a lit window is the best sermon on a dark night.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is point of view?
2. **EASY** In first person, what word does the narrator use for himself?
3. **EASY** What is the first thing Crusoe does after he reaches the shore?
4. **EASY** Name the three gifts of first person from the lesson.
5. **MEDIUM** Find the words in the model that show the older, looking-back Crusoe is speaking.
6. **MEDIUM** Why can’t Crusoe tell us what his comrades felt as they drowned? What does he tell instead?
7. **MEDIUM** Fix the point of view: “I opened the door. Grandmother was secretly worried about the bill.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write three first-person sentences as Crusoe on his first night on the island. Use one participial phrase and one exact detail.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Slipping into other characters’ heads (“she felt,” “he knew”) when the narrator could only see their faces and hear their words.
- Switching from past to present tense in the middle of the story.
- Telling feelings in general words (“I was very happy”) instead of showing them through actions and exact details, as Crusoe does.

Make it a game • Could He Know It?. A parent reads sentences aloud from a pretend first-person castaway story (“I saw a ship.” “The captain of the ship was hungry.” “I heard a gun.” “The sailors were planning to sail away.”). The student shouts “Could!” or “Couldn’t!” for each and, for every “Couldn’t,” rewrites it so the narrator could know it.

Scripture. “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” (Psalm 66:16, KJV)

The psalmist speaks in the first person as a witness, just as Crusoe begins his story on shore by thanking God for his deliverance.

Practice: answers

1. The position from which a story is told: who is telling it and how much that teller can know.
2. "I" (and "me," "my," "we").
3. He looks up and thanks God that his life was saved.
4. Nearness (inner thoughts), trust (an eyewitness) and voice.
5. "I do not wonder now at the custom" (also the comment "For sudden joys, like griefs, confound at first").
6. He did not see them and cannot see into their minds; he tells only what he found: three hats, one cap and two shoes that were not fellows.
7. Sample: I opened the door. Grandmother was sitting at the table with the bill in her hand, and she did not look up when I said hello.
8. Sample: Climbing into a thick, thorny tree, I settled myself as well as I could, so that if I should sleep I might not fall. I had nothing but a knife, a tobacco-pipe and a little tobacco in a box. Before I shut my eyes, I thanked God again that I was alive to be uncomfortable.

4.2 THIRD PERSON LIMITED: ONE PAIR OF EYES

OBJECTIVES

- Define third person limited and tell how it differs from first person.
- Explain why Stevenson hands *Treasure Island* from Jim to Dr. Livesey and back, and what that shows about a narrator's limits.
- Rewrite Jim's first sight of Blind Pew in third person limited, then write an original scene of a stranger's arrival through one character's eyes.

Warm-up. Stand at a window for one minute and say aloud only what you can actually see and hear. Then guess one thing you cannot see (what a passing driver is thinking, what is behind the neighbor's door). Which list would make a better mystery?

Video slot. Video coming. Robert Louis Stevenson and *Treasure Island* (author's life and the writing of the book). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

third person

A point of view in which the narrator stands outside the story and calls the characters "he," "she," "they," or by name.

third person limited

Third person that stays with one character: the narrator tells only what that character sees, hears, thinks and knows.

viewpoint character

The one character whose eyes and mind the limited narrator uses (also called the point-of-view character).

suspense

The reader's eager or anxious waiting to learn what will happen, often made by what the viewpoint character does not yet know.

scene break

A clear break (a new chapter, a blank line, a heading) that lets a writer change viewpoint characters without confusing the reader.

CORE IDEAS

Outside, but close. In first person the narrator is a character who says "I." In third person the narrator stands outside the story and says "he" or "she" or uses names. Third person can be wide or narrow. When the narrator stays beside one character the whole time, telling only what that character sees, hears, thinks and knows, we call it *third person limited*. Think of a

camera mounted on one person's shoulder, with a microphone that picks up that person's thoughts and no one else's.

Stevenson's lesson in limits. *Treasure Island* (1883) is told mostly by Jim Hawkins in the first person. But in Chapter 13 Jim slips ashore on his own, and by Chapter 15 he is far off in the woods and has no way of knowing what is happening back at the ship. So Stevenson does something bold. Chapter 16 begins with a new heading, "Narrative Continued by the Doctor," and for three chapters Dr. Livesey tells the story, because he was there. Then Jim takes it back. Stevenson would rather change narrators than let Jim report things he could not have seen. That is the whole principle of a limited point of view: one pair of eyes, and no cheating.

The limit makes the mystery. Read the model. Jim does not know the stranger's name (it is Pew), what he wants, or how dangerous he is. He knows only what comes through his eyes and ears on a foggy afternoon: a tapping stick, a green shade, a hood, a sing-song voice. Even when Jim judges the man, he gives his evidence: "He was plainly blind, *for* he tapped before him with a stick." Because we know only what Jim knows, we feel what Jim feels, and we lean forward to learn more. That leaning forward is suspense.

From "I" to "he." Third person limited keeps first person's limit but changes the pronoun. "I was standing at the door" becomes "Jim was standing at the door." The narrator may now describe Jim a little from outside (his name, how he looks standing in the doorway), but he still may not tell what the stranger is thinking. Thought words such as *wondered*, *remembered*, *feared*, *knew* belong to the viewpoint character alone. For everyone else, use what can be seen and heard, and words like *seemed*, *appeared* or *as if*. Stevenson does just this: Pew was hunched "as if with age or weakness." Jim cannot know which.

Choosing whose eyes. Pick your viewpoint character on purpose. Choose the person with the most at stake, or the one who sees the most important thing, or, for suspense, the one who knows the least. Stay with that character for the whole scene. If you must switch, make a clear scene break and announce the new viewpoint early, as Stevenson's chapter heading does. Never hop from head to head inside one paragraph.

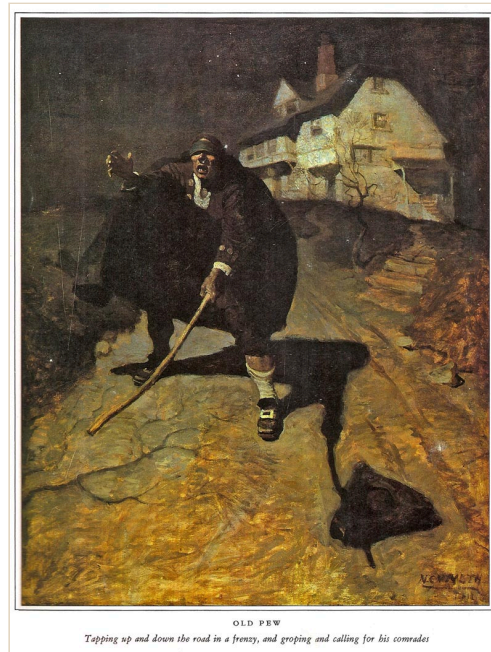
Humble eyes. A limited narrator is a good picture of our own condition. Each of us sees one corner of what happens and must judge fairly from the evidence we have. Paul wrote, "now I know in part." Writing in a limited view trains you to notice carefully and to judge others by what they say and do, not by guesses about their hearts.

The model. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island (1883), Chapter III, "The Black Spot," Project Gutenberg #120*

So things passed until, the day after the funeral, and about three o'clock of a bitter, foggy, frosty afternoon, I was standing at the door for a moment, full of sad thoughts about my father, when I saw someone drawing slowly near along the road. He was plainly blind, for he tapped before him with a stick and wore a great green shade over his eyes and nose; and he was hunched, as if with age or weakness, and wore a huge old tattered sea-cloak with a hood that made him appear positively deformed. I never saw in my life a more dreadful-looking figure.

He stopped a little from the inn, and raising his voice in an odd sing-song, addressed the air in front of him, "Will any kind friend inform a poor blind man, who has lost the precious sight of his eyes in the gracious defence of his native country, England--and God bless King George!--where or in what part of this country he may now be

PICTURE STUDY



Blind Pew (illustration for Treasure Island), N. C. Wyeth, 1911 · Oil on canvas, painted for book illustration · Reproduced in *Treasure Island* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1911)
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In 1911 the American painter N. C. Wyeth made a set of large oil paintings for a new edition of *Treasure Island*. This one shows the dreadful stranger Jim sees from the inn door in the model passage. A painter, like a narrator, must choose a point of view: where to stand, how close to come and what to leave in shadow. Wyeth chose to keep us at a distance from Pew, the way Jim first saw him.

Look closely

- Find the stick. How is Pew using it, and what does that tell you about him?
- What is the weather and light? Find two things that match Jim's "bitter, foggy, frosty afternoon."
- Where has Wyeth put you, the viewer: close or far, level with Pew or looking down? Whose eyes might you be looking through?

Talk about it

1. Write three sentences in third person limited from Jim's viewpoint as Pew comes near. Use only what Jim could see and hear.

2. Now write three sentences limited to Pew's viewpoint. He cannot see, so tell the moment only through sound, touch, cold and smell.

WRITING PROJECT: THE STRANGER AT THE DOOR

First retell the model in third person limited. Then write your own scene of three paragraphs in which a stranger arrives, told through the eyes of one character who does not know who the stranger is.

Your stranger need not be a villain: it might be a lost traveler, a messenger with news or a long-lost relative.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The model passage
- Two colored pencils

Steps

1. Copy the model by hand. With one color, underline everything Jim sees or hears; with the other, underline every judgment Jim makes and the evidence he gives for it.
2. Rewrite the model in third person limited: change "I" to "Jim" or "he," but keep every limit. Do not add anything Jim could not know.
3. Plan your own scene. Choose a place, a time and weather, a viewpoint character and a stranger. Write down one thing the viewpoint character does not know about the stranger.
4. Paragraph 1: set the place, weather and the viewpoint character's mood. Paragraph 2: the stranger comes near, described only by what can be seen and heard. Paragraph 3: the stranger speaks, and your viewpoint character reacts.
5. Give at least one adverb clause that marks when the character noticed something ("when she saw...", "as the gate creaked...").
6. Read it aloud to a parent. Ask: did you ever learn something the viewpoint character could not know? Fix any slip.

Check your work

- The whole scene uses third person ("he," "she," names) and stays with one viewpoint character.
- Only the viewpoint character's thoughts are told; others are shown by words, actions and "seemed" or "as if."
- The stranger's identity or purpose is held back, so the reader feels suspense.
- I used at least one adverb clause beginning with *when*, *as*, *while* or *before*, with a comma after it when it opens the sentence.
- Each sentence is complete, and the tense stays in the past.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model exactly, keeping Stevenson's double hyphens and his British spelling "defence."
2. Make a T-chart of the model: "What Jim knows" and "What Jim does not know yet."
3. Write the first sentence of the model three ways: first person (as it is), third person limited to Jim and third person limited to Pew.

History note. *Treasure Island* first ran as a serial in the boys' magazine *Young Folks* in 1881–1882, signed "Captain George North," and came out as a book in 1883. Stevenson began it to amuse his stepson on a rainy holiday in Scotland, starting from a map of an island they had drawn. N. C. Wyeth's paintings for the 1911 Scribner's edition became some of the best-known book pictures in America.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.3 "Adverb Clauses." Stevenson's "when I saw someone drawing slowly near along the road" tells exactly when Jim noticed; adverb clauses of time help a limited narrator mark what the viewpoint character perceives and in what order.

For families. Strictly speaking, *Treasure Island* is a first-person novel: Jim narrates, and Dr. Livesey narrates Chapters 16–18. This lesson uses that famous switch to teach the principle behind all limited points of view (a narrator may tell only what one person could know); the student then practices that limit in third person. The model is copied exactly from Project Gutenberg #120, which keeps Stevenson's double hyphens and straight quotation marks. The novel has pirate violence (Pew is killed by horses in Chapter 5) and much rum-drinking; it is a standard read for this age, but preview if your child is sensitive.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Rewrite the model's first two sentences in third person limited to Jim.

1. Change "I" to "Jim" the first time and "he" after that, so the reader is never confused about who "he" is.
2. Because Pew is also "he," name Jim again where the pronoun could point to either.
3. Keep every limit: still no name for the stranger, no knowledge of why he has come.

Answer: So things passed until, the day after the funeral, about three o'clock of a bitter, foggy, frosty afternoon, Jim was standing at the door for a moment, full of sad thoughts about his father, when he saw someone drawing slowly near along the road. The man was plainly blind, for he tapped before him with a stick and wore a great green shade over his eyes and nose; Jim thought he had never seen a more dreadful-looking figure.

Example 2. A student wrote: “Martha watched the rider come up the lane. He was tired and hoped someone would give him supper. She wondered if he was a soldier.” Find the head-hop and fix it.

1. The viewpoint character is Martha (she “watched” and “wondered”).
2. “He was tired and hoped someone would give him supper” tells the rider’s inner state, which Martha cannot know.
3. Replace it with signs Martha could see or hear.

Answer: Martha watched the rider come up the lane. He sat slumped in the saddle, and his horse’s head hung low; when he reached the gate he looked first at the chimney smoke and then at the kitchen window. She wondered if he was a soldier.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What pronouns does a third-person narrator use for the characters?
2. **EASY** What makes third person “limited”?
3. **EASY** Who narrates most of *Treasure Island*, and who takes over in Chapters 16–18?
4. **EASY** Name three things Jim notices about the stranger in the model.
5. **MEDIUM** Why did Stevenson switch narrators instead of letting Jim keep telling the story?
6. **MEDIUM** Find the phrase in the model that shows Jim guessing rather than knowing. What word signals the guess?
7. **MEDIUM** Fix the head-hop (viewpoint: Tom): “Tom opened the letter. His aunt was nervously waiting to hear his answer.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write three sentences in third person limited from Pew’s viewpoint as he reaches the inn. Remember that he is blind.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Head-hopping: telling two characters’ thoughts in the same scene.
- Changing “I” to “he” but forgetting the limit, so the narrator suddenly knows the stranger’s name or plans.
- Unclear pronouns when two characters are both “he”; use a name again when needed.

Make it a game • Shoulder Camera. One player picks a viewpoint character in a picture book illustration or a painting and narrates in third person limited for thirty seconds. The listener rings a bell (or claps) at any slip into another character’s head. Each slip found is a point; then switch roles.

Scripture. “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” (1 Corinthians 13:12, KJV)

Every human viewpoint is limited, like Jim’s at the inn door; only God sees the whole, and one day we shall know as we are known.

Practice: answers

1. "He," "she," "they" (and the characters' names).
2. The narrator stays with one character and tells only what that character sees, hears, thinks and knows.
3. Jim Hawkins; Dr. Livesey.
4. Any three: he taps with a stick; he wears a green shade over his eyes and nose; he is hunched; he wears a tattered hooded sea-cloak; he speaks in an odd sing-song.
5. Jim had gone ashore and could not know what happened at the ship and the stockade; Stevenson kept the rule that a narrator tells only what he could know.
6. "as if with age or weakness"; the words "as if" signal it.
7. Sample: Tom opened the letter. Across the table his aunt sat very still, twisting her napkin, her eyes on his face.
8. Sample: Pew felt the road turn from frozen ruts to the flat stones before the inn, and he stopped. Somewhere ahead a door stood open; he could smell wood smoke and hear the creak of a sign swinging in the wind. He lifted his face toward the sound and began his sing-song.

4.3 OMNISCIENT: DICKENS SEES ALL OF SCROOGE

OBJECTIVES

- Define the omniscient point of view and name four things an omniscient narrator can do that a limited one cannot.
- Read and copy Dickens’s portrait of Scrooge and mark where the narrator sees inside, judges, compares and reports what no single character could know.
- Write a three-paragraph omniscient introduction of an invented character in Dickens’s manner.

Warm-up. Describe your street or town as a hawk would see it from high above: everything at once. Then name one thing even the hawk cannot see (a thought, a secret, what will happen tomorrow). Who can see that?

Video slot. Video coming. Charles Dickens and the writing of *A Christmas Carol* (1843). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

omniscient

All-knowing (Latin *omnis*, “all,” and *sciens*, “knowing”). An omniscient narrator can tell anything about any character, place or time in the story.

narrator’s comment

A remark in which the narrator speaks in his own voice to judge, explain or joke (“Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone, Scrooge!”).

summary

Telling that covers a long time or a whole character at once (“no children asked him what it was o’clock”).

scene

Telling that slows down to show one moment, with action and dialogue, as it happens.

head-hopping

Jumping carelessly from one character’s mind to another’s so the reader loses track. Omniscient narrators move between minds, but on purpose and clearly.

CORE IDEAS

The narrator above the story. In first person, the teller is inside the story. In third person limited, he rides on one character’s shoulder. In the *omniscient* (all-knowing) point of view, the narrator stands above the whole story. He may go into any room, any mind, any year. He can tell what a man is like deep down, what everyone in town thinks of him, what happened

long ago and what will happen later. He may stop and talk to the reader. Charles Dickens is one of the great masters of this voice.

What Dickens knows. Look at what the narrator reports in the model. He knows Scrooge's inner nature: "The cold within him froze his old features." He knows Scrooge's whole life in summary: no man or woman "ever once in all his life" asked him the way. He knows how the weather itself fares against Scrooge. He even reports how the blind men's dogs behave and what they seem to say. No single character in the book could tell all this. Only a narrator above the story can.

A voice that judges and jokes. An omniscient narrator often has a strong voice of his own. Dickens begins with a cry: "Oh!" Then he piles up seven words in a row ("squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!") so that the list itself feels grasping. He compares Scrooge to flint and to an oyster. He jokes that rain and snow beat Scrooge in only one way: they often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did. The narrator is not neutral; he tells us plainly that covetousness is sin. Yet the whole book exists to show that this hard old man can be changed.

Power with a price. Knowing everything is a great power, and it has dangers. If the narrator tells all the secrets at once, there is no suspense. If he hops from mind to mind in every sentence, the reader gets lost. Good omniscient narrators choose. They move between summary and scene. They enter a mind when it matters and stay long enough for us to settle. Dickens even builds this into his plot: the three Spirits carry Scrooge from his old school to the Cratchits' table, to his nephew Fred's party, to a lighthouse and a ship at sea, so that Scrooge, for one night, sees almost as the narrator sees.

Tools to borrow. When you write in the omniscient view, try Dickens's tools. (1) Tell the inner nature, then prove it with outward signs. (2) Use a summary sentence about a whole life ("Nobody ever..."). (3) Show how others react, even animals. (4) Make one comparison that sticks (flint, oyster). (5) Let your narrator make one short comment in his own voice. Keep your comments fair; you are describing a vice, not mocking a real person.

Only One sees all. No man is truly omniscient. When a storyteller writes this way, he borrows, in a very small way, a view that belongs to God alone, "with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13). That is why it should be used humbly and justly. Dickens's narrator sees Scrooge's cold heart, but he looks at it the way a good doctor looks at a disease: in order to show the cure.

The model. *Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol (1843), Stave One, "Marley's Ghost," Project Gutenberg #46*

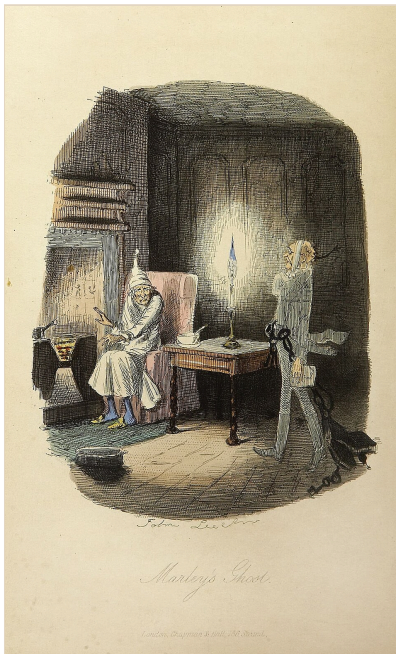
Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was

on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, "No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!"

PICTURE STUDY



Marley's Ghost, John Leech, 1843 · Hand-colored etching · Printed in the first edition of *A Christmas Carol* (Chapman and Hall, London, 1843)

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

This is another of John Leech's eight pictures for the first edition. Scrooge sits by his tiny fire on Christmas Eve when the ghost of his dead partner, Jacob Marley, comes through the door, bound in a chain. In the story, Dickens tells us exactly what the chain is made of: cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds and heavy purses. The picture shows one moment from outside; the narrator can tell us what both men are thinking.

Look closely

- Look closely at Marley's chain. What objects can you find in it, and why would a miser's chain be made of them?
- Look at Scrooge. How do his posture, his clothes and his tiny fire show the man Dickens describes in the model?
- Find where the light falls brightest. Whose face does Leech want you to look at first?

Talk about it

1. Write one paragraph about this moment in the omniscient view: tell what Scrooge sees, what he thinks, and what Marley wants him to understand.
2. Write the same moment in three sentences limited to Scrooge. What did you have to leave out?

WRITING PROJECT: A CHARACTER FROM ABOVE

Write a three-paragraph omniscient introduction to an invented character in Dickens's manner, as the model introduces Scrooge. Choose one strong quality: a miser, a grumbler, a busybody, or (for contrast) a cheerful, generous soul like Mr. Fezziwig.

Your character must be invented, not someone you know.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The model passage
- A thesaurus (optional)

Steps

1. Copy the first paragraph of the model by hand, keeping every comma and semicolon.
2. Mark the model: put an I beside inner nature, an S beside each summary of a whole life, an R beside others' reactions, a C beside each comparison and an N beside the narrator's own comments.
3. Plan your character: name, trade, one ruling quality, one comparison ("as ... as ..."), and one creature or thing that reacts to him or her.
4. Paragraph 1: open with a narrator's cry or comment, then a pile-up of words for the ruling quality, then the inner nature shown in outward signs.
5. Paragraph 2: how the world (weather, time, the seasons, the street) fares against your character, ending with a small joke or twist.
6. Paragraph 3: a "Nobody ever..." (or "Everybody always...") summary, then how people and animals react.
7. Read it aloud with feeling. Cut any sentence that only repeats an earlier one.

Check your work

- The narrator stands above the story and tells things no single character could know.

- There is at least one comparison and at least one narrator’s comment.
- I joined at least two closely related independent clauses with a semicolon, as Dickens does.
- Items in my pile-up of words are separated by commas, and the series is clear.
- The character is invented, and the narrator judges the vice or virtue fairly, without mocking a real person.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the second paragraph of the model exactly.
2. List Dickens’s seven words for Scrooge in the first sentence. Write a seven-word pile-up of your own for a generous person.
3. Imitate “No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him” with a sentence of your own that balances two halves.

History note. Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in about six weeks in the autumn of 1843, and it was published on December 19, 1843, by Chapman and Hall with eight illustrations by John Leech: four hand-colored etchings and four wood engravings. The first printing sold out by Christmas Eve. Dickens later gave public readings of it for many years.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 19.1 “Simple and Compound Reviewed.” Dickens builds Scrooge with compound sentences (“He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days”; “They often ‘came down’ handsomely, and Scrooge never did”); join two of your own closely related clauses the same way.

For families. The model is copied exactly from Project Gutenberg #46, Stave One; Gutenberg’s text keeps Dickens’s spelling “grind-stone” and “shrivelled.” Old words to gloss: *rime* is frost; the *dog-days* are the hottest weeks of summer; *courts* are small paved yards off a street; “came down handsomely” is a pun, since a generous man “comes down” with money. The book is a good family read-aloud in December; the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come is solemn but not gory.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Take the model's first paragraph apart. Which sentences tell inner nature, which give outward signs, and where is the narrator's comment?

1. Narrator's comment: "Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone, Scrooge!" The narrator speaks in his own voice.
2. Inner nature: "Hard and sharp as flint...; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster" and "The cold within him..."
3. Outward signs: the pointed nose, red eyes, blue lips, grating voice, the frost on his head and chin.

Answer: Dickens moves from comment, to inner nature, to outward signs, to a summary of his whole year ("he iced his office in the dog-days"). The coldness inside is proved by what anyone could see outside.

Example 2. A student wrote an omniscient opening: "Mrs. Grubb was mean. She didn't like anybody. Nobody liked her either. She was very mean to children." Revise it with Dickens's tools.

1. Replace the bare label "mean" with a pile-up of exact words and one comparison.
2. Show inner nature through outward signs.
3. Add a "Nobody ever..." summary and a reaction from a creature.

Answer: Oh, she was a sour one, Mrs. Grubb! a scolding, sniffing, pinching, peering old grudge-keeper, as prickly as a holly hedge in a hard frost. Her mouth had been pulled tight so long that it had forgotten how to open for a song. No child ever ran after a ball into her yard, and the very sparrows hopped along her fence on tiptoe, as though they feared she would charge them rent for the rail.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What does *omniscient* mean?
2. **EASY** Name four things an omniscient narrator can do that a limited narrator cannot.
3. **EASY** To what two things does Dickens compare Scrooge in the first paragraph?
4. **EASY** What do the blind men's dogs do when they see Scrooge coming?
5. **MEDIUM** Explain the joke in "They often 'came down' handsomely, and Scrooge never did."
6. **MEDIUM** Find one sentence in the model that is a summary of Scrooge's whole life rather than one moment.
7. **MEDIUM** How does the plot of *A Christmas Carol* let Scrooge share something like the omniscient narrator's view?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write two omniscient sentences about Bob Cratchit and Scrooge in the office on Christmas Eve, entering both minds clearly.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Head-hopping: entering three minds in three sentences with no reason, so the reader cannot settle.
- Telling every secret at the start and leaving no suspense.
- Using only labels (“he was mean”) instead of exact signs, comparisons and reactions.
- Letting the narrator’s comments turn into mockery of a real person; aim at the vice, as in Unit 3.

Make it a game · Narrator’s Ladder. Choose a simple event (a dog steals a sausage from a market stall). Player 1 tells it in first person as the dog; Player 2 tells it in third person limited to the butcher; Player 3 climbs to the top of the ladder and tells it omniscient, entering both minds and adding one narrator’s comment. Rotate and choose a new event.

Scripture. “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” (Hebrews 4:13, KJV)

Only God truly sees every heart; an omniscient narrator borrows a small likeness of that view and should use it justly, as Dickens does in order to show Scrooge’s need of change.

Practice: answers

1. All-knowing.
2. Any four: enter any character’s mind; tell a character’s inner nature directly; summarize a whole life or town; go to any place or time; tell what will happen later; comment to the reader in his own voice.
3. Flint and an oyster.
4. They tug their owners into doorways and up courts, then wag their tails.
5. Rain and snow “come down” (fall) heavily; a generous man “comes down handsomely” with money. Scrooge never gives.
6. Sample: “No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o’clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge.”
7. The three Spirits carry him to scenes he could not otherwise see (his past, the Cratchits’ home, Fred’s party, distant places, the future), so for one night he sees almost as the narrator does.
8. Sample: Bob Cratchit, warming his hands at a candle, was thinking of the goose he could not quite afford and of Tiny Tim’s face when it came to the table. Ten feet away, Scrooge was thinking only that a clerk who wanted the whole of Christmas Day off was a clerk who meant to pick his pocket every twenty-fifth of December.

4.4 ONE STORY, THREE VIEWS

OBJECTIVES

- Show how the elder son’s part of the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:25–28) tells one homecoming from more than one view.
- Separate the facts of an event, which never change, from the selection, emphasis and feeling that change with point of view.
- Tell one short event three times, in first person, third person limited and omniscient, and judge which telling serves the story best.

Warm-up. Think of a family event everyone remembers (a dinner that burned, a trip that went wrong). Ask two family members to tell it in one minute each. Write down one fact they agree on and one thing only one of them mentioned.

Video slot. Video coming. Rembrandt’s Return of the Prodigal Son (a museum or art-history introduction to the painting). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

event

What actually happened: the who, what, when, where, how and why that stay the same in every telling.

selection

The narrator’s choice of which facts and details to include. Each point of view selects differently.

emphasis

Which part of the event a telling makes most important, by placing it first or last, giving it more words or slowing down for it.

consistency

Keeping one point of view, one tense and one set of pronouns from start to finish within a single telling.

parable

A short story that teaches a spiritual truth by comparison, as Jesus taught in the Gospels.

CORE IDEAS

One event, many tellings. In this unit you have met three narrators: Crusoe, who says “I”; the limited narrator, who rides on one character’s shoulder; and Dickens’s narrator, who sees all. Now you will put them to work on a single event. The facts of the event do not change. What changes is *selection* (what gets told), *emphasis* (what matters most) and *feeling*.

Solomon knew this long ago: “He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.”

The Lord’s own example. In the parable of the prodigal son, Jesus tells most of the story from above, as a storyteller who knows hearts: “when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion.” But in the verses of the model, the telling moves out to the field and stays with the elder son. He hears music and dancing. He does not know why, so he asks a servant. The servant’s report is a second view of the same homecoming, short and plain: your brother is back, and your father has killed the fatted calf. To the father this event is joy. To the servant it is news. To the elder son it is an offense: “he was angry, and would not go in.”

Facts first, then views. Before you tell an event three ways, write down the facts that will not change, using the old questions of narrative: who, what, when, where, how and why. Then, for each telling, decide three things: what this narrator *knows*, what he *does not know* and what he *cares about*. A first-person narrator gives nearness and voice. A limited narrator gives suspense and one clear line of feeling. An omniscient narrator gives the whole picture and can show two hearts side by side, as Jesus shows both the father and the elder son.

Change the view, not the truth. A point of view may be partial, but in this exercise it must never be false. Do not change what happened to suit a narrator. Change only what he notices, what he leaves out and how he feels. Real novelists sometimes write narrators who are mistaken, but even then the author knows the truth and lets the reader find it. Ephesians 4:25 still governs the writer: “speak every man truth with his neighbour.”

Choosing the best view. After you have told the event three ways, ask which telling best serves the meaning. Jesus ends the parable with the father pleading and the elder son still standing outside the house. We never hear whether he went in. The open ending speaks straight to the people who first heard it, the Pharisees and scribes who murmured that Jesus “receiveth sinners” (Luke 15:2). The view a storyteller chooses can turn a story into a question aimed at the hearer’s own heart.

Keep each telling clean. Each of your three versions must hold steady: one point of view, one tense, one set of pronouns. If your first-person telling slips into “he thought” about another character, or your past-tense telling slides into the present, the reader feels the floor shift. Read each version aloud by itself before you compare them.

The model. *Luke 15:25–28 (KJV)*

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

PICTURE STUDY



The Return of the Prodigal Son, Rembrandt van Rijn, about 1668 · Oil on canvas · State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Rembrandt painted this large canvas near the end of his life. The father bends over his kneeling son and lays his hands on the young man's back. The son's head is shaved, his clothes are torn, and one worn sandal has slipped off his foot. At the right a tall man in a red cloak stands and looks down; many viewers take him for the elder brother. Other figures watch from the dark. Every person in the room is a different point of view on the same homecoming.

Look closely

- Look at the father's two hands on the son's back. Are they the same? What might they say?
- Look at the son's feet. What do they tell you about his journey home?
- Find the standing man at the right and the figures in the shadows behind. What is each one doing with his eyes?

Talk about it

1. Tell this moment three ways in three sentences each: as the son (first person), limited to the standing man at the right, and omniscient.
2. Which figure in the painting would make the most surprising narrator? Write the first sentence of his story.

WRITING PROJECT: ONE STORY, THREE VIEWS

Choose one short event and tell it three times: once in first person, once in third person limited and once in omniscient. Each telling should be one or two paragraphs. Then write a short paragraph judging which telling works best and why.

Good events have at least two people who want or feel different things: a lost dog found by a neighbor, a burned supper on the night guests came, a storm that kept a fishing boat out late, or a scene from this unit (Crusoe's landing, Pew at the inn, Fezziwig's ball).

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Your work from Lessons 4.1-4.3
- Three colored pencils

Steps

1. Read Luke 15:11-32 aloud. Mark where the telling stays with the elder son, and list the three people in verses 25-28 who see the homecoming differently.
2. Choose your event. Write a fact list (who, what, when, where, how, why) that will stay the same in all three tellings.
3. Make a three-column chart: for each narrator, write what he knows, what he does not know and what he cares about most.
4. Write the first-person telling. Give your narrator a voice and one small, exact detail.
5. Write the third-person limited telling through a different character. Hold back what that character does not know.
6. Write the omniscient telling. Enter at least two minds clearly and add one short narrator's comment.
7. Write a closing paragraph: Which telling serves the story best, and why? Then check each telling with the list below.

Check your work

- All three tellings keep the same facts; only selection, emphasis and feeling change.
- Each telling keeps one point of view and one set of pronouns from start to finish.
- Each telling keeps one tense; there is no shift from past to present.
- I used active voice for the main actions, so the reader sees who did what.
- My first-person and limited tellings never report another character's thoughts as fact.
- My closing paragraph names a reason for its choice, not just "I liked it."

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Luke 15:25-28 from the King James Bible exactly.
2. Write the servant's report in verse 27 as the servant might tell it to his wife that evening, in first person, in three sentences.
3. List five events from your own week that two people might tell differently.

History note. Rembrandt's *Return of the Prodigal Son* is usually dated to the last years of his life, about 1668; he died in Amsterdam in 1669. Catherine the Great bought it for her collection in St. Petersburg in 1766, and it hangs today in the State Hermitage Museum.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.4 "Shifts in Tense, Voice and Mood." When you write the same event three times, check each telling for needless shifts: from past to present tense, or from active to passive voice in the middle of an action.

For families. The model and the Scripture are from the King James Version. The exercise of retelling one story from different speakers goes back to the ancient progymnasmata, where students also wrote *ethopoeia*, speeches in the character of a given person; your student will meet that exercise later. Keep the focus on observation and truthfulness: point of view changes what is noticed, never what happened. If your student chooses a family event, let the people involved approve the telling before it goes in the portfolio.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student told the event "Grandfather's boat came in late after a storm" three ways. Here are the opening sentences. Name the point of view of each and what it gains. (A) "I had watched the harbor for three hours when I saw a light that might have been his." (B) "Grandmother set the fourth cup on the table, took it off, and set it on again; the window rattled, and she did not look at it." (C) "Out past the point, Grandfather was singing to keep his hands from shaking, while at home his wife counted cups and his grandson counted lights."

1. (A) uses "I" and tells only what the watcher saw: first person. It gains nearness and suspense ("might have been his").
2. (B) uses "she," stays with Grandmother, and shows her fear only through what she does: third person limited. It gains one strong line of feeling.
3. (C) goes out to sea and back home in one sentence and knows why Grandfather sings: omniscient. It gains the whole picture.

Answer: First person, third person limited, omniscient. The facts (a storm, a late boat, a waiting family) stay the same; the selection and emphasis change.

Example 2. Find and fix the shifts in this limited telling: “Ben ran down to the dock. The rope is thrown to him by his uncle, and he catches it. His uncle was proud of him.”

1. Tense shift: “ran” (past) to “is thrown” (present). Keep the past.
2. Voice shift: “The rope is thrown ... by his uncle” is passive in the middle of action. Make it active.
3. Point-of-view slip: “His uncle was proud of him” enters the uncle’s mind in a telling limited to Ben. Show it instead.

Answer: Ben ran down to the dock. His uncle threw him the rope, and he caught it. When Ben looked up, his uncle was grinning and nodding at him.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three points of view in this unit.
2. **EASY** In Luke 15:25, where is the elder son, and what does he hear?
3. **EASY** Who tells the elder son why there is a feast?
4. **EASY** What three things change from one point of view to another? What must stay the same?
5. **MEDIUM** How does the same homecoming look to the father, to the servant and to the elder son?
6. **MEDIUM** Why might Jesus have ended the parable without telling whether the elder son went in?
7. **MEDIUM** Fix the tense shift: “The guests arrived at six, and the roast is still raw.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Tell Luke 15:27–28 in two first-person sentences as the elder son.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Changing the facts of the event between tellings instead of changing only what the narrator notices and feels.
- Writing three tellings that sound the same except for the pronouns; each narrator should select different details.
- Shifting tense or voice in the middle of a telling.
- Ending with “I liked the first one best” without a reason drawn from the story.

Make it a game • Who Saw It?. A parent reads one sentence describing an event from a hidden point of view (for example, “I could smell the bread burning before I reached the stairs” or “Far off, the baker did not yet know his oven had failed, and his wife did not yet know she would forgive him”). The student names the point of view and the narrator, then retells the sentence from a different view. Score one point for each correct name and one for each clean retelling.

Scripture. “He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and

searcheth him.” (Proverbs 18:17, KJV)

One telling can seem complete until a second view is heard; a fair writer, like a fair judge, listens to more than one witness.

Practice: answers

1. First person, third person limited and omniscient.
2. In the field; music and dancing.
3. One of the servants.
4. Selection, emphasis and feeling change; the facts of the event stay the same.
5. To the father it is joy and compassion; to the servant it is news to report; to the elder son it is an offense, and he is angry.
6. Sample: The Pharisees and scribes who murmured that He received sinners were like the elder son, so the open ending asks them (and us) whether we will go in and rejoice.
7. The guests arrived at six, and the roast was still raw.
8. Sample: When I asked the servant what the music meant, he told me my brother was come home and my father had killed the fatted calf for him. I stood in the dark yard with the field dust still on my feet, and I would not go in.

UNIT 4 REVIEW

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

1. (2 pts) Define point of view.
2. (2 pts) Name the point of view: "I cast my eye to the stranded vessel."
3. (4 pts) What is the difference between third person limited and omniscient?
4. (3 pts) Why does Stevenson let Dr. Livesey narrate Chapters 16–18 of *Treasure Island*?
5. (4 pts) In the *Robinson Crusoe* passage, what are the only signs of his comrades that Crusoe ever saw, and why does that detail work well in first person?
6. (3 pts) Name three things Dickens's narrator tells about Scrooge that no single character could know.
7. (4 pts) Fix the point-of-view slip in this scene limited to Anna: "Anna knocked at the door. The old man inside was annoyed and did not want visitors."
8. (3 pts) Fix the shifts in tense and voice: "Crusoe walked along the shore, and his hands are lifted up by him."
9. (3 pts) In Luke 15:25–28, name three people and how each sees the son's homecoming.
10. (12 pts) Choose one event (for example, a dog stealing a sausage from a market stall) and tell it in two sentences each: first person, third person limited and omniscient.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: ONE STORY, THREE VIEWS

Copy your best three-view telling from Lesson 4.4 on clean paper, with a title, a heading over each version naming its point of view, and your closing paragraph judging which telling works best.

- **Point of view:** Each telling holds its point of view from start to finish; first person and limited never report other minds as fact.
- **Truth of the event:** The facts stay the same in all three tellings; selection, emphasis and feeling change.
- **Craft:** Each telling has an exact detail; the first person has a voice; the omniscient has a comparison or narrator's comment, in the manner of Defoe, Stevenson and Dickens.
- **Mechanics:** No needless shifts in tense or voice; participial phrases and adverb clauses are punctuated correctly; semicolons join only independent clauses.

Answer key

1. The position from which a story is told: who is telling it and how much that teller can know.
2. First person.
3. Limited stays with one character and tells only what that character knows; omniscient can enter any mind and tell anything about any person, place or time.
4. Jim has gone ashore and could not know what happened at the ship and the stockade; the doctor was there.

5. Three of their hats, one cap and two shoes that were not fellows. Crusoe can tell only what he saw, and those small, odd things show the loss more sharply than explanation.
6. Any three: the cold within him; that no one in all his life asked him the way; how the weather fares against him; how blind men's dogs react to him; his habits all year round.
7. Sample: Anna knocked at the door. After a long wait it opened a crack, and an old man peered out and frowned at her.
8. Crusoe walked along the shore and lifted up his hands.
9. The father: joy and compassion; the servant: news to report; the elder son: an offense that makes him angry.
10. Sample: (1) I had my teeth in the sausage before the butcher turned around, and I did not stop running until the church steps. (2) The butcher turned back to his counter and saw only a bare hook swinging; down the street, a brown tail was disappearing around the corner. (3) The dog thought the sausage was the finest thing in the world, and the butcher thought it was the most expensive; neither of them yet knew that the butcher's little daughter had left the gate open.

POETRY: THE SONNET, FIRST LOOK

The sonnet is the most famous fixed form in English poetry: fourteen lines, five beats to the line, and a strict rhyme scheme. In this unit you will read four masters, each by copying first. Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 shows the English form (three quatrains and a couplet). Milton's "On His Blindness" shows the Italian form (octave and sestet) and a Christian answer to loss. Keats's "On first looking into Chapman's Homer" trains your ear to hear iambic pentameter, and Wordsworth's "Nuns fret not" explains why a strict form can free a writer. The unit ends with a sonnet of your own. Picture study begins with Munkácsy's *Milton Dictating Paradise Lost to His Daughters* (1878).

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Can write a clear paragraph of praise or comparison (Units 2 and 3 of this year).
- Knows phrases and clauses (Grammar Level 3, Units 17-18) and can read aloud with expression.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name the parts and rhyme schemes of the English and Italian sonnets.
- ☐ I can find the turn in a sonnet and explain the poem's argument in prose.
- ☐ I can scan a line of iambic pentameter and hear when a line breaks the beat.
- ☐ I can explain what Milton means by "They also serve who only stand and waite."
- ☐ I can write and revise a fourteen-line sonnet of my own and read it aloud well.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Shakespeare's Sonnets (Project Gutenberg #1041)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1041>): All 154 sonnets. Parents should choose which to read; a few are adult in theme.
- **Milton: Minor Poems, ed. Samuel Thurber (Project Gutenberg #31706)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/31706>): A school edition with notes; includes all of Milton's English sonnets.
- **John Keats, Poems 1817 (Project Gutenberg #8209)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8209>): Keats's first book, with the Chapman's Homer sonnet.
- **The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, Volume IV (Project Gutenberg #32459)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/32459>): Wordsworth's 1807 sonnets, including "Nuns fret not" and "London, 1802" ("Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour").

5.1 SHAKESPEARE'S SONNET 18 🍷 ★

OBJECTIVES

- Define a sonnet and name the parts of the Shakespearean (English) sonnet: three quatrains and a couplet, rhymed ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.
- Read Sonnet 18 closely and trace its argument from question, to answer, to turn, to closing couplet.
- Copy the sonnet by hand, mark its rhyme scheme, and write a prose paraphrase of each quatrain.

Warm-up. Finish this sentence three different ways: “You are better than a summer’s day because ...”. Then ask: what is the one thing a summer’s day always does that a person (or a poem) might not?

Video slot. Video coming. Shakespeare Sonnet 18 read aloud (a clear, unhurried reading by a trained actor or a library recording). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

sonnet

A poem of fourteen lines, usually in iambic pentameter, with a fixed rhyme scheme. The word comes from the Italian *sonetto*, “little song.”

quatrain

A group of four lines. A Shakespearean sonnet has three quatrains before its final couplet.

couplet

Two rhyming lines together. The couplet at the end of a Shakespearean sonnet sums up or clinches the poem.

rhyme scheme

The pattern of end rhymes, marked with letters. Sonnet 18 is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

turn (volta)

The place where a sonnet changes direction: from problem to answer, or from question to resolve. In Sonnet 18 it comes at line 9, “But thy eternal summer shall not fade.”

CORE IDEAS

A little song with strict rules. The sonnet was perfected in fourteenth-century Italy by Petrarch and brought into English in the 1500s by Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey. It has fourteen lines, a set rhyme scheme and, in English, a steady meter called iambic pentameter (you will learn to hear it in 5.3). Think of it as the poet’s version of the progymnasmata: a fixed form that trains the writer by forcing him to choose every word.

The English pattern. Shakespeare's sonnets, printed in 1609, use a form now called the Shakespearean or English sonnet: three quatrains rhymed ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, then a couplet, GG. Each quatrain usually develops one step of the thought, and the couplet snaps the argument shut like the lid of a box. Learn the shape first; you will see it everywhere.

An argument in verse. Sonnet 18 is not just pretty; it argues. Line 1 asks a question: shall I compare you to a summer's day? Lines 2-8 answer, "No, summer is not good enough." Its winds are rough, its lease is short, the sun is sometimes too hot and sometimes clouded, and every fair thing fades. That is a *comparison* head from your encomium work, used to show that the person praised is greater than the thing he is compared with.

The turn. Line 9 begins with "But." Here the poem changes direction. Summer fades, but "thy eternal summer shall not fade." Why not? Because the poet is putting the person into "eternal lines," the lines of this very poem. The turn is the hinge of every sonnet. When you read one, hunt for it: look for *but*, *yet*, *then* or *so* near line 9 or line 13.

The couplet's claim. "So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, / So long lives this, and this gives life to thee." The word *this* means the poem. Shakespeare boasts that verse outlasts summer, beauty and even death. Four hundred years later, you are reading it, so he was partly right. A Christian reader can admire the boast and also know its limit: words of men endure for a time, but only "the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40:8).

Copy, then imitate. As with every model this year, begin with your pen. Copy the sonnet slowly, line by line, keeping the capitals at the start of each line and every mark of punctuation. Then mark the rhyme letters in the margin and draw a line under the turn. Copywork lets the shape of the poem settle into your hand before you try one of your own in 5.4.

The model. *William Shakespeare, Sonnet 18, from Shakespeare's Sonnets (1609), Project Gutenberg #1041*

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd:
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee

PICTURE STUDY



Milton Dictating Paradise Lost to His Daughters, Mihály Munkácsy, 1877–1878 · Oil on canvas · New York Public Library, New York

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The Hungarian painter Mihály Munkácsy shows John Milton, blind and growing old, speaking the lines of *Paradise Lost* aloud while young women in the family write them down. The painting was shown at the Paris Exposition of 1878. We begin this sonnet unit with it because it shows what Shakespeare’s couplet claims: words spoken and written down can outlast the speaker. Milton could no longer see a page, so he had to compose by ear, holding whole stretches of verse in memory before he dictated them. In 5.2 you will read the sonnet he wrote about losing his sight.

Look closely

- Find the light. Where does it fall, and whose faces does it show most clearly?
- Look at Milton’s face and hands. How can you tell he cannot see?
- Find the daughter who is writing. What does each of the other two seem to be doing or feeling?

Talk about it

1. Write three sentences as the daughter holding the pen: what is it like to take down a poem one line at a time?
2. Shakespeare says, “So long lives this.” How does this painting show a poem being made to last?

WRITING PROJECT: COPY, MARK AND PARAPHRASE SONNET 18

You will copy the model, mark its form, and turn each part into plain prose, so you understand both the shape and the argument before you write your own sonnet in 5.4.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Pen and a colored pencil
- The model passage

Steps

1. Copy Sonnet 18 by hand, keeping every capital, apostrophe and mark of punctuation exactly.
2. In the left margin, write the rhyme letter (A, B, C ...) beside each line. Draw a box around each quatrain and around the couplet.
3. Underline the word where the poem turns, and write “turn” beside it.
4. Under the poem, write a one-sentence prose paraphrase of each quatrain and of the couplet (four sentences in all).
5. Write one more sentence naming the argument of the whole poem: what does it claim, and why?
6. Read the sonnet aloud twice, once slowly and once at a natural pace, pausing only where the punctuation tells you.

Check your work

- My copy matches the model exactly, line for line.
- My rhyme letters show ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.
- Each paraphrase is a complete sentence in my own words that keeps the meaning.
- At least one paraphrase is a complex sentence with a dependent clause (for example, “Although summer fades, ...”).
- Commas set off my introductory clauses.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the closing couplet of Sonnet 18 and learn it by heart.
2. List ten things that fade (summer, a rose, a sunset ...) and beside each one thing that lasts longer.
3. Write the rhyme scheme of the Shakespearean sonnet from memory and label its parts.

History note. Shakespeare’s 154 sonnets were printed together in 1609 by Thomas Thorpe. Sonnets 1–126 are mostly addressed to a young man; Sonnet 18 is one of these, and it praises him as an encomium would. The Munkácsy painting was finished for the 1878 Paris Exposition and is now owned by the New York Public Library; a smaller version is in the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.3 “Adverb Clauses.” Line 12, “When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st,” is an adverb clause telling *when*; use adverb clauses in your paraphrases.

For families. Sonnet 18 is safe for this age; it is praise, with no coarse content. Some editions place other sonnets near it that are more adult in theme, so choose the reading yourself rather than handing over a full collection. Old forms to explain: *thee, thou, thy* (you, your); *ow’st* (ownest, own); *untrimm’d* (stripped of its finery). This lesson begins the ★ quarter path for the unit. The year’s faith verse, Philippians 4:8, asks us to think on what is lovely; the sonnet is a fine place to practice.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Paraphrase the second quatrain (lines 5–8) in plain prose.

1. Translate the old words: “eye of heaven” = the sun; “gold complexion” = the sun’s face; “fair” = beautiful thing; “untrimm’d” = stripped of beauty.
2. Find the three complaints: the sun is too hot, the sun is clouded, every beautiful thing loses its beauty.
3. Join them in one sentence, with a dependent clause for the cause.

Answer: Sometimes the sun burns too hot and sometimes clouds hide it, and every beautiful thing loses its beauty in the end, whether by accident or because nature always changes.

Example 2. A student wrote: “Sonnet 18 is about how summer is nice.” Revise it to name the real argument.

1. Ask: does the poem praise summer? No; it says summer falls short.
2. Ask: what is praised, and why will it last? The person, because the poem preserves him.
3. Use a complex sentence so the cause is clear.

Answer: Sonnet 18 argues that the person it praises is lovelier than summer, because summer fades but his beauty will live on in the poem as long as people read it.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** How many lines does a sonnet have?
2. **EASY** Write the rhyme scheme of a Shakespearean sonnet.
3. **EASY** What is a quatrain? What is a couplet?
4. **EASY** In what year were Shakespeare’s sonnets first printed?
5. **MEDIUM** Name three ways summer falls short in lines 3–8.

6. **MEDIUM** Where is the turn in Sonnet 18, and what word signals it?
7. **MEDIUM** In the couplet, what does “this” refer to?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write your own opening line that asks a comparison question, like Shakespeare’s, about someone you admire (a grandparent, a teacher, a hero from history).

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking the poem praises summer. It uses summer as the lesser thing in a comparison.
- Pausing at the end of every line when reading aloud. Pause where the punctuation tells you, not just where the line ends.
- Losing the old spellings when copying (*dimmed*, *ow’st*). Copywork must be exact.

Make it a game • Couplet Catch. A parent reads the first twelve lines of the sonnet aloud, then stops. The student must speak the couplet from memory. Next round, the parent stops after eleven lines, then ten, and so on. How far back can you go?

Scripture. “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” (Isaiah 40:8, KJV)

Shakespeare says his lines will outlast summer; Isaiah reminds us that only God’s word stands for ever.

Practice: answers

1. Fourteen.
2. ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.
3. A quatrain is a group of four lines; a couplet is two rhyming lines together.
4. 1609.
5. Any three: rough winds shake the buds; summer’s lease is too short; the sun is sometimes too hot; the sun is often dimmed by clouds; every beautiful thing fades by chance or nature’s change.
6. Line 9, signaled by “But”: “But thy eternal summer shall not fade.”
7. The poem itself.
8. Sample: “Shall I compare my grandfather to oak?” A good answer asks a question and sets up a comparison the rest of the poem can test.

5.2 MILTON, “ON HIS BLINDNESS”: THE ITALIAN SONNET

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of the Petrarchan (Italian) sonnet: an octave rhymed ABBAABBA and a sestet, here CDECDE, with the turn between them.
- Trace Milton’s question and Patience’s answer, and connect the poem to the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14–30).
- Compare the Italian and English sonnet forms in a short written paragraph.

Warm-up. Think of a time you could not do something you wanted to do for someone else: you were sick, too young, or stuck at home. Write one sentence: Was there still a way to serve?

Video slot. Video coming. Milton “When I consider how my light is spent” read aloud, or a short life of John Milton. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

Petrarchan (Italian) sonnet

A sonnet in two parts: an eight-line octave and a six-line sestet. Named for Petrarch, the Italian poet of the 1300s.

octave

The first eight lines of an Italian sonnet, rhymed ABBAABBA. It usually poses a problem or question.

sestet

The last six lines of an Italian sonnet, often rhymed CDECDE or CDCDCD. It answers or resolves the octave.

enjambment

Running a sentence on past the end of a line without a pause: “though my Soul more bent / To serve therewith my Maker.”

allusion

A brief reference to a well-known story or text. Milton’s “one Talent” alludes to Christ’s parable in Matthew 25.

CORE IDEAS

The poet who went blind. John Milton (1608–1674) was the most learned English poet of his age. He served the government of England as a writer of Latin letters, and by about 1652 he had lost his sight completely. He was in his early forties. He had long planned a great poem, and now he could not read or write a line. This sonnet, written in the early 1650s and

printed in 1673, is his wrestling match with that loss. The title "On His Blindness" was added by an editor in the 1700s; Milton left it untitled.

The Italian shape. Milton chose the older form, Petrarch's. It falls into two parts rather than four. The *octave* (lines 1–8) rhymes ABBAABBA: spent, wide, hide, bent, present, chide, denied, prevent. Only two rhyme sounds for eight lines! That is hard in English, which has fewer rhymes than Italian. The *sestet* (lines 9–14) rhymes CDECDE: need, best, state, speed, rest, wait. The octave asks; the sestet answers.

The question. Milton remembers the parable of the talents. A master gave money to three servants; the one who buried his talent was punished. Milton's "talent" is his gift for poetry, and blindness seems to have buried it. He wants to serve God and give a "true account," but he fears God will scold him. So he asks, "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?" Will God demand a full day's work from a man He has denied light? Milton calls it a *fond* (foolish) question, a murmur.

The answer, and a moved turn. Patience answers, and notice where: in the middle of line 8, not at the start of line 9. Milton lets his sentences run across lines (enjambment), so the poem flows like speech, though the rhyme still holds the shape. God does not need man's work or even His own gifts back. Those serve Him best who "Bear his mild yoke" (compare Matthew 11:29–30). God is a King; thousands of angels speed at His command over land and sea. Then the great last line: "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Two forms side by side. The English sonnet builds in three steps and clinches with a couplet. The Italian sonnet sets problem against answer, eight against six. Neither is better; each fits a different kind of thought. Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 argues and boasts; Milton's sonnet struggles and then rests. When you write your own in 5.4, you will choose the form that fits your thought.

Spelling. Milton's 1673 printing used older spellings such as *milde yoak* and *waite*. The text below follows the Project Gutenberg edition, which modernizes the spelling but keeps Milton's words. Copy it exactly as printed here.

The model. *John Milton, Sonnet XIX, "On His Blindness" (written about 1652–1655, printed 1673), from Milton: Minor Poems, ed. Samuel Thurber, Project Gutenberg #31706*

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state

Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait

PICTURE STUDY



The Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, Rembrandt van Rijn, 1637 · Oil on panel · State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Milton's "day-labour" recalls another of Christ's parables, in Matthew 20. A householder hires workers for his vineyard at dawn, at nine, at noon, at three, and even at five in the afternoon, and at evening he pays every man the same penny. The first-hired grumble. Rembrandt paints the moment of payment in a shadowy room. Like Milton's poem, the parable asks what God requires of those who could not work the whole day, and answers that He gives by grace, not by the clock.

Look closely

- Find the householder. How has Rembrandt used light to make him the center?
- Find a worker who seems to be complaining. What do his body and hands tell you?
- Look into the shadows. How many figures can you find who are simply waiting?

Talk about it

1. Write a short speech from the worker hired at the eleventh hour. What would he say when he receives a full day's pay?
2. How does this parable help answer Milton's question, "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"

WRITING PROJECT: OCTAVE AND SESTET: A TWO-PART STUDY

Copy Milton's sonnet, mark its two parts, and write a paragraph comparing the Italian and English forms.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Pen and two colored pencils
- A KJV Bible (Matthew 25:14–30)

Steps

1. Read Matthew 25:14–30 with a parent. Note what happened to the servant who hid his talent.
2. Copy the sonnet exactly, with Milton's spellings and quotation marks.
3. Shade the octave in one color and the sestet in another. Write the rhyme letters in the margin (ABBAABBA CDECDE).
4. Draw a bracket around Milton's question and another around Patience's answer. Mark the exact spot where Patience begins to speak.
5. Write a paraphrase of the whole poem in four to six prose sentences.
6. Write one paragraph (six to eight sentences) comparing Sonnet 18 and Milton's sonnet: their shapes, where each turns, and what kind of thought each form suits.

Check your work

- My copy keeps Milton's spelling and punctuation exactly.
- My rhyme letters and colors show the octave and sestet correctly.
- My comparison paragraph has a clear topic sentence and names at least two differences and one likeness.
- I used at least one compound-complex sentence and punctuated it correctly.
- I punctuated the quotations from the poems correctly, with quotation marks and a slash (/) between lines.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the last line, "They also serve who only stand and wait," in your best hand and learn it by heart.
2. Make a two-column chart: English sonnet / Italian sonnet. Fill in parts, rhyme scheme, number of rhyme sounds, and usual place of the turn.
3. List five people you know who serve by waiting: a nurse on night duty, a sentry, a mother at a sickbed ...

History note. Milton was totally blind by about 1652. He went on to compose *Paradise Lost* (1667) by dictating it to helpers, sometimes, by tradition, to his daughters, as in Munkácsy's painting in 5.1. Thurber's school edition, used for the model, numbers this

sonnet XIX; other editions number it XVI. Rembrandt's *Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard* (1637) hangs in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 19.4 “Diagramming Long Sentences.” Milton’s first eight lines are one long sentence; find its main clause (“I fondly ask”) beneath all the dependent clauses before it.

For families. This sonnet is a gift for any child who has been ill, disabled, or simply too small to help as much as he wished. Talk together about Milton’s answer: God is not a taskmaster who needs our work; we serve Him by bearing His “mild yoke” in faith, and patient waiting is real service. Matthew 11:29–30 and Isaiah 40:31 make good companion readings. Milton’s politics were strong and his life was eventful; you need not go into them here. Scholars date the sonnet anywhere from 1652 to 1655.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Paraphrase the octave (lines 1–8) in plain prose.

1. Find the main clause buried at the end: “I fondly ask.”
2. Gather the “when” clauses before it: my sight is gone before half my life is done; my one gift is useless; I long to serve God and give a true account.
3. State the question he asks in modern words.

Answer: When I think how my sight is gone before half my life is over, and how my one great gift lies useless in me even though I want more than ever to serve God with it and give Him an honest account, I foolishly ask, “Does God demand a full day’s work from a man He has left in the dark?”

Example 2. A student wrote: “Milton’s sonnet turns at line 9 like all Italian sonnets.” Correct it.

1. Look at line 8: “I fondly ask; but Patience to prevent.” The word *but* appears here.
2. Patience begins answering in the middle of line 8, and her words begin in line 9.
3. The rhyme still divides at line 9, but the thought turns half a line early.

Answer: Milton’s rhyme divides the octave from the sestet at line 9, but the thought turns early, at “but Patience” in the middle of line 8, because his sentences run across the line ends.

PRACTICE

1.  How many lines are in the octave? In the sestet?
2.  Write the rhyme scheme of Milton’s sonnet.
3.  Which parable does “that one Talent which is death to hide” refer to?

4. **EASY** Who answers Milton's question in the poem?
5. **MEDIUM** What does "fondly" mean in line 8?
6. **MEDIUM** Find one example of enjambment and explain it.
7. **MEDIUM** Give two differences between the Italian and English sonnet.
8. **CHALLENGE** In your own words, explain what "They also serve who only stand and wait" means, and give one example from real life.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading "talent" as a modern skill only. Milton means both his gift and the coin in Christ's parable.
- Stopping at the end of each line. Milton's sentences run across the lines; read to the punctuation.

Make it a game • Octave or Sestet?. A parent reads a single line of Milton's sonnet at random. The student calls out "Octave!" or "Sestet!" and its rhyme letter. Then swap: the student reads, the parent answers. Add Sonnet 18 lines for a harder round: the answerer must also name which poem.

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)

Milton ends where Isaiah does: waiting on the Lord is not idleness but faithful service.

Practice: answers

1. Eight in the octave; six in the sestet.
2. ABBAABBA CDECDE.
3. The parable of the talents, Matthew 25:14-30.
4. Patience.
5. Foolishly.
6. Sample: "though my Soul more bent / To serve therewith my Maker": the sentence runs from line 4 into line 5 without a pause.
7. Any two: Italian has two parts (octave and sestet), English has four (three quatrains and a couplet); Italian rhymes ABBAABBA in the octave with only two sounds, English uses seven rhyme sounds; Italian usually turns at line 9, English often at line 9 and again at the couplet.
8. Sample: People who cannot do great active work still serve God when they wait on Him in patient faith and stand ready for His command, like a soldier on watch or a grandmother who prays daily from her bed.

5.3 IAMBIC PENTAMETER BY EAR

OBJECTIVES

- Define the iamb and iambic pentameter, and hear the da-DUM beat in English speech and verse.
- Scan lines from Keats, Shakespeare and Milton, marking ten syllables and five stresses, and spot common variations.
- Write five lines of iambic pentameter of your own and read them aloud to test them by ear.

Warm-up. Say these aloud and clap on the loud syllables: “to-DAY,” “a-BOU**T**,” “the DO**G**,” “I WENT to SEE the SEA.” Now say your full name the same way. Does it go da-DUM or DUM-da?

Video slot. Video coming. Iambic pentameter explained with Shakespeare examples (a clear teaching video, or a trained actor reading a sonnet slowly). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

meter

The regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of verse.

iamb

A foot of two syllables, unstressed then stressed: da-DUM, as in “a-BOVE” or “the SUN.”

iambic pentameter

A line of five iambs, ten syllables in all: da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM. *Penta* is Greek for five.

scansion

Marking a line to show its meter: ~ (or u) over weak syllables, / over strong ones, and a bar | between feet.

trochaic inversion

Swapping one iamb for a trochee (DUM-da), most often at the start of a line, for emphasis: “SI-lent, up-ON a PEAK in DA-ri-EN.”

CORE IDEAS

English already walks in iambs. Listen to ordinary talk: “i THINK | i’ll GO | and GET | a CUP | of TEA.” Our language falls naturally into weak-strong pairs, because so many little words (*the, a, to, of, and*) are weak and lead into stronger ones. That is why the iamb has been the main beat of English poetry from Chaucer to Frost. It sounds like a heartbeat, or footsteps.

Five feet make the line. Iambic pentameter is ten syllables arranged as five iambs. Count with your fingers: “Much HAVE | I TRAV | eled IN | the REALMS | of GOLD.” Ten syllables, five stresses. The sonnets of Shakespeare, Milton and Keats, most of Shakespeare’s plays, and all of *Paradise Lost* are written in this line. It is long enough to hold a full thought and short enough to say in one breath.

Scan by ear, not by rule. To scan a line, first say it naturally, as you would in conversation. Do not sing it. Then mark the syllables your voice leans on. Dictionary stress helps: *com-PARE*, *SUM-mer*, *PLAN-et*. In a line, some stresses are stronger than others, but you only need to hear which syllable in each pair is heavier. If you force a word into a wrong stress (“a-BOUT” becomes “A-bout”), the line is either misread or badly written.

Variation keeps it alive. A line that thumps perfectly every time grows dull, like a metronome. Good poets vary the beat while keeping the pattern underneath. The most common change is a trochee at the start of a line: “ROUGH winds do SHAKE the DAR-ling BUDS of MAY” or Keats’s last line, “SI-lent, up-ON a PEAK in DA-ri-EN.” Notice also how old poets cut syllables to keep the count: *dimm’d*, *star’d*, *o’re*.

Your ear is the judge. After you write a line, hand it to a parent without saying where the stresses fall. If your parent naturally reads it as da-DUM five times, your line works. If the reader stumbles, rearrange the words. This is how Milton composed after he was blind: entirely by ear.

The model. *John Keats, “On first looking into Chapman’s Homer” (1816), from Poems (1817), Project Gutenberg #8209*

Much have I traveled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow’d Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star’d at the Pacific--and all his men
Look’d at each other with a wild surmise--
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

PICTURE STUDY



Homer and His Guide, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, 1874 · Oil on canvas · Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Ancient tradition held that Homer was a blind singer who wandered from town to town reciting his poems. Bouguereau paints him led over rough ground by a boy, with a lyre slung on his back and a dog barking a warning. Homer's poems were made for the ear long before they were written down; their meter carried them in memory for generations. Keats met Homer through Chapman's translation; Milton, blind like the old singer, composed by ear. Meter is the music that made poems memorable before most people could read.

Look closely

- Find Homer's eyes and hands. How do they show he cannot see?
- Look at the boy. What is he doing, and where is he looking?
- Find the lyre. Why would a poet carry a musical instrument?

Talk about it

1. Write one line of iambic pentameter describing the old man's walk. Read it aloud and mark the stresses.
2. Why might a blind poet care even more than others about the sound and beat of a line?

WRITING PROJECT: SCAN AND BUILD: FIVE LINES BY EAR

First you will scan the model; then you will build five lines of your own and test them aloud.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Pencil (for scansion marks you may need to erase)
- The model passage

Steps

1. Copy Keats's sonnet exactly, leaving a blank line above each line of verse for your marks.
2. Read each line aloud naturally. Above each syllable, mark ~ for weak and / for strong. Draw a bar | between the five feet.
3. Circle any foot that is not an iamb (for example, the trochee "SI-lent" in the last line).
4. Write five lines of iambic pentameter of your own on one subject (a place you love, a day of work, a storm, a hero). Count ten syllables on your fingers for each.
5. Read your lines aloud to a parent without marking them first. Mark where the parent's voice naturally stresses. Revise any line that stumbles.
6. Copy your best two lines neatly; you may use them in 5.4.

Check your work

- Every line of mine has ten syllables (or eleven, with a light ending).
- A listener reads each line with five natural stresses, no forced words.
- I used strong, concrete nouns and verbs, not filler words to pad the count.
- Each line uses a prepositional or participial phrase correctly, without a dangling modifier.
- Every sentence in my lines is complete and correctly punctuated.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Write ten two-syllable words that are iambs (a-BOVE, be-GIN, re-TURN ...) and ten that are trochees (GAR-den, RIV-er ...).
2. Copy and scan the first line of Sonnet 18 and the last line of Milton's sonnet.
3. Listen for one iambic line in ordinary speech this week (at supper, in a sermon, in an advertisement) and write it down.

History note. Keats read Chapman's Homer (translated 1598-1616) with his friend and former teacher Charles Cowden Clarke, and sent him the finished sonnet the next morning. It appeared in Keats's first book, *Poems* (1817). Vasco Núñez de Balboa, not Hernán Cortés, crossed Panama (the isthmus of Darién) and saw the Pacific in 1513. Bouguereau's *Homer and His Guide* (1874) is in the Milwaukee Art Museum.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 17.1 "Phrases and Clauses." Prepositional phrases ("in the realms of gold," "upon a peak in Darien") almost always fall into iambs, so they are a poet's best building blocks.

For families. Meter is learned by ear far more than by eye. Read the sonnets aloud together often, and let the student hear you read. If your student struggles to hear stress,

have him say a word while lightly resting his hand under his chin: the jaw drops further on the stressed syllable. Do not insist on perfect scansion; disagreements about light stresses are normal even among scholars. The point is hearing the steady five-beat line.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Scan Keats's line 9: "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies."

1. Count the syllables: then-felt-I-like-some-watch-er-of-the-skies = 10.
2. Say it naturally and find the heavier syllable in each pair: then FELT | i LIKE | some WATCH | er OF | the SKIES.
3. Notice "of" takes a light stress only because of its place; that is normal.

Answer: ˘ / | ˘ / | ˘ / | ˘ / | ˘ / — then FELT | I LIKE | some WATCH | er OF | the SKIES. Five regular iambs.

Example 2. A student wrote this line: "The river is flowing very fast today." Test it and revise it into iambic pentameter.

1. Count: the-riv-er-is-flow-ing-ver-y-fast-to-day = 11 syllables.
2. Read aloud: the RIV-er IS FLOW-ing VER-y FAST to-DAY. "Is flowing" forces a stress on "is" and breaks the beat.
3. Use an active, simpler verb and a phrase: "The river runs" keeps the iambs.
4. Recount and reread.

Answer: "The river races down the rocky hill." — the RIV | er RAC | es DOWN | the ROCK | y HILL. Ten syllables, five iambs, and a stronger verb.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is an iamb?
2. **EASY** How many syllables and stresses are in a regular line of iambic pentameter?
3. **EASY** Mark each word as iamb or trochee: *begin, garden, delight, mountain, release*.
4. **EASY** What does the Greek prefix *penta* mean?
5. **MEDIUM** Scan "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"
6. **MEDIUM** Why does Keats write "star'd" and "Look'd" instead of "stared" and "looked"?
7. **MEDIUM** Find the trochaic inversion in Sonnet 18, line 3, and say why it suits the meaning.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write one line of iambic pentameter about the sea, and scan it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Singing the line in a sing-song DUM-DUM-DUM instead of reading it naturally, then marking stresses that are not really there.

- Padding lines with filler (“so very,” “did go”) just to reach ten syllables.
- Forcing a word against its dictionary stress (“a-BOU” read as “A-bout”) to fit the meter.

Make it a game · Pentameter Ping-Pong. One player says a line of iambic pentameter about anything in the room (“The lamp is on, the dog is fast asleep”). The other must answer at once with another line that rhymes with it. Tap the five beats on the table. Miss the beat or the rhyme and the point goes to the other side. First to five points wins.

Scripture. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalm 19:1, KJV)

Keats’s “watcher of the skies” discovered a new planet; the psalmist reminds us that the skies themselves speak of their Maker.

Practice: answers

1. A two-syllable foot, unstressed then stressed (da-DUM).
2. Ten syllables, five stresses.
3. begin (iamb), garden (trochee), delight (iamb), mountain (trochee), release (iamb).
4. Five.
5. shall I | com PARE | thee TO | a SUM | mer’s DAY. Ten syllables; the first foot is light on both syllables, the other four are clear iambs.
6. To show the words are one syllable each, keeping the line to ten syllables (and because that was the printing custom of the time).
7. “ROUGH winds” — the strong first syllable makes the wind’s force hit at once, like a gust.
8. Sample: “The gray waves break against the harbor wall.” — the GRAY | waves BREAK | a GAINST | the HAR | bor WALL. Ten syllables, five stresses.

5.4 WRITE FOURTEEN LINES

OBJECTIVES

- Explain, with Wordsworth, why a strict form can free a writer rather than cramp him.
- Plan a sonnet as an argument: choose a subject, a form (English or Italian) and a turn.
- Draft and revise a fourteen-line sonnet in iambic pentameter with a regular rhyme scheme, and read it aloud.

Warm-up. Name a game that would be no fun without rules (chess, baseball, a crossword). What would happen to it if all the rules were removed? Now guess why poets choose a form as strict as the sonnet.

Video slot. Video coming. How to write a sonnet, step by step (a teacher or poet planning and drafting a sonnet). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

form

The fixed shape of a poem: its number of lines, meter and rhyme scheme.

exact rhyme / slant rhyme

Exact rhyme matches the final vowel and consonant sounds (oak / spoke); slant rhyme comes close (fence / sense is exact; home / stone is slant). Use exact rhyme for most lines.

inversion

Turning normal word order around (“Much have I traveled”). Masters use it for emphasis; beginners often use it only to force a rhyme, which sounds stiff.

draft

A first written version, meant to be revised. Most sonnets need several drafts.

imitation

Writing your own piece on the pattern of a model, keeping its form but changing its content. The classical road to invention.

CORE IDEAS

The narrow room. In 1806 William Wordsworth wrote a sonnet about writing sonnets. Nuns do not fret at their small rooms, he says, nor hermits at their cells, nor students in their studies; bees happily murmur for hours inside foxglove flowers. A limit freely chosen is not a prison. For Wordsworth, the sonnet’s “scanty plot of ground” was a rest from “the weight of too much liberty.” The same is true for you: fourteen lines, five beats and a rhyme scheme will push you to find better words than you would find with no rules at all.

Begin with an argument. Every sonnet in this unit argues something. Shakespeare: you are lovelier than summer, and my poem will keep you. Milton: I fear my gift is wasted; no, God is

served by patient waiting. Keats: reading Chapman's Homer felt like discovering a new world. Before you write a line, write one sentence that states your poem's argument. Good subjects come from this year's work: praise of a person (encomium), praise of a thing (the plow, the book, the bridge), a virtue, or a moment of discovery.

Choose your form and your turn. If your thought moves in steps and ends with a punch, choose the English sonnet: three quatrains (ABAB CDCD EFEF) and a couplet (GG). If your thought is a problem and an answer, choose the Italian: an octave (ABBAABBA) and a sestet (CDECDE or CDCDCD). English is easier for beginners because it needs only two words for each rhyme sound. Wherever the turn comes, plan it before you draft.

Build in stages. First, write a prose plan: one sentence for each quatrain and the couplet (or for octave and sestet). Second, make rhyme lists for your key words. Third, draft line by line, counting ten syllables and reading aloud for the five beats. Write the last line early if you can; knowing where you are going makes the rest easier. Do not expect it to come all at once. Wordsworth, Milton and Keats all revised.

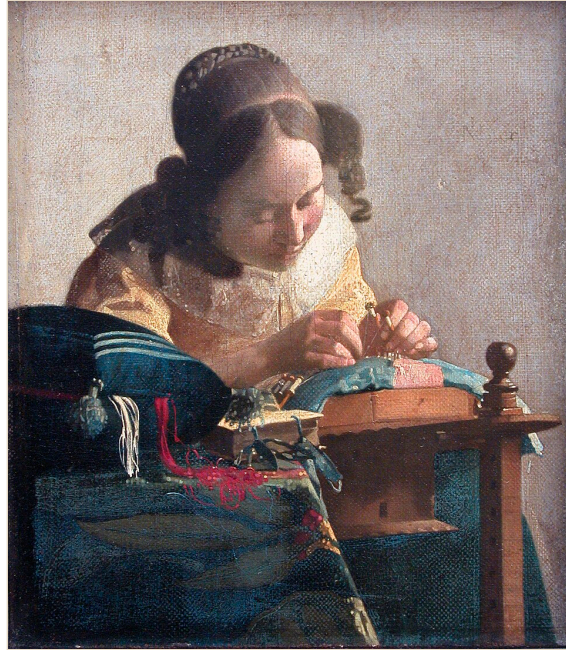
Avoid the beginner's traps. Do not twist your sentences just to land a rhyme ("And to the store that day did I then go"). Do not pad lines with "so very," "did," or "oh." Prefer active verbs to passive ones, and concrete pictures (oak, frost, plow) to vague words (nice, things, stuff). Keep your grammar sound: each sentence should still make sense written out as prose.

Truth and beauty together. The year's verse, Philippians 4:8, asks us to think on what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report. A sonnet is a fine place to do that thinking. Praise what deserves praise; tell the truth about it; and take the time to make it lovely.

The model. *William Wordsworth, "Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room" (composed 1806, published 1807), from The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, Volume IV, ed. William Knight, Project Gutenberg #32459*

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells;
And students with their pensive citadels;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
In truth the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found

PICTURE STUDY



The Lacemaker, Johannes Vermeer, about 1669–1670 · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Vermeer's *Lacemaker* is one of the smallest paintings in the Louvre, only about nine by eight inches. A young woman bends over her work, so absorbed that the whole world seems to have shrunk to the few inches between her fingers. Wordsworth named "Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom" among those who are happy inside narrow bounds. Lace is made by following a strict pattern with pins and bobbins, thread by thread, and the strictness is exactly what makes it beautiful. A sonnet is made the same way.

Look closely

- Find her hands. What is each hand doing?
- Look at the red and white threads in the front. How are they painted differently from her careful lace?
- Notice how small the picture is and how close we are. What does Vermeer make you pay attention to?

Talk about it

1. Write four lines of iambic pentameter about someone you know who does careful work with his or her hands.
2. How is writing a sonnet like making lace? Give two likenesses.

WRITING PROJECT: YOUR FIRST SONNET

You will plan, draft, revise and read aloud a sonnet of your own: fourteen lines, iambic pentameter, and either the English or the Italian rhyme scheme.

Choose a subject worth praising or pondering: a grandparent, a hero from history, a well-made tool, a season of work, a moment you discovered something new, or God's care in a hard time.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Pencil and eraser
- A rhyming dictionary (optional)
- Your two best lines from 5.3

Steps

1. Write your argument in one sentence: what will your poem claim or discover?
2. Choose English or Italian form. Write a prose plan: one sentence for each quatrain and the couplet, or for the octave and the sestet. Mark where the turn comes.
3. For each rhyme sound, list six to ten possible rhyming words before you draft.
4. Draft all fourteen lines. Count ten syllables per line and mark your rhyme letters in the margin.
5. Read the draft aloud to a parent. Circle any line where the beat stumbles, any forced inversion, and any filler word. Revise those lines.
6. Copy the final sonnet neatly with a title. Read it aloud, pausing at punctuation, not at line ends.

Check your work

- My poem has fourteen lines and a regular English or Italian rhyme scheme.
- Most lines have ten syllables and five clear stresses when read naturally.
- My poem has a clear argument and a turn I can point to.
- I used active voice and strong, concrete verbs; I changed any weak passive line to active.
- Every sentence is complete when written out as prose, with no dangling modifiers.
- Commas, semicolons and colons are used correctly between clauses.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Wordsworth's lines 8-11, from "In truth the prison" to "scanty plot of ground," and underline the image you like best.
2. Imitate Wordsworth's first four lines: list four people or creatures who are happy in a small space (a farmer in his field, a wren in its nest ...), in four lines of your own.
3. Keep a page of rhyme pairs you discover this week (oak / spoke, field / yield, hand / land).

History note. Wordsworth placed this sonnet at the head of the sonnets in his *Poems, in Two Volumes* (1807), as a kind of preface. He wrote over five hundred sonnets and loved Milton's; another of his sonnets begins, "Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour."

Furness Fells are mountains in England's Lake District, near Wordsworth's home. Vermeer's *Lacemaker* (about 1669–1670) has been in the Louvre since 1870.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.2 “Active and Passive Voice.” Change limp passive lines (“The fence was mended by his hands”) to active ones (“His hands would mend the fence”) for more force in fewer syllables.

For families. Expect this to take more than two sessions for some students; a sonnet is a real achievement at twelve or thirteen. Praise effort and specific successes (a strong verb, a clean rhyme, a clear turn) before suggesting fixes. A slightly irregular line is acceptable if the beat is clear when read aloud. Good subjects are people, places, work, virtues and God's providence; steer away from vague feelings toward concrete things. Wordsworth's first line mentions nuns; you may need to explain convents. Keep the finished sonnet for the Unit 8 portfolio.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Plan and draft the first quatrain of an English sonnet in praise of a grandfather.

1. Argument: My grandfather's quiet work taught me more than his words.
2. Plan for quatrain 1: describe his hands and his few, wise words. Rhyme sounds: -oak (A) and -ence (B).
3. Rhyme lists: oak, spoke, broke, yoke, smoke / fence, sense, hence, since, dense.
4. Draft, count ten syllables, and read aloud: “GRAND fa | ther's HANDS | were ROUGH | as WEATH | ered OAK” (a trochee to start, then four iambs).

Answer: Grandfather's hands were rough as weathered oak;
They split the wood and mended every fence;
He seldom wasted words, but when he spoke,
His plain advice made more than common sense.

Example 2. Revise this couplet, which forces its rhyme: “And so it is that in my heart I see / How very kind and good he was to me.”

1. Find the faults: filler (“And so it is,” “very”), a vague claim (“kind and good”), and a sing-song rhyme on weak words.
2. Replace the vague claim with a concrete picture from the poem: the fence, the wood, the oak.
3. Keep the turn: the couplet should clinch the argument that his work teaches.

Answer: Sample: “His fences stand, though he has gone to rest; / The work he did still teaches me the best.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** According to Wordsworth, who does not fret at a narrow room?
2. **EASY** What does Wordsworth call the sonnet in line 11?
3. **EASY** Write the rhyme scheme of Wordsworth's octave.
4. **EASY** What should you write before you draft any lines?
5. **MEDIUM** What does Wordsworth mean by "the weight of too much liberty"?
6. **MEDIUM** Revise to remove the forced inversion: "The hill so steep did we climb up at last."
7. **MEDIUM** Change this line to active voice: "The bread was baked by Mother before dawn."
8. **CHALLENGE** Write the couplet (lines 13-14) for an English sonnet in praise of a book.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Twisting word order just to make a rhyme. If you would never say it in prose, rewrite the line.
- Starting to write lines with no argument, so the poem wanders and has no turn.
- Writing about vague feelings instead of concrete things a reader can see.
- Counting syllables but never reading aloud. The ear, not the finger, is the final judge.

Make it a game • Rhyme Chain Race. Set a timer for one minute. A parent calls out a word (stone, light, hand, field). Write as many exact rhymes as you can. Then swap. Score one point per rhyme and two for any rhyme the other player missed. Keep the best lists for your sonnet.

Scripture. "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Psalm 16:6, KJV)

David rejoiced in the boundary lines God gave him, as Wordsworth rejoiced in the bounds of the sonnet.

Practice: answers

1. Nuns (and also hermits, students, maids at the wheel, weavers and bees).
2. "The Sonnet's scanty plot of ground."
3. ABBAABBA (room, cells, citadels, loom, bloom, fells, bells, doom).
4. A one-sentence argument and a prose plan, with the turn marked.
5. Having no limits at all can be a burden; a writer with endless choices can feel lost, and a form gives him rest and direction.
6. Sample: "At last we climbed the steep and stony hill."
7. Sample: "My mother baked the bread before the dawn."
8. Sample: "Though paper yellows and the binding wears, / Its words still speak to readers after years." A strong answer is iambic, rhymes exactly, and clinches an argument.

UNIT 5 REVIEW

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

1. (2 pts) Define a sonnet.
2. (3 pts) Write the rhyme scheme of the English (Shakespearean) sonnet and name its parts.
3. (3 pts) Write the rhyme scheme of Milton's octave and sestet.
4. (3 pts) What is the turn (volta) of a sonnet? Where does it come in Sonnet 18?
5. (3 pts) Define an iamb and iambic pentameter.
6. (4 pts) Scan this line, marking the five stresses: "And summer's lease hath all too short a date."
7. (4 pts) What parable does Milton allude to with "that one Talent which is death to hide"? What is Patience's answer to his question?
8. (4 pts) Quote the closing couplet of Sonnet 18 and explain what "this" refers to.
9. (3 pts) Why does Wordsworth say poets need not fret at the sonnet's narrow form?
10. (3 pts) Revise this line to remove the forced inversion and passive voice: "By me the field was plowed so well and deep."
11. (6 pts) Write a quatrain (four lines, rhymed ABAB) in iambic pentameter on a subject of your choice.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: MY FIRST SONNET

Copy your finished sonnet from 5.4 on clean paper with a title, and beneath it write two sentences naming its form (English or Italian), its argument, and where it turns. Read it aloud for your family. Keep it for the Unit 8 portfolio.

- **Form:** Fourteen lines with a regular English or Italian rhyme scheme, using mostly exact rhymes.
- **Meter:** Most lines are iambic pentameter that a listener reads naturally with five stresses.
- **Argument and turn:** A clear claim or discovery with a turn the writer can point to; concrete images rather than vague words.
- **Style and mechanics:** Active voice and strong verbs; no forced inversions; complete sentences correctly punctuated with commas, semicolons and colons.

Answer key

1. A poem of fourteen lines, usually in iambic pentameter, with a fixed rhyme scheme.
2. ABAB CDCD EFEF GG: three quatrains and a couplet.
3. Octave ABBAABBA; sestet CDECDE.
4. The place where the poem changes direction; in Sonnet 18 at line 9, "But thy eternal summer shall not fade."

5. An iamb is a foot of an unstressed then a stressed syllable (da-DUM); iambic pentameter is a line of five iambs, ten syllables.
6. and SUM | mer's LEASE | hath ALL | too SHORT | a DATE.
7. The parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30). God does not need man's work or His own gifts; those who bear His mild yoke serve Him best, and "They also serve who only stand and waite."
8. "So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, / So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."
"This" is the poem itself.
9. A limit freely chosen is no prison; the form gives rest and direction to those who feel "the weight of too much liberty."
10. Sample: "I plowed the field both evenly and deep." (Active voice, natural word order, ten syllables.)
11. Sample: "The farmer rises early in the cold / And walks the furrows while the stars still burn; /
He trusts the seed the Lord has made to hold / And waits in patience for the spring's return."
Score: 4 lines, ABAB rhyme, mostly regular pentameter, concrete words.

THE FIVE-PARAGRAPH ESSAY AS SCAFFOLD

This unit sets the classical exercises you have learned (commonplace, encomium and invective) on the frame every school essay and contest expects: an introduction ending in a thesis, three body paragraphs and a conclusion. You will learn to write a thesis with a forecast from the Declaration of Independence, build body paragraphs from the encomium heads with Stephen's praise of Moses in Acts 7, open and close an essay with Lincoln's Gettysburg Address as your guide, and finish with an entry for the VFW Patriot's Pen or the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The five-paragraph essay is a scaffold: put it up to build straight, and you will know later when it can come down.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Knows the heads of the encomium (Unit 2) and the commonplace (Unit 1).
- Writes a unified paragraph and can tell a complete sentence from a fragment.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell a topic, a fact and a thesis apart, and write a thesis with a three-part forecast.
- ☐ I can turn the encomium heads into three body paragraphs, each with a topic sentence, evidence, explanation and link.
- ☐ I can write an introduction that moves from hook to bridge to thesis, and a conclusion that restates, gathers and sends off.
- ☐ I can read a contest's official rules and write an essay that fits its theme and word limit.
- ☐ I can proofread for shifts in tense, voice and mood.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **The Declaration of Independence (Project Gutenberg #1)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1>): The model for 6.1; read the whole list of grievances to see how the body proves the claim.
- **Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (Project Gutenberg #4)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4>): The model for 6.3; short enough to memorize.
- **VFW Youth Scholarships: Patriot's Pen** (<https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships>): Official theme, rules and entry form for 2026-27; deadline October 31, 2026.
- **Scholastic Art & Writing Awards: How to Enter**
(<https://www.artandwriting.org/awards/how-to-enter/>): Official rules, categories, fees and regional deadlines for the 2027 Awards.
- **Library of Congress Veterans History Project**
(<https://www.loc.gov/programs/veterans-history-project/>): Free interview guides and question lists for interviewing a veteran.

6.1 THE THESIS STATEMENT ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell a topic, a fact and a thesis apart, and name the four marks of a good thesis.
- Find the claim and the promise of proof in the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence.
- Write a one-sentence thesis with a three-part forecast for an encomium or a commonplace.

Warm-up. One friend says, “Let’s talk about dogs.” Another says, “A good dog is the best hired hand a farm family can have.” Which one gives you something to prove? Say out loud the three reasons you would give for the second sentence.

Video slot. Video coming. How to write a thesis statement for a five-paragraph essay (middle school level). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

thesis statement

One sentence, usually at the end of the introduction, that states the claim your whole essay will prove.

claim

A statement a reasonable reader could doubt, so that it needs proof: praise or blame, should or should not, better or worse.

forecast

The part of a thesis that names your reasons in the order the body paragraphs will take them. Cicero called this step the *partition*.

topic

The subject you write about (“George Washington,” “the plow,” “cowardice”). A topic alone makes no claim.

scaffold

A frame builders put up to raise a wall straight and take down when the wall can stand. The five-paragraph essay is a scaffold for writers.

CORE IDEAS

A scaffold, not the building. When masons raise a brick wall, they first put up a scaffold of poles and planks so they can lay each course straight. When the wall stands, the scaffold comes down. The five-paragraph essay is a scaffold of that kind: an introduction that ends with a thesis, three body paragraphs that each prove one reason, and a conclusion. In this unit you will hang your encomium and commonplace work on that frame, so that what you

have learned can travel into any school essay, test or contest. In high school you will take down some of the planks and build freer essays, but a writer who first learns to build straight builds better when he is free.

New frame, old bones. The five-paragraph essay is a modern school form, but its bones are ancient. Cicero, in his youthful book *On Invention*, named the parts of a speech: the opening (exordium), the statement of facts (narration), the *partition* (what you will prove and in what order), the proof (confirmation), the answer to objections (refutation) and the conclusion (peroration). The five-paragraph essay keeps the opening, the partition, the proof and the conclusion. Your thesis is Cicero's partition packed into one sentence.

Topic, fact, thesis. A *topic* is only a subject: "George Washington." A *fact* is something no one disputes: "Washington was born in Virginia in 1732." A *thesis* is a claim someone could doubt, which your essay promises to prove: "Washington deserves to be called the father of his country because he held the army together, refused a crown and gave up power freely." Here is the test. Read your sentence to a sensible friend. If he can answer, "Prove it," you have a thesis. If he can only answer, "So what?" or "I know," you have a topic or a fact.

Four marks of a good thesis. (1) It is *one sentence*. (2) It makes a *clear claim*: praise or blame, should or should not, better or worse. (3) It is *arguable but defensible*: not so obvious that no one would doubt it, and not so wild that you cannot prove it in three paragraphs. (4) It gives a *forecast*: three reasons, written in the same grammatical form and in the order your body paragraphs will take them. Compare "The plow is good" with "The plow deserves praise because it feeds the nation, rewards honest labor and teaches patience." The second sentence is a map of the whole essay.

Your old exercises, new frame. Everything you wrote this year can become a thesis. An encomium of a person says *who* deserves praise and names the heads you will use: "Wilberforce deserves honor for his faith, his persistence and his victory." An encomium of a thing does the same for the plow, the book or the bridge. A commonplace or an invective turns the method against a vice: "Sloth is a thief, because it robs a man of his bread, his health and his good name." The ancient heads do the inventing; the thesis sets them in order.

Reading the model. The Declaration of Independence was drafted by Thomas Jefferson for a committee of five and adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. Its second paragraph sets out the principles first, then the claim: the King's history is "a history of repeated injuries and usurpations." Then comes the promise: "To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world." What follows in the full Declaration is a long list of grievances, the body that proves the claim. Copy the paragraph slowly and underline the sentence that works as the thesis.

The model. *The Declaration of Independence (1776), second paragraph, Project Gutenberg #1*

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights,

Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. --Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

PICTURE STUDY



Declaration of Independence, John Trumbull, 1818 (placed in the Capitol Rotunda in 1826) · Oil on canvas · Rotunda, United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Trumbull, who had served as an officer in the Revolution, painted many of the delegates from life. The picture does not show a signing. It shows the committee of five (John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin) presenting their draft to John Hancock, the president of Congress. In one sense, it is a picture of men handing in a thesis to be judged.

Look closely

- Find the tall man in the red waistcoat laying the paper on the desk. That is Jefferson.
- Find the seated man receiving it. Who is he, and what is his job in the room?
- Look at the faces of the delegates on the sides. Do they look convinced yet, or still weighing the claim?

Talk about it

1. Write a thesis that one of the seated delegates might have written about the paper on the desk, with three reasons.
2. Why might Trumbull have chosen the moment the draft was presented rather than the moment it was signed?

WRITING PROJECT: THREE THESES AND A MAP

You will write three theses this week and choose one to carry through the whole unit. By 6.3 it will be a full five-paragraph essay.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Your encomium and commonplace work from Units 1-3
- Index cards (optional)

Steps

1. Choose three topics: one person to praise (a hero from history or Scripture), one thing to praise (a tool, a book, a building), and one vice to blame.
2. For each topic, write three sentences: the topic alone, a fact about it, and a claim.
3. Turn each claim into a full thesis by adding a three-part forecast. Use the encomium heads (origin and upbringing, deeds, comparison) or the commonplace heads to find your reasons.
4. Test each thesis aloud. A parent answers, "Prove it." If the answer is "So what?" instead, sharpen the claim.
5. Choose the strongest thesis. Under it, write the three reasons as three separate sentences. These are the first drafts of your three topic sentences.
6. Copy the chosen thesis on an index card and keep it for 6.2 and 6.3.

Check your work

- Each thesis is one sentence with a clear claim of praise or blame.
- Each forecast names three reasons in the order I will prove them.
- My three reasons are written in the same form (three nouns, three verbs or three phrases).
- I can join my reasons to my claim with an adverb clause beginning with *because*, and the sentence is complete.

- I did not write “In this essay I will” or “My thesis is.”

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the last two sentences of the model passage, from “The history of the present King” to “a candid world.”
2. List ten topics you could praise and ten vices you could blame. Star the three you know the most about.
3. Write the four marks of a good thesis on the inside cover of your notebook.

History note. Trumbull received his commission from Congress in 1817 for four large paintings of the Revolution; the *Declaration of Independence* was the first finished and was hung in the Capitol Rotunda in 1826. The scene shows the presentation of the draft on June 28, 1776, not the signing, which for most delegates took place on August 2.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 19.2 “Complex.” Most good theses are complex sentences: an independent clause states the claim, and a dependent clause beginning with *because* carries the forecast.

For families. The five-paragraph essay is a twentieth-century classroom form, and many writing teachers rightly warn against treating it as the goal. This unit treats it as a scaffold for the classical exercises already learned (encomium, commonplace, invective), which is how Cicero’s partition and Aphthonius’s heads are meant to be used. The model is printed from Project Gutenberg #1. Discuss with your student that the Declaration’s claim rests on a Creator who gives rights; this is the document’s own reasoning, not a later gloss.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this weak thesis: “This essay is about bridges.”

1. Test it: a reader can only say “So what?” It is a topic, not a claim.
2. Add a claim of praise: “Bridges deserve praise.” Better, but a reader still asks, “Why?”
3. Add a forecast from the encomium heads for a thing: what it does for people, what it shows about its builders, how it compares to the ferry it replaced.
4. Put the reasons in the same form and in the order you will prove them, saving the strongest for last.

Answer: A bridge deserves our praise, because it joins divided towns, honors the patient skill of its builders and does safely in one minute what a ferry once did dangerously in an hour.

Example 2. Take apart this student thesis: “Benjamin Franklin should be admired since he was born in Boston, and he invented things, also he helped write the Declaration.”

1. Claim: “should be admired.” Good; it can be doubted and proved.
2. Reasons: “born in Boston” is a fact, but by itself it is not praiseworthy. Change it to a head the essay can prove: his rise from a poor apprentice.
3. Form: the three reasons are written three different ways (a clause, a clause, “also ...”). Put them in the same form.
4. Order: inventions, then public service is a fine order, with the greatest deed last.

Answer: Benjamin Franklin deserves our admiration, because he rose from a poor apprentice by his own industry, served his neighbors with useful inventions and helped found a free nation.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Topic, fact or thesis? “The Brooklyn Bridge opened in 1883.”
2. **EASY** Topic, fact or thesis? “Honesty.”
3. **EASY** Topic, fact or thesis? “Every boy and girl should learn to swim, because it saves lives, builds strength and opens a lifetime of work and play on the water.”
4. **EASY** Name the four marks of a good thesis.
5. **MEDIUM** In the model, which sentence is the claim and which sentence promises the proof?
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the forecast so the reasons match in form: “The library deserves praise because of its books, it is quiet, and helping students.”
7. **MEDIUM** Write a thesis for a commonplace against cowardice.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a thesis for an encomium of a hero from Scripture, using the heads origin and upbringing, deeds, and comparison as your three reasons.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Announcing instead of claiming: “In this essay I will tell you about Washington.” State the claim itself.
- Writing a fact as a thesis. If no one could doubt it, there is nothing to prove.
- Forecasting three reasons and then writing body paragraphs in a different order.
- Giving reasons that overlap (“brave” and “courageous”) so that two body paragraphs say the same thing.

Make it a game · Prove It! A parent reads a sentence: a topic, a fact or a thesis. The student calls out which it is. If it is a thesis, the student has thirty seconds to give three reasons out loud. If it is a topic or fact, the student turns it into a thesis. Switch roles after five rounds.

Scripture. “For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” (1 Corinthians 14:8, KJV)

A thesis is the trumpet of an essay: if it sounds unclear, the reader cannot follow the march of your reasons.

Practice: answers

1. A fact.
2. A topic.
3. A thesis: a claim with a three-part forecast.
4. One sentence; a clear claim; arguable but defensible; a forecast of three reasons in order.
5. The claim: “The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.” The promise: “To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.”
6. Sample: The library deserves praise because it lends books freely, keeps a quiet place for study and helps students find what they need.
7. Sample: Cowardice is a shameful vice, because it betrays our friends, wastes our gifts and dishonors the God who made us for courage.
8. Sample: Daniel deserves praise as a model of faithfulness, because he kept God’s law as a captive boy in Babylon, spoke the truth to three kings and, like Joseph before him, served a foreign court without bowing to its gods.

6.2 BODY PARAGRAPHS FROM THE ENCOMIUM HEADS

OBJECTIVES

- Map the encomium heads (origin and upbringing, deeds, comparison) onto three body paragraphs.
- Build a body paragraph with a topic sentence, evidence, explanation and a link back to the thesis.
- Write three body paragraphs that prove the thesis chosen in 6.1.

Warm-up. From memory, list the heads of an encomium you learned in Unit 2. Then, for your own grandfather, a coach or a pastor, say one sentence for each head in under a minute.

Video slot. Video coming. George Washington’s life and character for students (a biography from a historic site or museum such as Mount Vernon). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

topic sentence

The first sentence of a body paragraph. It states one reason from the thesis and tells the reader what the paragraph will prove.

evidence

The facts, examples, events and quotations that prove the topic sentence.

explanation

Your own sentences that show *how* the evidence proves the point. Evidence without explanation is a pile of bricks without mortar.

transition

A word, phrase or sentence that carries the reader from one paragraph or idea to the next.

unity

The rule that every sentence in a paragraph serves its one topic sentence.

CORE IDEAS

The heads become paragraphs. Aphthonius, the Greek teacher whose exercises you have followed all year, laid out the encomium in order: a prologue, then origin (nation, homeland, ancestors), then upbringing (education and training), then deeds, then comparison, then an epilogue. Those heads fit the five-paragraph scaffold almost exactly. The prologue and thesis make the introduction. *Body 1* takes origin and upbringing. *Body 2* takes deeds. *Body 3* takes comparison. The epilogue becomes the conclusion. You already know what to say; now you know where to put it.

Four parts of a body paragraph. A strong body paragraph has (1) a *topic sentence* that states one reason from your thesis; (2) *evidence*, two or three specific facts or examples; (3) *explanation*, your own sentences showing why the evidence proves the point; and (4) a *link*, a closing sentence that ties the paragraph back to the thesis or leads into the next head. A paragraph of 80 to 120 words is about right at this stage. Keep unity: if a sentence does not serve the topic sentence, it belongs in another paragraph or nowhere.

Deeds of mind, body and fortune. The ancient teachers sorted deeds three ways: deeds of the *mind* or soul (courage, justice, self-control, wisdom), of the *body* (strength, endurance, skill), and of *fortune* (wealth, friends, high office). They taught that the first kind deserves the most praise, because a man chooses his virtues but does not choose his height or his inheritance. When you praise Washington, his tall frame and his Virginia estate matter less than his refusal to grasp at power. Choose your strongest deeds of the mind for Body 2.

Order your proof. In the *Iliad*, old Nestor drew up his troops with the strongest in front, the strongest again at the rear and the weaker in the middle. Writers borrowed the idea: open with a strong paragraph, put your weaker proof in the middle, and save your strongest for last, just before the conclusion. In an encomium, the comparison head often makes the strongest finish, because it sets your hero beside someone already famous and shows him equal or greater.

Transitions that carry the heads. Do not simply write “First,” “Second” and “Third.” Let each topic sentence look back and forward at once: “Raised in such a school, he soon proved his courage in the field.” “Yet a man’s greatness is best measured beside other great men.” A participial phrase at the head of a sentence (*Raised in such a school*) is one of the neatest transitions in English.

Reading the model. In Acts 7, Stephen stands before the council in Jerusalem and retells the history of Israel. When he reaches Moses, he gives a whole encomium in three verses: origin (born in a dangerous time, “exceeding fair”), upbringing (rescued and raised by Pharaoh’s daughter, “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians”), and deeds (“mighty in words and in deeds”). Each verse could be the topic sentence of a body paragraph. Copy the verses, then label each head in the margin.

The model. *Acts 7:20–22 (KJV), from Stephen’s speech to the council*

In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father’s house three months: And when he was cast out, Pharaoh’s daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

PICTURE STUDY



George Washington (the Lansdowne Portrait), Gilbert Stuart, 1796 · Oil on canvas · National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Gilbert Stuart painted Washington full length near the end of his second term as president. Washington wears a plain black suit, not a uniform; his sword hangs sheathed at his side, and his right hand is stretched out as though he were addressing Congress. The painter has filled the picture with clues to the man's deeds, the way a writer fills a body paragraph with evidence.

Look closely

- Find the sword. Is it drawn or sheathed? What might that say about a general who became a president?
- Look under and on the table for the books. What deeds might they stand for?
- Find the patch of bright sky in the background. Why might the painter put light behind his subject?

Talk about it

1. Write a topic sentence for a deeds paragraph about Washington, using one detail from the painting as evidence.
2. Which head of the encomium does this painting show best: origin, upbringing, deeds or comparison? Explain.

WRITING PROJECT: THREE BODY PARAGRAPHS

Take the thesis card from 6.1. You will write the three body paragraphs that prove it. If your thesis praised a thing or blamed a vice, use the heads that fit it (what it does, what it shows,

how it compares) in the same way.

You will need

- Your thesis card from 6.1
- Writing notebook
- A biography, encyclopedia article or Bible passage for your evidence

Steps

1. Copy your thesis at the top of the page. Under it, write the three heads in the order of your forecast.
2. Gather evidence: for each head, list three specific facts, events or quotations, with where you found them.
3. Choose the two or three strongest facts for each head and cross out the rest.
4. Write Body 1: topic sentence, evidence, explanation, link.
5. Write Body 2 and Body 3 the same way. Begin each topic sentence with a transition that looks back and forward.
6. Read the three paragraphs aloud. Underline each topic sentence and check it against the forecast in your thesis.

Check your work

- Each body paragraph proves one reason from my thesis, in the same order as the forecast.
- Each paragraph has a topic sentence, specific evidence, my own explanation and a link.
- Every sentence in a paragraph serves its topic sentence (unity).
- At least one transition is a participial phrase, and it modifies the subject that follows it.
- Each sentence is complete; no dependent clause stands alone as a sentence.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Acts 7:20-22 and write the name of the encomium head beside each verse.
2. Make a three-column chart: deeds of mind, deeds of body, deeds of fortune. Fill it for your hero.
3. Write five transitions that begin with a participial phrase ("Trained in ...", "Tested by ...", "Remembered for ...").

History note. Stuart painted the Lansdowne portrait in 1796 as a gift for the British statesman William Petty, Marquess of Lansdowne, who had supported peace with America. The painting returned to the United States and, since 2001, has belonged to the National Portrait Gallery. Stuart and his studio painted several copies, one of which hangs in the White House.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 17.2 "Participles." A participial phrase at the start of a topic sentence (*Raised in Pharaoh's court, Moses ...*) makes a smooth transition,

as long as it modifies the subject that follows.

For families. The heads come from Aphthonius's *Progymnasmata* (about A.D. 400); the sorting of goods into those of mind, body and fortune is older and goes back to Aristotle and Cicero. The model passage is printed from the King James text. If your student chooses a hero whose life has dark chapters, the encomium may praise real virtues without hiding real faults; Scripture itself does so with David.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's thesis: "George Washington deserves to be called the father of his country, because he was trained by hardship, proved his courage in war and, like Cincinnatus, gave up power freely." Take apart this draft of Body 3: "Washington was a good leader. He was the first president. He had a farm called Mount Vernon. Cincinnatus was a Roman. Washington did a lot for America."

1. Topic sentence: "Washington was a good leader" does not match the forecast (comparison with Cincinnatus).
2. Evidence: the farm is a deed of fortune and does not prove the point; the comparison is never made.
3. Explanation: missing. The reader is never told why the comparison is praise.
4. Link: "did a lot for America" is vague. End by tying the comparison to "father of his country."

Answer: Revised: Yet Washington's greatness shows most clearly beside the hero he was compared to all his life. Cincinnatus, the Roman farmer, was called from his plow to save the city and returned to his plow when the danger was past. Washington did the same twice: in 1783 he resigned his command to Congress and went home to Mount Vernon, and in 1796 he refused a third term as president. Many conquerors have taken power; very few have handed it back. A father raises his children to stand without him, and Washington did that for his country.

Example 2. Turn Acts 7:22 into the topic sentence and outline of an upbringing paragraph about Moses.

1. Find the head: “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” is upbringing.
2. Write a topic sentence that praises and looks forward.
3. List evidence and an explanation.

Answer: Topic sentence: Raised in Pharaoh’s own house, Moses received the finest education in the ancient world. Evidence: Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him (Acts 7:21); he was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” (7:22). Explanation: God placed the future lawgiver of Israel in the school of the greatest kingdom of his age. Link: That learning made him “mighty in words and in deeds.”

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Which encomium heads become the three body paragraphs?
2. **EASY** Name the four parts of a body paragraph.
3. **EASY** In Acts 7:20–22, which verse gives Moses’s deeds?
4. **EASY** Sort into mind, body or fortune: Washington’s height; his honesty; his estate.
5. **MEDIUM** Which sentence breaks unity in a paragraph about Washington’s courage? (a) At Princeton he rode between the lines under fire. (b) He liked to breed hunting dogs. (c) His men rallied when they saw him.
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling transition: “Trained as a surveyor, the frontier became familiar ground.”
7. **MEDIUM** Write a transition sentence from an upbringing paragraph to a deeds paragraph about Joseph (Genesis 37–41).
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a full comparison paragraph (80–120 words) for an encomium of the plow, comparing it to the sword.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Telling the whole life story in order instead of proving one head per paragraph.
- Piling up evidence with no explanation of why it proves the point.
- Praising deeds of fortune (wealth, fame, looks) as if they were virtues.
- Writing a comparison that only describes the other person and never says who is greater, or why.

Make it a game • Which Head? The parent reads short facts about a famous person (Washington, Daniel, Florence Nightingale, Moses). The student calls out the head each fact belongs to: origin, upbringing, deeds (mind, body or fortune) or comparison. Three right in a row earns the right to ask the parent one.

Scripture. “Let all things be done decently and in order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40, KJV)

Paul's rule for the church at Corinth is a good rule for paragraphs too: each head in its own place, in the order you promised.

Practice: answers

1. Origin and upbringing; deeds; comparison.
2. Topic sentence, evidence, explanation, link.
3. Verse 22: "mighty in words and in deeds."
4. Height: body. Honesty: mind. Estate: fortune.
5. (b): it does not prove courage.
6. Trained as a surveyor, young Washington came to know the frontier well.
7. Sample: Tested in a pit, a slave's house and a prison, Joseph was ready when Pharaoh called for a man of wisdom.
8. Sample: Yet the plow shows its true worth beside the sword. The sword has won more fame, and poets have sung of it for three thousand years. But the sword takes bread from a field, and the plow puts it there. A sword wins a country in a season; the plow keeps it alive in every season after. Even Scripture looks forward to the day when nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares" (Isaiah 2:4), not the other way around. The sword is honored in war, but the plow is needed every spring, and so the plow deserves the greater praise.

6.3 INTRODUCTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

OBJECTIVES

- Write an introduction that moves from a hook through a bridge to the thesis.
- Write a conclusion that restates the thesis in fresh words, gathers the proof and sends the reader off with a charge or a look forward.
- Trace past, present and future in Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and imitate its shape.

Warm-up. Think of the first line of a book you love and the last line of a sermon or speech you remember. Why did they stick? Write each from memory, as near as you can.

Video slot. Video coming. The Gettysburg Address and the dedication of the Soldiers’ National Cemetery, 1863 (a National Park Service or museum program). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

exordium

Cicero’s name for the opening of a speech, meant to make the hearer well disposed, attentive and ready to learn.

hook

The first sentence or two of an essay, which catches the reader: a scene, a question, a striking fact or a quotation.

bridge

The sentences that carry the reader from the hook to the thesis, narrowing from the general to your claim.

peroration

The closing of a speech, which sums up the proof and stirs the hearer to agree or act. The encomium’s epilogue is a peroration.

restatement

The thesis said again in new words at the start of the conclusion, now that it has been proved.

CORE IDEAS

Write them last. It sounds strange, but most good writers write the introduction and conclusion after the body. You cannot introduce a guest you have not met. Now that your thesis and three body paragraphs stand, you know exactly what you are introducing and what you are concluding.

The exordium’s three jobs. Cicero taught that an opening should make the hearer *well disposed* (willing to listen to you), *attentive* (eager to hear what comes next) and *ready to learn* (clear about the subject). An essay introduction does the same in three moves, shaped

like a funnel: a *hook* that catches attention, a *bridge* of two or three sentences that narrows toward your subject, and the *thesis* as the last sentence. The reader should reach the thesis feeling that it is the natural next thing to say.

Four honest hooks. (1) A *scene*: “On a December night in 1776, a tall Virginian stood in the bow of a boat on the icy Delaware.” (2) A *question* that the essay answers: “What makes a man great enough to give power away?” (3) A *striking fact*: “The Gettysburg Address is shorter than this lesson’s first page.” (4) A *quotation or maxim*, which you have practiced since Grade 5: “‘Pride goeth before destruction,’ wrote Solomon.” Avoid the worn-out hooks: a dictionary definition (“Webster’s defines courage as ...”), a vague sweep (“Since the dawn of time ...”) and the announcement (“In this essay I will ...”).

The conclusion closes the circle. A conclusion is not a copy of the introduction. It has three moves, the funnel turned upside down. First, *restate* the thesis in fresh words, with the confidence of something now proved. Second, *gather* the three reasons in a sentence or two, briefly, without new evidence. Third, *send off* the reader: urge him to imitate the hero (as the encomium’s epilogue does), look forward to what should follow, or return to the image from your hook so the essay closes like a circle. Never bring in a brand-new argument in the last paragraph.

Lincoln’s three times. On November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the Soldiers’ National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Edward Everett spoke for about two hours. Lincoln then spoke for about two minutes. His address moves through three times. The opening looks to the *past*: “Four score and seven years ago” takes the hearer back to 1776 and the Declaration you read in 6.1. The middle stands in the *present*: “Now we are engaged in a great civil war.” The close turns to the *future*: “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work.” Past, present, future is a shape you can borrow for any essay about a person, a nation or a cause.

Reading the model. Notice that Lincoln’s opening is a single scene and a single principle, and that his close is not a summary but a resolve: a series of clauses each beginning with *that*, rising to “shall not perish from this earth.” Copy the address in your best hand. Mark the past, the present and the future in the margin, and box the one sentence that works most like a thesis.

The model. *Abraham Lincoln, “The Gettysburg Address” (November 19, 1863), Project Gutenberg #4*

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

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

We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those

who here gave their lives that this nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

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

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

PICTURE STUDY



The Voyage of Life: Childhood, Thomas Cole, 1842 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Thomas Cole painted the life of a man as a voyage in four pictures: Childhood, Youth, Manhood and Old Age. In the first, a little child in a gilded boat floats out of a dark cave into morning light, while a guardian angel steers. In the last picture of the series, an old man in a battered boat drifts toward the open sea, and an angel points him to a light breaking through the clouds. Cole, a devout Christian, meant the series as a picture of the soul's journey home to God. Its first and last canvases are a lesson in beginnings and endings.

Look closely

- Find the cave the boat is leaving. What does it suggest about where a life, or an essay, begins?
- Look at the figure on the front of the boat. What is it holding, and why might Cole put it there?
- Compare the light here with the light you imagine at the end of the voyage. How does a beginning promise an ending?

Talk about it

1. Write a hook for an essay of your own that opens with a scene, the way Cole opens with the boat leaving the cave.
2. If this painting were the introduction of an essay, what would the thesis be? Write it in one sentence.

WRITING PROJECT: OPEN AND CLOSE YOUR ESSAY

Add an introduction and a conclusion to your thesis and three body paragraphs from 6.1 and 6.2. When you finish, you will have a complete five-paragraph essay.

You will need

- Your thesis card and body paragraphs
- Writing notebook
- A copy of the Gettysburg Address

Steps

1. Write four different hooks for your essay: a scene, a question, a striking fact and a quotation. Read them aloud and choose the best.
2. Write a bridge of two or three sentences that narrows from your hook to your subject.
3. Set your thesis as the last sentence of the introduction. Read the whole paragraph aloud to check that it flows.
4. Write the conclusion: restate the thesis in fresh words, gather your three reasons in one or two sentences, and send the reader off with a charge, a look forward or a return to your hook.
5. Copy the whole essay cleanly, all five paragraphs, with a title.
6. Read it aloud to your family. Ask them to tell you your thesis in their own words after they hear it once.

Check your work

- My introduction moves from hook to bridge to thesis, and the thesis is its last sentence.
- My conclusion restates the thesis in new words and adds no new argument.
- I avoided the worn-out hooks: dictionary definitions, “since the dawn of time” and “in this essay I will.”

- I used at least one noun clause beginning with *that* in my conclusion, as Lincoln does.
- I used at least one compound-complex sentence, punctuated correctly.
- My tenses stay steady: past for the story, present for what is true now.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the Gettysburg Address in your best hand. Mark PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE in the margin.
2. Collect five first sentences from books on your shelf. Label each: scene, question, fact or quotation.
3. Write a two-sentence conclusion for Acts 7:20-22, as if it were an essay praising Moses.

History note. Lincoln’s address survives in five manuscript copies in his own hand, which differ slightly; the Project Gutenberg text printed here is one common version. Edward Everett wrote to Lincoln the next day that he wished he had come as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as Lincoln had in two minutes. Thomas Cole painted the first *Voyage of Life* series in 1840 (now in Utica, New York) and a second set in 1842, now at the National Gallery of Art.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.4 “Noun Clauses.” Lincoln’s closing sentence is built from a series of noun clauses, each beginning with *that* (“that these dead shall not have died in vain”), which gives the ending its rising, resolving force.

For families. The exordium’s three aims come from Cicero, *On Invention* I.15-16. The model follows Project Gutenberg #4 exactly, including its spaced ellipses and double spaces, which come from that edition’s typing and not from Lincoln. If your student wants to memorize the address, the familiar Bliss copy differs only slightly; either is a fine piece to recite in Unit 8.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this introduction: “Webster’s Dictionary defines a hero as a person admired for courage. In this essay I will tell you about George Washington. He was a hero. Washington deserves to be called the father of his country, because he was trained by hardship, proved his courage in war and, like Cincinnatus, gave up power freely.”

1. Hook: the dictionary definition is a worn-out hook. Replace it with a scene.
2. Bridge: “In this essay I will” and “He was a hero” announce instead of leading. Replace them with sentences that narrow toward the claim.
3. Thesis: it is strong and already last. Keep it.

Answer: On December 23, 1783, a tall Virginian stood before Congress in Annapolis and handed back his commission as commander in chief. He had won a war against the greatest empire on earth, and many expected him to keep the army and rule. Instead, he went home to plant his fields. Such a man is rare in any age. Washington deserves to be called the father of his country, because he was trained by hardship, proved his courage in war and, like Cincinnatus, gave up power freely.

Example 2. Take apart and revise this conclusion: “In conclusion, Washington was trained by hardship, proved his courage in war and gave up power freely. Also, he had wooden teeth. That is why he is the father of his country.”

1. “In conclusion” is unnecessary; the reader can see it is the last paragraph.
2. The reasons are copied word for word; restate them in fresh words.
3. “Wooden teeth” is a new and unproved detail (and false: his false teeth were made of other materials). No new matter in a conclusion.
4. There is no send-off. Return to the hook (Annapolis) and look forward.

Answer: Washington earned his title not by a crown but by a life. Hardship trained him, war tested him and power could not hold him. When he laid down his commission at Annapolis, he showed his countrymen that a free people can be led without being ruled. Every American who has handed over an office in peace since then has walked the road he cleared.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the three parts of an introduction, in order.
2. **EASY** Name the three moves of a conclusion.
3. **EASY** What kind of hook is this? “Why would a king’s adopted son run away to keep sheep?”
4. **EASY** To what year does “Four score and seven years ago” point back from 1863, and what happened then?

5. **MEDIUM** Find one sentence in the Gettysburg Address for the past, one for the present and one for the future.
6. **MEDIUM** What is wrong with ending an essay on the plow with “Also, tractors are faster”?
7. **MEDIUM** Write a scene hook for an encomium of the book.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a full conclusion for a commonplace against cowardice whose thesis was “Cowardice is a shameful vice, because it betrays our friends, wastes our gifts and dishonors the God who made us for courage.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Putting the thesis first and the hook after it, so the funnel is upside down.
- Starting with a dictionary definition or “since the dawn of time.”
- Copying the thesis word for word into the conclusion.
- Adding a new argument or a new fact in the last paragraph.

Make it a game · Hook Auction. Each player writes three hooks for the same topic on slips of paper. Read them aloud without names. Each player has ten pretend dollars to bid on the hooks that make him most want to keep reading. The hook that earns the most wins; its writer then supplies a bridge and thesis aloud.

Scripture. “Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.” (Ecclesiastes 7:8, KJV)

A well-made ending gathers up all that came before it; take patience with your conclusion, not just your opening.

Practice: answers

1. Hook, bridge, thesis.
2. Restate the thesis, gather the reasons, send off the reader.
3. A question.
4. 1776; the Declaration of Independence.
5. Past: “Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation.” Present: “Now we are engaged in a great civil war.” Future: “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work.”
6. It brings a new argument into the conclusion, and it weakens the praise instead of closing it.
7. Sample: In a cabin lit by one fire, a boy of twelve reads the same borrowed book for the third time, because it is the only one for twenty miles.
8. Sample: Cowardice, then, is no small fault. It leaves friends to stand alone, buries the talents God lent us and answers His call to courage with silence. The cure is not to feel no fear but to do right while afraid, as Joshua was commanded to be strong and of a good courage. Let us choose that road tomorrow, in the small dangers of an honest word, so that we will be ready for the great ones.

6.4 PATRIOT'S PEN OR SCHOLASTIC ENTRY ★🏆

OBJECTIVES

- Read the official rules of a contest and plan an essay to its theme, length and form.
- Interview a veteran using the encomium heads, and turn the interview into a thesis and three body paragraphs.
- Revise and proofread a contest essay, checking for shifts in tense, voice and mood, and prepare it for entry.

Warm-up. Name a veteran you know: a grandparent, a neighbor, a man or woman at church. What is one thing you have seen that person do that a soldier or sailor learned in the service?

Video slot. Video coming. Veterans' oral history interviews for students (for example, the Library of Congress Veterans History Project). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

theme

The question or subject a contest asks every entrant to write about. An essay that drifts from the theme cannot win, however well written.

word limit

The least and most words a contest allows. Patriot's Pen essays must be 300 to 400 words.

interview

A planned conversation in which you ask a person questions and take careful notes, so you can quote and describe him truly.

veteran

A person who has served in the armed forces of the United States.

proofread

To read a finished draft slowly, line by line, for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, after the larger revising is done.

CORE IDEAS

Two contests, one scaffold. This lesson ends with a piece ready for one of two contests in the School Launch directory. The *VFW Patriot's Pen* is for students in grades 6–8 and asks for a short essay on a patriotic theme. The *Scholastic Art & Writing Awards* are for students in grades 7–12, ages 13 and up, and accept many kinds of writing, including the Critical Essay. Both reward exactly what you have practiced all unit: a clear thesis, three well-proved body paragraphs, and an opening and close that hold the reader. Choose one contest with your parents, then follow its rules to the letter.

The rules (as of October 2026). *Patriot's Pen 2026-27*: the theme is "What a Veteran Taught Me About America." Essays are 300 to 400 words, written by the student, and entered with the official 2026-27 entry form through a local participating VFW Post by October 31, 2026. The VFW lists a national first prize of \$5,000 and state first prizes of at least \$500. *Scholastic Awards 2027*: entries are made online, connected to an educator, with a \$15 fee per entry (fee waivers are available for need). Regional deadlines begin in December 2026 and run into January 2027. The Critical Essay category asks for 500 to 3,000 words meant to inform or persuade, and requires sources to be cited. Rules change; read the official pages and forms yourself before you write and again before you send.

Fitting the scaffold to the count. A Patriot's Pen essay of about 360 words gives you roughly 60 words for the introduction, 80 for each body paragraph and 50 for the conclusion. That is tight. Every sentence must earn its place: no throat-clearing, no list of facts without explanation. A Scholastic Critical Essay of 600 to 900 words lets each body paragraph grow to two paragraphs of its own, but the frame stays the same.

Invention by interview. The Patriot's Pen theme asks what a *veteran* taught *you* about *America*. All three words matter. Find a veteran you know and, with a parent present, ask about the heads you already know. Origin and upbringing: Where did you grow up? Why did you join? What did training teach you? Deeds: What did you do in the service? What was hardest? Comparison: How was America then like or unlike America now? Then the lesson: What do you want young Americans to know? Write down exact words you may want to quote. Your thesis answers the theme: "From Mr. ___, I learned that America is ___, ___ and ___."

Honest work. Contest essays must be the student's own. A parent may ask questions, point out a weak paragraph or mark a misspelled word, but must not write sentences. Do not use a computer program to write or rewrite your essay, and do not invent a veteran or a story. Paul's rule holds in contests too: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour" (Ephesians 4:25). Judges can tell a real interview from a made-up one; so can God.

Reading the model. The model below was written for this course to show the form. The veteran in it is invented for the sample; yours must be real, and your words must be your own. Notice the thesis at the end of the first paragraph, the three body paragraphs that each tell one story and draw one lesson, and the conclusion that gathers the three lessons and hands them on. Count its words. Then put it away before you write, so that you imitate the form and not the sentences.

The model. *"What a Veteran Taught Me About America," a sample five-paragraph essay (about 360 words). Written for this course; the veteran is invented.*

Every Memorial Day, Mr. Harold Pike stands at the end of our church pew a little straighter than the rest of us. He served in the Navy aboard a destroyer during the Korean War, and he is ninety-four years old. When I asked him what America meant to him, he did not give me a speech. He gave me three stories, and each one taught me something true about this country: that America is a promise kept by ordinary people, that freedom has a price, and that a citizen's duty does not

end when the uniform comes off.

Mr. Pike's first story was about his shipmates. They came from Maine farms, Texas oil towns and Chicago apartments. One had never seen the ocean before boot camp. "Nobody asked where you were from," he told me. "We asked if you could stand your watch." On that ship, America was not one kind of man. It was many kinds of men keeping the same promise.

His second story was harder to tell. In the winter of 1951, a friend from his gun crew was lost at sea. Mr. Pike still keeps the man's last letter in his Bible. He showed it to me and said, "Freedom isn't free. Somebody always pays for it." I had read those words on bumper stickers, but I had never held the letter that made them true.

The third story was about coming home. Mr. Pike went to work at the post office, raised four children, served as a deacon and has voted in every election since 1956. "The Navy was four years," he said. "Being an American is the whole rest of your life." He taught me that a citizen serves at the mailbox and the ballot box as well as on the deck of a ship.

When I left his house, Mr. Pike shook my hand as if I were a grown man. I walked home thinking about the promise, the price and the duty. America is not only a place on a map. It is a trust handed from one generation to the next, and now a small part of it is in my hands.

PICTURE STUDY



The Spirit of '76, Archibald MacNeal Willard, about 1875–1876 · Oil on canvas · Abbot Hall, Marblehead, Massachusetts

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Willard, who had himself served as a soldier in the Civil War, painted this picture for the nation's hundredth birthday in 1876. An old drummer marches in the middle, with a young boy drumming beside him and a wounded fifer playing on. Three generations march together. It is a picture of what the Patriot's Pen theme asks about: what the old soldier hands on to the young.

Look closely

- Compare the faces of the old drummer and the boy. Where is each one looking?
- Find the fifer's bandage. What does it tell you about the battle, and about him?
- Look at the ground behind and beside the marchers. What else do you see of the battle?

Talk about it

1. Write three sentences the old drummer might say to the boy after the battle about why they marched.
2. Write a hook for your contest essay that begins with a picture, the way Willard begins with three marching men.

WRITING PROJECT: YOUR CONTEST ENTRY

Choose one contest with your parents. **Patriot's Pen:** a 300–400 word, five-paragraph essay on "What a Veteran Taught Me About America," entered through a local VFW Post by October 31, 2026. If that date has passed, write it now and keep it for next year's contest, whose theme will be announced by the VFW. **Scholastic:** a Critical Essay of 500 words or more (for

example, an encomium of a hero, a book or a work of art, with sources cited), if you are 13 or older by the rules' date.

Get the official rules and entry form first. Everything below bends to them.

You will need

- Official 2026-27 Patriot's Pen entry form (from vfw.org or your local Post), or the Scholastic Awards online portal and rules
- Writing notebook and a pen for the interview
- Your five-paragraph essay from 6.3, as a pattern

Steps

1. Read the official rules aloud with a parent. Write the theme, word limit, deadline and any rules about title, name or format at the top of your planning page.
2. Gather your matter. For Patriot's Pen, interview a veteran (with a parent present) using the encomium heads, and take exact notes. For Scholastic, gather your sources and note where each fact came from.
3. Write a thesis that answers the theme directly, with a three-part forecast.
4. Draft the five paragraphs: introduction with hook, bridge and thesis; three body paragraphs, each with one story or reason and its lesson; a conclusion that gathers and sends off.
5. Count the words. Cut to the limit by removing whole weak sentences, not by squeezing good ones.
6. Revise with the checklist, then proofread aloud, slowly. Have a parent check the rules one last time.
7. Fill in the entry form, make a copy for your portfolio and deliver the entry by the deadline.

Check your work

- My essay answers the contest theme in the thesis and in every body paragraph.
- My word count is inside the contest limit.
- Every quotation is my veteran's or source's real words, in quotation marks, with no words changed.
- My tenses do not shift without reason: past for the stories, present for what is true now.
- I used active voice unless I had a good reason for passive.
- Every pronoun clearly points to one person, and every sentence is complete.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Write ten interview questions, two for each encomium head and two for the lesson.
2. Copy the thesis of the model and then write your own thesis under it in the same shape.
3. Copy Romans 13:7 and write one sentence about how your essay gives honor to whom honor is due.

History note. Willard first called his painting *Yankee Doodle*. Shown at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876, it drew crowds and was widely reproduced; Willard painted more than one version. The version given to Marblehead, Massachusetts, hangs in Abbot Hall there.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.4 “Shifts in Tense, Voice and Mood.” A veteran’s story is told in the past tense and its lesson in the present; proofread to make sure each shift is on purpose.

For families. Contest details are summarized from the VFW’s Youth Scholarships page and Scholastic’s How to Enter page as of October 2026. Get the official 2026–27 Patriot’s Pen entry form from vfw.org or your local VFW Post (use the VFW “Find a Post” tool) and confirm eligibility for home-educated students with that Post; read Scholastic’s current rules at artandwriting.org, including its age limit, its rules on originality and outside help, and how a parent may serve as the educator. Please be present for any interview with a veteran, keep it brief and respectful, and let the veteran decline any question; some memories are hard. The model essay is a course-written sample with an invented veteran and should not be submitted or closely copied.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Take apart the model essay. Find the thesis, the three reasons, and how each body paragraph proves one reason.

1. Thesis (last sentence of paragraph 1): America is a promise kept by ordinary people, freedom has a price, and a citizen’s duty continues after service.
2. Body 1: the shipmates from many places → the promise kept by ordinary people. Evidence: a quotation (“We asked if you could stand your watch”).
3. Body 2: the friend lost at sea → the price of freedom. Evidence: the letter and a quotation.
4. Body 3: coming home → the duty that continues. Evidence: work, family, church, voting, and a quotation. The conclusion gathers promise, price and duty and hands them on.

Answer: Thesis with three-part forecast; three body paragraphs in the promised order, each with one story, a quotation and a lesson; a conclusion that restates in fresh words (“the promise, the price and the duty”) and sends off with a charge.

Example 2. A student’s draft is 470 words, over the 400-word limit. Here is one paragraph: “My grandpa was in the Army. He was in the Army for twenty years. He was in the Army in Germany and also in Texas and also in Kentucky. He told me lots of things. He told me that America is a country where you can work hard and get ahead, and I think that is really, really true and important.” Cut it and make it stronger.

1. Cut repetition: “in the Army” appears three times.
2. Cut the list of places unless it proves the point.
3. Replace “lots of things” and “really, really true” with one specific memory and his exact words.
4. Keep the lesson, but tie it to the thesis.

Answer: Sample: My grandfather served twenty years in the Army, and he started as a private from a small Kentucky town. “Nobody handed me a stripe,” he told me. “I earned every one.” He retired a first sergeant. From him I learned that America rewards the man who shows up early and works late. (52 words, down from 61, and stronger.)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the 2026–27 Patriot’s Pen theme?
2. **EASY** What is the Patriot’s Pen word limit, and who may enter?
3. **EASY** Where do you send a Patriot’s Pen entry, and by when (2026–27)?
4. **EASY** What grades and ages may enter the Scholastic Awards, and how long must a Critical Essay be?
5. **MEDIUM** For a 360-word essay, about how many words go to each of the five paragraphs?
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the shift: “Mr. Pike joined the Navy in 1950, and he serves on a destroyer.”
7. **MEDIUM** Change to active voice: “A letter was kept in his Bible by Mr. Pike.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a thesis for a Patriot’s Pen essay about a veteran you know, answering the theme with a three-part forecast.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing about patriotism in general and never answering the theme: what a veteran taught *you*.
- Going over or under the word limit, which can disqualify an otherwise good essay.
- Inventing quotations or details. Use your notes and your veteran’s real words.
- Missing the deadline or forgetting the official entry form.

Make it a game • Fifty-Word Squeeze. Take any 80-word paragraph from your essay. Set a timer for five minutes and cut it to 50 words without losing a single fact that matters. Read both versions aloud to your family and let them vote on which is stronger. Then switch: a parent squeezes one of your paragraphs while you time.

Scripture. “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” (Romans 13:7, KJV)

A contest essay about a veteran is a way of rendering honor where it is due, and it must be written truthfully to do so.

Practice: answers

1. “What a Veteran Taught Me About America.”
2. 300 to 400 words; students in grades 6-8.
3. To a local participating VFW Post, with the official entry form, by October 31, 2026.
4. Grades 7-12, ages 13 and up; 500 to 3,000 words.
5. About 60 for the introduction, 80 for each body paragraph and 50 for the conclusion.
6. Mr. Pike joined the Navy in 1950, and he served on a destroyer.
7. Mr. Pike kept a letter in his Bible.
8. Sample: My great-uncle, who flew cargo planes in Vietnam, taught me that America is built on keeping your word, carrying your share of the load and thanking God for the people beside you.

UNIT 6 REVIEW

The student may answer in writing or aloud. Writing tasks are scored with the unit checklists, not for spelling alone. Allow the student to look at the encomium heads for item 7.

1. (3 pts) Topic, fact or thesis? (a) “The printing press.” (b) “Gutenberg printed his Bible in the 1450s.” (c) “The printing press deserves praise, because it spread the Scriptures, multiplied schools and gave common men a voice.”
2. (4 pts) Name the four marks of a good thesis.
3. (2 pts) In the Declaration’s second paragraph, which sentence promises proof?
4. (3 pts) Which encomium heads become the three body paragraphs, in order?
5. (4 pts) Name the four parts of a body paragraph.
6. (6 pts) Name the three parts of an introduction and the three moves of a conclusion.
7. (4 pts) Write a thesis with a three-part forecast for an encomium of Nehemiah, Florence Nightingale or the lighthouse.
8. (2 pts) Fix the dangling participle: “Raised on a farm, hard work came naturally.”
9. (2 pts) Fix the shift in tense: “The veteran told me about his ship, and then he shows me a letter.”
10. (2 pts) Gettysburg Address: which words point to the past, and what event do they name?
11. (2 pts) Give the 2026–27 Patriot’s Pen theme and word limit.
12. (6 pts) Write a conclusion (3–5 sentences) for the thesis you wrote in item 7.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A FIVE-PARAGRAPH ESSAY AND A CONTEST ENTRY

Place two pieces in your Grade 7 portfolio: the five-paragraph essay you built in 6.1–6.3, and a clean copy of your contest entry from 6.4 with the date you sent it. Attach your thesis card and interview or source notes behind each.

- **Thesis:** One sentence with a clear, arguable claim and a three-part forecast that the body follows in order.
- **Body paragraphs:** Each proves one reason with a topic sentence, specific evidence, explanation and a link; the encomium heads are used well.
- **Introduction and conclusion:** An honest hook and a bridge lead to the thesis; the conclusion restates in fresh words, gathers and sends off without new arguments.
- **Mechanics and honesty:** Complete sentences, correct participial phrases and no needless shifts in tense, voice or mood; quotations exact; contest rules and word limit followed; the work is the student’s own.

Answer key

1. (a) Topic. (b) Fact. (c) Thesis.
2. One sentence; a clear claim; arguable but defensible; a forecast of three reasons in order.
3. “To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.”
4. Origin and upbringing; deeds; comparison.
5. Topic sentence, evidence, explanation, link.

6. Introduction: hook, bridge, thesis. Conclusion: restate, gather, send off.
7. Sample: The lighthouse deserves our praise, because it guards sailors from unseen rocks, stands faithful through every storm and pictures the Word that is “a light unto my path.”
8. Raised on a farm, she found that hard work came naturally. (Any revision where the participle modifies the subject.)
9. The veteran told me about his ship, and then he showed me a letter.
10. “Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation”; the founding of 1776.
11. “What a Veteran Taught Me About America”; 300 to 400 words.
12. Sample: The lighthouse, then, is more than a tower of stone. It saves lives in the dark, keeps its post when every other light is out and reminds us where true light comes from. Whenever you see one on a rocky coast, remember the keeper who trimmed its lamp, and ask whether your own light is shining.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE: THE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In this creative unit you become a biographer. You will read Plutarch, the ancient master of the “life,” and learn his rule that a small deed can show a person’s character better than a great battle. Then you will interview a grandparent or another older person, sort what you learn under the heads of encomium, choose a controlling idea, and write a biographical sketch of 600–800 words in the manner of Benjamin Franklin’s portrait of his father. The finished sketch is both a portfolio piece and a gift to the person whose life it tells, and a record of God’s providence in your own family.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Knows the heads of encomium (origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison) from Unit 2 and can write a thesis sentence (Unit 6).
- Can identify participial phrases and adverb and noun clauses (Grammar Level 3, Units 17–18), or is studying them alongside this unit.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain Plutarch’s rule that a life is shown in small deeds as well as great ones.
- ☐ I can write open and follow-up questions and take accurate interview notes with exact quotations.
- ☐ I can sort a life under the heads of encomium and write a controlling idea that governs what I keep and cut.
- ☐ I can write a biographical sketch that opens with a telling anecdote, uses telling details, and closes with an epilogue.
- ☐ I can keep past events in the past tense and my subject’s deeds in active voice.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Plutarch’s Lives, Dryden translation revised by Clough (Project Gutenberg #674)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/674>): Read the opening of “Alexander” and the Bucephalus story (chapter 6) aloud together.
- **Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (Project Gutenberg #148)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/148>): The opening pages on his ancestors and his father are the models for 7.2 and 7.4.
- **The Voyage of Life, National Gallery of Art** (<https://www.nga.gov/>): Search the collection for Thomas Cole’s four paintings to view the whole series used in 7.3.

7.1 PLUTARCH’S LIVES: NOT HISTORIES, BUT LIVES ✎ ★

OBJECTIVES

- Tell who Plutarch was, what his *Parallel Lives* are, and why they have been read for nineteen centuries.
- Explain Plutarch’s rule that “a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest” can show a person’s character better than a famous battle.
- Write a Plutarch-style anecdote: one small, true deed that reveals the character of someone you know.

Warm-up. Think of an older person you know well. Without naming any big achievement (a job title, a trophy, a degree), tell one small thing that person always does. What does that habit tell you about him or her?

Video slot. Video coming. Plutarch and his *Parallel Lives* (an introduction to the ancient biographer, or the story of Alexander and Bucephalus). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

biography

The written story of a real person’s life, from the Greek *bios* (life) and *graphein* (to write).

biographical sketch

A short biography that does not tell everything but chooses the facts and scenes that show who the person was.

anecdote

A short, true story about one moment in a person’s life, often small, that reveals his or her character.

character

The settled habits of a person’s soul: his virtues and vices, what he loves and how he acts when no one is grading him.

Parallel Lives

Plutarch’s great work, which pairs the life of a famous Greek with the life of a famous Roman (Alexander with Caesar, Demosthenes with Cicero) and compares them.

CORE IDEAS

A new kind of writing. This year you have praised (encomium), blamed (invective) and told stories from three points of view. Now you put those skills together to tell the story of a real life. A *biographical sketch* is not a whole book. It is a short portrait in words, like a pencil sketch beside an oil painting: fewer lines, but every line chosen. Over four lessons you will

read the master of the form, interview an older person, arrange what you learn, and write a sketch of your own.

The master. Plutarch was a Greek who lived about A.D. 46 to after 119, mostly in the small town of Chaeronea, where he served as a magistrate. For many years he was also a priest at Delphi. He wrote dozens of essays, but he is remembered for his *Parallel Lives*: pairs of famous Greeks and Romans, set side by side so that each life throws light on the other. Twenty-two of the pairs survive. In 1579 Sir Thomas North put them into English, and Shakespeare took the plots of *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* from North's Plutarch. Later, Dryden and his fellow translators made a new English version, which Arthur Hugh Clough revised in 1859. That is the version you will copy.

Lives, not histories. A historian asks, "What happened?" Plutarch asks, "What kind of man was this?" He tells us plainly in the model passage: "my design is not to write histories, but lives." A battle may show a general's skill, but a joke at dinner, a kindness to a servant, or a word spoken in anger may show his soul. Like a portrait painter who spends most of his care on the face, Plutarch spends his care on the "marks and indications" of character.

The telling anecdote. Plutarch's most famous example comes early in his life of Alexander. A horse named Bucephalus was brought to King Philip, but it reared and would let no one mount. The boy Alexander noticed something the grown men had missed: the horse was afraid of its own shadow. He turned its head toward the sun, calmed it, and rode it. Plutarch does not stop to say "Alexander was observant and bold." He lets the deed say it. That is the first skill of a biographer: *find the small deed that shows the large truth, and tell it plainly.*

Truth first. A biography is not a story you are free to invent. Plutarch sometimes weighed two reports and told his reader which he trusted. Your sketches must be true in the same way. When you are not sure of a fact, you ask, you check, or you leave it out. "Whatsoever things are true" comes first in this year's verse (Philippians 4:8) for a reason.

Copy, then imitate. Copy the model by hand. Notice how Plutarch builds one long sentence by setting the small things ("an expression or a jest") against the great ones ("the most famous sieges"), and how he closes with a comparison to a painter. Then try one sentence of your own on the same plan.

The model. *Plutarch, "Alexander," in Plutarch's Lives, the Dryden translation revised by Arthur Hugh Clough (1859), Project Gutenberg #674*

It being my purpose to write the lives of Alexander the king, and of Caesar, by whom Pompey was destroyed, the multitude of their great actions affords so large a field that I were to blame if I should not by way of apology forewarn my reader that I have chosen rather to epitomize the most celebrated parts of their story, than to insist at large on every particular circumstance of it. It must be borne in mind that my design is not to write histories, but lives. And the most glorious exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest discoveries of virtue or vice in men; sometimes a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest, informs us better of their characters and inclinations, than the most famous sieges, the

greatest armaments, or the bloodiest battles whatsoever. Therefore as portrait-painters are more exact in the lines and features of the face in which the character is seen, than in the other parts of the body, so I must be allowed to give my more particular attention to the marks and indications of the souls of men, and while I endeavor by these to portray their lives, may be free to leave more weighty matters and great battles to be treated of by others

PICTURE STUDY



The Queens of Persia at the Feet of Alexander (The Tent of Darius), Charles Le Brun, 1660-1661 · Oil on canvas · Palace of Versailles, France
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

After his victory at Issus in 333 B.C., Alexander captured the mother, wife and daughters of the Persian king Darius. Plutarch tells how Alexander treated these royal captives with honor and protected them, when the custom of war allowed far worse. Le Brun painted the scene for King Louis XIV of France. Notice that it is not a battle picture. Like Plutarch, the painter chose a quiet moment that shows a man's character.

Look closely

- Find Alexander. How does the painter make him stand out from everyone else in the tent?
- Look at the hands of the kneeling women and of Alexander. What is each gesture saying?
- Find the soldiers at the edges. Are they watching the women or their commander?

Talk about it

1. Why might a quiet moment of mercy tell us more about Alexander than one of his battles? Answer in a paragraph, using Plutarch's own reasoning from the model.

2. Write the scene in three sentences as Plutarch might, telling only what Alexander did and said, and letting the reader judge his character.

WRITING PROJECT: A TELLING ANECDOTE

Write one Plutarch-style anecdote about a real person you know well, ideally the grandparent or older relative you will interview in Lesson 7.2. This paragraph may become the opening of your finished sketch in Lesson 7.4.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- The model passage
- A parent or sibling to check your facts

Steps

1. Copy the model passage by hand. Underline the small things Plutarch names and circle the great things he sets against them.
2. List five small, true things you have seen your person do or heard him or her say: a habit, a saying, a kindness, a joke, a way of working.
3. Beside each, write the virtue (or quirk) it reveals. Choose the one that shows the most with the least.
4. Write the anecdote in one paragraph of 120–180 words. Tell who, where, what was done and what was said. Do *not* name the virtue until the last sentence, or not at all.
5. Begin or end with one sentence on Plutarch's plan: "Great deeds may tell us what a man did; small ones tell us who he was."
6. Ask someone who was there to check every fact. Fix anything you misremembered.

Check your work

- Every detail is true; I checked with someone who knows.
- The anecdote shows one small deed or saying, not a list of achievements.
- I let the deed show the character instead of announcing it in every sentence.
- I used at least one participial phrase correctly ("Seeing the dog limp, Grandpa ..."), and it modifies the right noun.
- My verbs stay in the past tense throughout the story.
- Every sentence is complete; no fragments or run-ons.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the model passage by hand. Then imitate its third sentence: "The most glorious ____ do not always ____; sometimes a matter of less moment, ____, ____ better than ____."
2. Start a page titled "Small Deeds." List ten small things that have shown you someone's character (a teacher, a coach, a pastor, a grandparent).
3. Write the Bucephalus story in four sentences from memory, then check it against the core ideas.

History note. Plutarch (about A.D. 46 to after 119) lived under Roman rule in Greece. His *Lives* were favorite reading for centuries: Shakespeare drew plays from them, and many of America’s founders knew them well. Le Brun’s painting, finished in 1661, was one of the first large works he made for Louis XIV and now hangs at Versailles.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 17.2 “Participles.” A participial phrase (“seeing the horse afraid of its shadow”) lets a biographer pack a small action into the front of a sentence; make sure it sits beside the person who did it.

For families. The model is printed from the Dryden translation as revised by Clough (Project Gutenberg #674), the classic public-domain English Plutarch. The Bucephalus story is in Plutarch’s “Alexander,” chapter 6, and is worth reading aloud. If your student has no living grandparent, a great-aunt or great-uncle, an older neighbor or a longtime church member makes an excellent subject for this unit; please help choose someone in this first lesson so the interview in 7.2 can be scheduled.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote: “My grandmother is very generous. She always gives to people. She is the most generous person I know.” Revise it into a Plutarch-style anecdote.

1. Notice the problem: the word “generous” is announced three times, but nothing is shown.
2. Ask: what is one small, true moment when she was generous? The student remembers that she kept a basket of extra lunches by the door every Saturday for the boys who mowed the church lawn.
3. Tell the moment with who, where, what was done and what was said. Save the judgment for the end, or leave it out.

Answer: Every Saturday in summer, a basket sat by Grandma’s back door with four sack lunches in it. She had packed them before breakfast for the boys who mowed the church lawn across the road, and she never put her name on them. When I asked why she did not tell them who made the lunches, she wiped her hands on her apron and said, “The Lord knows. That’s plenty.” I have seen her give money and time to many people, but that basket taught me more about her than any check she ever wrote.

Example 2. Take apart Plutarch’s third sentence: “And the most glorious exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest discoveries of virtue or vice in men; sometimes a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest, informs us better of their characters and inclinations, than the most famous sieges, the greatest armaments, or the bloodiest battles whatsoever.”

1. Find the semicolon. It joins two independent clauses: a general claim, then the surprising truth.
2. In the second clause, list the small things: “an expression or a jest.” List the great things: “sieges ... armaments ... battles.”
3. Notice the three great things each have a superlative adjective (most famous, greatest, bloodiest) so the small things seem smaller still and yet win.

Answer: It is a compound sentence that sets small against great. Plutarch piles up three superlatives for the great deeds so that, when the small deed wins, the reader feels the surprise.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Where did Plutarch live, and about when?
2. **EASY** Why are Plutarch’s biographies called *Parallel Lives*?
3. **EASY** Finish Plutarch’s sentence: “my design is not to write histories, but ...”
4. **EASY** What is an anecdote?
5. **MEDIUM** In the model, Plutarch compares himself to what kind of artist, and why?
6. **MEDIUM** What did young Alexander notice about Bucephalus, and what does the story show about him?
7. **MEDIUM** Which English translator’s Plutarch did Shakespeare use?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write two sentences about a famous American in Plutarch’s manner: one great deed, then one small deed that shows character better.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Listing achievements (“She was a nurse for thirty years and raised five children”) instead of telling one moment that shows character.
- Announcing the virtue in every sentence instead of letting the deed speak.
- Inventing or “improving” details. A biographical sketch must be true; check it with someone who was there.

Make it a game • Guess the Life. Each player writes one small, true anecdote about a well-known person from history or the Bible without naming him or her (for example, a boy who turned a frightened horse toward the sun). Others guess who it is. Score a point for a correct guess and a point for the writer if the anecdote was small but still gave the person away.

Scripture. “Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” (Proverbs 20:11, KJV)

Solomon knew Plutarch’s rule long before Plutarch: small doings, even a child’s, show what a person is.

Practice: answers

1. In Chaeronea, in Greece, about A.D. 46 to after 119.
2. He paired a famous Greek with a famous Roman and compared them, such as Alexander with Caesar.
3. “lives.”
4. A short, true story about one moment in a person’s life that reveals character.
5. A portrait painter, who takes most care with the face because character is seen there; Plutarch takes most care with the signs of a person’s soul.
6. That the horse was afraid of its own shadow; he turned it toward the sun. It shows he was observant, patient and bold.
7. Sir Thomas North’s (1579).
8. Sample: George Washington won the war at Yorktown and was twice chosen President. Yet his character shows more plainly in the day in 1783 he handed his commission back to Congress and rode home to farm at Mount Vernon, when he might have kept power.

7.2 INTERVIEWING A GRANDPARENT

OBJECTIVES

- Prepare open questions arranged under the heads of encomium: origin, upbringing, work and deeds, and character.
- Conduct a respectful interview with a grandparent or older relative, taking careful notes and marking exact words.
- Turn interview notes into accurate sentences, using quotations and indirect quotations correctly.

Warm-up. Which question will get a longer answer: “Did you like school?” or “What was a school day like when you were my age?” Why? Write two more questions of each kind.

Video slot. Video coming. How to conduct a family oral history interview (tips on questions, listening and note-taking). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

interview

A planned conversation in which one person asks questions to learn facts and stories from another.

open question

A question that cannot be answered with “yes,” “no” or one word: “What did your father do for a living?”

follow-up question

A question asked on the spot to draw out more of an answer: “What happened next?” “What did he say?”

primary source

A person or document from the time itself: an eyewitness, a letter, a diary, a family Bible record.

indirect quotation

Reporting what someone said without his exact words, usually in a noun clause: Grandpa said *that the winter of 1978 buried the fences*.

CORE IDEAS

Plutarch read; you may ask. Plutarch had to work from old books and reports. You have something better: a living witness. Your grandparents remember a world you never saw, and many of their stories have never been written down. If no one asks, those stories will be lost. Benjamin Franklin began his *Autobiography* by saying, “I have ever had pleasure in obtaining

any little anecdotes of my ancestors,” and the model shows what he learned from an uncle who had asked before him.

An old command. Asking our elders is not only good history; it is obedience. Moses told Israel, “ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee” (Deuteronomy 32:7), and the psalmist promised to tell “the generation to come the praises of the LORD” (Psalm 78:4). As you listen, watch for God’s providence: the move that turned out well, the job that came just in time, the prayer that was answered.

Plan by heads. You already know the heads of encomium from Unit 2: origin, upbringing, deeds and comparison. Use them as drawers for your questions. *Origin:* Where and when were you born? Who were your parents and grandparents, and what work did they do? *Upbringing:* What was your house like? What chores did you have? Who taught you the most? *Deeds and work:* What was your first job? What work are you proudest of? What hard time did you come through, and how? *Character and faith:* Who shaped what you believe? What advice would you give someone my age? Write twelve to fifteen open questions, and star the five you most want answered in case time runs short.

Listen more than you talk. A good interviewer asks, then waits. Silence is not rude; it gives the other person time to remember. When an answer opens a door, step through with a follow-up: “What did that look like?” “What did your mother say?” “Do you remember the year?” The best stories often come from follow-ups, not from your list.

Notes you can trust. Write the date, place and name at the top of your page. Take notes in short phrases, not full sentences. When your grandparent says something in a memorable way, write the *exact* words and put them in quotation marks so you will know later that they are a quotation. Mark names and dates you need to check with a small question mark. You may also record the interview if your grandparent agrees; ask first. Within a day, read your notes over and fill in what you remember while it is fresh.

Respect and truth. Some memories are painful. If your grandparent does not want to talk about something, thank him or her and move on. Never print a private story without permission. And keep the ninth commandment in your notes: do not stretch what was said. If two relatives remember a story differently, you may say so in your sketch, as Plutarch did when his sources disagreed.

The model. *Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (begun 1771), Project Gutenberg #148*

The notes one of my uncles (who had the same kind of curiosity in collecting family anecdotes) once put into my hands, furnished me with several particulars relating to our ancestors. From these notes I learned that the family had lived in the same village, Ecton, in Northamptonshire, for three hundred years, and how much longer he knew not (perhaps from the time when the name of Franklin, that before was the name of an order of people, was assumed by them as a surname when others took surnames all over the kingdom), on a freehold of about thirty acres, aided by the smith's business, which had continued in the family till his

time, the eldest son being always bred to that business; a custom which he and my father followed as to their eldest sons.

PICTURE STUDY



An Old Man and His Grandson, Domenico Ghirlandaio, about 1490 · Tempera on wood panel · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Ghirlandaio was one of the busiest painters in Florence, the teacher in whose workshop young Michelangelo trained. Here he painted an old man and a little boy, usually called his grandson, gazing at each other. The painter did not hide the bumps on the old man's nose, but no one remembers the picture for that. What we remember is the look that passes between them. Through the window a road winds off into the distance, like the long years that stand between the two.

Look closely

- Follow the two pairs of eyes. Who is looking at whom, and how?
- Find the boy's hand. What does that small gesture tell you?
- Look through the window. Where does the road go, and what might it stand for?

Talk about it

1. Write three open questions the boy might ask his grandfather when he is old enough to interview him.
2. The painter showed the old man's face honestly, flaws and all, and yet the picture is full of love. How can a written sketch of your grandparent be both honest and loving?

WRITING PROJECT: THE INTERVIEW

Plan, hold and write up an interview with a grandparent or another older person who knows your family. Your notes are the raw material for the sketch you will write in Lesson 7.4.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Two pens or pencils
- A recording device (only with permission)
- Family photographs, a family Bible record or old letters, if available

Steps

1. Ask your grandparent, with your parent's help, for an hour. Explain that you are writing a short biography for school and would like to hear about his or her life.
2. Write 12–15 open questions under four heads: Origin, Upbringing, Work and Deeds, Character and Faith. Star your top five.
3. Hold the interview. Put the date, place and name at the top of the page. Ask, wait, and follow up. Write exact words in quotation marks when something is said memorably. If you can, look at photographs together; they wake up memories.
4. Before you leave, ask: "Is there anything I didn't ask that you want me to know?" Then thank your grandparent.
5. Within a day, read your notes and fill in gaps. Put a question mark beside anything to check (names, dates, places), and check it with another relative or a record.
6. Write a one-page interview summary: five facts you learned, two quotations copied exactly, and one story told in four or five sentences of your own.

Check your work

- My questions are open questions, sorted under the four heads.
- My notes give the date, place and the person's full name.
- Exact words are in quotation marks; the punctuation goes inside the closing mark.
- Indirect quotations use a noun clause and no quotation marks ("She said that the mill closed in 1962").
- I checked doubtful names and dates with a second source.
- Every sentence in my summary is complete and in the past tense when telling past events.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Franklin's model sentence about his uncle's notes. Circle the parentheses and tell why Franklin used them.
2. Turn five closed questions into open ones: "Were you poor?" "Did you go to church?" "Did you like your job?" "Was it cold?" "Were you scared?"

3. After the interview, write the one sentence your grandparent said that you most want to remember, word for word.

History note. Franklin began his *Autobiography* in 1771 as a letter to his son William. In 1758 the two of them had visited Ecton, the village in Northamptonshire, England, where Franklins had lived for generations, and had searched the parish records there. Ghirlandaio's panel of about 1490 hangs in the Louvre.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.4 "Noun Clauses." When you report what your grandparent said without exact words ("He told me *that the river froze solid that year*"), the report is a noun clause acting as a direct object.

For families. Please help arrange the interview, and sit in if your student is shy or the subject is frail. If no grandparent is living or available, an older relative, a family friend, or a longtime member of your church works just as well; a phone or video call is fine. Some memories (war, illness, the death of a child) may be hard to speak of; teach your student to receive such things gently and not to press. Ask the subject before any part of the finished sketch is shared outside the family, and leave out details such as addresses or birth dates if the sketch will be posted anywhere. The model is from Project Gutenberg #148.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's first question list for her grandfather began: "Were you born in Ohio? Did you have brothers? Did you work on a farm? Was it hard?" Revise it.

1. Notice that all four are closed questions; each can be answered "yes" or "no."
2. Keep the subject of each question but ask how, what, who or tell me about.
3. Sort the new questions under their heads.

Answer: Origin: "Where were you born, and what was the town like?" "Who was in your family when you were growing up?" Upbringing and work: "What jobs did you do on the farm, and which one did you hate most?" Deeds: "What was the hardest year you remember, and how did your family get through it?"

Example 2. Turn these interview notes into two accurate sentences, one with a direct quotation and one with an indirect quotation. Notes: “Grandma, 3/9. 1st job: dime store, 1961, age 15, 75 cents/hr. ‘I thought I was rich.’ Bought Mom a Bible with first pay. (year? check)”

1. Use the exact words only where the notes have quotation marks.
2. Report the rest in a noun clause beginning with that.
3. Leave out or check the doubtful fact. Here the student asked Great-aunt Ruth, who confirmed the Bible was bought in 1961.

Answer: Grandma took her first job at the dime store in 1961, when she was fifteen. She told me that she earned seventy-five cents an hour, and she laughed and said, “I thought I was rich.” With her first pay she bought her mother a Bible.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Is this open or closed? “Did you like your first job?”
2. **EASY** Name the four heads you will use to sort your interview questions.
3. **EASY** What is a primary source? Give two examples for a family biography.
4. **EASY** According to the model, how long had Franklin’s family lived in Ecton, and what trade did the eldest son learn?
5. **MEDIUM** Write two follow-up questions for this answer: “We moved to Texas in 1955 because Dad got work on the railroad.”
6. **MEDIUM** Change to an indirect quotation: Grandpa said, “I walked two miles to school.”
7. **MEDIUM** Punctuate: Grandma said the Lord always provided for us
8. **CHALLENGE** Your grandmother says the family farm was sold in 1968; your uncle says 1971. What should you do in your notes and in your sketch?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Asking only yes-or-no questions and getting one-word answers.
- Reading the list without listening, and so missing the follow-up that would have drawn out the best story.
- Putting quotation marks around words the person did not actually say, or forgetting to mark the words they did say.
- Trusting memory for names and dates without checking.

Make it a game · Twenty Open Questions. A parent thinks of a true event from his or her own childhood. The student may ask only open questions (who, what, where, when, why, how, tell me about) and must reconstruct the story. Any yes-or-no question costs a point. When the story is out, the student retells it in five sentences, and the parent scores it for accuracy.

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

God Himself tells us to ask our elders; your interview obeys this command.

Practice: answers

1. Closed. Open version: “What was your first job like?”
2. Origin; upbringing; work and deeds; character and faith.
3. A person or document from the time itself. Examples: a grandparent’s memories, a family Bible record, old letters, a diary.
4. Three hundred years (and perhaps longer); the smith’s business (blacksmithing).
5. Sample: “What do you remember about the trip?” “What did your father do on the railroad, and what were his hours like?”
6. Grandpa said that he had walked two miles to school.
7. Grandma said, “The Lord always provided for us.” (or, indirect: Grandma said that the Lord had always provided for them.)
8. Mark the date with a question mark and check a record (a deed, a letter, a family Bible) or ask another relative. If it cannot be settled, write around it (“in the late 1960s”) or say plainly that the family remembers it two ways.

7.3 ARRANGING A LIFE

OBJECTIVES

- Sort interview notes under the heads of encomium: origin, upbringing, deeds and character, with a closing comparison or reflection.
- Choose a controlling idea (one sentence that names what this life shows) and cut material that does not serve it.
- Build a working outline for a biographical sketch, choosing chronological or topical order and marking time with adverb clauses.

Warm-up. Your interview notes are a heap of bricks. Name three different things you could build with the same heap. What decides which one you build?

Video slot. Video coming. Thomas Cole’s *The Voyage of Life* at the National Gallery of Art (an introduction to the four paintings). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

arrangement

The second canon of rhetoric (Latin *dispositio*): putting your material in the best order.

controlling idea

The one sentence that says what a life shows and governs what you keep and cut; the thesis of a biographical sketch.

chronological order

Telling a life in the order of time, from birth onward, as Plutarch usually did.

topical order

Grouping a life by subjects (work, family, faith) rather than by years, as the Roman biographer Suetonius often did.

frame

An opening scene that the writer returns to at the end, so the sketch closes where it began, but with new meaning.

CORE IDEAS

Too much, not too little. After a good interview you have more than you can use. Plutarch faced the same trouble with Alexander and said he would “epitomize the most celebrated parts” rather than tell every detail. Arranging a life begins with choosing. A sketch of 600 to 800 words might hold one opening anecdote, three or four short stories, and a handful of facts. The rest stays in your notebook, where it is still treasure.

The controlling idea. Before you sort, decide what this life shows. Read your notes and ask: what thread runs through the stories? Write it in one sentence, as you wrote a thesis in Unit

6: “Grandpa Joe’s life shows that steady work, done for others, outlasts hard times.” “My grandmother’s faith was not loud, but it held her family together through three moves and a fire.” Every story you keep should help prove that sentence. A story that is charming but off the thread may go.

The heads of encomium. The ancient teachers gave an order for praising a person that still works for a sketch. Aphthonius listed origin (nation, homeland, ancestors, parents), upbringing (education, training), deeds (the person’s virtues shown in action), and comparison, with an introduction and an epilogue. Stephen used the same order when he told the life of Moses in the model: birth and early care, upbringing in Pharaoh’s house, learning, deeds, and then the turning point “when he was full forty years old.” Sort your notes into these drawers. Under deeds, include work, hardships met, and kindnesses done.

Time or topic. Most sketches move in *chronological order*, because readers like to follow a life forward. Stephen marks his stages by forty-year spans (Acts 7:23, 30, 36). But a life may also be told in *topical order*: one section on work, one on family, one on faith. Suetonius arranged his lives of the Caesars largely by topic. Choose the order that best proves your controlling idea, and keep it. Do not jump back and forth without warning.

The frame. Many fine sketches open with a telling anecdote (the work you did in 7.1), then step back to the beginning of the life, move forward through the heads, and close by returning to the opening scene. The return makes the ending feel earned: the reader now understands why that small moment mattered.

Marking time. A reader must always know when he is. Adverb clauses of time do this work: *When the mill closed in 1962, ... After Grandpa came home from the Army, ... While the children were small,* Put one at the start of each new stage, and keep your verbs in the past tense as you move through the years.

The model. *Acts 7:20-23, from Stephen’s speech before the council (KJV)*

In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father’s house three months: And when he was cast out, Pharaoh’s daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

PICTURE STUDY



The Voyage of Life: Old Age, Thomas Cole, 1842 · Oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Thomas Cole, the American landscape painter, told a whole human life in four paintings: *Childhood*, *Youth*, *Manhood* and *Old Age*. In each, the same traveler rides a boat down the river of life, watched over by a guardian angel. Cole arranged the life in chronological order, and each stage has its own weather: dawn and flowers for childhood, a bright dream of a castle in the sky for youth, storms and rapids for manhood. In this last painting the river has reached the ocean, and the old man looks up toward the light of heaven.

Look closely

- Find the old man's hands and face. What is he looking at?
- Find the angel. Where is it pointing, and what is there?
- Compare the water and sky here with what you would expect in a painting called *Youth*. How does the weather mark the stage of life?

Talk about it

1. If you painted your grandparent's life in four stages like Cole, what would each painting show? Write one sentence for each stage.
2. Cole ends his series with hope, not just with an ending. How might the last paragraph of your sketch point beyond the facts to what the life meant?

WRITING PROJECT: THE WORKING OUTLINE

Turn your interview notes from 7.2 into an outline you can write from in 7.4.

You will need

- Your interview notes and summary from 7.2
- Your anecdote from 7.1
- Index cards or slips of paper
- Highlighters in four colors

Steps

1. Read all your notes. Highlight each fact or story by head: one color for origin, one for upbringing, one for deeds and work, one for character and faith.
2. Write your controlling idea in one sentence. Test it: can at least three of your stories prove it?
3. Put each story or important fact on its own card. Lay the cards out under the heads. Set aside every card that does not serve the controlling idea.
4. Choose chronological or topical order. Arrange the cards, then number them.
5. Choose your opening: the 7.1 anecdote or another telling moment. Decide whether you will return to it at the end (a frame).
6. Copy the result as an outline: Opening anecdote; I. Origin; II. Upbringing; III. Deeds and work (two or three stories); IV. Character and faith; Closing. Under each, list the cards and one adverb clause of time you will use to open that section.

Check your work

- My controlling idea is one clear sentence about what this life shows.
- Every item in my outline supports the controlling idea.
- My outline follows one order (chronological or topical) without jumping around.
- Each section opens with an adverb clause of time or place, set off by a comma when it comes first.
- My outline names an opening anecdote and a plan for the closing.
- Facts I am unsure of are marked to check before I write.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Acts 7:20-23. Label each part with its head: origin, upbringing, education, deeds, turning point.
2. Write five adverb clauses of time you could use in your sketch ("When she was nine," "After the war ended," "By the time the farm was paid off," ...).
3. Write three possible controlling ideas for your sketch, then circle the one your stories prove best.

History note. Cole painted *The Voyage of Life* twice: the first set (1840) is in the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute in Utica, New York, and the second (1842), shown here, is in the National Gallery of Art in Washington. Cole was a devout Christian and meant the series as a sermon in paint. Aphthonius, whose heads of encomium you learned in Unit 2, wrote his textbook of exercises in the fourth century A.D.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.3 “Adverb Clauses.” Clauses beginning with *when*, *after*, *while* and *until* mark the stages of a life; when one opens a sentence, follow it with a comma.

For families. This is the lesson where many students stall, because they want to keep everything. Help by asking, “Which three stories would your grandparent most want remembered?” The model is printed from the King James text. Stephen’s whole review of Moses’s life runs from Acts 7:20 to 7:44 and is a fine example of a life arranged by stages.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student’s notes on his grandfather include: born 1944 in Kentucky; father a coal miner; seventh of nine children; quit school at 16 to work; finished his diploma at night at 30; drove a truck 35 years; never missed a Sunday; built his own house; loved fishing; once drove all night through snow to bring medicine to a sick neighbor; served as a deacon. Write a controlling idea and decide what to keep.

1. Look for a thread. Many items show steady work and service: the night diploma, 35 years driving, building the house, the medicine run, the deacon’s work.
2. Write the controlling idea: “Grandpa Earl never had an easy road, but he kept driving it, for his family and for anyone who needed him.”
3. Keep what proves it. Fishing is a pleasant fact but off the thread; it may get one sentence or go. The snowy drive is the best anecdote and should open the sketch.

Answer: Opening: the all-night drive through snow with the medicine. I. Origin: Kentucky, 1944, coal miner’s son, seventh of nine. II. Upbringing: left school at 16 to help the family. III. Deeds: diploma at night at 30; 35 years on the road; built his own house. IV. Character and faith: never missed a Sunday; deacon. Closing: return to the snowy road and the controlling idea.

Example 2. Revise this jumbled paragraph into clear chronological order with adverb clauses of time: “Grandma became a nurse. She grew up on a farm in Iowa. She married Grandpa in 1965. She was born in 1943. She worked nights for twenty years while raising four children.”

1. Number the events by time: born 1943; grew up on the farm; became a nurse; married 1965; worked nights for twenty years.
2. Join some events with adverb clauses so the reader feels time passing.
3. Keep every verb in the past tense.

Answer: Grandma was born in 1943 and grew up on a farm in Iowa. After she finished nursing school, she married Grandpa in 1965. While she raised four children, she worked the night shift at the hospital for twenty years.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Which canon of rhetoric is this lesson about?
2. **EASY** Name the heads of encomium in order, as Aphthonius gives them.
3. **EASY** What is a controlling idea?
4. **EASY** In Acts 7:20–23, at what age did Moses decide to visit his brethren?
5. **MEDIUM** Find the adverb clause: “When the factory closed, Grandpa opened a repair shop in his garage.”
6. **MEDIUM** Which order, chronological or topical, would you choose for a grandmother whose life you want to show through three subjects (her garden, her teaching, her church work) that ran side by side for fifty years? Why?
7. **MEDIUM** Controlling idea: “Aunt Ruth’s cheerfulness carried her through hard times.” Which detail should be cut? (a) She sang hymns while canning in a hot kitchen. (b) She joked with the nurses after surgery. (c) She owned a blue Ford. (d) She wrote funny letters to her son in the Navy.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a frame for a sketch: an opening sentence of an anecdote and a closing sentence that returns to it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Trying to include every fact from the interview, so the sketch becomes a list.
- Writing without a controlling idea, so the stories do not add up to a portrait.
- Jumping between years without adverb clauses or other signals of time.
- Placing the best anecdote in the middle where it is lost, instead of opening or closing with it.

Make it a game • Life in Order. A parent writes ten events from a well-known life (Joseph in Genesis 37–50, or George Washington) on slips of paper and shuffles them. The student races to put them in chronological order, then picks the one slip that would make the best opening anecdote and explains why.

Scripture. “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” (Psalm 90:12, KJV)

Numbering a life’s days and setting them in order is a path to wisdom, for the writer as much as for the reader.

Practice: answers

1. Arrangement (*dispositio*).
2. Introduction, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
3. One sentence that says what the life shows; it governs what is kept and cut.
4. When he was full forty years old.
5. “When the factory closed” (it tells when Grandpa opened the shop).

6. Topical, because the three subjects ran at the same time; telling them by year would scatter each one.
7. (c) The blue Ford does not show cheerfulness.
8. Sample: Opening: "The first thing I remember about Grandpa is the sound of his hammer at six in the morning." Closing: "The house is quiet now at six, but every board he nailed still holds."

7.4 THE SKETCH: A LIFE IN TELLING DETAILS

OBJECTIVES

- Study how Franklin sketched his father through person, skills, judgment and a single household habit.
- Draft a biographical sketch of 600–800 words from your outline, opening with a telling anecdote and closing on your controlling idea.
- Revise for truth, telling detail, and consistent tense, voice and mood, then present the sketch to its subject.

Warm-up. Describe someone in your family in exactly three details: one about how the person looks, one about a skill, and one habit at the dinner table. Could a stranger pick him or her out of a crowd from your three details?

Video slot. Video coming. Benjamin Franklin’s boyhood in Boston and his father Josiah (a short history program or museum talk). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

telling detail

A small, specific fact that reveals more than it says: Franklin’s father playing psalm tunes on his violin in the evening.

person and character

Franklin’s phrase for the two halves of a portrait: what a person looked like and could do, and what kind of soul he had.

epilogue

The closing of an encomium or sketch, which gathers the life into its meaning and may look forward.

tense shift

Changing from past to present (or back) without reason, which confuses the reader about when things happened.

draft

A complete first version, written to be revised, not polished as you go.

CORE IDEAS

Franklin’s portrait of his father. In the model, Franklin sketches Josiah Franklin, a Boston soap and candle maker who raised a large family on little money. Notice the order. First comes *person*: build, strength, skill at drawing and music. Then a telling detail: psalm tunes on the violin “after the business of the day was over.” Then *character*: “a sound understanding and solid judgment.” Then proof: leading men of the town and church came to

ask his advice. Last, a habit at the table that shaped his children for life. Franklin never says “my father was wise and godly.” He shows a man whose neighbors sought his counsel and whose dinner talk was about “what was good, just, and prudent.”

One habit can carry a portrait. Franklin spends a long sentence on a surprising subject: his family never talked about the food. That small habit tells us what Josiah cared about, how he taught, and how it shaped Benjamin, who says he could scarcely tell a few hours later what he had eaten. This is Plutarch’s rule from 7.1 at work: “a matter of less moment” shows the soul. Look in your notes for the habit that only your grandparent had.

Write the draft straight through. Use your outline from 7.3. Begin with the telling anecdote. Then step back: “To understand that night, you have to know where Grandpa came from.” Move through origin, upbringing and deeds, opening each stage with an adverb clause of time. Use one or two exact quotations from your interview; they let the reader hear your grandparent’s voice. Do not stop to fix every word. A draft is meant to be revised.

The epilogue. End by gathering the life into its meaning. You may return to your opening scene, state your controlling idea in fresh words, or tell what you have learned from this person. If God’s providence is plain in the story (a door closed and another opened, a prayer answered, a family kept through hard years), name it simply and gratefully, without preaching. Avoid the empty ending: “And that is my grandma’s life.”

Revise in three passes. *Truth:* read the draft to someone who knows the facts; correct every error. *Detail:* underline each general word (nice, hardworking, kind) and replace at least three with a telling detail. *Sentences:* check that you tell past events in the past tense and do not drift into the present (“Grandpa walks to the barn”) by accident; use active voice for your subject’s deeds (“Grandma ran the store,” not “The store was run by Grandma”); and keep each sentence complete.

A gift, not just an assignment. When the sketch is finished, copy it neatly or print it, and give it to the person you wrote about. Read it aloud if he or she wishes. Few gifts honor an older person more than hearing that someone listened carefully to a life and found it worth writing down.

The model. *Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (begun 1771), on his father, Josiah Franklin, Project Gutenberg #148*

He had an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set, and very strong; he was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skilled a little in music, and had a clear pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin and sung withal, as he sometimes did in an evening after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a mechanical genius too, and, on occasion, was very handy in the use of other tradesmen's tools; but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding and solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and publick affairs. In the latter, indeed, he was never employed, the numerous family he had to educate and the straitness of his circumstances keeping him close to his trade; but I remember well his being

frequently visited by leading people, who consulted him for his opinion in affairs of the town or of the church he belonged to, and showed a good deal of respect for his judgment and advice: he was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an arbitrator between contending parties.

At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbor to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life; and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table, whether it was well or ill dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavor, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind, so that I was bro't up in such a perfect inattention to those matters as to be quite indifferent what kind of food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this day if I am asked I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner what I dined upon

PICTURE STUDY



Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 1 (Portrait of the Artist's Mother), James McNeill Whistler, 1871 · Oil on canvas · Musée d'Orsay, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

The American painter James McNeill Whistler painted his mother, Anna, in London when she was in her late sixties. She was a devout Christian who had moved from America to London to keep house for her son. Whistler called the painting an “arrangement” because he cared so much about its shapes and colors, but the world has always called it *Whistler's Mother*. With only a few things (the folded hands, the lace cap, the straight back, the quiet profile), he made a portrait that millions recognize.

Look closely

- Count the objects in the picture besides the woman. Why do you think Whistler kept so few?
- Look at her hands and posture. What do they suggest about her character?
- Find the lace on her cap and cuffs. Why might a painter who used so little color still take care with such a small detail?

Talk about it

1. Whistler chose a few details and left out everything else. List the four or five details from your interview that you would keep if your sketch could hold only those.
2. Write a paragraph describing your grandparent sitting in a favorite chair, using only details that reveal character.

WRITING PROJECT: THE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Write, revise and present a biographical sketch of 600–800 words of the person you interviewed. It is the creative capstone of Unit 7 and goes in your portfolio.

You will need

- Your 7.1 anecdote, 7.2 interview notes and 7.3 outline
- Writing notebook or computer
- A family photograph of your subject (optional, with permission)

Steps

1. Reread the model. In your outline, mark where you will give *person* (looks, skills) and where you will give *character* (judgment, faith, habits), as Franklin did.
2. Write the draft straight through from your outline: opening anecdote, origin, upbringing, deeds and work, character, epilogue. Include one or two exact quotations from the interview.
3. Find one household habit or saying unique to your subject and give it at least three sentences, as Franklin did with his father's table.
4. Revise in three passes: truth (read it to someone who knows the facts), detail (replace at least three general words with telling details), and sentences (tense, voice, completeness).
5. Give the sketch a title that is more than the person's name ("The Man at the Head of the Table," "Ninety Pies a Year").
6. Copy or print a clean final version. Present it to your subject, and read it aloud if he or she wishes.

Check your work

- Every fact is true and checked; quotations are the person's exact words.

- The sketch opens with a telling anecdote and closes with an epilogue that states or shows the controlling idea.
- I used at least three telling details instead of general words like “nice” or “hardworking.”
- I kept past events in the past tense with no accidental shifts to the present, and I used active voice for my subject’s deeds.
- Adverb clauses mark the stages of the life, with commas after introductory clauses.
- Every sentence is complete, and quotation marks and commas around quotations are correct.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Franklin’s first sentence about his father. Then imitate it about your subject: “She had ..., was ..., but ...; she was ..., could ..., and had ..., so that when she ..., it was”
2. List ten general words you might use about your subject (kind, strong, funny ...). Beside each, write one telling detail that shows it instead.
3. After you present your sketch, write a few sentences about what your grandparent said or did when he or she heard it.

History note. Josiah Franklin (1657–1745) came to Boston from England about 1683 and worked as a tallow chandler, making soap and candles. He had seventeen children by two wives; Benjamin was his youngest son. Whistler painted his mother in 1871; the painting was bought by the French government in 1891 and now hangs in the Musée d’Orsay.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.4 “Shifts in Tense, Voice and Mood.” A sketch tells past events in the past tense; switch to the present only for what is still true (“Grandma still keeps the violin in her closet”), and keep your subject in active voice.

For families. The model is printed from Project Gutenberg #148, keeping Franklin’s eighteenth-century spellings (skill’d, publick, bro’t). Please read the draft for accuracy before it is presented; a grandparent will notice an error in a date or name. Ask before sharing the finished sketch beyond the family. Many families find these sketches become keepsakes; consider keeping a copy with family records. The finished sketch is the Unit 7 portfolio piece.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this paragraph for telling detail: “My grandpa was a very hardworking man. He worked hard every day on the farm. He was also very kind and everyone liked him.”

1. Underline the general words: hardworking, worked hard, kind, everyone liked him.
2. Ask the interview notes for proof. Notes: up at 4:30 to milk; fixed the neighbors’ fences without being asked; the feed-store owner said, “Walt’s word is better than a contract.”
3. Replace each general word with one detail. Let a quotation from someone else give the judgment.

Answer: Grandpa’s alarm rang at 4:30 every morning of his life, and the cows were milked before the rest of us woke. When a storm knocked down the Hansens’ fence, he had it standing again before they got home from church. The man who ran the feed store told me once, “Walt’s word is better than a contract.”

Example 2. Find and fix the shifts in tense and voice: “In 1970 Grandma opened a bakery on Main Street. Every morning she rises at three, and ninety pies are baked by her before dawn. Customers lined up out the door.”

1. Tense: “rises” is present, but the rest is past. Change it to “rose.”
2. Voice: “ninety pies are baked by her” is passive and present. Make it active and past: “she baked ninety pies.”
3. Read the paragraph again to be sure every past event is in the past tense.

Answer: In 1970 Grandma opened a bakery on Main Street. Every morning she rose at three and baked ninety pies before dawn. Customers lined up out the door.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What trade did Franklin’s father follow, and in what city?
2. **EASY** Name two of Josiah Franklin’s skills from the model.
3. **EASY** What did Josiah Franklin like to have at his table?
4. **EASY** What is a telling detail?
5. **MEDIUM** How does Franklin prove his father’s good judgment instead of only claiming it?
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the tense shift: “Grandma grew up in Maine, and every winter she skates on the pond behind the house.”
7. **MEDIUM** Change to active voice: “The church roof was repaired by Grandpa in 1985.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write an epilogue (two or three sentences) for a sketch whose controlling idea is “Grandma’s kitchen table was where our family learned to pray and to work.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Turning the sketch into a list of dates and jobs, with no anecdote and no telling details.
- Drifting into the present tense halfway through a past event.
- Ending with an empty line (“That is my grandpa’s life”) instead of an epilogue that gathers the meaning.
- Polishing the first paragraph for a whole session instead of drafting straight through.

Make it a game · Three-Detail Portraits. Each player secretly picks a relative or a well-known figure from history and writes three telling details, with no names and no general words like “kind” or “brave.” Players read their details aloud one at a time; others guess after each. Fewer details needed for a correct guess earn the writer more points (three points after one detail, two after two, one after three).

Scripture. “The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.” (Proverbs 20:7, KJV)

Franklin’s sketch shows a father whose integrity blessed his children for life; your sketch may show the same blessing passed down in your own family.

Practice: answers

1. He was a soap and candle maker (tallow chandler) in Boston.
2. Two of: drawing, music (singing, playing the violin), handiness with tradesmen’s tools, sound judgment.
3. A sensible friend or neighbor to talk with, and a useful topic that would improve his children’s minds.
4. A small, specific fact that reveals more than it says, such as the psalm tunes on the violin.
5. He tells that leading people of the town and church came to ask his advice, that private persons consulted him, and that he was often chosen to settle disputes.
6. Grandma grew up in Maine, and every winter she skated on the pond behind the house.
7. Grandpa repaired the church roof in 1985.
8. Sample: The table is scratched now, and the chairs no longer match. But when we gather there at Thanksgiving, someone always reaches for Grandma’s hand before the food is passed, and the work of the day waits until the blessing is said. She taught us at that table, and she is teaching us still.

UNIT 7 REVIEW

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

1. (3 pts) Who was Plutarch, and what are his *Parallel Lives*?
2. (3 pts) Finish and explain: “my design is not to write histories, but ...”
3. (3 pts) Tell the Bucephalus anecdote in two or three sentences and name what it shows about Alexander.
4. (2 pts) Turn these into open questions: “Did you have chores?” “Was the Depression hard?”
5. (2 pts) Change to an indirect quotation: Grandma said, “We never locked our doors.”
6. (4 pts) Name the heads of encomium you used to sort your notes.
7. (3 pts) What is a controlling idea, and what does it do for a sketch?
8. (2 pts) Underline the adverb clause and add the needed comma: “After the bank failed Great-grandpa sold his tools and moved west.”
9. (3 pts) In the model, how does Franklin show his father’s judgment rather than just claim it?
10. (3 pts) Fix the shifts: “In 1958 Grandpa joined the Army. He is sent to Germany, and letters were written by him every week.”
11. (3 pts) Replace the general word with a telling detail: “My aunt was very generous.”
12. (4 pts) Write a two-sentence epilogue for a sketch of someone you admire.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: A LIFE WORTH TELLING

Place the final, revised biographical sketch from Lesson 7.4 in your portfolio, with a title, the subject’s name, the date of the interview, and (if permitted) a photograph. Include your interview notes and outline behind it to show your work from listening to arranging to writing.

- **Truth and research:** Facts are accurate and checked; quotations are the subject’s exact words; nothing is invented.
- **Arrangement:** A telling anecdote opens the sketch; a clear controlling idea governs the heads (origin, upbringing, deeds, character); an epilogue closes it.
- **Telling detail:** Character is shown through specific deeds, habits and sayings, in Plutarch’s and Franklin’s manner, not announced with general words.
- **Mechanics:** Consistent past tense and active voice; adverb clauses marking time are punctuated correctly; quotations punctuated correctly; complete sentences.

Answer key

1. A Greek writer (about A.D. 46 to after 119) from Chaeronea; biographies pairing a famous Greek with a famous Roman and comparing them.
2. “lives.” Plutarch cares more about character than about the full record of events; a small deed or saying can show the soul better than a battle.

3. No one could ride the horse; young Alexander saw it was afraid of its shadow, turned it toward the sun, calmed it and rode it. It shows he was observant, patient and bold.
4. Sample: "What chores did you have growing up?" "What do you remember about how your family got through the Depression?"
5. Grandma said that they had never locked their doors.
6. Origin, upbringing, deeds (and work), character (and faith), with comparison or an epilogue at the close.
7. One sentence that says what the life shows; it decides which stories are kept and which are cut.
8. After the bank failed, Great-grandpa sold his tools and moved west. (Adverb clause: "After the bank failed.")
9. Leading people of the town and church came to ask his advice, private persons consulted him, and he was often chosen to settle disputes.
10. In 1958 Grandpa joined the Army. He was sent to Germany, and he wrote letters every week.
11. Sample: Every Christmas my aunt knitted forty pairs of mittens and left them in a box at the church door.
12. Sample: Grandpa's shop has been closed for ten years, but the chairs he built still stand in six houses in our town. He used to say a joint should outlast the carpenter, and his have.

REVIEW

The year closes by bringing all five canons together. You will review the year's exercises and draft an encomium speech modeled on David's lament for Saul and Jonathan, deliver it with Hamlet's advice to the players as your guide, revise it and two other pieces by Benjamin Franklin's method of comparing and correcting, and finally gather a portfolio of eight pieces and answer for it in an oral examination.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has written a commonplace, an encomium, an invective, a story, a sonnet, an essay and a biographical sketch in Units 1–7.
- Can name the heads of the encomium (origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison) and the five canons of rhetoric.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name each of the year's exercises and the heads or parts that build it.
- ☐ I can write a three- to four-minute encomium speech for the ear, with deeds and a refrain.
- ☐ I can deliver a speech from a key-word card with pauses, eye contact and fitting gestures.
- ☐ I can revise from large to small (invention, arrangement, style, mechanics) and fix shifts in tense, voice and mood.
- ☐ I can assemble a portfolio and explain each piece aloud in an oral examination.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **Shakespeare, Hamlet (Project Gutenberg #1524)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1524>): Hamlet's advice to the players is in Act III, Scene 2.
- **Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (Project Gutenberg #20203)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20203>): The Spectator passage on teaching himself to write comes early in the book.
- **Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, trans. Richard Crawley (Project Gutenberg #7142)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7142>): Book 2 holds Pericles' Funeral Oration, the most famous encomium speech of antiquity; for further reading.
- **The King James Bible (Project Gutenberg #10)**
(<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10>): For 2 Samuel 1 and Ecclesiastes 12.

8.1 THE YEAR IN REVIEW: BUILDING AN ENCOMIUM SPEECH ★

OBJECTIVES

- Name the year's exercises (commonplace, encomium, invective, the essay and the three creative forms) and the heads that build each one.
- Study David's lament for Saul and Jonathan as a spoken encomium and find the marks of writing for the ear.
- Choose a worthy subject and draft a three- to four-minute encomium speech from the six heads.

Warm-up. Without looking back, list every kind of writing you did this year, from the commonplace in Unit 1 to the biographical sketch in Unit 7. Star the one you are proudest of and circle the one that was hardest.

Video slot. Video coming. How to write a short speech of praise, or a reading of David's lament (2 Samuel 1) from a trusted church or classical-school channel; preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

encomium

A speech or essay of praise built from set heads: prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison and epilogue.

the five canons

The five parts of the speaker's art: invention (finding what to say), arrangement (putting it in order), style (choosing the words), memory and delivery.

refrain

A line repeated at set places in a speech or poem so the hearer can hold on to it, as in "How are the mighty fallen!"

writing for the ear

Writing meant to be heard: clear signposts, repeated key words, sentences a speaker can say in one breath, and concrete deeds a listener can picture.

lament

A poem or speech of mourning. A lament for a good man is often an encomium spoken in grief.

CORE IDEAS

Looking back over the ladder. This year you climbed three rungs of the progymnasmata. The *commonplace* took a vice everyone already hates (cowardice, theft, tyranny) and amplified it with the contrary, comparison, intention, digression and rejection of pity. The

encomium praised a person or thing by origin, upbringing, deeds and comparison. *Invective* turned the same heads to blame a deed or a vice, never to slander a living person. Beside these ran the creative track: point of view in story, the sonnet in fourteen lines, and the biographical sketch. The five-paragraph essay gave all of them a scaffold.

Why end with a speech? The ancient exercises were spoken before they were ever read silently. A Roman or Elizabethan schoolboy wrote his encomium and then stood up and delivered it. Doing that brings all five canons together at once: you *invent* your praise from the heads, *arrange* it, choose its *style*, hold it in *memory*, and *deliver* it with your voice. That is why the year closes here.

The heads, one more time. An encomium speech of three or four minutes (about 400 to 550 words) runs like this: a *prologue* that says why this subject deserves praise; *origin* (family, homeland, time); *upbringing* (training, teachers, habits); *deeds*, the longest part, arranged by virtues such as courage, justice, wisdom and self-control; a *comparison* with another worthy person; and an *epilogue* that calls the hearers to imitate. You may praise someone from history, the grandparent you interviewed in Unit 7, or a thing such as the plow or the book from Unit 2.

David's lament. When Saul and his son Jonathan fell in battle on Mount Gilboa, David did not write an essay. He made a song and commanded that it be taught to the children of Judah (2 Samuel 1:18). Look at what he does in the model. He names deeds and qualities the hearers can picture ("swifter than eagles," "stronger than lions"). He speaks straight to his audience ("Ye daughters of Israel"). He reminds them of gifts they themselves received ("who clothed you in scarlet"). And he returns to a refrain, "How are the mighty fallen," at the start, middle and end (verses 19, 25 and 27), so no listener can lose the thread.

Writing for the ear. A reader can look back up the page; a listener cannot. So a speech needs things an essay can do without. Tell the hearers where you are going ("I will praise her for three things"). Keep most sentences short enough to say in one breath, and save one long, building sentence for each section's high point. Repeat your key word. Use triads, as Paul does in Philippians 4:8 and as you practiced with parallel structure. Above all, prefer one true deed to five adjectives. "She was generous" is forgettable; "She drove sixty miles in the snow to bring a stranger's child home" is not.

Honest praise. Philippians 4:8 asks us to think on what is true and of good report. Praise that is false or swollen is flattery, and Proverbs warns against it. Praise only what is real, say it plainly, and give God the glory for gifts He gave. An honest encomium of an ordinary, faithful person can move a room more than a grand speech about a famous one.

The model. *David's lament for Saul and Jonathan, 2 Samuel 1:23-25 (KJV)*

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.

PICTURE STUDY



General George Washington Resigning His Commission, John Trumbull, 1824 · Oil on canvas · Rotunda of the United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

On December 23, 1783, with the war for independence won, General Washington stood before Congress at the Maryland State House in Annapolis and handed back his commission as commander in chief. He could have kept power; he gave it up and went home to farm. John Trumbull, who had served on Washington's staff early in the war, painted the scene for the Capitol Rotunda. The whole room is quiet, listening to one man speak a short, plain speech.

Look closely

- Find Washington. How does the painter make your eye go to him first, though he is not in the center of the crowd?
- Look at the faces of the seated members of Congress. Which ones seem most moved by what they hear?
- Find the people watching from the balcony. Why might the painter include ordinary visitors and not only officials?

Talk about it

1. Write the prologue of an encomium of Washington drawn only from this painting: what deed is shown, and why does it deserve praise?
2. Washington's resignation speech was short. Why can a short, plain speech sometimes say more than a long one?

WRITING PROJECT: DRAFT YOUR ENCOMIUM SPEECH

This is the first of three lessons on one speech. Today you invent and arrange it and write the first draft. In 8.2 you will deliver it, and in 8.3 you will revise it with other pieces for your portfolio.

Choose a subject who is truly worthy and whom you can praise with real deeds: a figure from history or Scripture, the grandparent from your Unit 7 sketch, or a good thing such as the book, the bridge or the plow.

You will need

- Writing notebook
- Your Unit 2 encomium and Unit 7 sketch, for ideas
- A KJV Bible
- A timer

Steps

1. Read 2 Samuel 1:17-27 aloud. Mark the refrain each time it comes.
2. Brainstorm under six headings (prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue). Under deeds, list at least four true actions, and group them by virtue.
3. Write a one-sentence thesis of praise, such as “My grandfather deserves honor for his faithfulness in work, in hardship and in prayer.”
4. Choose a refrain of six words or fewer that sums up your subject. Plan to use it at least three times.
5. Write the speech, 400 to 550 words. Give deeds the most space. End with an epilogue that calls the hearers to imitate.
6. Read it aloud with a timer. If it runs past four minutes, cut adjectives first and deeds last.
7. Mark any sentence you stumbled on; you will fix it before 8.2.

Check your work

- The speech follows the heads in order, and the deeds section is the longest.
- Every claim of praise is true and backed by a deed a listener can picture.
- A refrain or key word comes back at least three times.
- I used at least two adjective clauses (who, which, that) to tell about my subject.
- Most sentences can be said in one breath, and I kept one longer sentence for each high point.
- Commas set off introductory phrases and clauses.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy 2 Samuel 1:23 by hand, then imitate it about your subject: “_____ was _____ and _____ in his life ...”

2. Make a table of the year: in one column list each exercise (commonplace, encomium, invective, story, sonnet, essay, sketch); in the next, write its heads or parts from memory.
3. List ten concrete deeds of your speech subject, then cross out the five weakest.

History note. Trumbull painted four large scenes of the Revolution for the Capitol Rotunda; this one is dated 1824. Washington’s address to Congress that day was only a few paragraphs long. It ended by commending “the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God.”

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.2 “Adjective Clauses.” Praise often comes in adjective clauses, as in David’s “Saul, who clothed you in scarlet”; use them to fasten a deed to your subject’s name.

For families. Units 8.1–8.3 work on one speech, so keep the draft handy. A living subject such as a grandparent is fine for praise (invective, by contrast, is only ever aimed at vices or long-dead wrongdoers). Help your student check facts and dates in the speech; an encomium with a false fact loses its force. The model is printed from the King James text. Verse 26 of the chapter is left out only to keep the model short; you may read the whole lament together.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student wrote this deeds paragraph for an essay. Rewrite it for the ear: “My grandmother, who was raised on a farm in Kansas during the 1930s and who later became a nurse at the county hospital where she worked for thirty-one years, was known for her kindness and dedication and her willingness to help anyone.”

1. The sentence is too long to say in one breath, and it ends with three vague nouns: kindness, dedication, willingness.
2. Split it. Put origin and work in short sentences.
3. Replace the vague nouns with one deed a listener can see.
4. Add a refrain the listener can hold.

Answer: My grandmother grew up on a Kansas farm in the dust years. She became a nurse. For thirty-one years she worked the night shift at the county hospital. One winter night the power failed, and she held a lantern over a doctor’s hands until dawn. She kept the light burning.

Example 2. Find the heads in this short encomium of the book: “Of all man’s tools, none has carried more wisdom than the book. It was born of the scroll and the clay tablet. Monks copied it by candlelight and Gutenberg set it in type. It has kept the laws of nations and the words of prophets. A sword wins one battle; a book teaches a hundred generations. Open one tonight.”

1. “Of all man’s tools...” announces the subject and why it deserves praise: prologue.
2. Scroll and clay tablet: origin. Monks and Gutenberg: upbringing (how it was made and trained up).
3. Keeping laws and prophets’ words: deeds. Sword versus book: comparison. “Open one tonight”: epilogue.

Answer: Prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue: all six heads, in order, in six sentences.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Name the five canons of rhetoric in order.
2. **EASY** What are the six heads of an encomium?
3. **EASY** What is the refrain in David’s lament?
4. **EASY** How is invective different from slander?
5. **MEDIUM** Which head of the commonplace answers the hearer who says, “But he was poor and desperate”?
6. **MEDIUM** Rewrite for the ear: “He was very brave.”
7. **MEDIUM** Find the adjective clauses in 2 Samuel 1:24.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a comparison head of two or three sentences for an encomium of your speech subject.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Praising with adjectives (kind, amazing, hardworking) instead of deeds the listener can picture.
- Writing one long essay sentence that runs the speaker out of breath.
- Spending the whole speech on origin and childhood, and leaving no time for deeds.
- Stretching the truth to make the praise bigger. Flattery is not encomium.

Make it a game · Heads Up, Year in Review. Write the year’s exercises on slips of paper (commonplace, encomium, invective, first person, sonnet, thesis, sketch). Draw a slip and, within thirty seconds, name its heads or parts and give a one-sentence example. A correct answer earns the slip; most slips wins.

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

An encomium is praise spoken by another; that is why we praise others honestly and leave our own praise to God and to them.

Practice: answers

1. Invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery.
2. Prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
3. "How are the mighty fallen!"
4. Invective blames a deed or a vice with true evidence; slander attacks a person with falsehood or spite. Our invective is aimed only at vices or long-dead wrongdoers.
5. The rejection of pity.
6. Sample: When the barn caught fire, he went back in twice for the horses.
7. "who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights" and "who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel," both modifying Saul.
8. Sample: Joseph kept Egypt's grain against seven lean years. My grandfather kept a smaller storehouse, a root cellar of potatoes and apples, but he opened it the same way to every neighbor who knocked.

8.2 DELIVERING THE ENCOMIUM: MEMORY AND DELIVERY

OBJECTIVES

- Read Hamlet’s advice to the players and turn it into rules for your own delivery.
- Prepare a key-word card and rehearse the speech from memory, not from the page.
- Deliver the encomium from 8.1 to an audience and take their response in writing.

Warm-up. Say the sentence “I never said she took the book” seven times, stressing a different word each time. How many different meanings can one sentence have, just by the voice?

Video slot. Video coming. Public speaking for students: posture, eye contact and pausing (from a classical-school, speech-and-debate or library channel); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

memory

The fourth canon: holding the speech in the mind, usually by its order of heads and key words rather than word for word.

delivery

The fifth canon: the use of voice, face, posture and gesture in speaking.

key-word card

A single card with the heads of the speech and one to three key words under each, used instead of a full script.

pause

A deliberate silence before or after an important line, which lets the hearers catch up and marks what matters.

temperance (in delivery)

Hamlet’s word for control: strong feeling kept in measure, so the speech is neither ranting nor flat.

CORE IDEAS

Delivery, delivery, delivery. Cicero and Quintilian both tell the story that the great Athenian orator Demosthenes, asked what mattered most in speaking, answered “delivery”; asked what came second, “delivery”; and third, “delivery.” He did not mean words were unimportant. He meant that a good speech badly spoken will not be heard, and a speech that is not heard cannot persuade or praise anyone.

Shakespeare’s rules. In *Hamlet*, the prince hires a company of traveling actors and, before their performance, tells them how to speak. His advice has been quoted to speakers for four hundred years. Speak “trippingly on the tongue,” lightly and clearly. Do not “mouth” the

words, puffing them up like a town crier. Do not “saw the air” with your hand. In the strongest passion, keep a “temperance,” a calm control. And yet “be not too tame neither.” The rule that holds all the others together is this: “Suit the action to the word, the word to the action.” Your voice, face and hands should fit what you are saying, and never more than fits.

Memory without memorizing every word. The ancient orators remembered a speech by its order. You already have that order: prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue. Make a key-word card with each head and one to three words beneath it (“Kansas, dust years” / “nurse, 31 years” / “lantern”). Memorize only three things word for word: your first sentence, your refrain and your last sentence. The rest you will say from the card in words that come naturally, as Franklin rebuilt the *Spectator* from his hints.

The body speaks too. Stand with your weight on both feet; do not sway. Before your first word, look at your audience and count two silent seconds. Look at one face for a whole sentence, then another. Speak to the back row. Slow down: nearly every nervous speaker goes too fast. Pause before your refrain and after it. Let your hands rest at your sides until a real gesture comes (pointing back to the past, opening to the audience in the epilogue). Hamlet would call that suiting the action to the word.

Rehearse in rounds. Rehearse at least five times over two days. Round one: read the full text aloud. Round two: speak from the card, with the text nearby. Rounds three and four: from the card only, standing, with a timer. Round five: to one listener, who tells you one thing to keep and one thing to change. Then deliver the speech to your family, a co-op class or a grandparent. If your subject is a living grandparent, there is no better audience than that grandparent.

Grace in speech. Colossians 4:6 asks that our speech be “alway with grace, seasoned with salt.” A speech of praise is a gift to its hearers and to its subject. Nervousness is normal; it means you care. Pray before you stand up, then think about your audience and your subject rather than yourself.

The model. *William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act III, Scene 2 (about 1600), Project Gutenberg #1524*

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

FIRST PLAYER. I warrant your honour.

HAMLET. Be not too tame neither; but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit

the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure

PICTURE STUDY



The Play Scene in Hamlet, Daniel Maclise, 1842 · Oil on canvas · Tate Britain, London
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

This is the moment Hamlet has been preparing for when he gives his advice to the players. The traveling actors perform a play before the king and the whole court, and Hamlet watches not the stage but the king's face. Maclise, an Irish painter working in London, filled the hall with dozens of figures, each reacting in a different way to what is being performed.

Look closely

- Find the small stage and the actors. How large are they compared with the audience?
- Find Hamlet in the foreground. Where are his eyes pointed?
- Choose two people in the audience. How does each one's posture show what he or she is thinking?

Talk about it

1. Maclise shows that an audience is made of many listeners, each watching differently. Write three sentences describing how your audience in this lesson might listen to your speech.
2. Which of Hamlet's rules do the actors on the little stage seem to be keeping or breaking? Give reasons from the picture.

WRITING PROJECT: DELIVER YOUR ENCOMIUM

Turn the draft from 8.1 into a spoken speech and deliver it to a real audience.

You will need

- Your encomium draft from 8.1
- One index card (4 × 6 inches)
- A timer, and a phone or recorder if your family allows
- Listener slips (one per listener)

Steps

1. Fix any sentence you stumbled over in 8.1. Mark pauses with a slash (/) and stressed words with underlines.
2. Make your key-word card: the six heads in order, with one to three key words under each. Write your first sentence, refrain and last sentence in full at the bottom.
3. Rehearse in five rounds over two days (full text, card with text nearby, card only twice, then one listener).
4. Record one rehearsal if you can. Listen for speed, filler words (um, like, so) and dropped endings.
5. Deliver the speech to your audience. Stand, pause two seconds, look up, begin.
6. Give each listener a slip with three lines: “One thing to keep,” “One thing to change,” and “The deed I remember.” Collect the slips.
7. In your notebook, write a short paragraph on what the slips told you.

Check your work

- I spoke from a key-word card, not from the full page.
- My speech took between three and four minutes.
- I paused before and after my refrain.
- I looked at my listeners for most of the speech.
- My gestures fit my words, and my hands were still the rest of the time.
- In my written reflection, every sentence is complete and my tenses stay in the past when I tell what happened.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy “Suit the action to the word, the word to the action” and write Hamlet’s rules as five commands of your own.
2. Draw your key-word card in your notebook before you make the real one.
3. After the speech, list the listeners’ remembered deeds. Which deed did most of them remember, and why?

History note. *Hamlet* was written around 1600 for Shakespeare’s company at the Globe Theatre. “Termagant” and “Herod” were ranting characters in the old religious plays of

the Middle Ages, famous for shouting; to “out-Herod Herod” means to overdo even the loudest actor. The “groundlings” were the poorer playgoers who stood in the yard in front of the stage. Maclise’s painting was shown at the Royal Academy in 1842.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.3 “Mood.” Hamlet’s advice is nearly all in the imperative mood (“Speak,” “Suit,” “Pray you avoid it”); use the imperative in your epilogue to call your hearers to imitate your subject.

For families. *Hamlet* as a whole is a tragedy of murder and revenge; this passage is clean and needs no other part of the play. Be a warm audience: one encouraging, specific comment matters more than a list of faults. If your student is very nervous, let the first delivery be to the family alone and a second to a larger group. The Demosthenes story is reported by Cicero (*Brutus*) and Quintilian (*Institutes* XI).

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn this epilogue into a key-word entry and mark it for delivery: “So when you are tired, when the work is long and no one is watching, remember the woman who held the lantern. She kept the light burning. Go and do likewise.”

1. Key words for the card: “tired / lantern / go and do likewise.”
2. Mark the pauses: “So when you are tired, / when the work is long / and no one is watching, / remember the woman who held the lantern. // She kept the light burning. // Go and do likewise.”
3. Underline the stressed words: tired, long, watching, lantern, light, Go.

Answer: Card: EPILOGUE: tired / lantern / “Go and do likewise.” Delivered slowly, with the longest pause before the refrain and before the last line, and a single open-hand gesture toward the audience on “Go.”

Example 2. A listener’s slip says: “Keep: the lantern story. Change: you went too fast in the middle and looked at the card the whole time.” Plan the fix.

1. Speed in the middle usually means the deeds section is not yet known well. Rehearse that section alone three times.
2. Looking at the card means the card has too many words. Cut every key word that is not a picture or a name.
3. Practice looking up for a whole sentence, then down for one glance only.

Answer: Shorten the card to picture-words only, rehearse the deeds section separately, and slow down by pausing at every slash mark.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Which two canons does this lesson practice?
2. **EASY** What does Hamlet mean by “saw the air too much with your hand”?
3. **EASY** What three parts of the speech should you memorize word for word?
4. **EASY** What did Demosthenes say were the three most important things in speaking?
5. **MEDIUM** Hamlet warns against two opposite faults. Name both.
6. **MEDIUM** Find three verbs in the imperative mood in the model.
7. **MEDIUM** Paraphrase “Suit the action to the word, the word to the action.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Hamlet says the purpose of playing is “to hold as ’twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image.” How does that describe encomium and invective?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading the speech from the page with eyes down, so the audience hears a voice but never meets a face.
- Rushing, especially through the middle, and skipping the pauses that let a line land.
- Memorizing every word, then freezing when one word is lost. Memorize the order and the key words instead.
- Gestures that do not match the words (“sawing the air”) or nervous habits like swaying and touching the hair.

Make it a game · Hamlet Says. One player reads a sentence aloud in a deliberately wrong way (too fast, too tame, sawing the air, mumbling). The others must name the fault in Hamlet’s words (“trippingly,” “mouth it,” “saw the air,” “too tame,” “tear a passion to tatters”) and then say the sentence correctly.

Scripture. “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Colossians 4:6, KJV)

Good delivery is more than technique: it is speech offered with grace, for the good of the hearers.

Practice: answers

1. Memory and delivery.
2. Waving your hand back and forth too much, like a saw, instead of using gestures gently.
3. The first sentence, the refrain and the last sentence.
4. Delivery, delivery and delivery.
5. Overdoing it (mouthing, sawing the air, tearing a passion to tatters) and being “too tame.”
6. Sample: Speak, use (“use all gently”), avoid (“Pray you avoid it”), Be (“Be not too tame”), Suit.
7. Sample: Let your gestures and voice match what you are saying, and let what you say match your gestures; neither should go beyond the other.
8. Sample: An encomium holds up a mirror to virtue so hearers can see what goodness looks like and love it; invective holds up a mirror to vice so they can see it plainly and scorn it. Both work

only if the picture is true to nature.

8.3 REVISION: FRANKLIN’S METHOD AND THE SECOND DRAFT

OBJECTIVES

- Read Franklin’s account of how he taught himself to write and name the steps of his method.
- Revise in order from large to small: invention, arrangement, style, then mechanics.
- Revise the encomium speech and two other pieces from the year for the portfolio.

Warm-up. Look at a piece you wrote early this year (your Unit 1 commonplace is a good choice). Without changing anything yet, write down three things you can do now that you could not do when you wrote it.

Video slot. Video coming. Benjamin Franklin’s youth as a printer’s apprentice, or how to revise an essay (from a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

revision

Literally “seeing again”: changing a draft’s content, order and wording, not only fixing errors.

proofreading

The last, smallest step of revision: checking spelling, punctuation and capitals.

hints

Franklin’s word for short notes that capture the thought of each sentence, from which a whole piece can be rebuilt.

shift

An unneeded change in tense, voice or mood inside a passage, which jolts the reader.

fair copy

A clean, final copy of a revised piece, written or typed with care for others to read.

CORE IDEAS

Franklin’s school. Benjamin Franklin left school at ten. As a teenage apprentice in his brother’s Boston print shop, he found an old volume of the *Spectator*, the London paper of essays by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, and decided to learn to write like it. His method, told in the model, is the one you have used all through these years: imitate a master, rebuild from notes, then compare and correct. Notice the last step. Franklin did not stop when the draft was done. He “compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them.” That comparing and correcting is revision.

Revision is not proofreading. Many students think revising means fixing commas. Commas matter, but they come last. Revise from large to small, following the canons. First *invention*: is the main claim true and clear, and does each part support it? Is anything missing, such as a deed, an example, a testimony? Second *arrangement*: are the heads in the best order, and does each paragraph keep to its head? Franklin even “jumbled” his notes and put them back in order to train this skill. Third *style*: are the verbs strong and active, the sentences varied, the words exact? Last, *mechanics*: spelling, punctuation, capitals.

Four moves. Every revision is made of four moves: *add* (a missing deed, a stronger comparison), *cut* (a vague adjective, a sentence that repeats), *move* (the strongest deed to the end of the deeds section, a misplaced modifier next to its word) and *replace* (a weak verb for a strong one, “was given by” for an active verb). If a draft has had none of these four moves, it has not been revised.

Look for shifts. In Grammar you learned to keep tense, voice and mood steady. Drafts written in a hurry slide around: “Washington *stood* before Congress. He *hands* back his commission, and the room *was filled* with silence.” The tense shifts from past to present and the voice from active to passive. Revised: “Washington stood before Congress. He handed back his commission, and silence filled the room.” Read your draft aloud slowly; the ear catches shifts the eye misses.

Let it rest, then compare. Franklin “laid them by a few days” before rebuilding. Time makes a draft look new. Put a piece away for at least a day before revising it. Then compare it with a master: hold your encomium next to David’s lament, your sonnet next to Shakespeare’s, your sketch next to Plutarch. You will see, as Franklin did, both faults to correct and, sometimes, a place where you did well. Franklin admitted he sometimes had “the pleasure of fancying” he had improved on the original in small things. That pleasure is allowed.

Iron sharpens iron. You cannot see all your own faults. Ask a parent or a fellow student to read with two questions: Where did you get lost? Where did you want more? Take the answers without arguing. Proverbs says a friend sharpens a friend as iron sharpens iron; a good reader is a gift, even when the sharpening stings.

The model. *Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (written 1771–1790), Project Gutenberg #20203*

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, try'd to compleat the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired

before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it

PICTURE STUDY



Saint Jerome in His Study, Antonello da Messina, about 1475 · Oil on lime wood · The National Gallery, London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Jerome (died A.D. 420) spent much of his life making and correcting the Latin Bible that the Western church used for a thousand years. At the request of Pope Damasus he began by revising the older Latin versions of the Gospels, comparing them against the Greek, much as Franklin later compared his own pages against the *Spectator*. Antonello shows him as a careful scholar in a tidy study built like a room inside a room, every book and object in its place. The lion recalls an old legend that Jerome pulled a thorn from a lion's paw.

Look closely

- Find the lion. Where is it, and why might the painter keep it in the shadows?
- Look at the shelves and the objects around Jerome. What do they tell you about how he works?
- Find the birds on the step at the front. How does the stone arch frame the whole scene, like the edges of a page?

Talk about it

1. Everything in this study is in order. Write a paragraph comparing Jerome's study with the order a revised piece of writing should have.

2. Jerome spent years correcting a text that mattered more than any other. Why is careful revision a kind of faithfulness?

WRITING PROJECT: THREE PIECES, SEEN AGAIN

Revise your encomium speech (using the listeners' slips from 8.2) and two other pieces from this year that you will place in your portfolio. Choose one from the progymnasmata (commonplace, encomium, invective or essay) and one from the creative track (story, sonnet or sketch).

You will need

- Your drafts from the year
- Colored pencils (one color per revision layer)
- The model passage for each piece (David's lament, Sonnet 18, Plutarch and so on)
- Writing notebook

Steps

1. Franklin's test: for one piece, write a one-line hint for each paragraph. Put the draft away and rebuild the piece from the hints in a few sentences. Did the order hold? If not, rearrange.
2. Invention layer (first color): for each piece, mark the main claim and add one thing that is missing.
3. Arrangement layer (second color): check the heads or parts in order; move at least one sentence or paragraph to a better place.
4. Style layer (third color): circle every form of "to be" and every passive verb; replace at least five with strong active verbs. Cut every adjective that a deed already shows.
5. Read each piece aloud to catch shifts in tense, voice and mood. Fix them.
6. Ask a reader the two questions: Where did you get lost? Where did you want more? Make one change for each answer.
7. Proofread last, then make a fair copy of each piece.

Check your work

- Each piece shows at least one add, cut, move and replace.
- Each paragraph keeps to its own head or part.
- Tense, voice and mood stay steady unless a change is needed.
- I used the active voice wherever the doer matters.
- No modifier is misplaced or dangling.
- Commas, semicolons and quotation marks are correct, and quotations are copied exactly.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Do Franklin's exercise: take one paragraph of the model, write a hint for each sentence, close the book tomorrow and rebuild it. Then compare.

2. Copy the four revision moves (add, cut, move, replace) and give one example of each from your own work.
3. Turn three sentences of a prose piece from this year into rhymed lines, as Franklin did, to stretch your stock of words.

History note. The *Spectator* was a daily London paper of essays by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, first published in 1711–1712. Franklin began his *Autobiography* in 1771 as a letter to his son and kept adding to it until near his death in 1790. Antonello da Messina's *Saint Jerome* was bought by the National Gallery in 1894.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.4 “Shifts in Tense, Voice and Mood.” Revision is where you catch the shifts a fast draft lets in; read each piece aloud and keep tense, voice and mood steady.

For families. Franklin keeps his old spellings (“try’d,” “compleat”); point them out as history, not as models for spelling. The sentences just after the model mention that he did much of this study on Sundays, avoiding church, which his father had required; and Franklin was never orthodox in his faith. Families may discuss both his real diligence and his choices plainly. When you respond to your student’s writing, name one strength before one fault, and resist rewriting it yourself. The student holds the pencil.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this commonplace paragraph against cowardice: “Cowardice is a very bad thing. It is something that is hated by everyone. When soldiers ran from the battle, the city was being lost and the people are taken as slaves. A coward is very selfish.”

1. Invention: the paragraph claims but never shows. Add a picture of the deed and its cost.
2. Style: cut “very” and “something that”; change the passives (“is hated by everyone,” “was being lost”) to active verbs.
3. Shifts: “ran ... was being lost ... are taken” jumps from past to present. Keep it in the past.
4. Arrangement: “A coward is very selfish” is the cause of the cowardice; move it before the result.

Answer: All men hate cowardice. The coward loves his own skin more than his brother’s life. When the soldiers ran from the wall, the enemy poured through the gap; by nightfall the city fell, and the women and children who had trusted those soldiers marched away in chains.

Example 2. A student’s sonnet line from Unit 5 reads: “The autumn leaves fall down upon the ground.” Revise it, keeping iambic pentameter.

1. “Fall down” and “upon the ground” both say the same thing; the line repeats itself.
2. Replace the empty words with a picture and a stronger verb, keeping ten syllables in the da-DUM pattern.
3. Check by tapping the beat: the AU-tumn LEAVES ... and so on.

Answer: Sample: “The maples spend their gold along the lane.” (ten syllables, iambic, with a strong verb, “spend,” and a picture)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What did Franklin do after he rebuilt a *Spectator* paper from his hints?
2. **EASY** Name the four revision moves.
3. **EASY** Put in order, large to small: style, mechanics, invention, arrangement.
4. **EASY** Why did Franklin turn prose into verse?
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the shift: “Jonathan loved David, and David’s life was saved by him more than once.”
6. **MEDIUM** Fix the shift in mood: “First read your draft aloud, and then you should mark every stumble.”
7. **MEDIUM** Fix the dangling modifier: “Laid aside for three days, Franklin rebuilt the essay from his hints.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Revise for strength and steadiness: “There were many people who were helped by Wilberforce, and he is remembered because the slave trade was ended by his work in 1807.”

COMMON MISTAKES

- Calling a spell-check a revision. Mechanics come last, after invention, arrangement and style.
- Revising only the first paragraph and leaving the rest untouched.
- Arguing with a reader’s honest response instead of asking what caused it.
- Making a fair copy that introduces new mistakes. Proofread the fair copy, too.

Make it a game · Franklin’s Puzzle. A parent writes the hints for a short paragraph (one line per sentence) on slips, mixes them up, and hands them over. Race the timer to put the hints in order, then rebuild the paragraph aloud. Compare with the original: one point for correct order, one for each sentence that keeps the original meaning.

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

A faithful reader sharpens a writer, as Franklin’s comparisons sharpened him.

Practice: answers

1. He compared it with the original, found his faults and corrected them.
2. Add, cut, move, replace.
3. Invention, arrangement, style, mechanics.
4. To build a stock of words: meter and rhyme forced him to search for words of different length and sound.
5. Jonathan loved David, and he saved David's life more than once.
6. First read your draft aloud, and then mark every stumble.
7. After laying his hints aside for three days, Franklin rebuilt the essay from them.
8. Sample: Wilberforce labored for twenty years until Parliament abolished the British slave trade in 1807, and his work spared many thousands from being carried into slavery.

8.4 THE PORTFOLIO AND THE ORAL EXAMINATION

OBJECTIVES

- Assemble a Grade 7 portfolio of eight revised pieces with a table of contents and a preface.
- Explain each piece’s form, heads and model author in an oral examination.
- Recite a memorized passage and set goals for Grade 8.

Warm-up. Spread out every piece you wrote this year. Sort them into three piles: progymnasmata (commonplace, encomium, invective, essay), creative (story, sonnet, sketch) and speech. Which pile is tallest?

Video slot. Video coming. A one-room schoolhouse in nineteenth-century America and the old practice of recitation (from a museum or historic-site channel); preview first. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

portfolio

A chosen collection of a writer’s best finished work, arranged with care to show what the writer can do.

preface

A short opening note by the author telling the reader what the collection contains and how it came to be.

recitation

Speaking a memorized passage aloud before a teacher or audience; also the old name for an oral lesson.

oral examination

A test given by questions and spoken answers, in which the student explains and defends his work.

CORE IDEAS

The Preacher’s three tasks. At the end of Ecclesiastes, Solomon describes what a wise teacher does with words. He “sought out, and set in order many proverbs”; he “sought to find out acceptable words”; and what he wrote was “upright, even words of truth.” Those are the tasks of the writer: *invention* (seeking out), *arrangement* (setting in order) and *style* (acceptable words), all ruled by truth. A portfolio is your own setting in order of a year’s words.

What goes in. Choose one piece from each unit, eight in all: a commonplace (Unit 1), an encomium (Unit 2), an invective against a vice (Unit 3), a story told from a chosen point of view (Unit 4), your sonnet (Unit 5), your five-paragraph essay or contest entry (Unit 6), your

biographical sketch (Unit 7) and your encomium speech with its key-word card (Unit 8). Each should be revised and in fair copy. Under each title write one line naming its form and the master you imitated: "Commonplace against cowardice, after Aphthonius."

Order and frame. A portfolio needs a title page, a table of contents and a short preface of one or two paragraphs. The preface tells the reader what the collection contains, which piece you think is strongest and why, and what you learned to do this year. Write it plainly, without boasting and without false modesty. You may add one page of "firsts and lasts": the first sentence you wrote this year and the best sentence you wrote this year, side by side.

The oral examination. For centuries, students did not only hand in work; they stood and answered for it. In an old American country school the pupils came to the front by turns and *recited*: they said their lessons aloud and the teacher questioned them. Your oral exam works the same way. A parent or teacher opens your portfolio and asks: What form is this? What are its heads? Whose model did you imitate? What did you change in revision, and why? You answer aloud, in full sentences, using the terms of the year.

Recite. Close the exam with a recitation of a passage you have memorized: Philippians 4:8, the year's faith verse; Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 from Unit 5; or the epilogue of your own encomium. Stand, pause, look up and speak as you learned in 8.2. Memorized words become your own; you will carry them for the rest of your life.

Looking ahead. Next year you will climb to comparison, description, thesis and the proposal of a law, and the speech will grow longer. End the exam by writing three goals for Grade 8: one in invention, one in style and one in delivery. Then give thanks. Ecclesiastes warns that "of making many books there is no end"; the point of the work is not the pile of pages but a mind trained to think on what is true, honest, just and of good report.

The model. *Ecclesiastes 12:9-11 (KJV)*

And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

PICTURE STUDY



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

Winslow Homer painted the one-room schoolhouses of rural America in the years after the Civil War. Children of every age learned in a single room, and the teacher heard each class in turn as the pupils read, spelled and recited their lessons aloud. Homer fills the plain room with summer light and shows a teacher who is young, upright and attentive.

Look closely

- Find the teacher. What is she holding, and what does her posture tell you about her?
- Look at the windows and the bare walls. Where does the light fall, and what does it make you notice?
- Find the vase of flowers. Who might have brought them, and why?

Talk about it

1. Imagine one pupil is about to stand and recite. Write a paragraph from that pupil's point of view (first person, as in Unit 4) in the moment before speaking.
2. What can a student learn by saying lessons aloud that he cannot learn by reading silently?

WRITING PROJECT: GRADE 7 PORTFOLIO AND ORAL EXAMINATION

Gather, frame and defend a year of writing.

You will need

- Eight revised pieces in fair copy (from 8.3 and earlier units)

- A folder, binder or bound notebook
- Paper for a title page, table of contents and preface
- The oral exam question list (from the parent)

Steps

1. Choose eight pieces, one from each unit. If a piece is not yet revised, revise it now using the 8.3 layers.
2. Under each title, write one line naming its form and its model: “Sonnet, after Shakespeare’s Sonnet 18.”
3. Make a title page and a table of contents.
4. Write a preface of 150 to 250 words: what the collection holds, your strongest piece and why, and what you can do now that you could not do in September.
5. Prepare for the oral exam: for each piece, be ready to name its form, its heads or parts, its model author and one revision you made.
6. Sit the oral exam. End with a recitation and three written goals for Grade 8.
7. Present the portfolio to a grandparent or another family member and let them choose one piece for you to read aloud.

Check your work

- Eight pieces, one per unit, each in fair copy with a form-and-model line.
- Title page, table of contents and preface are in place.
- The preface uses at least one complex and one compound-complex sentence, correctly punctuated.
- Quotations from Scripture and the models are copied exactly.
- No sentence fragments or run-ons remain in any piece.
- My oral answers used the year’s terms and full sentences.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Ecclesiastes 12:10 and, under it, write one sentence telling which piece this year came nearest to “acceptable words ... upright, even words of truth.”
2. Write the first sentence you wrote this year and the best sentence you wrote this year, side by side, and list three differences.
3. List three goals for Grade 8: one each for invention, style and delivery.

History note. Homer’s *The Country School* (1871) belongs to the Saint Louis Art Museum. Homer painted several schoolhouse scenes in the early 1870s, including the outdoor game *Snap the Whip* (1872). Recitation, in which pupils came forward to say their lessons, was the ordinary method of the one-room school.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 19.4 “Diagramming Long Sentences.” In the oral exam, choose the longest sentence in your portfolio and diagram it on the board, showing how every clause and phrase fits.

For families. Sample oral exam questions: What is a commonplace, and how is it different from an encomium? Name the heads of this piece. Why is invective aimed at vices and not living people? What is iambic pentameter? Whose point of view is this story told from, and why? What is a thesis? What did you change in revision? Allow 20 to 30 minutes and score with the portfolio rubric in the unit. Keep the portfolio; it is the best record of the year for transcripts and for the student's own encouragement.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Revise this weak preface opening: "This is my portfolio. It has a lot of stuff I wrote this year. I hope you like it. Some of it is good I think."

1. It says nothing specific: "a lot of stuff" names no form.
2. "I hope you like it" and "some of it is good I think" are false modesty and weaken the reader's trust.
3. Name what is inside, choose a strongest piece and give a reason, and join ideas in a complex sentence.

Answer: This collection holds eight pieces from my seventh-grade year, from a commonplace against cowardice to an encomium of my grandmother that I delivered aloud. The piece I think strongest is my sonnet, because I revised it four times until every line kept the meter and still said something true.

Example 2. Oral exam question: "This is your invective. Why is it aimed at a vice and not at a person you know?" Model a strong answer.

1. Give the rule: invective blames deeds and vices, not living people.
2. Give the reason from Scripture: speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).
3. Point to the piece itself.

Answer: Invective uses the encomium's heads to blame, but we aim it at vices or long-dead wrongdoers, not at living people, because Ephesians 4:15 tells us to speak the truth in love. My invective attacks gossip itself. It shows how gossip is born, what it does and whom it harms, so the hearer learns to hate the vice without hating a neighbor.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What three things does Ecclesiastes 12:9 say the Preacher did with proverbs?
2. **EASY** How many pieces go in the Grade 7 portfolio, and how are they chosen?
3. **EASY** What is a preface?
4. **EASY** What is a recitation?
5. **MEDIUM** Match each canon to a phrase from Ecclesiastes 12:9–10: invention, arrangement, style.

6. **MEDIUM** Write the form-and-model line for your Unit 7 piece.
7. **MEDIUM** Identify the sentence structure: “Before I wrote this sonnet, I had never counted syllables, but now I hear the beat in every line.”
8. **CHALLENGE** Write the preface sentence that names your strongest piece and gives a reason, using a complex sentence.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Putting unrevised first drafts into the portfolio.
- Writing a preface that boasts or that apologizes; say plainly what is there and why.
- Answering oral questions with one word instead of a full sentence that uses the term.
- Copying a model or Scripture inexactly in the fair copy.

Make it a game · Recitation Bee. Family members take turns reciting a memorized passage (a verse, a sonnet, a speech epilogue). Listeners hold up one finger for each word missed. A clean recitation scores three points; one slip, two; two slips, one. Finish with each player reading the best sentence they wrote this year.

Scripture. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Philippians 4:8, KJV)

The year’s faith verse is also the test of the portfolio: keep what is true, just and of good report.

Practice: answers

1. He gave good heed, sought them out and set them in order.
2. Eight, one from each unit.
3. A short opening note by the author telling what the collection contains and how it came to be.
4. Speaking a memorized passage aloud before a teacher or audience.
5. Invention: “sought out.” Arrangement: “set in order.” Style: “sought to find out acceptable words.”
6. Sample: Biographical sketch of my grandfather, after Plutarch’s *Lives*.
7. Compound-complex: two independent clauses joined by “but,” plus the dependent clause “Before I wrote this sonnet.”
8. Sample: Because I delivered it aloud to the woman it praises, my encomium of my grandmother is the piece I value most.

UNIT 8 REVIEW

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

1. (5 pts) Name the five canons of rhetoric in order.
2. (6 pts) Name the six heads of an encomium.
3. (2 pts) How is a commonplace different from an encomium?
4. (3 pts) At whom may invective be aimed, and why?
5. (2 pts) Give two marks of writing for the ear.
6. (3 pts) Name two faults Hamlet warns players against, and his one rule that sums them up.
7. (3 pts) Describe Franklin's method of learning to write.
8. (3 pts) Fix the shifts: "Washington stood before Congress, and his commission is handed back by him."
9. (2 pts) Name the four revision moves.
10. (3 pts) Rewrite for the ear with a deed instead of an adjective: "My uncle was very generous."
11. (2 pts) Identify the sentence structure: "Because the preacher was wise, he taught the people, and he set in order many proverbs."
12. (4 pts) Write the prologue (two or three sentences) of an encomium of a person or thing you admire.

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: GRADE 7 PORTFOLIO: A YEAR SET IN ORDER

Gather eight revised pieces in fair copy, one from each unit (commonplace, encomium, invective, point-of-view story, sonnet, five-paragraph essay, biographical sketch and the encomium speech with its key-word card), with a title page, table of contents and a preface of 150 to 250 words. Present it in an oral examination and close with a recitation.

- **Form:** Each piece follows the heads or parts of its form, and its form-and-model line names them correctly.
- **Revision:** Each piece shows real revision (add, cut, move, replace), not only proofreading; tense, voice and mood stay steady.
- **Truth and accuracy:** Praise and blame are honest and backed by deeds; Scripture and models are quoted exactly.
- **Delivery and defense:** The speech was delivered from a key-word card with pauses and eye contact, and oral answers used the year's terms in full sentences.

Answer key

1. Invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery.
2. Prologue, origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison, epilogue.
3. A commonplace amplifies a known virtue or vice (usually against a type of wrongdoer, such as the tyrant or the coward); an encomium praises a particular person or thing.

4. Only at vices or long-dead historical wrongdoers, never a living person, because we speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) and blame deeds rather than slander people.
5. Two of: signposts, a refrain or repeated key word, sentences short enough for one breath, concrete deeds, triads.
6. Two of: mouthing the words, sawing the air with the hand, tearing a passion to tatters, being too tame. Rule: "Suit the action to the word, the word to the action."
7. He made short hints of each sentence of a Spectator paper, laid them aside a few days, rewrote the paper from the hints, then compared it with the original and corrected his faults.
8. Washington stood before Congress and handed back his commission.
9. Add, cut, move, replace.
10. Sample: When the Millers' barn burned, my uncle gave them his own hay for the whole winter.
11. Compound-complex.
12. Sample: Of all the tools on a farm, none has fed more people than the plow. Kings have been forgotten, but the plow still turns the ground each spring. Tonight I will praise it as it deserves.

BONUS: CONTEST LAB

This optional unit takes the year's writing to real readers. You will reshape your 6.4 essay for the VFW Patriot's Pen contest (2026–27 theme: "What a Veteran Taught Me About America," 300–400 words, due October 31, 2026), choose a piece and category for the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards (grades 7–12, age 13 and up; regional deadlines December 2026–January 2027), and then polish and send your entry with a rules checklist, an exact word count and honest work that is wholly your own. Models come from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* and Pope's *Essay on Criticism*. Contest rules are summarized as of October 2026; always get the official forms.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Has a five-paragraph essay draft from 6.4 and at least one finished creative piece from Units 4, 5 or 7.
- Knows active and passive voice and the encomium heads (origin, upbringing, deeds, comparison).

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read a contest's official rules and turn them into a checklist.
- ☐ I can answer a contest theme with a clear, specific thesis.
- ☐ I can match a piece to a category and its length limit.
- ☐ I can count words the way a contest counts them and cut padding without losing facts.
- ☐ I can proofread for shifts in tense, voice and mood and keep my entry honestly my own.

OPTIONAL BOOKS

- **VFW Youth Scholarships: Patriot's Pen** (<https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships>): Official theme, entry form and Post locator. Check for the current year's form.
- **Patriot's Pen Rules and Eligibility (VFW, PDF)** (<https://www.vfw.org/-/media/vfwsite/files/community/youth-and-education/patriots-pen-rules-and-eligibility.pdf>): Word limit, anonymity, own-work rule and judging points.
- **Scholastic Art & Writing Awards: How to Enter** (<https://www.artandwriting.org/awards/how-to-enter/>): Fees, fee waiver and the regional deadline lookup; see also the Categories page for length limits.
- **Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (Project Gutenberg #4)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4>): Free; the 9.1 model.
- **Booker T. Washington, Up from Slavery (Project Gutenberg #2376)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2376>): Free; Chapter II is the 9.2 model, and the whole book is a fine memoir for this age.
- **Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism (Project Gutenberg #7409)** (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7409>): Free; the 9.3 model, with notes.

9.1 VFW PATRIOT’S PEN: WHAT A VETERAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT AMERICA 🏆

OBJECTIVES

- Read the 2026–27 Patriot’s Pen rules and judging points and say what each one asks of your essay.
- Study Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address as a short, tight piece that honors soldiers and draws a lesson for the living.
- Interview a veteran and reshape your 6.4 five-paragraph draft into a 300- to 400-word essay on the theme.

Warm-up. Write the names of every veteran you know: family, neighbors, church members, a coach. Beside each, write one thing you know he or she did in service. Circle the person you would most like to ask a question.

Video slot. Video coming. The Gettysburg Address read aloud, or a short history of Soldiers’ National Cemetery at Gettysburg (a National Park Service or museum channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

theme

The question a contest asks every entrant to answer. For 2026–27 the Patriot’s Pen theme is “What a Veteran Taught Me About America.”

veteran

A person who has served in the armed forces. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is a society of those who served overseas in war.

word limit

The fewest and most words a contest allows. Patriot’s Pen allows 300 to 400 words, give or take 5; the title and footnotes are not counted.

judging criteria

The points judges score. Patriot’s Pen gives 30 for knowledge of the theme, 35 for theme development and 35 for clarity of ideas.

anonymous entry

An entry with no name, school or other personal identifier in the essay itself, so judges score the writing alone.

CORE IDEAS

A real audience. In 6.4 you shaped a five-paragraph essay for a contest. Now you send it. The Veterans of Foreign Wars runs Patriot’s Pen for students in grades 6–8, and

homeschooled students may enter. For 2026–27 the theme is *“What a Veteran Taught Me About America.”* The essay must be typed in English, 300 to 400 words (plus or minus 5), and turned in with the official entry form to a participating local VFW Post by **October 31, 2026**. A contest is a good teacher: a stranger will read your work with no one to explain it for you, so every sentence must stand on its own. (Rules summarized October 2026 from vfw.org; get the official form and rules before you send.)

Read the scoring like a map. The judges give 30 points for *knowledge of the theme* (show that you know your subject and have looked into it), 35 for *theme development* (the who, what, where, when and why, tied to your own experience) and 35 for *clarity of ideas* (an easy-to-follow essay that leaves the reader sure of your answer). Notice what this means. A list of general praise for “our brave troops” will score poorly. One real veteran, one real lesson and the facts behind it will score well. The rules also ask for an approach that is “positive and clearly focused.”

The theme is a thesis waiting to be finished. “What a veteran taught me about America” is a question; your thesis is the answer in one sentence. Fill the blank: “From my grandfather’s years in the Navy, I learned that America is ____.” Good answers are specific: that freedom is kept by ordinary people doing hard duties; that Americans of every kind can serve side by side; that a citizen owes something back. Then use your Unit 2 heads. The veteran’s *origin* and *upbringing* go in one short paragraph; his or her *deeds* carry the middle; the *lesson* about America is the comparison and epilogue.

Ask before you write. The best essays come from an interview, just as your Unit 7 sketch did. Ask a veteran where and when he served, what a normal day was like, what surprised him, and what he wishes young Americans understood. Write down one sentence word for word. The rules let you use quotations “sparingly” if they are plainly marked, so one strong quotation from your veteran (or from Lincoln) is enough. Check names, dates and places with the veteran before you finish; knowledge of the theme is a third of the score.

Lincoln’s lesson in brevity. On November 19, 1863, Lincoln spoke at the dedication of the soldiers’ cemetery at Gettysburg. His address is about 270 words, shorter than the shortest Patriot’s Pen essay, and it does exactly what your essay must do: it honors those who served (“what they did here”), and it turns their deed into a lesson for the living (“It is for us the living ... to be dedicated”). Notice how it moves from past (“Four score and seven years ago”) to present (“Now we are engaged”) to future (“shall not perish”). Your essay can follow the same three steps: what the veteran did, what it shows, what we must now do.

Your own essay, your own words. The rules say plainly: “You must write your own essay.” A parent or teacher may check punctuation, grammar and spelling, but the content must stay yours, and AI writing tools are not allowed. This is the old rule of honest work: “Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour” (Ephesians 4:25). An essay that is truly yours, even if plain, is worth more than a polished one that is not.

The model. *Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address (November 19, 1863), Project Gutenberg #4*

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

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

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

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

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

PICTURE STUDY



The Veteran in a New Field, Winslow Homer, 1865 · Oil on canvas · The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Wikimedia Commons · CC0

Winslow Homer had followed the Union army as an artist for *Harper's Weekly*. In 1865, the year the Civil War ended, he painted a man in shirtsleeves cutting wheat alone. Only a dark jacket and a canteen thrown down in the corner tell us he has just come home from the army. The man who carried a rifle now carries a scythe. The painting asks a quiet question: what does a soldier bring home with him into ordinary work?

Look closely

- Find the jacket and canteen. Why might Homer have put them so small and low in the picture?
- Look at the man's back and arms. What do they tell you about how he works?
- Look at the line between the cut wheat and the standing wheat. How much work is left?

Talk about it

1. Write three sentences in which this veteran teaches a boy or girl something about America without saying a word.
2. Isaiah 2:4 speaks of beating swords into plowshares. How does this painting show that hope?

WRITING PROJECT: FROM THE 6.4 DRAFT TO A PATRIOT'S PEN ENTRY

Take the five-paragraph essay you drafted in 6.4 and remake it for this year's theme. If your 6.4 draft was on another topic, keep its structure and thesis skills and write fresh content.

Today's date matters: the entry is due to your local Post by October 31, 2026. If that date has passed, finish the essay anyway as practice and watch for next year's theme.

You will need

- Your 6.4 draft
- Writing notebook
- The official Patriot's Pen rules and entry form (vfw.org)
- A veteran willing to be interviewed (in person or by phone)
- A computer or typewriter for the final copy

Steps

1. Read the official rules aloud with a parent. Underline the theme, the word limit, the deadline and the three judging criteria.
2. Interview a veteran for 15-20 minutes. Ask where and when he or she served, one hard day, one surprise, and "What should a young American understand about this country?" Copy one answer word for word.
3. Write a one-sentence thesis that answers the theme: "What this veteran taught me about America is ..."
4. Plan five paragraphs: introduction with thesis; the veteran's service (who, where, when); one scene or deed that shows the lesson; what the lesson means for America; a conclusion that says what you will now do.
5. Draft 330-380 words so you have room to cut or add. Use your 6.4 introduction and conclusion skills.
6. Read the draft to the veteran, if you can, and correct any fact he or she points out.
7. Count every word (not the title). Save the draft for 9.3, where you will polish and send it.

Check your work

- My thesis answers the theme in one clear sentence.
- I named who served, where, when and what was learned, and I checked the facts.
- The essay contains no name, school, address or other personal identifier.
- I used active voice for the veteran's deeds ("she repaired engines," not "engines were repaired").
- Any quotation is short and plainly marked with quotation marks and the speaker.
- The essay is 300-400 words, not counting the title.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the last paragraph of the Gettysburg Address by hand, then underline every word that looks to the future.
2. Imitate Lincoln's turn: "The world will little note ... but it can never forget what they did here." Write your own sentence of the form "We may forget _____, but we must never forget _____."

3. List ten questions you could ask a veteran. Star the three that ask for a story, not a yes or no.

History note. Lincoln spoke at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, four and a half months after the battle. Edward Everett, the main speaker, talked for about two hours; Lincoln spoke for about two minutes. Five handwritten copies of the address survive and differ slightly in wording. The Project Gutenberg text printed here marks Lincoln's pauses with spaced dots, which many printings give as dashes or commas.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.2 "Active and Passive Voice." Active voice puts the veteran in the subject and saves words, which matters when the limit is 400.

For families. Rules summarized from vfw.org and the VFW's "Patriot's Pen Rules and Eligibility" sheet in October 2026; always download the current official entry form and confirm with your local Post, since Posts set their own drop-off arrangements. Prizes begin at the Post level; each state's first-place winner receives at least \$500 at the national level, and the national first-place award is \$5,000. Students may enter only once a year (one Post). Note the anonymity rule: the essay must not include the student's name, school or personal identifiers, and it asks students to avoid references to their own race, sex, religion or national origin that could reveal who they are. A student may still write about faith, duty and country in general terms; help your student avoid naming your church or family details. You may check punctuation, grammar and spelling, but the content must be your student's. If no veteran is close by, a phone call to a family friend or a local VFW or American Legion Post can usually find one willing to talk.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. A student's 6.4 thesis read: "Veterans are heroes who deserve our respect because they fought for our freedom." Rewrite it to answer the 2026-27 theme.

1. The theme asks what *a* veteran taught *me* about *America*. The old thesis is about all veterans and teaches nothing specific.
2. Pick one veteran from the interview: a neighbor who served as an Army medic.
3. State the lesson about America in one clause.

Answer: From a neighbor who served as an Army medic, I learned that America is kept free not only by battles but by ordinary people who do their duty carefully when no one is watching.

Example 2. This body paragraph is 74 words. Cut it to under 50 without losing a fact: “It was in 1969 that my grandfather was sent to Vietnam, and he was assigned to a unit where he was given the job of repairing helicopter engines, which was a job that was very important because if the engines were not repaired correctly then the pilots who were flying the helicopters would be in great danger, and so he learned that he had to be very careful and do everything right every time.”

1. Change passive to active: “was sent” becomes “went”; “was given the job” becomes “repaired.”
2. Cut empty openers (“It was in 1969 that”) and repeated words (“job,” “helicopters”).
3. Turn the long “because ... then ... and so” chain into two sentences.

Answer: In 1969 my grandfather went to Vietnam to repair helicopter engines. If he missed one loose bolt, a pilot and crew could die. So he learned to check everything twice, every time, even at two in the morning. (38 words)

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What is the 2026–27 Patriot’s Pen theme?
2. **EASY** Who may enter, how long must the essay be, and when is it due?
3. **EASY** Name the three judging criteria and their points.
4. **EASY** Does the title count toward the word limit?
5. **MEDIUM** Find the three-step movement of time in the Gettysburg Address and quote a phrase for each.
6. **MEDIUM** Rewrite in active voice: “The flag was folded by my uncle with great care.”
7. **MEDIUM** A student writes, “My name is Caleb and I go to Grace Christian Academy.” What rule does this break, and how should it be fixed?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a conclusion of two or three sentences that turns a veteran’s deed into a lesson for the living, as Lincoln does.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing about veterans in general instead of what one veteran taught you about America.
- Putting your name, school or hometown in the essay, which breaks the anonymity rule.
- Filling the essay with quotations. The rules allow them only sparingly; most words must be yours.
- Missing the deadline or forgetting to staple the official entry form on top of the essay.

Make it a game · Four Hundred Words or Fewer. The parent reads a padded sentence aloud (“It is a fact that there are many things that veterans have done”). Players race to rewrite it in the fewest words that keep the meaning. Count the words; the shortest correct version wins the round. Play five rounds.

Scripture. “That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?” (Joshua 4:6, KJV)

Israel set up stones so that children would ask and elders would tell; your interview is that same question, asked of someone who served.

Practice: answers

1. “What a Veteran Taught Me About America.”
2. Students in grades 6–8 (homeschoolers included); 300–400 words, plus or minus 5; to a participating VFW Post by October 31, 2026.
3. Knowledge of the theme (30), theme development (35), clarity of ideas (35).
4. No. The title and any footnotes are not counted; every other word is.
5. Past: “Four score and seven years ago.” Present: “Now we are engaged in a great civil war.” Future: “shall not perish from this earth.”
6. My uncle folded the flag with great care.
7. The anonymity rule: no name, school or personal identifiers in the essay. Cut the sentence; the entry form carries the student’s information.
8. Sample: My grandfather checked every bolt twice so that men he would never meet could fly home. America still runs on that kind of faithfulness. It is for me, now, to do my own small duties as if someone’s life depended on them.

9.2 SCHOLASTIC ART & WRITING AWARDS: CHOOSING A CATEGORY

OBJECTIVES

- Read the 2027 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards rules: who may enter, the regional deadline, the fee and the fee waiver.
- Match a piece from this year (sketch, sonnet or story) to the right category and its length limit.
- Study a memoir passage by Booker T. Washington and revise your own piece toward one concrete, true scene.

Warm-up. Lay out three pieces from this year: your Unit 4 story, your Unit 5 sonnet and your Unit 7 biographical sketch. Read the first sentence of each aloud. Which one makes you want to keep reading? Why?

Video slot. Video coming. Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute, a short biography (a museum, National Park Service or library channel). Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

category

One of the kinds of writing a contest judges separately, such as Poetry, Short Story, Flash Fiction or Personal Essay & Memoir. Each has its own length limit.

memoir

A true account of events from the writer's own life, told with the care of a story: scenes, details and people.

regional deadline

The last day to enter in your area. Scholastic deadlines are set by region and fall between December and January.

fee waiver

Permission to enter without paying the fee, chosen in the online entry portal by a family for whom the fee is a hardship.

Gold Key

The top regional award in the Scholastic Awards; Gold Key works go on to national judging.

CORE IDEAS

A second contest, a longer road. The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, begun in 1923 and now run by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, judge art and writing by students in grades 7–12. Read the eligibility line closely: students must be in grades 7–12 *and* age 13 or older, living in the United States (or its territories or military bases) or in Canada outside

Quebec. Homeschooled students may enter. If you are twelve now, this lesson is still worth doing; you will be ready the first year you are eligible. (Rules summarized October 2026 from artandwriting.org; read the official rules before you enter.)

Deadlines, fees and the waiver. Entries are made online. Each region sets its own deadline, beginning in December 2026 and running into January 2027, so look up your region's date by zip code on the "My Region" page and write it on your calendar today. The fee for the 2027 Awards is \$15 per individual entry (\$40 for a portfolio, which is for seniors only). If the fee is a hardship, the family may select the fee waiver in the entry portal. Regional judges give Gold Keys, Silver Keys and Honorable Mentions; Gold Key works go on to national judging.

Pick the category that fits the piece. Do not change your piece to fit a category it was never meant for. Choose the category that already fits. For a seventh grader, three categories match this year's work. *Personal Essay & Memoir* (500–3,000 words) fits your Unit 7 biographical sketch, especially if you were present for the events. *Poetry* (3–100 lines, one poem per entry) fits your Unit 5 sonnet. *Flash Fiction* (up to 1,000 words) or *Short Story* (1,000–3,000 words) fits your Unit 4 story. A piece outside the limits may not be judged at all, so count before you choose.

What judges look for. Scholastic judges read thousands of entries. What makes one stand out is not big words or a big subject, but a writer who shows a real scene clearly. Look at the model. Booker T. Washington does not say "I always loved learning." He shows a boy at a salt furnace learning one number, "18," because it was painted on his stepfather's barrels. Then he shows his mother finding an old spelling book, and he says he began "to devour" it. One true scene, one strong verb: that is what a reader remembers.

Memoir is about events, people and work. Washington's memoir, *Up from Slavery* (1901), tells of a boy born in slavery who became the founder of Tuskegee Institute. It is not a list of feelings; it is a record of work, of a mother's help and of steady effort, told plainly. Your memoir can be the same: the day your grandfather taught you to sharpen a saw, the winter your family nursed a neighbor, the summer you learned to read music. Write what happened and who was there, and let the reader see what it meant. Give thanks where thanks belong; much of what we learn comes by God's providence through other people.

The rules about names and honesty. Scholastic asks you to keep your name and identifying details off the manuscript itself; your information goes in the online portal, and a parent's email is required to set up the account. Your work must be your own. The Alliance does not accept AI-generated work, and in this course we do not use AI writing tools at any stage. Plagiarism means disqualification. Choose a piece you wrote, revise it yourself, and you can enter with a clear conscience.

The model. *Booker T. Washington, Up from Slavery: An Autobiography (1901), Chapter II, "Boyhood Days," Project Gutenberg #2376*

The first thing I ever learned in the way of book knowledge was while working in this salt-furnace. Each salt-packer had his barrels marked with a certain number. The number allotted to my stepfather was "18." At the close of the day's work the

boss of the packers would come around and put “18” on each of our barrels, and I soon learned to recognize that figure wherever I saw it, and after a while got to the point where I could make that figure, though I knew nothing about any other figures or letters.

From the time that I can remember having any thoughts about anything, I recall that I had an intense longing to learn to read. I determined, when quite a small child, that, if I accomplished nothing else in life, I would in some way get enough education to enable me to read common books and newspapers. Soon after we got settled in some manner in our new cabin in West Virginia, I induced my mother to get hold of a book for me. How or where she got it I do not know, but in some way she procured an old copy of Webster’s “blue-back” spelling-book, which contained the alphabet, followed by such meaningless words as “ab,” “ba,” “ca,” “da.” I began at once to devour this book, and I think that it was the first one I ever had in my hands

PICTURE STUDY



The Young Schoolmistress, Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, about 1735–1736 · Oil on canvas · The National Gallery, London

Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

Chardin painted quiet scenes of French households: a boy blowing bubbles, a woman scraping vegetables, a girl saying grace. Here an older girl teaches a little one to read, pointing to each letter with a long needle. Nothing grand is happening, yet Chardin gives it all his skill. That is a lesson for a contest writer: a small, true scene told with great care can hold a judge’s eye as well as any battle.

Look closely

- Find the long pointer in the older girl's hand. What is she pointing at?
- Look at the small child's face and hands. Is the child following, or thinking of something else?
- Notice how little is in the background. Why might Chardin leave it so plain?

Talk about it

1. Write a memoir paragraph about the person who taught you to read or to do some skill. Begin with one object, as Washington begins with the number "18."
2. How is this painting like Washington's mother finding the spelling book for her son?

WRITING PROJECT: CHOOSE, FIT AND STRENGTHEN A SCHOLASTIC ENTRY

Choose one piece from this year, match it to a Scholastic category, and revise it toward one true, clear scene. In 9.3 you will polish and submit it (or the Patriot's Pen essay, or both).

You will need

- Your Unit 4 story, Unit 5 sonnet and Unit 7 sketch
- Writing notebook
- The official Scholastic categories page and your region's deadline (artandwriting.org)
- A computer for word and line counts

Steps

1. With a parent, check eligibility: grade 7 or higher and age 13 or older by the rules for the 2027 Awards. Look up your region's deadline by zip code and write it on the calendar.
2. Count the words (or lines) in each of your three pieces. Write each count beside the category limits: Personal Essay & Memoir 500–3,000 words; Poetry 3–100 lines; Flash Fiction up to 1,000 words; Short Story 1,000–3,000 words.
3. Choose one piece and one category. Write a sentence saying why it fits.
4. Find the one scene in your piece that matters most. Mark every sentence that tells a feeling or a general truth instead of showing an event.
5. Rewrite that scene with one concrete object, one strong verb and one line of real speech, as Washington uses "18," "devour" and the spelling book.
6. Read the whole piece aloud to a parent. Cut anything that does not serve the main scene.
7. Save the revision for 9.3.

Check your work

- The piece fits the category's length limit.
- The main scene shows a real object, action and person, not only feelings.
- I used adverb clauses (when, after, because, though) to set the time and cause of events.
- Verb tense stays the same unless the time really changes.
- My name and other identifying details are not in the text of the piece.

- Every word is my own work.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Washington's first paragraph by hand. Circle the number "18" each time it appears and say why he repeats it.
2. Imitate his opening: "The first thing I ever learned about _____ was while _____." Finish it with a true memory and write three more sentences.
3. List five objects from your childhood (a tool, a book, a recipe card, a key). Beside each, write the person it reminds you of.

History note. Booker T. Washington was born into slavery in Virginia in 1856. After emancipation his family moved to Malden, West Virginia, where as a boy he packed salt and worked in a coal mine. He studied at Hampton Institute and in 1881 became the first head of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. *Up from Slavery* was published in 1901. Chardin's *Young Schoolmistress* exists in more than one version; the picture here is the one in the National Gallery, London.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 18.3 "Adverb Clauses." Washington sets time and cause with adverb clauses ("Soon after we got settled ... in West Virginia," "though I knew nothing about any other figures"); use them to anchor your own scene.

For families. Rules summarized from artandwriting.org (How to Enter, Categories and FAQ pages) in October 2026: grades 7–12 and age 13 or older; homeschoolers welcome; regional deadlines December 2026 through January 2027; \$15 per individual entry with a self-certified fee waiver in the portal (some regions may ask for more). A parent's email is required to create the student's account. Because a twelve-year-old seventh grader is not yet eligible, check your student's age against the rules; if not eligible, treat this lesson as preparation for next year. Read the category descriptions yourself before choosing; judges see many entries, and some subjects in the published winners may not suit your family. In the model, Washington calls the spelling-book words "meaningless" only because syllables such as "ab" and "ba" carry no sense alone.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Which category? (a) A 14-line sonnet about a grandmother's garden. (b) A 1,350-word true account of the day the student's family rebuilt a neighbor's fence after a storm. (c) A 760-word made-up story told by a lighthouse keeper.

1. (a) is one poem within 3–100 lines.
2. (b) is true, about the writer's own experience, and within 500–3,000 words.
3. (c) is fiction under 1,000 words; Short Story requires at least 1,000.

Answer: (a) Poetry. (b) Personal Essay & Memoir. (c) Flash Fiction.

Example 2. Revise this memoir sentence into a scene: “My grandfather taught me a lot about hard work and I will always be grateful.”

1. Ask: what exactly did he teach, and where? (Splitting wood, in his yard, in November.)
2. Find one object, like Washington’s “18”: the maul with tape on the handle.
3. Use a strong verb and one line of real speech; let the gratitude show without being announced.

Answer: The first thing my grandfather taught me in his yard that November was where to strike a log. He tapped the crack with the head of the maul, the one with black tape on the handle. “Hit it there,” he said, “and let the wood do the work.” I swung forty times before one split clean.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** Who may enter the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards?
2. **EASY** What does an individual entry cost for the 2027 Awards, and what can a family do if that is a hardship?
3. **EASY** Give the length limits for Poetry and for Personal Essay & Memoir.
4. **EASY** What is a Gold Key?
5. **MEDIUM** Why does Washington begin with the number “18” instead of saying he loved learning?
6. **MEDIUM** Find two adverb clauses in the model.
7. **MEDIUM** Your Unit 4 story is 1,040 words. Name two categories it could enter, and what you would have to do for each.
8. **CHALLENGE** Write the opening three sentences of a memoir, beginning with one object, in imitation of Washington.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Choosing a category without counting words or lines first.
- Writing about feelings in general instead of showing one true scene.
- Missing your region’s deadline because you looked up someone else’s region.
- Leaving your name or school in the manuscript.

Make it a game • Category Sort. The parent writes ten short descriptions on cards (“a 40-line poem about a barn,” “a 2,200-word true story of a fishing trip,” “a 600-word invented tale,” “a 120-line poem”). The student sorts each into Poetry, Personal Essay & Memoir, Flash Fiction, Short Story or “Not eligible as written,” and says why. One point for each correct card.

Scripture. “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he

shall not stand before mean men.” (Proverbs 22:29, KJV)

Diligent, careful work is noticed; enter your best work, honestly made, and leave the result to God.

Practice: answers

1. Students in grades 7-12 who are age 13 or older and live in the United States (or its territories or military bases) or Canada outside Quebec; homeschoolers may enter.
2. \$15; select the fee waiver in the online entry portal.
3. Poetry: 3-100 lines, one poem per entry. Personal Essay & Memoir: 500-3,000 words.
4. The top regional award; Gold Key works go on to national judging.
5. A concrete object lets the reader see the scene and the hunger to learn; a general statement would be forgotten.
6. Two of: “Soon after we got settled in some manner in our new cabin in West Virginia”; “though I knew nothing about any other figures or letters”; “if I accomplished nothing else in life”; “when quite a small child” (elliptical).
7. Short Story as it is (1,000-3,000 words), or Flash Fiction if you cut it to 1,000 words or fewer.
8. Sample: The first thing I ever learned about baking bread was while standing on a chair in my aunt’s kitchen. She had a cracked blue bowl that she would not let anyone else wash. In it, every Saturday, the dough rose under a damp towel while I watched for the edge to reach the crack.

9.3 POLISH AND SEND: RULES CHECKLIST, WORD COUNT, HONEST WORK

OBJECTIVES

- Turn a contest’s official rules into a checklist and check your entry against every line.
- Count words or lines the way the contest counts them and bring the piece safely inside the limit.
- Proofread for shifts in tense, voice and mood, sign off on the work as honestly your own, and send it.

Warm-up. Read this aloud and find what is wrong: “My essay is 412 words, but the title is long, so it’s probably fine. Mom rewrote my second paragraph, but it’s still my idea.” Name both problems.

Video slot. Video coming. How to proofread your writing (reading aloud and reading backward), from a library or classical-school channel. Search approved channels (e.g., a library, museum or classical-school channel); preview first.

KEY TERMS

polish

The last stage of revision: small changes in words, sentences and mechanics after the ideas and order are settled.

rules checklist

A list made line by line from a contest’s official rules, with a box to tick for each requirement.

proofreading

Reading slowly to catch errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and typing.

shift

An unneeded change in tense, voice or mood within a sentence or paragraph, which jolts the reader.

own work

Writing whose ideas, order and words come from you. Others may point out mechanical errors; they may not supply content.

CORE IDEAS

Polish is the last step, not the first. The canons of rhetoric run in order: invention, arrangement, style. In 9.1 and 9.2 you found what to say and put it in order. Now you work on style and correctness, the part a contest judge notices first and a careless writer skips. Alexander Pope, in the model, says good writing looks easy only because the writer worked

hard: “True ease in writing comes from art, not chance, / As those move easiest who have learned to dance.” A dancer practices; a writer polishes.

Make the rules into a checklist. Print the official rules. Go through them with a pencil and turn every requirement into a line with a box. For Patriot’s Pen that list includes: theme answered; typed in English; no color or graphics; 300–400 words (plus or minus 5), title not counted; no name, school or personal identifiers in the essay; quotations few and clearly marked; official entry form stapled on top; delivered to a participating Post by October 31. For Scholastic it includes: grade and age eligible; right category; inside the length limit; no name on the manuscript; entered online by your region’s deadline; fee paid or waiver selected. Tick each box only after you check it, not because you think it is fine.

Count the way the judges count. Patriot’s Pen counts every word “regardless of length,” but not the title or footnotes. Scholastic limits most prose by words and poetry by lines. Use the word count in your word processor, then count one paragraph by hand to be sure it agrees. Aim inside the limit, not on its edge: a Patriot’s Pen essay of 340–390 words leaves room for a small difference in counting. If you are over, cut in this order: empty openers (“It is a fact that”), doubled words (“very important and essential”), passive verbs, and last of all, facts.

Proofread in three passes. Read once for *sense*: aloud, slowly, listening as Pope says for “the sound” to “echo to the sense.” Read again for *shifts*: does the tense stay in the past while you tell what happened? Did an active sentence slide into passive for no reason? Did a statement turn into a command in the middle? Read a third time for *mechanics*, going backward from the last sentence to the first, so your eye sees each sentence alone and does not skim. Check commas after introductory clauses, semicolons between independent clauses, and quotation marks around every borrowed word.

Honest own work. Both contests require that the work be yours. Patriot’s Pen allows a parent or teacher to check punctuation, grammar and spelling, “but the content must remain the contestants.” Scholastic does not accept AI-generated work and disqualifies plagiarism. A good rule for every contest: helpers may point to an error; you make the fix. If someone suggests a better sentence, thank them and write your own. Scripture asks for an honest scale: “A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight” (Proverbs 11:1). Your name on the entry form is your word that the weight is true.

Send it, then let it go. Make a clean final copy, keep a copy for your portfolio, and send the entry on time with every form filled. Then leave the result in God’s hands. Most entries do not win, and that is no failure; you have finished a real piece for a real reader, which is what writers do. Write down the date you sent it, and when results come, read them calmly and start the next piece.

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

Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow;
And praise the easy vigor of a line,

Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offense,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows,
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar,
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labors, and the words move slow;
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.

PICTURE STUDY



The Moneylender and His Wife, Quentin Massys, 1514 · Oil on panel · Musée du Louvre, Paris
Wikimedia Commons · Public domain

In the Flemish city of Antwerp, a money changer weighs coins on a tiny scale to be sure each is full weight. His wife has stopped turning the pages of her prayer book to watch him. Massys painted every coin, pearl and page with great care, as if he too were weighing each stroke. An old description says the original frame carried words from Leviticus 19:36 about just balances and just weights.

Look closely

- Find the small balance in the man's hand. What is he checking?
- Look at the wife's eyes and hands. Which is she paying attention to, the book or the scale?

- Find the round mirror on the table. What does it show from outside the room?

Talk about it

1. How is checking a word count like weighing a coin? Write three sentences.
2. The painting sets a prayer book beside a pile of money. What might the painter want us to think about honest work?

WRITING PROJECT: POLISH AND SEND

Finish one entry (Patriot's Pen from 9.1, your Scholastic piece from 9.2, or both) and send it. If a deadline has passed or you are not yet eligible, polish the piece anyway and file it in your portfolio with a note of the next deadline.

You will need

- Your 9.1 and/or 9.2 draft
- The official rules printed out, and the Patriot's Pen entry form if you are sending that essay
- A computer with word count
- A colored pencil and a ruler (for reading backward line by line)

Steps

1. Make a rules checklist from the official rules, one box per requirement. Have a parent check that you missed nothing.
2. Count words or lines. Write the number at the top of your draft. If you are outside the limit, cut or add, then count again.
3. Proofreading pass one: read the whole piece aloud for sense. Mark any place you stumble.
4. Pass two: hunt shifts in tense, voice and mood. Fix each one.
5. Pass three: read backward, sentence by sentence, for spelling, commas, semicolons and quotation marks. A parent may point out errors; you make every fix.
6. Type the final copy as the rules require. Fill in the entry form (or the online portal) with a parent, and both of you read the line saying the work is the student's own before signing or submitting.
7. Send it by the deadline. Write the date sent, the contest and the category in your notebook, and put a copy in your portfolio.

Check your work

- Every box on my rules checklist is ticked, and I checked each one myself.
- My count is inside the limit, counted the way the contest counts.
- Tense, voice and mood do not shift without reason.
- Introductory clauses are followed by commas, and independent clauses joined without a conjunction use a semicolon.
- Every quotation is exact and marked, with its speaker named.

- The ideas and words are my own; helpers only pointed out errors.

WRITING NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Pope's lines from "True ease in writing" to "echo to the sense" by hand, then mark the stressed syllables in the first line as you did in Unit 5.
2. Make a blank rules checklist page you can reuse for any contest: theme, eligibility, length, format, anonymity, forms, deadline, delivery, honesty.
3. List the five padding phrases you use most (for example "very," "really," "in order to," "the fact that," "I think that"). Beside each, write a shorter way.

History note. Pope published *An Essay on Criticism* in 1711, when he was about twenty-three. In the model he makes the lines act out their meaning: the Ajax line is slow and heavy with consonants, and the Camilla line runs long and quick. Denham and Waller were earlier English poets Pope admired. Massys painted *The Moneylender and His Wife* in Antwerp in 1514; it hangs in the Louvre.

 **Grammar link.** Grammar Level 3, Lesson 20.4 "Shifts in Tense, Voice and Mood." Your second proofreading pass hunts exactly these shifts.

For families. Contest rules here are summarized from vfw.org (Patriot's Pen Rules and Eligibility) and artandwriting.org in October 2026; always work from the current official forms. The line between help and authorship matters: Patriot's Pen permits a parent or teacher to check punctuation, grammar and spelling only, and Scholastic does not accept AI-generated work. A simple way to keep it clean is to mark errors with a dot in the margin and let your student find and fix them. The Gutenberg text of Pope modernizes some spellings ("learned," "labors") and has no mark at the end of the "dance" line; older printings read "learn'd to dance." Results can take months; help your student see sending the piece as the real finish line.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Find and fix the shifts: "When my grandfather came home from Korea, he goes straight to the farm. The fences were rebuilt by him that summer. Work hard and you will never be hungry, he told me."

1. Tense: the story is in the past, but "goes" is present. Change to "went."
2. Voice: "were rebuilt by him" slides into passive for no reason. Make it active.
3. Mood: the command is fine because it is his own words, but it needs quotation marks to show it is a quotation, not a sudden command to the reader.

Answer: When my grandfather came home from Korea, he went straight to the farm. That summer he rebuilt the fences. "Work hard," he told me, "and you will never be hungry."

Example 2. A Patriot's Pen draft is 418 words, not counting the title. Show how to bring it inside the limit.

1. The limit is 400, plus or minus 5, so 405 is the most allowed; aim for about 390.
2. Cut empty openers: "It is important to remember that" (6 words) and "I would like to say that" (6 words).
3. Change two passive sentences to active (saves about 4 words) and cut doubled words such as "brave and courageous" to "brave" (saves 2).
4. Recount: $418 - 18 = 400$. Cut one more padded phrase to reach the safer range.

Answer: After the cuts the essay is about 390 words, with every fact kept. The student recounts with the word processor and by hand before printing.

PRACTICE

1. **EASY** What are the three proofreading passes?
2. **EASY** Why read backward on the last pass?
3. **EASY** What may a parent do with a Patriot's Pen essay, and what may a parent not do?
4. **EASY** Explain Pope's line "True ease in writing comes from art, not chance."
5. **MEDIUM** Fix the shift: "Every morning the veteran raises the flag, and then the yard was swept."
6. **MEDIUM** Shorten without losing meaning: "Due to the fact that he was very, very tired, he decided that he would go to sleep."
7. **MEDIUM** Your Scholastic memoir is 485 words. What must you do before entering Personal Essay & Memoir, and how?
8. **CHALLENGE** Write a four-line imitation of Pope on revision, in rhymed couplets, about cutting extra words.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Trusting your memory of the rules instead of checking each line of the official ones.
- Counting the title in a Patriot's Pen essay, or forgetting that every short word counts.
- Letting a helper rewrite sentences; helpers point, the writer fixes.
- Waiting until the deadline day and finding a form, a signature or a printer missing.

Make it a game · Error Hunt. The parent types a 100-word paragraph with exactly eight planted errors (two tense shifts, one passive slide, two comma errors, one misspelling, one missing quotation mark, one extra word). The student hunts them in three timed passes, two minutes each. Score one point per error found and one point per correct fix; lose a point for any "fix" that adds an error.

Scripture. "A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight." (Proverbs 11:1, KJV)

A contest entry is a weight on the scale; honest counting and honest authorship make it a just weight.

Practice: answers

1. Aloud for sense; for shifts in tense, voice and mood; backward for mechanics.
2. So your eye sees each sentence alone and catches errors instead of skimming for meaning.
3. A parent may check punctuation, grammar and spelling; the content must remain the student's.
4. Writing that reads easily is the result of skill and practice, not luck, just as a graceful dancer has practiced.
5. Every morning the veteran raises the flag and then sweeps the yard. (Or, in past tense: raised ... swept.)
6. Because he was exhausted, he went to sleep.
7. Bring it to at least 500 words, by adding to the main scene (an object, an action, a line of speech), not by padding.
8. Sample: Cut every word that does not earn its place, / And let the thought stand clear with open face. / The patient pen that trims and tries again / Will find the plain, strong line that moves all men.

UNIT 9 REVIEW

Read each question aloud if needed. The student may answer in writing or out loud. Contest facts are as of October 2026; accept a current official rule if it has since changed. Writing tasks are scored with the unit checklists, not for spelling alone.

1. (3 pts) Give the 2026–27 Patriot’s Pen theme, word limit and deadline.
2. (3 pts) Name the three Patriot’s Pen judging criteria and their points.
3. (3 pts) Who is eligible for the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards?
4. (2 pts) Give the length limit for Scholastic Poetry and for Personal Essay & Memoir.
5. (2 pts) What can a family do if the Scholastic entry fee is a hardship?
6. (4 pts) Rewrite this weak thesis to answer the Patriot’s Pen theme: “Veterans are important to our country.”
7. (4 pts) How does the Gettysburg Address move through time, and why is that a good pattern for a Patriot’s Pen essay?
8. (4 pts) What makes Booker T. Washington’s memoir passage memorable? Name two techniques.
9. (3 pts) Fix the shifts: “After the storm my father checks the roof, and the shingles were replaced by him.”
10. (3 pts) Cut to under 12 words: “It is a fact that in the year 1944 my great-grandfather was sent across the ocean to France.”
11. (3 pts) Name the three proofreading passes.
12. (4 pts) A friend offers to rewrite your conclusion so it will win. What do you say, and why?

UNIT PORTFOLIO PIECE: MY CONTEST ENTRY

Add the final, polished copy of your entry (Patriot’s Pen essay, Scholastic piece, or both) to your Grade 7 portfolio, with your rules checklist, your word or line count, and a note of the contest, category and date sent. If you were not eligible or a deadline had passed, include the polished piece and the next deadline.

- **Fit to the rules:** Every line of the rules checklist is met: theme or category, length, format, anonymity, forms and deadline.
- **Content:** A clear thesis or central scene, built on true, specific facts and a concrete scene rather than general praise or feelings.
- **Style and mechanics:** No needless shifts in tense, voice or mood; active voice for deeds; commas, semicolons and quotation marks correct.
- **Honesty:** The ideas and words are the student’s own; quotations are exact and marked; helpers only pointed out errors.

Answer key

1. “What a Veteran Taught Me About America”; 300–400 words (plus or minus 5), title not counted; to a participating VFW Post by October 31, 2026.
2. Knowledge of the theme (30), theme development (35), clarity of ideas (35).

3. Students in grades 7-12, age 13 or older, living in the U.S. (including territories and military bases) or Canada outside Quebec; homeschoolers may enter.
4. Poetry: 3-100 lines, one poem. Personal Essay & Memoir: 500-3,000 words.
5. Select the fee waiver in the online entry portal.
6. Sample: From my uncle's years as a Navy cook, I learned that America depends on people who do unglamorous work faithfully.
7. Past ("Four score and seven years ago"), present ("Now we are engaged"), future ("shall not perish"). An essay can likewise tell what the veteran did, what it shows, and what we must now do.
8. Two of: one concrete object (the number "18," the spelling book); a true scene with real people (stepfather, mother); a strong verb ("devour"); plain, honest telling of events.
9. After the storm my father checked the roof and replaced the shingles.
10. Sample: In 1944 my great-grandfather crossed the ocean to France. (9 words)
11. Aloud for sense; for shifts in tense, voice and mood; backward for mechanics.
12. Sample: "Thank you, but please just show me where it is weak; I need to write it myself." Both contests require the student's own work, and honest work is a just weight (Proverbs 11:1).