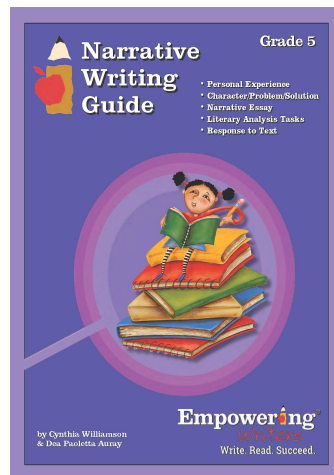




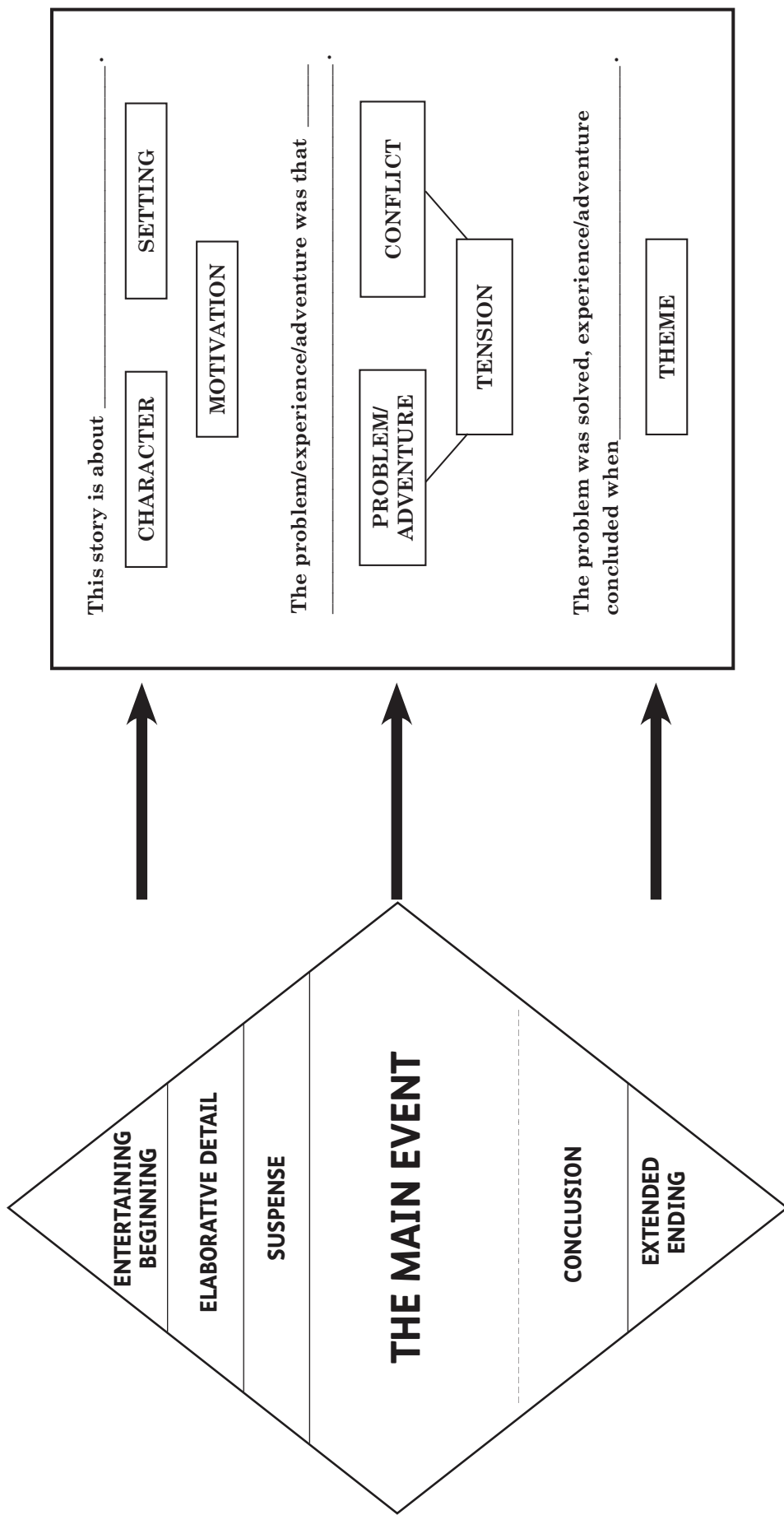
# Grade 5 Narrative Writing Guide

Student Pages for Print or Projection

## SECTION 1: Recognizing Genre/Organization



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Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Milking Maisy

### Genre: Personal Experience

Mooooo! Oink oink! Quack quack! Those were the sounds that greeted our ears when we arrived at the farm.

The 5th grade field trip to Miller Farm took place on a sunny spring day. Some of my classmates had been there before to pick pumpkins or buy vegetables, but this was my first trip to an actual working farm and I was excited.

“I can’t wait to see the tractors,” said Sam, who loved all things mechanical. Cindy was hoping to see tiny pink piglets and Jose was eager to check out the ducks.

Tractors, baby pigs and ducks all sounded good to me, but what I was really, really hoping to do was milk a cow.

Our tour started in the fields, where a tractor was hard at work readying the rich, dark soil for planting. The farmer told us that the first crops he’d be planting were peas and spinach. Later in the spring, he explained, he’d grow a variety of vegetables, including corn, lettuce and melons. In the distance, we could see the pasture, where emerald-green grass grew and sheep grazed calmly. They were guarded by a large, shaggy dog with a loud, deep bark that discouraged anybody from coming too close to the fleecy animals.

In the first barn we explored, there was a litter of 16 newborn piglets squirming beneath a bright heat lamp. Cindy let out a shriek of joy when she saw them.

Before we knew it, it was time for lunch and we settled down for a picnic on the lawn. A flock of white ducks ambled over and Jose fed them scraps of bread from his sandwich.

“I think we’re going to see the cows next,” Cindy whispered to me. “And you’ll get a chance to milk one, Anna.”

After lunch, the farmer led us past a grassy pasture filled with black and white cows.

(continued)

“As you can see, our cows are all out to pasture,” the farmer explained. “We milk them when they come inside at the end of the day.”

I felt my heart sink. It didn’t seem fair. Sam saw his tractor, Cindy her piglets and Jose his ducks. But I wasn’t going to get a chance to milk a cow.

We went to an enclosure filled with goats of every size and shape. There was a tall billy goat with a long beard pawing the ground with his hoof. A baby goat kicked up its heels. Another of the friendly animals nuzzled my hand. The farmer grabbed a bucket and stool.

“Time to milk the goats,” he said. “Who’s first?”

Milking a goat? My hand shot into the air. The goat’s name was Maisy and the farmer showed me how to work her silky udders gently. Before I knew it, the bucket was filled with fresh, warm milk that the farmer would use to make cheese and soap.

“Thanks, Maisy,” I said, patting her on the head and feeling a rush of gratitude toward her for giving me an experience I hadn’t been expecting, but one I’d remember forever. Someday, somehow, I’ll get a chance to milk a cow, and when I do, I’m sure it’ll be very much like milking a goat!

**SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK:**

**This story is about** \_\_\_\_\_ .

**The problem/adventure/experience was that** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

**The problem was solved, adventure/experience concluded when**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

**What is the theme of the story?** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Go back and highlight the sections of the story that indicate the theme.)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## My Lucky Day

### Genre: Character/Problem/Solution

I sat on the couch staring at the TV screen and flipping through channel after channel. As usual, there was nothing good on at 4:00 on a Tuesday afternoon. The long, boring hours between the end of the school day and 5:30 when my mom got home were my least favorite time of the day. Ever since Mom went back to work, I came home to an empty house every day. I didn't want to complain, but it was lonely.

Figuring I might as well get started on my homework, I clicked off the TV and took out my assignment book. There was plenty to do. I was just getting started when I heard an unmistakable sound coming from outside — the deep moo of a cow. I rushed to the window to investigate and sure enough, there were two cows grazing on our front yard.

This was surprisingly unsurprising. About a third of a mile from my house was a small farm. Once its fields were lush with crops; its barns and fences neatly painted and well-kept. But over the past few years, I'd noticed that the place was looking more and more run down. The yard was overgrown with weeds and long expanses of the fence had collapsed, providing an easy escape route for the adventurous cows. This was the third time I'd seen the bovine beauties in my yard.

Mom told me she used to see the farmer and his family working the farm together, but his wife had passed on and his children moved far away. These days, he was always alone. Obviously, taking care of even a small farm was more than one man, however hard-working, could handle. I felt sorry for him, even though he didn't seem to be the nicest of guys. I'd never seen him without a scowl on his face.

Oh, no! From the window, I saw the cows start to nibble on my mom's rose bushes. I grabbed a broom and rushed outside.

"Go away," I shouted, prodding the brown-eyed, long-lashed creatures with the broom. I hated doing so. They were such gentle animals.

A low, soft voice came from behind me. "I'll take it from here, son."

It was the farmer. Up close, his sour scowl looked more like an expression of

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sadness. He introduced himself and I told him my name was Matthew. With a wave, he began to herd the cows toward the road, speaking to them in a calm, kind voice.

“Can I help?”

“Thanks, Matthew,” he said, a little smile coming to his lips. “If you could just help me keep these two girls moving forward, I’d be much obliged.”

So we walked behind the cows and urged them on. When the four of us arrived at the ramshackle dairy barn, the farmer asked me if I wanted to learn how to milk a cow.

“Are you kidding?”

“No, not at all,” he said. “You’re what? 11 or so? Plenty old enough to know how to milk a cow. And I need the help.”

From that day on, I spent those once lonely and boring after-school hours at the farm. I milked the cows and fed the pigs. I fixed the fence and painted the barn. The farmer paid me in cash when he could; in chicken eggs and fresh vegetables when he couldn’t. Either way, I felt grateful. I didn’t know it at the time, but it was definitely my lucky day when those two cows ambled into my front yard!

**SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK:**

**This story is about** \_\_\_\_\_ .

**The problem/adventure/experience was that** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

**The problem was solved, adventure/experience concluded when**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

**What is the theme of the story?** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Go back and highlight the sections of the story that indicate the theme.)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Agriculture Around the World

### Genre: Informational

No farms, no food. That’s a simple fact that holds true around the world. From the crunchy lettuce in your salad to the sweet berries in your pie, farms provide us with a full menu of healthy, delicious foods. The crops and livestock raised by the farmers of South America, Africa and China are important to the world’s food supplies.

South America is one of the world’s leading producers of beef. Known as “pampas,” the vast grasslands of Brazil and Argentina make perfect pastures for cattle. At higher elevations on the continent, coffee plantations abound. Those in Columbia are known for producing some of the richest and most flavorful brews in the world. (Interestingly, coffee beans grown at sea level are said to be of lesser quality and are used mostly in instant coffees.) In the tropical regions of South America, cocoa is an important cash crop. Here, cocoa beans have been grown for centuries by the native Maya people, who invented one of winter’s most comforting treats — hot chocolate.

More than half of the people of Africa work on farms or ranches. Grains, such as corn and millet, thrive in the rich soil of Eastern and Southern Africa. Cassava, a starchy root vegetable similar to a potato, is also grown here. In rainy tropical regions, pineapples and banana-like plantains are cultivated. Despite a dry climate prone to extreme highs and lows in temperature, the deserts of Northern Africa produce a big harvest of dates and cotton almost every year. Also, a wide range of livestock can be found on the farms of Africa, including camels who are raised for their highly nutritious milk as well as their meat. Even in urban areas, many African families keep a small herd of goats or a flock of free-ranging chickens to supplement their own diets.

There are at least 300 million farmers in China! These hard-working women and men produce crops as familiar as rice and as exotic as jujube, a popular Asian

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fruit that looks like a cherry but has the crisp texture of an apple. Along with the usual pigs and chickens, Chinese farms raise unique livestock too. There are about 1,500 turtle farms in China, more than any place else on earth. Turtle meat is seen not only as food but as a medicine that can lead to a longer life span. In the Himalayas, yaks are raised for their meat, which is said to taste like lean beef. The yak's long, shaggy wool can be woven into warm cloth too. While agriculture in China is thriving today, that may not be the case in the future. Unfortunately, experts believe that at least 1/10 of the farmland has been contaminated by mining which introduced toxins like lead into the soil.

Wouldn't you love to visit South America and see how cocoa beans are harvested? Can you imagine drinking camel milk or biting into a yak-burger? The next time you sit down to a healthy meal, take a minute to think about the farmers from around the globe who made it possible with their hard work. For sure, we'd be in real trouble without them.

**Informational Writing Summarizing Framework**

**TOPIC:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN IDEA #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN IDEA #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN IDEA #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**etc.** \_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Being a Farmer

### Genre: Opinion

What do you want to be when you grow up? I know many people dream of being rock stars or playing professional sports and I certainly agree that either would be thrilling. But nothing sounds better to me than being a farmer. Farming is never boring. While it's hard work, farmers tend to lead healthy lifestyles. Plus, farmers today have plenty of options about the crops they grow and the animals they raise.

Because it requires a wealth of different, hands-on skills the job of a farmer is never boring. One day, a farmer could be planting crops and the next, painting a barn or repairing a fence. Their responsibilities change with the seasons too. Caring for baby animals might keep them busy in the spring. In the autumn, they can be found harvesting their crops and stockpiling hay for their animals. Plus, there's always something new to learn about farming. Farmers may devote their time in the winter to learning about new agricultural practices that could help keep their animals healthy and their fields flourishing. As you might imagine, there's never a dull moment!

I am convinced that the life of a farmer is healthy. Instead of sitting in commuter traffic or at a desk in a stuffy office building, they work outdoors and get plenty of exercise. Their diet includes foods they produced with their own hands and it's usually more nutritious and delicious than processed foods. While busy, I believe their lives are rarely stressful. They do not have to answer to a boss or stick to a dress code. Perhaps most importantly, farmers tend to have close family relationships and strong ties to their communities, both of which are factors known to encourage health and emotional wellness.

There are many different ways in which farmers today can build their businesses. Some take the usual path — growing a variety of popular crops and

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selling them at the stand in front of their house or at a local farmer’s market. But others focus on one particular crop. For example, there are an increasing number of farms in North America who specialize in growing lavender, a beautifully scented herb used in bath products and to flavor foods. According to Profitable Plants Digest, farmers can earn as much as \$18,000 from a 1/2 acre harvest of lavender. Farmers have a wide range of choices about livestock too. Of course, they could tend to the usual pigs and cows, or they might decide to raise a herd of camels or yaks like farmers in Africa and Asia. There are so many exciting possibilities!

Is there any doubt that being a farmer is the best job in the world? It’s a profession that’s never boring, encourages a healthy lifestyle and offers endless options. If that sounds good to you, maybe your future lies in the fields and pastures of the countryside. Without a doubt, farming is a career path worth exploring.

**Opinion Writing Summarizing Framework**

**TOPIC:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN REASON #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN REASON #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN REASON #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## NARRATIVE, INFORMATIONAL, OR OPINION?

Read each paragraph. Decide if you think it is **NARRATIVE** which is written to entertain you, **INFORMATIONAL** which is written to **INFORM** you, or **OPINION** which is written to express a personal opinion. Circle your answers.

1. For fitness, there is no better sport than swimming. This amazing exercise strengthens and tones all the muscles in your body. In my opinion, it is also very relaxing and helps busy people manage stress. Another benefit is that swimmers very rarely get injured in the water. This is in sharp contrast to runners who are always getting hurt. Plus, who really enjoys pounding the pavement in the hot sun anyway? Stick to swimming! It's not only great for your health but it's really fun.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

2. There was something odd about these new neighbors of hers. Peering from her bedroom window, Jennifer watched as they moved their belongings into the big, dark house next door — a family of five, all wearing dark capes and sunglasses at midnight. She hoped her mother wouldn't invite them over for dinner.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

3. Amphibians are animals that can survive on land or in water, such as salamanders and frogs. These cold-blooded animals play an important role in the food chains of freshwater ecosystems. By feasting on hundreds and thousands of insects, they keep pest populations down and they are preyed upon by many fish species and birds of prey, including herons and hawks.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

**BONUS:** Go back and look at the narrative paragraph. Is it a **CHARACTER/ PROBLEM/SOLUTION** or **PERSONAL EXPERIENCE** narratives?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## NAME THE GENRE! (1)

Read the following paragraphs. For each paragraph determine whether it is Narrative, Informational, or Opinion. If it's a narrative, do you think it's a personal experience narrative or a character/problem/solution narrative? Circle your answers and be ready to explain them.

1. This spring our class took a field trip to the natural history museum. It was an unforgettable day! Everybody was fascinated by the dinosaur bones as well as the skeletons of animals from the ice age. The gem and mineral exhibit was equally captivating. I saw a huge slab of pink quartz and learned about geodes, which are hollow rocks filled with sparkling crystals. Can you imagine digging such a specimen out of the earth? Nothing would be more exciting.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

2. The largest and deepest ocean on earth, the Pacific covers 30% of the earth's surface. There are about 25,000 islands in this vast body of water, including the Hawaiian and the Galápagos Islands. Volcanic activity and earthquakes deep beneath the sea created most of them. Atolls, islands made of coral, are commonplace in the Pacific too but they are difficult to inhabit. These coral mountains are just a few feet above sea level and prone to flooding.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

3. I am convinced that our town needs bike paths. If we had safe paths leading to our schools and shopping centers, we could reduce traffic and the carbon emissions caused by automobiles. Paved bike paths would help people get a healthy dose of exercise every day too. Of course, winter weather might force us to use our cars but for the greater part of each year, bicycles would definitely be sufficient.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## NAME THE GENRE! (2)

Read the following paragraphs. For each paragraph determine whether it is Narrative, Informational, or Opinion. If it's a narrative, do you think it's a personal experience narrative or a character/problem/solution narrative? Circle your answers and be ready to explain them.

1. One of the best-known animals of the Arctic is the Polar Bear. These snowy-white mammals are well adapted for life in an icy environment. Their thick fur helps them stay warm while their dark skin absorbs heat from the sun. Another valuable adaptation is the size of their paws, which can grow to be a foot in diameter. Like natural snowshoes, these oversized paws distribute the weight of the bear evenly over a large area. This makes it less likely that the hefty animal will crack the ice and fall into the freezing water while it hunts for prey in the frosty tundra.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

2. The wind began to howl and a drenching rain fell from the sky. I sought shelter in a nearby cave. As I sat shivering on the cold, hard-packed ground, I smelled something burning and heard a deep, rattling snore. Holding my breath, I tiptoed deeper into the cave and saw a neon green dragon sleeping peacefully. With every breath, it released a spark and a little puff of smoke. I watched in horror as one spark ignited the soft bed of dried pine needles on which the beast rested. It awakened with a roar.

**Narrative**

**Informational**

**Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### NAME THE GENRE! (3)

Read the following paragraphs. For each paragraph determine whether it is Narrative, Informational, or Opinion. If it's a narrative, do you think it's a personal experience narrative or a character/problem/solution narrative? Circle your answers and be ready to explain them.

1. About six thousand years ago, the world was forever transformed by the domestication of the horse. Since then, these sturdy beasts have served people in many different ways. For hundreds of years, they were the major means of transportation in cities and in the countryside. On the farm, these tireless workers can plow fields as well as herd cows and sheep. Ask any cowboy, and he'll probably tell you a horse is the best partner any wrangler could have!

**Narrative                      Informational                      Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

2. I'd been so excited about my first horseback riding lesson. Wearing my new riding boots and helmet, I'd swaggered into the stable so sure of myself. But I quickly discovered that horseback riding is harder than it looks. The next morning, I woke up with every muscle in my legs aching! I almost cancelled my second lesson. Today, I'm really glad I didn't.

**Narrative                      Informational                      Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

3. I am certain that horseback riding is the world's best sport! Riders can venture out alone or in a group and follow scenic trails in the woods or on the beach. It's the world's most relaxing way to work every muscle in your legs, shoulders and back! Another advantage that people always appreciate is that riders and their horses tend to build close and trusting relationships.

**Narrative                      Informational                      Opinion**

**If narrative - Character/problem/solution or Personal Experience?**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## A Close Call

Mom dragged a wagon filled with bottles of water and snacks. We also brought clean towels and a big bottle of sunscreen to protect ourselves from sunburn. My little sister, Katie, who was a champion builder of sand castles, lugged her pails and shovels. I hauled along my boogie board and Dad carried a fishing pole and tackle box for surf-casting. We set up camp right in front of the lifeguard's chair. It was the last day of our vacation on Nantucket and the weather was just right for our final trip to the beach.

"Careful out there today," the lifeguard called after me as I sprinted into the surf. "Will do," I promised. Waves crashed onto the shore, but they didn't scare me at all. I'd always been a strong swimmer and I'd grown very confident in the water over the past few days. Body surfing these big waves would be a blast!

I dove under a wave and stroked my way past the breakers. To my left was a group of surfers with their colorful long boards and their bright rash guards. I really admired them. To balance on a slippery board and catch a wave seemed like the ultimate thrill to me. It looked hard, kind of like skateboarding on a really slick, bumpy surface, but I knew I'd get it with practice. Dad had promised me surfing lessons when we returned to Nantucket next summer and I was going to hold him to it.

The thing about rip currents is you don't know you've been caught in one until it has a firm grip on you. My first inkling that I was in trouble was when I saw the figure of my mom in the distance. From the beach, she was frantically gesturing at me to come ashore. That's when I realized just how far out I was. Kicking wildly, I tried to swim to the beach, but the current just took me further and further out. Quickly, I exhausted myself.

Suddenly, the lifeguard's voice rang out. Speaking through a megaphone, he said, "Help is on the way. Don't fight it. And don't panic."

That was easy to say, hard to do. The waves were slapping my face and saltwater was stinging my eyes. The current was so strong I felt like it was going to take me out to the middle of the ocean where I'd be gobbled up by a shark or dragged to the ocean floor by the many flailing arms of a giant octopus.

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“Stay calm,” I told myself, trying to shake these deadly scenarios out of my mind.

I could barely see the beach when suddenly the rushing water of the current released its grip on me. All my instincts were to paddle as hard as I could to shore, but I knew that would just get me caught in the current again, so I really didn’t know what to do. I was so tired it was hard to think and I felt sick from all the saltwater I’d swallowed.

Suddenly, a helicopter appeared in the sky above me and a steel rescue bucket was lowered. “Hop in,” came a voice from above.

I did just that. Twenty minutes later, I was reunited with my family on the beach. All four of us hugged and cried for a good long time as the hot sun beat down on us.

“I was so scared, James,” Katie sobbed. “I thought I’d never see you again.”

“I was scared too,” I admitted. “Really, really scared. For a minute, I thought I’d never swim in the ocean again, but as I looked out at the sparkling water and white-capped waves, I knew I would. Swimming in the ocean would always be risky, but I’d be smart about it.

Thinking back, I realize how foolish I’d been to jump into the waters of the North Atlantic without understanding rip currents. I did some research and discovered that they were quite common in Nantucket and not easy to spot from shore. I also learned exactly what to do if you got caught in one. (After all, you can’t always count on a helicopter coming to your rescue.) The number one rule was don’t panic. It will not pull you underwater. Don’t try to fight it either. Stay calm and swim parallel to the beach until you feel the current start to lose strength. Then, and only then, do you try to make it to shore.

Of course, I hope to never experience such a close call again. But rip currents won’t keep me out of the ocean. For sure, next summer you’ll find me surfing on a Nantucket Beach.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK:**

This story is about \_\_\_\_\_.

The problem/adventure/experience was that \_\_\_\_\_

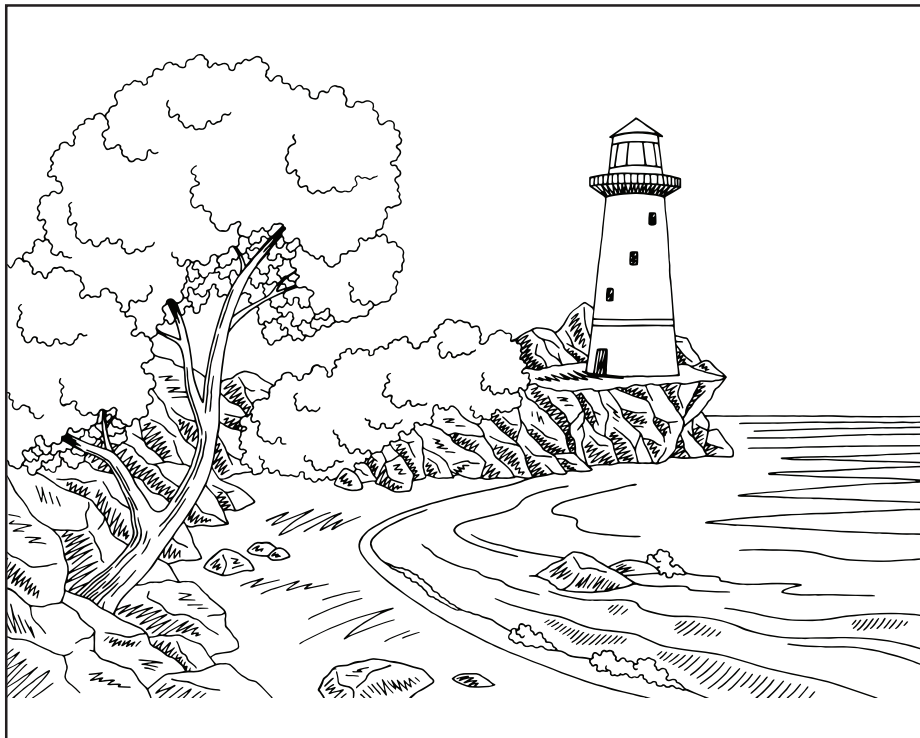
\_\_\_\_\_

The problem was solved, adventure/experience concluded when

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the theme of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

(Go back and highlight the sections of the story that indicate the theme.)



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Best Friends Forever

All summer long, Lily and I managed to stay best friends – chatting on FaceTime nightly and having sleepovers on the weekends whenever we could. Our friendship dated back to the days of nursery school when we’d hold hands while we took our naps lying side by side on brightly colored foam mats. So I didn’t feel the full impact of my best friend’s departure until school started. Sitting alone on the school bus, I felt tears stinging my eyes as we passed the cozy yellow house where Lily once lived.

Of course, I had other friends at school. There was dark-haired, long-legged Gia who was always urging me to join the soccer team and boy-crazy Tracy who cracked me up with her goofy jokes. They were both great, but they weren’t Lily. My familiar, small-town elementary school didn’t seem to be the same friendly place it had been without my best friend.

Lily was missing me, too. She’d called me crying, because her new school was big and she kept getting lost trying to find her way from the classroom to the cafeteria to the gym. She felt invisible in a crowd of unfamiliar and indifferent faces too. I couldn’t say much to comfort her. We had both sunk into the depths of despair.

“You’ve got to snap out of it, Julia,” my brother said.

Mom agreed. “Why not get involved in some new activities at school and make new friends.”

So I reluctantly joined the soccer team. Our team practiced every day after school for hours and it was paying off: we were favored to win the regional championship! I began spending my free time with Gia and my other teammates. Of course, I didn’t forget about Lily but I thought about her less and less. I worried that our friendship was doomed when I realized that a busy month had passed and we hadn’t talked once.

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On a crisp Saturday morning in November, I arrived at the soccer field for the regional championship game swaggering with confidence. I knew we were going to win! I was buckling up my shin guards when the opposing team arrived wearing their bright school colors of red and gold. It was the happiest of surprises to see my old friend Lily among them!

Shrieking her name, I raced across the field to greet her and she was equally excited to see me. We both jumped up and down with joy!

“Hey, no cozying up to the competition, Julia,” Gia called, only half-joking.

I ignored her. “I’ve missed you so much,” I told Lily.

“Me too,” she said. “I’ve made a lot of new friends, but you’ll always be my best friend.”

I felt the same way. Before we had the chance to catch up further, the game began. I’d never known Lily to be particularly athletic or competitive, but on the field, she definitely played to win and I was proud of her. My team gave it their all, but at the end, Lily’s took the championship.

I congratulated her and said, “Next year, the championship is ours!”

“In your dreams,” she said with a laugh.

Then, she got on the bus with her new friends and I lingered on the soccer field chatting with mine. Later that night, Lily and I had a long, giggly conversation and I realized that true friendship can stand up to all kinds of obstacles. Lily and I might be living in different towns and playing on competing teams now. Each of us was making new friends, but we’d always share a special bond. That’s what made us best friends forever.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK:**

This story is about \_\_\_\_\_.

The problem/adventure/experience was that \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

The problem was solved, adventure/experience concluded when

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

What is the theme of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

(Go back and highlight the sections of the story that indicate the theme.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## My Favorite Sport: Tennis

Would you like to challenge yourself by learning the world's most exciting sport? If so, I highly recommend tennis. I really appreciate how tennis gives both your body and your brain a fantastic workout. Plus, in my opinion, it is the most accessible of all sports.

While a low-impact sport, tennis asks a lot of your body. One minute, a player could be running and the next, pivoting on the balls of the feet or twisting from the torso to slam the ball across the net. Playing this fast-paced game requires coordination between major muscle groups as well as flexibility and balance. It also increases bone density, which begins to decline after the age of 30 and could lead to brittle bones in the later years without proper exercise. All in all, it is a fabulous choice for a full-body workout.

Tennis requires, quite literally, that you think on your feet. The game challenges players to quickly strategize in order to outsmart their opponents and plan their next moves. Players must coordinate the movements of their upper and lower bodies too. This gives the brain a workout that just might result in a better memory and improved concentration. The way I see it, a vigorous tennis game is the easiest and most enjoyable way to stimulate your brain. It helps fight stress and elevates your mood too.

From the fittest among us to those who are just starting to get into shape, anybody can play tennis. Unlike skiing, football and dozens of other sports, this game requires little equipment. All it takes is a racket and a fuzzy, bright yellow ball. Most communities have public tennis courts that you can use free of charge. If you want to play during the winter months, indoor courts are widely available too. Another advantage of tennis is that it's a game you can play for a lifetime. Start today and just imagine what an awesome player you'll be by the time you're 80!

Let's grab our rackets and head down to the tennis court right now! I am convinced that tennis is the best way to exercise the mind and the body. From beginners to old pros and everybody in between, it's definitely a sport we all can enjoy.

### SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN REASON #1: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN REASON #2: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN REASON #3: \_\_\_\_\_

ETC. \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Tennis Anyone?

Mom grabbed the car keys and called up the stairs, "Time for your tennis lesson." It was the day of my first tennis lesson and my mom was more excited about it than I was. She loved tennis and I knew she had her fingers crossed that I'd end up sharing her passion for the game. Over and over again, she'd described her vision of the two of us lobbing a fuzzy yellow ball over the net, both of us giving it our all and getting better with every single volley.

I hated to disappoint her, but sports had never been my thing and I couldn't imagine myself taking to tennis. I was slow and clumsy and, whenever I tried to do something athletic, I either embarrassed myself or got hurt. Which would it be today? Embarrassment, I hoped because I wasn't up for a trip to the emergency room.

As we drove to the public courts at the city park, Mom chattered away about her early experiences with tennis. "The minute I picked up a racquet, I knew tennis was my sport," she said, happily. "You're going to love it, Molly."

I sighed. "Really?"

Mom parked the car and waved at a young man who was standing alone on the court, bouncing a tennis ball off his racquet. He looked very handsome and athletic in his white shorts and t-shirt. "That's Bob, your instructor," Mom told me. "He's a fantastic player."

I hoped he was a fantastic teacher too, because I knew I was going to need all the help I could get. First, Bob led me through some warm-up stretches, which felt really good and I was proud of myself for keeping up with him. Then, he showed me how to grip my racquet and finally he started throwing balls for me to hit. I swung at the first one and missed. I missed the second one too, and slammed the third one into a neighboring court. I hit the fourth one low and hard right over the net.

Mom cheered me on from the sidelines. "You're getting it, honey," she yelled.

I was sweating and the sun was in my eyes, but I was starting to believe her when I took a major tumble and fell flat on my face. I felt blood gush from my mouth and spit out a front tooth!

(continued)

It took hours and it hurt a lot, but the dentist managed to replant my tooth into my gum. By the time we got home, it was early evening. Bob had left several messages asking if I was okay and hearing his friendly, concerned voice touched my heart. Mom made me an icy, delicious strawberry milkshake for dinner that not only tasted great but numbed my sore mouth.

"I'm sorry about today," Mom said, blinking back tears. "I shouldn't have pushed you to try tennis. I know sports aren't your thing."

She told me she'd call Bob and cancel the remainder of my lessons, which should have been a major relief to me. Instead, it made me feel sad. When I woke up the next morning, my tooth was still throbbing but I'd made a decision.

I remembered how exciting it had been to slam the ball right across the net for the first time and imagined how proud Mom would be if I became as good a tennis player as she. Was I ready to give up on tennis after just one lesson? While I still had little confidence in my athletic abilities, I knew for sure that the answer to that question was no.

As soon as my tooth was healed, I got back onto the court and, with twice-weekly lessons all summer long, my game improved in leaps and bounds. Mom and Bob were thrilled with my progress — and best of all, I was thrilled with myself. I may never be a champion tennis player, but I hope I'll always be a person who doesn't quit even when the going gets tough.

**SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK:**

**This story is about** \_\_\_\_\_ .

**The problem/adventure/experience was that** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

**The problem was solved, adventure/experience concluded when**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

**What is the theme of the story?** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Go back and highlight the sections of the story that indicate the theme.)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Tennis: The History of the Game

Over 18 million people play tennis in the United States alone. Played competitively or just for fun, tennis is one of the most popular racket sports in the world. Let's trace the history of the game from its early origins, through its growing popularity in the 14th century and onto its rise as an Olympic sport today.

There is controversy surrounding the early origins of the game of tennis. Some say that very similar games were played in ancient Egypt and Greece but there is little evidence to support this belief. The more accepted theory is that the game originated in the monasteries of France in the 11th or 12th century. Played against a wall or in a courtyard with a string dividing the space into two sides, this early version of tennis was played with a bare hand — hence the name “Jeu de plume.” Translated from French, that means “the game of the hand.” French nobility discovered the game in the 13th century and they introduced it to English royalty. For centuries, it was played only by the most privileged people in the world and known as “the game of kings.”

In the 1850s, after Henry Goodyear invented a process that made rubber balls extra bouncy and inexpensive to manufacture, the game grew in popularity among people from all walks of life. Racquets were introduced and outdoor courts, shaped like an hourglass with the net stretched across the narrow middle, appeared for the first time. However, they were quickly replaced with the rectangular courts we use today. The first tennis tournament was played in Wimbledon, England in 1877, but women were barred from competing until 1884. Today, this city in the English countryside is still the site of the most prestigious tennis competition in the world.

In the summer of 1896, tennis first became an Olympic sport. In 1900, Charlotte Cooper won the gold medal in women's singles, the first woman to do so in any Olympic event. (But this wasn't Cooper's first triumph on the court. Wearing an ankle-length dress and corset, she'd become the first woman to win at Wimbledon five years earlier.) Following a feud between the Olympic Committee and the International Lawn Tennis Federation, tennis was removed from the Olympic program in 1924 and did not officially return until 1988 when 15-year-old Steffi Graf brought home the gold for Germany. Today, tennis is among the highlights of the summer Olympic Games.

Can you imagine playing tennis with your bare hand? Isn't it fascinating how the game has changed over the years? Don't you think it's wonderful that tennis is an Olympic event? Exciting to watch and fun to play, tennis is certainly among our most captivating sports.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## TURNING QUESTIONS INTO RESPONSES

An easy way to answer response to text questions is to turn the important parts of the question into the beginning of your response. Look at the questions below, followed by the beginning of a response. Using this technique ensures that your answers will be written in complete sentences. Your teacher will select a story for you to reread. Then, answer each of these questions about the story, by turning the question into the beginning of your response. The first two have been started for you.

1. Who was *the main point of view character*?

*The main point of view character was* \_\_\_\_\_ .

2. What was *the setting*?

*The setting was* \_\_\_\_\_ .

3. What was *the problem or adventure*?

\_\_\_\_\_ .

4. What was *the main character's motivation*?

(What did the main character want?)

\_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_\_ .

5. What caused *the conflict in the story*?

\_\_\_\_\_ .

## KICK IT UP A NOTCH!

To improve the writing, try varying the way each of above sentences begin. On another sheet of paper, or at the keyboard, REVISE the complete sentences you created by using the sentence starters below.

In this story \_\_\_\_\_ .

In the story titled (title here) \_\_\_\_\_ .

The author introduces us to \_\_\_\_\_, our main character.

We immediately meet (main character's name) \_\_\_\_\_, the hero of the story.

The story took place \_\_\_\_\_ .

The story was set \_\_\_\_\_ .

The protagonist, (main character's name) wanted \_\_\_\_\_ .

(Main character's name) was trying to \_\_\_\_\_ .

The author created tension when \_\_\_\_\_ (conflict) \_\_\_\_\_ .

The problem began when \_\_\_\_\_ .

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## DIGGING DEEPER – BE A TEXT DETECTIVE!

To get the most out of a story, it's important to not just think about the action, but to consider why things happened in the story. What might the character's feelings have to do with it? What caused the character to feel as she or he felt? How did you feel about the events in the story? What about the things an author implies but doesn't actually explain? This involves looking for evidence in the text. Look at the questions below. Your teacher will select a story for you to reread. Then, on another sheet of paper or at the keyboard, answer each of the questions below about the story using the sentence starters provided. You may also turn each question into a response by repeating the key parts.

1. In the story, how did (*character*) feel about his/her situation?
2. How do you know how (*character*) felt?
3. Did you ever have a similar experience? When?
4. How did you feel during your experience?
5. What did (*character*) learn from his/her experience?
6. What did you learn from your experience?
7. Why did you empathize with (*character*)?



### Sentence Starters:

1. It was clear \_\_\_ was feeling \_\_\_ because \_\_\_.
2. This was evidenced by \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I understand the way \_\_\_\_\_ felt because \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I'll never forget the time \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A similar experience I had was \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I could really empathize with her/him because \_\_\_\_\_.
7. It's easy to understand why \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Although I never had an experience like this, I can imagine \_\_\_\_\_.
9. This scene kept my interest because \_\_\_\_\_.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## THEME IN STORY

When someone asks, “What was that story all about?” the reader might talk about the character, setting, the plot, motivation, and conflict. But there’s also a deeper meaning that is responsible for all of the choices the author makes. This deeper meaning (sometimes called the BIG IDEA) is called **theme**. For example, the theme of a story might be the importance of honesty. The plot, the main character’s motivation and conflict would all demonstrate the importance of honesty. Perhaps the main character was dishonest and learned a difficult lesson because of telling a lie. Or, maybe the main character struggled to be honest, but it paid off in the end. Here are some other common themes found in stories and literature:

### Common Literary Themes

- Friendship
- Loyalty
- Justice
- Honesty
- Compassion
- Responsibility
- Being true to yourself
- Learning from mistakes
- Value of hard work
- Forgiveness
- Courage
- Ambition
- Importance of Family
- Cooperation
- Appreciating what you have
- Gift of Nature

### Think and Discuss!

Call to mind your favorite narrative book. What was the **theme**? How do you know? What did the main character do, feel, or learn over the course of the story that points to the theme? Discuss this with your class!

### Write about it!

Reread the story Best Friends Forever to determine what the theme might be. Be sure to look for evidence in the text to support your ideas. Then, using the Sentence Starters below, write about the theme, providing evidence.

### Sentence Starters:

- It’s clear the theme of this story is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
- Throughout the story the main character struggles with \_\_\_\_\_.
- The big idea throughout this story is \_\_\_\_\_.
- The main character displays \_\_\_\_\_.
- As I read, the theme \_\_\_\_\_.
- This is illustrated when \_\_\_\_\_.
- The evidence of theme appears when \_\_\_\_\_.
- Another illustration of this is when \_\_\_\_\_.
- At each important point in the plot we see \_\_\_\_\_.
- The author also echoes this theme when \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**FRAMING QUESTIONS FOR NARRATIVE STORIES**

\_\_\_\_\_ Story

\_\_\_\_\_ Author

1. Who is the main point of view character in the story?
2. Where is the story set?
3. What is the mood of the story? (How does the word choice make you feel?)
4. What is the main character’s problem, challenge or adventure?
5. What is the main character’s motivation? (What does the main character want?)
6. What is the main character’s conflict? (Who or what stands in the way of the main character’s motivation?)
7. Where does the author use suspense and/or foreshadowing?
8. How does the main character feel about the situation?
9. How does the main character show his/her feelings?
10. How does the main character grow and change in response to story events?
11. What is the theme of the story and how is it demonstrated?
12. Have you ever experienced something similar? Describe.
13. How did you feel about the experience you had?

\*Remember, some of these questions can be influential or evaluative in nature.

**Sentence Starters for Responding to Literature**

The reader discovers that \_\_\_\_\_.

We recognize \_\_\_\_\_.

The author reveals \_\_\_\_\_.

(Character’s name) was motivated by \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ contributed to the story conflict.

This is evidenced by \_\_\_\_\_.

In this story \_\_\_\_\_.

The reader realizes \_\_\_\_\_.

At the beginning it’s clear that \_\_\_\_\_.

As the story unfolds, \_\_\_\_\_.

The plot centers around \_\_\_\_\_.

In the story, the evidence suggests \_\_\_\_\_.

It isn’t long before we discover \_\_\_\_\_.

Through the text we learn that \_\_\_\_\_.

Clearly, the theme was \_\_\_\_\_.

The main character’s point of view is \_\_\_\_\_.

The author definitely shows \_\_\_\_\_.

We see this when \_\_\_\_\_.

For example, \_\_\_\_\_.

Furthermore, \_\_\_\_\_.

Additionally, \_\_\_\_\_.

From the start, \_\_\_\_\_.

However, \_\_\_\_\_.

As a result, \_\_\_\_\_.

An illustration of this \_\_\_\_\_.

Similarly, \_\_\_\_\_.

I believe \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

From my point of view \_\_\_\_\_.