



Grade 4 Informational Writing Guide

Student Pages for Print or Projection

SECTION 5: Introductions and Conclusions

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Student Reference Page

WHAT YOUR INFORMATIONAL INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH NEEDS

When writing an original essay or report include:

1. **A Lead:** Catch the reader's attention with:

- an amazing or unusual fact
- a question
- a descriptive segment
- a statistic
- a quote
- an anecdote

2. **A Topic Sentence:** Briefly, clearly, tell the reader what the piece will be about.

Read each introduction paragraph that follows. Pay attention to the different kinds of leads. The lead appears in *italics*. The topic sentence is underlined. Notice that the topic sentence in each example is the same!

He soars through the air like an eagle, swing to swing, performing acrobatics, landing gently on a tightrope strung across the big-top, drawing “oohs” and “ahs” from the crowd below. Without a doubt, circus performers need great eye-hand coordination, bodies that are fit and trim, and nerves of steel.

(Type of lead: descriptive segment)

The Flying Wallendas performed amazing death-defying dare-devil stunts – without the benefit of a safety net! Without a doubt, circus performers need great eye-hand coordination, bodies that are fit and trim, and nerves of steel.

(Type of lead: amazing fact)

Well trained athletes must know how to fall. In fact, during a high-wire circus performance the famous Wallendas fell to the ground without injury! A newspaper reporter said, “The Wallendas fell so gracefully that it seemed they were flying!” Thus, they were referred to as “The Flying Wallendas.” Without a doubt, circus performers need great eye-hand coordination, bodies that are fit and trim, and nerves of steel.

(Type of lead: quote)

(continued)



Spectators love to watch the kind of daring athletic feats popularized by performers in the famous Canadian circus company, Cirque du Soleil. In fact, almost ninety million people in more than 200 cities around the world have watched them perform challenging aerial acrobatics. Without a doubt, circus performers need great eye-hand coordination, bodies that are fit and trim, and nerves of steel.

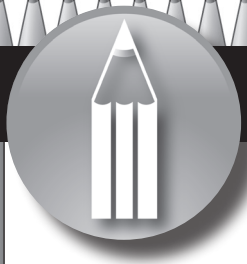
(Type of lead: statistic)

Do you think that the best athletes are those playing ball in national leagues and earning millions every game? Before you answer, ask yourself this - have you ever seen acrobatic artists in world class circus shows? Without a doubt, circus performers need great eye-hand coordination, bodies that are fit and trim, and nerves of steel.

(Type of lead: question)

When I went to the circus I was expecting to see clowns, dancing horses, and a lion tamer sticking his head in the mouth of the king of beasts! I settled in with my popcorn and sat back to relax. I never dreamed I'd be on the edge of my seat, watching a human pyramid of tumblers balancing on a chair atop the high wire! It was hard to imagine how much practice was involved in perfecting that! Without a doubt, circus performers need great eye-hand coordination, bodies that are fit and trim, and nerves of steel.

(Type of lead: anecdote)



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Name: _____

LEADS AND TOPIC SENTENCES (1)

Read each introduction paragraph. Fill in the author’s prewriting plan in order to highlight each main idea. Underline the lead in red and the topic sentence in blue. Then, on the line below each summary, tell which kind of lead the author used:

- Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question**
- Quote • Statistic • Anecdote**

“There’s nothing like a game of golf to get a little exercise and unwind after a hard day,” says golf enthusiast Martha Kiley. Golf provides good exercise, opportunities for healthy competition, and time for socializing with fellow golfers. No wonder it’s such a popular sport.

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1 _____

MAIN IDEA #2 _____

MAIN IDEA #3 _____

Type of Lead: _____

Are you dreaming of a snack drenched in milk chocolate? Does your mouth water at the prospect of crunchy nuts and gooey caramel? I love cocoa fudgy nut bars because they are easy to make, fun to pack as snacks, and most importantly, are delicious to eat.

TOPIC: _____

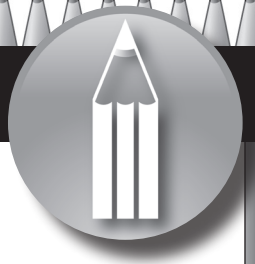
MAIN IDEA #1 _____

MAIN IDEA #2 _____

MAIN IDEA #3 _____

Type of Lead: _____

Read each introduction again and check (✓) the one that belongs in an opinion piece. Circle the one that introduces an informational piece.



Name: _____

LEADS AND TOPIC SENTENCES (2)

Read each introduction paragraph. Fill in the author's prewriting plan in order to highlight each main idea. Underline the lead in red and the topic sentence in blue. Then, on the line below each summary, tell which kind of lead the author used:

- Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question**
• Quote • Statistic • Anecdote

In a recent poll, eight out of every ten kids questioned said that they preferred pizza to all other foods, and I agree with them! Pizza is a convenient, delicious, and nutritious family food choice.

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1 _____

MAIN IDEA #2 _____

MAIN IDEA #3 _____

Type of Lead: _____

Do you enjoy an occasional swim? Would you like to join the arts and crafts club, or learn yoga, karate, or judo? Does a trip to the weight room sound appealing? The YMCA offers sports, crafts, and clubs for people of all ages.

TOPIC: _____

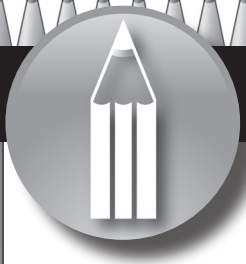
MAIN IDEA #1 _____

MAIN IDEA #2 _____

MAIN IDEA #3 _____

Type of Lead: _____

Read each introduction again and check (✓) the one that belongs in an opinion piece. Circle the one that introduces an informational piece.



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Name: _____

LEADS AND TOPIC SENTENCES (3)

Read each introduction paragraph. Fill in the author’s prewriting plan in order to highlight each main idea. Underline the lead in red and the topic sentence in blue. Then, on the line below each summary, tell which kind of lead the author used:

- Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question**
- Quote • Statistic • Anecdote**

Last season Dave’s Dugout served their famous chili-cheeseburgers to over 100,000 delighted customers. The super-deluxe chili-cheeseburger is convenient, economical, and suited to large appetites.

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1 _____

MAIN IDEA #2 _____

MAIN IDEA #3 _____

Type of Lead: _____

I walked into my neighbor’s house and was met by the flapping of wide, white wings! The cockatiel landed on my shoulder and said, “Nice to see you!” I was astounded! This beautiful, intelligent bird certainly makes an entertaining pet!

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1 _____

MAIN IDEA #2 _____

MAIN IDEA #3 _____

Type of Lead: _____

Read each introduction again and check (✓) the one that belongs in an opinion piece. Circle the one that introduces an informational piece.

THINK ABOUT IT: Compare the TOPIC SENTENCES in both examples on this page. How are they different? Why was it difficult to fill in the prewriting plan in the second example?



Name: _____

WRITING AN ATTENTION-GRABBING LEAD (1)

Read the topic sentence below:

Dogs can be trained as household helpers, well-behaved companions, and serious workers.

The topic sentence tells us that the piece will be about all of the ways dogs help people. Think about the various kinds of leads you can write to grab the reader's attention:

**Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question
• Quote • Statistic • Anecdote**

Use the spaces below to write an example of each of the following leads. Make sure each lead catches the reader's attention and draws the reader on to the topic sentence above.

- **Descriptive Segment** (*Write several phrases that describe helpful dogs.*)

- **Amazing Fact** (*Write an amazing or little known fact about the ways a dog could be helpful. If you aren't sure of one, ask people you know who have experience with dogs.*)



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Name: _____

WRITING AN ATTENTION-GRABBING LEAD (2)

Read the topic sentence below:

Dogs can be trained as household helpers, well-behaved companions, and serious workers.

The topic sentence tells us that the piece will be about all of the ways dogs help people. Think about the various kinds of leads you can write to grab the reader’s attention:

- Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question**
- Quote • Statistic • Anecdote**

Use the spaces below to write an example of each of the following leads. Make sure each lead catches the reader’s attention and draws the reader on to the topic sentence above.

- **Anecdote** (*Write an anecdote showing how dogs help people.*)

- **Quote** (*What might an AUTHORITY - a veterinarian, trainer, breeder, or longtime dog owner - say about dogs helping people? For practice purposes only, envision what that authority figure might say. Later, research and replace it with an actual quote.*)



Name: _____

WRITING AN ATTENTION-GRABBING LEAD (3)

Read the topic sentence below:

Dogs can be trained as household helpers, well-behaved companions, and serious workers.

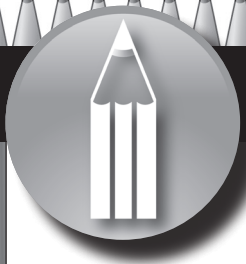
The topic sentence tells us that the piece will be about all of the ways dogs help people. Think about the various kinds of leads you can write to grab the reader's attention:

- Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question**
• Quote • Statistic • Anecdote

Use the spaces below to write an example of each of the following leads. Make sure each lead catches the reader's attention and draws the reader on to the topic sentence above.

- **Statistic** (*Write a number fact about the ways dogs help people. Use information you gathered from people you know who have helpful dogs.*)

- **Question** (*Write a question or series of questions that will make people wonder about the ways in which dogs help people.*)



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Name: _____

REVISE THESE BORING LEADS (1)

Even though an informational piece is intended to give you straight-forward information, it should NOT be dull. Read each sentence below. Each one is BORING.

REMEMBER: The introduction should have a “lead” sentence that makes the reader eager to read on. In each example, the BORING LEAD sentence is in italics. The topic sentence is underlined.

Revise each lead sentence using one of the following techniques:

- Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question**
- Quote • Statistic • Anecdote**

1. *I have a parakeet.* Parakeets make interesting pets.

2. *New York City is a busy place.* In New York there are things to see and do to suit every taste.

BONUS: How could this author have improved each topic sentence above so that the reader has a better idea of what she/he will learn by reading on?



Name: _____

REVISE THESE BORING LEADS (2)

Even though an informational piece is intended to give you straight-forward information, it should NOT be dull. Read each sentence below. Each one is BORING.

REMEMBER: The introduction should have a “lead” sentence that makes the reader eager to read on. In each example, the BORING LEAD sentence is in italics. The topic sentence is underlined.

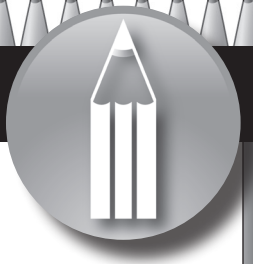
Revise each lead sentence using one of the following techniques:

- Descriptive Segment • Amazing Fact • Question**
- Quote • Statistic • Anecdote**

1. *This is all about gorillas.* Gorillas are intelligent animals.

2. *Brush and floss. I like to have clean teeth.* Dental care is important to good health.

BONUS: How could this author have improved each topic sentence above so that the reader has a better idea of what she/he will learn by reading on?



Name: _____

EFFECTIVE TOPIC SENTENCES (1)

Read the prewriting plan and the menu of possible TOPIC SENTENCES the author is considering.

- Circle the topic sentence that references EACH main idea/reason.
- Underline the topic sentence that refers to the main ideas/reasons in a general way.
- Cross out the topic sentence that does not encompass all of the main ideas/reasons.
- Place a check (✓) beside the example of an opinion piece summary.

TOPIC: KANGAROOS

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: appearances

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: habitat

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: behavior

Topic Sentences:

Discover kangaroos' physical characteristics, habitat and unusual behavior.

Let's learn about kangaroos.

Kangaroos are part of the marsupial group of animals.

TOPIC: GROWING FLOWERS - A FUN HOBBY

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: planting them is fun

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: bouquets beautify your home

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: fragrant

Topic Sentences:

Some flowers are nice but others are difficult to grow.

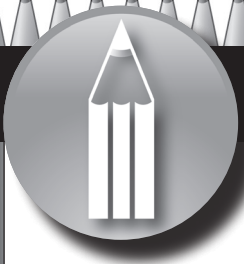
Raising flowers is appealing for many reasons.

Charming to look at, lovely to smell, and a joy to grow, flowers are nature's treat.

Think About it: What is the benefit of stating each main idea within the topic sentence?

How does it help the author? How does it help the reader?

Extend this! Create a lead that can be used along with each effective TOPIC SENTENCE.



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Name: _____

EFFECTIVE TOPIC SENTENCES (2)

Read the prewriting plan and the menu of possible TOPIC SENTENCES the author is considering.

- Circle the topic sentence that references EACH main idea/reason.
- Underline the topic sentence that refers to the main ideas/reasons in a general way.
- Cross out the topic sentence that does not encompass all of the main ideas/reasons.
- Place a check (✓) beside the example of an opinion piece summary.

TOPIC: T.V.

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: entertaining

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: educational

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: habit forming

Topic Sentences:

Television networks earn lots of money by hosting commercials.

There are many advantages and disadvantages to watching T.V.

While T.V. can be entertaining and educational, it is also habit forming.

TOPIC: POOL PARTY FUN

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: who to invite

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: the best water games

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: the most delicious party snacks

Topic Sentences:

If you plan every detail carefully you'll see that a pool party will be the highlight of the summer!

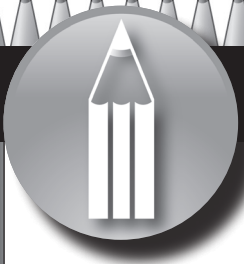
Have you ever planned a pool party?

Inviting the right group of friends, planning a variety of games, followed by an array of snacks is the recipe for a terrific pool party.

Think About it: What is the benefit of stating each main idea within the topic sentence?

How does it help the author? How does it help the reader?

Extend this! Create a lead that can be used along with each effective TOPIC SENTENCE.



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Name: _____

WRITING TOPIC SENTENCES (1)

Read each prewriting plan. The author has listed both the TOPIC and the main ideas/reasons. Use this information to craft an effective TOPIC SENTENCE. Be sure your topic sentence references each main idea/reason.

Ex: **TOPIC:** GUINEA PIGS MAKE GREAT PETS

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: cute appearance

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: fun to care for

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: inexpensive

TOPIC SENTENCE:

People love guinea pigs because they are adorable, fun to care for, and inexpensive.

TOPIC: AIRPLANE TRAVEL

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: fast

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: comfortable

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: safe

TOPIC SENTENCE:

BONUS: Place a check (✓) beside the example of the opinion piece summary.

OPTION: Try creating a TOPIC SENTENCE that *suggests* or *implies* main ideas/reasons in a general way, rather than stating each main idea/reason specifically.



Name: _____

WRITING TOPIC SENTENCES (2)

Read each prewriting plan. The author has listed both the TOPIC and the main ideas/reasons. Use this information to craft an effective TOPIC SENTENCE. Be sure your topic sentence references each main idea/reason.

Ex: TOPIC: CACTUS PLANTS

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: appearance

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: where they grow

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: home to animals

TOPIC SENTENCE:

You can recognize a cactus by its unique appearance, especially in the desert habitat where they grow, providing homes for scores of desert creatures.

TOPIC: MAPLE STREET SCHOOL

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: dedicated teachers

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: modern classrooms

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: after school programs

TOPIC SENTENCE:

BONUS: Place a check (✓) beside the opinion piece summary.

OPTION: Try creating a TOPIC SENTENCE that *suggests* or *implies* main ideas/reasons in a general way, rather than stating each main idea/reason specifically.



Name: _____

WRITING THE INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH (1)

Read each assignment as well as the author's prewriting plan. Use this information to write an effective introduction paragraph. Be sure you include a powerful LEAD as well as an effective TOPIC SENTENCE. Underline the lead in RED, the topic sentence in BLUE.

Think about your favorite holiday celebrations. Write an opinion piece that describes what you love about Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Saint Patrick's Day.

TOPIC: HOLIDAYS

MAIN REASON #1: Halloween

MAIN REASON #2: Thanksgiving

MAIN REASON #3: Saint Patrick's Day

Many people order out for Chinese food delivery. Write an informational piece explaining the following:

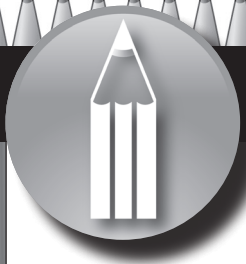
TOPIC: CHINESE FOOD DELIVERY

MAIN IDEA #1: offers many choices

MAIN IDEA #2: convenient

MAIN IDEA #3: inexpensive

BONUS: In the margin, write down what *kind* of lead you wrote beside each introduction paragraph.



Student Page

Name: _____

WRITING THE INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH (2)

Read each assignment as well as the author’s prewriting plan. Use this information to write an effective introduction paragraph. Be sure you include a powerful LEAD as well as an effective TOPIC SENTENCE. Underline the lead in RED, the topic sentence in BLUE.

Winter is a fascinating season. Write an informational piece that captures the joys and challenges of winter.

TOPIC: WINTER

MAIN IDEA #1: weather

MAIN IDEA #2: fun in the snow

MAIN IDEA #3: staying warm

Skateboarding has dramatically gained in popularity. Write an informational essay about equipment you’ll need, tricks you can learn, and safety precautions.

TOPIC: SKATEBOARDING

MAIN IDEA #1: equipment

MAIN IDEA #2: tricks

MAIN IDEA #3: safety precautions

BONUS: In the margin, write down what *kind* of lead you wrote beside each introduction paragraph.



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STRATEGIES FOR CRAFTING A RESPONSE TO TEXT INTRODUCTION

1. Read the assignment or prompt and analyze it for GIVENS and VARIABLES.
2. Fill in a SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK for each source text and use this to write a paragraph using INFORMATIONAL VERBS.
3. Read the assignment and TURN QUESTIONS INTO RESPONSES.

Ex. You've read two articles on shrinking habitats - one about polar bear habitats in the Arctic and the other about elephant habitats in Sumatra. Write an essay describing the reasons for these shrinking habitats and how these animals are being affected. Then, based on both articles, explain if you think people can help. If so, how?

1. Analyze the assignment for **givens and variables**:

Givens: *Describe reasons for shrinking habitats
How polar bear and elephant are affected*

Variable: *How people can help*

2. Use **summarizing framework** to craft a paragraph with informational verbs:

TOPIC: Shrinking Habitats

MAIN IDEA #1: *Polar Bears (Arctic)*

MAIN IDEA #2: *Elephants (Sumatra)*

MAIN IDEA #3: *Support Wildlife Preservation Organizations, Reduce Greenhouse gases*



In both of these texts the authors discuss shrinking natural habitats and how they affect the animals that depend on them. The first article describes the melting polar caps that make it extremely difficult for the polar bears to hunt and find food. In the second article we learn about how the lumber industry is responsible for deforestation in Sumatra, stripping the land of food for elephants.

3. Turn a question into a response:

Based on both articles I think there are a number of ways people can help to turn this situation around.

4. By combining these techniques students can compose a solid introduction paragraph:

In both of these texts the authors discuss shrinking natural habitats and how they affect the animals that depend on them. The first article describes melting polar caps that make it extremely difficult for the polar bears to hunt and find food. In the second article we learn about how the lumber industry is responsible for deforestation in Sumatra, stripping the land of food for elephants. Based on both articles I think there are a number of ways people can help to turn this situation around.



Name: _____

WRITING RESPONSE TO TEXT INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPHS

Imagine that you've read two source texts and created the following summarizing frameworks for these texts:

TOPIC: HONEY BEES

MAIN IDEA #1: Appearance/Characteristics

MAIN IDEA #2: Life in the Hive

MAIN IDEA #3: Reasons for Decline

TOPIC: MONARCH BUTTERFLIES

MAIN IDEA #1: Life Cycle

MAIN IDEA #2: Migration

MAIN IDEA #3: Reasons for Decline

Now, imagine that you must respond to this assignment:

You've read two articles on insect populations that are decreasing – one about Honey Bees and the other about Monarch Butterflies. Write an essay comparing the lives of Honey Bees and Monarchs. Then, based on both articles, discuss why you think these insect populations may be shrinking and what we might do to protect these insects.

1. What are the GIVENS in this assignment? _____

What are the VARIABLES? _____

2. Based on the summarizing frameworks, write a paragraph using INFORMATIONAL VERBS:

3. Finally, turn the 'why' QUESTIONS INTO a RESPONSE and make it the last sentence in your paragraph, above.



Student Page

Name: _____

REVISING DULL CONCLUSION PARAGRAPHS

Read this author's prewriting plan and concluding paragraph:

TOPIC: LEMONADE (*opinion*)

MAIN REASON #1: easy to make

MAIN REASON #2: refreshing

MAIN REASON #3: sell it

So now you know why people like lemonade. Because it's easy to make, it's refreshing on a hot day, and if you have any left over you can set up a lemonade stand. THE END

The conclusion paragraph restates the main reasons in a boring way.

Watch the way the author REVISED this paragraph using the following techniques:

- Restating each main reason as **a question**
- Using word referents
- General Topic Sentence

How simple and effortless is it to tear open that little package and add water? Can you think of anything more tangy and satisfying than a tall frosty glassful on a hot afternoon? Would you like to earn extra cash? You can sell the extra in front of your house! Lemonade is an all-around excellent beverage!

Here is another example of a "before and after" conclusion paragraph:

TOPIC: MAKING AN ICE CREAM SUNDAE (*informational - how to*)

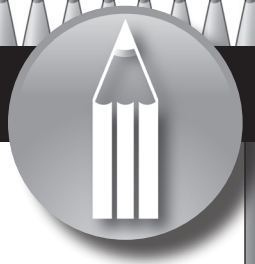
MAIN IDEA #1: ingredients

MAIN IDEA #2: preparation

MAIN IDEA #3: serving

BEFORE: *So now you know how to make an ice cream sundae. I hope you enjoyed reading about the ingredients, preparation, and serving it. THE END*

AFTER: *So are you ready to go out and purchase everything you need to create this popular dessert? Are you clear on the steps for assembling this frozen treat? Have you decided where and how you will serve your guests? Once done, everyone will certainly enjoy your well-assembled and beautifully served ice cream sundae!*



Name: _____

ANALYZING CONCLUSION PARAGRAPHS (opinion) (1)

The concluding paragraph should “sum up” the main reasons of an opinion piece. However, this should not be a totally redundant restating of the main reasons. Read this conclusion paragraph. It restates the main reasons in a boring way. Underline main reason #1 in red, main reason #2 in blue, main reason #3 in green.

So now you know why I like ice cream. Because it tastes good, it’s cold and refreshing, and it comes in many flavors. THE END

Based on the conclusion paragraph, fill in the author’s prewriting plan below.

TOPIC: _____

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____

MAIN REASON #3: _____

Now read the revised conclusion below. Once again, underline main reason #1 in red, main reason #2 in blue, main reason #3 in green.

Is your mouth watering at the thought of a delicious cone, sundae, or float? Does the very idea of a frozen treat actually cool you down on a hot summer afternoon? And don’t all those flavors, from berry to bubble gum, chocolate to coffee, pistachio to pecan intrigue you? Ice cream is definitely a tasty, delicious snack!

ANALYZE IT:

- Compare the “before and after” concluding paragraphs. (Compare color to color for main reasons.)
- CIRCLE the word referents the author used in place of the words “ice cream.”
- In the revised version, what technique does the author use to restate each main idea?
- Place a check beside the general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE.



Student Page

Name: _____

ANALYZING CONCLUSION PARAGRAPHS (informational) (2)

The concluding paragraph should “sum up” the main ideas of an informational piece. However, this should not be a totally redundant restating of the main ideas. Read this conclusion paragraph. It restates the main ideas in a boring way. Underline main idea #1 in red, main idea #2 in blue, main idea #3 in green.

This is what you can do with a fish tank. You can set up a realistic underwater habitat. You can learn about all kinds of tropical fish. Your guppies can have baby fish. THE END

Based on the conclusion paragraph, fill in the author’s prewriting plan below.

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____

MAIN IDEA #3: _____

Now read the revised conclusion below. Once again, underline main idea #1 in red, main idea #2 in blue, main idea #3 in green.

Can you imagine being able to create a realistic miniature underwater habitat complete with gravel rocks and live plants? Would you become an expert on these aquatic creatures, right in your very own living room? How would you keep your hobby going, by raising a new batch of baby swimmers? These are just some of the reasons why owning and caring for tropical fish appeals to so many people.

ANALYZE IT:

- Compare the “before and after” concluding paragraphs. (Compare color to color for main ideas.)
- CIRCLE the word referents the author used in place of the words “fish.”
- In the revised version, what technique does the author use to restate each main idea?
- Place a check beside the general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE.



Student Page

Name: _____

REVISE THIS CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH (opinion) (1)

Read this conclusion paragraph. Fill in the author’s prewriting plan below. List more specific or descriptive language for each main reason on the lines provided.

So now you know all about having a great birthday party. Good food, lots of fun activities, and goodie bags make your party a lot of fun. I hope you enjoyed reading this opinion piece. THE END

TOPIC: _____

List specific or descriptive examples for each main reason.

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____

MAIN REASON #3: _____

Revise this conclusion paragraph by **restating each main reason as a question.**

Sentence Starters:

Who wouldn't enjoy _____ ?	How would you like to _____ ?
Why not include _____ ?	Wouldn't your guests appreciate _____ ?
Shouldn't you plan on _____ ?	Doesn't every successful party require _____ ?

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____

MAIN REASON #3: _____

BONUS: On another paper, write a new and improved conclusion paragraph using the main reason questions you created above. Then, see if you can replace your main reason and topic “blurbs” (food, fun activities, goodie bags, birthday party) with **word referents**. Replace the boring final sentence with a **general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE using a general adjective**.



Name: _____

REVISE THIS CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH (informational) (2)

Read this conclusion paragraph. Fill in the author's prewriting plan below. List more specific or descriptive language for each main idea on the lines provided.

So now you know all about snowmobiling. You can explore the winter landscape, spend time with family and friends, and get some exercise. I hope you learned something from my report.

TOPIC: _____

List specific or descriptive examples for each main idea.

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____

MAIN IDEA #3: _____

Revise this conclusion paragraph by **restating each main idea as a question.**

Sentence Starters:

Do you see how _____?	Are you surprised to learn _____?
Is it clear that _____?	Do you realize that _____?
Have you considered how _____?	Why not _____?

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____

MAIN IDEA #3: _____

BONUS: On another paper, write a new and improved conclusion paragraph using the main idea questions you created above. Then, see if you can replace your main idea and topic “blurbs” (snowmobiling, winter landscape, family and friends, exercise) with **word referents**. Replace the boring final sentence with a **general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE** using a **general adjective**.

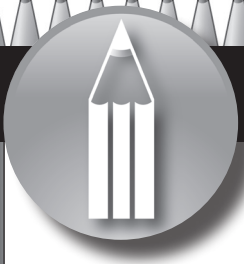


DEFINITIVE WORDS/PHRASES *lend an air of authority and finality to the piece.*

certainly	surely	positively	clearly
decidedly	undoubtedly	for sure	absolutely
definitely	of course	indeed	truly
without a doubt			

INFORMATIONAL VERBS *replace passive or helping verbs with informational verbs in order to easily restate each main idea.*

recognize	understand	disclose	discover
uncover	reveal	study	examine
observe	analyze	investigate	find out
focus on	research	know	delve
consider	determine	remember	explore
illustrate	outline	explain	discuss
become familiar with	be on the lookout	become aware of	



Student Page

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DEFINITIVE WORDS AND PHRASES

One way authors end their pieces effectively is to use definitive words and phrases to add an air of authority and clarity to the conclusion paragraph. Here is a list of these words and phrases:

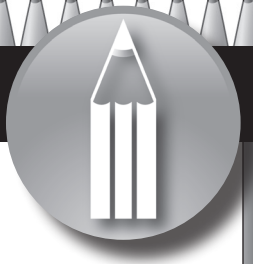
certainly surely without a doubt clearly decidedly truly for sure
absolutely definitely of course indeed undoubtedly positively

Compare the following pairs of sentences. Circle the definitive words and phrases. Notice the difference in tone between those that use this technique and those that do not.

1. By exploring the world of caves you will learn about life in these dark habitats.
By exploring the world of caves you will certainly learn about life in these dark habitats.
2. The author convinces us that we must continue to discover ways to protect the Monarch Butterfly.
Clearly, the author convinces us that we must continue to discover ways to protect the Monarch Butterfly.
3. When you're in Cape Cod you should visit the National Seashore.
When you're in Cape Cod you should definitely visit the National Seashore.
4. You will have the time of your life at Parson's Arcade and Amusement Center.
You will, indeed, have the time of your life at Parson's Arcade and Amusement Center.

Now it's your turn! Use a caret to insert a definitive word or phrase.

1. When flying you should check to be sure your carry-on luggage will fit in the overhead bins.
2. If you ever get to New York you should try to get tickets to a Yankees game.
3. Good friends are loyal, helpful, and tolerant of your quirks.



Name: _____

INFORMATIONAL VERBS (1)

One way authors effectively restate main ideas is to use informational verbs along with word referents. Here is a list of informational verbs:

disclose	recognize	understand	learn about	discover	uncover	reveal
study	examine	observe	analyze	investigate	find out	focus on
research	explain	know	delve	consider	determine	remember
explore	illustrate	discuss	be familiar with	be on the lookout	become aware of	outline

Read the “before” version of a conclusion paragraph, below. Underline main idea #1 in red, main idea #2 in blue, main idea #3 in green.

So now you know where to go camping, the things you’ll need, and what you need to stay safe. I hope you go camping someday. THE END

Read the following “after” version which restates each main idea using informational verbs and word referents. Again, underline main idea #1 in red, main idea #2 in blue, main idea #3 in green.

You can certainly explore the many camping destinations in your area. Once you’re familiar with the basic, necessary equipment, and become aware of the simple safety precautions, you’ll be ready to plan an overnight outdoor adventure of your own. Camping is, without a doubt, a challenging and rewarding experience.

ANALYZE IT:

- Compare the “before and after” concluding paragraphs. (Compare color to color for main ideas.)
- Locate each word referent in the “after” version, and write the original word(s) it referred to above it - compare the “before” and “after” word choice.
- Place a check beside the general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE. BOX the general adjectives.
- Circle the DEFINITIVE WORDS AND PHRASES in the “after” version.



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Name: _____

INFORMATIONAL VERBS (2)

One way authors effectively restate main ideas is to use informational verbs along with word referents. Here is a list of informational verbs:

- | | | | | | | |
|----------|------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------|
| disclose | recognize | understand | learn about | discover | uncover | reveal |
| study | examine | observe | analyze | investigate | find out | focus on |
| research | explain | know | delve | consider | determine | remember |
| explore | illustrate | discuss | be familiar with | be on the lookout | become aware of | outline |

Read the conclusion paragraph below. Then, REVISE this paragraph using **informational verbs**. Also improve this paragraph through the use of **definitive words and phrases**, **word referents** for restating each main idea, and a **general restatement of the topic sentence**.

So now you know all about summer - the weather, the fourth of July, and all the things you can do in the water. I hope you enjoyed my report on summer. THE END

CHECK YOURSELF:

- Locate each word referent in your revision, and write the original word(s) it referred to above it - compare the “before” and “after” word choice.
- Place a check beside your general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE. BOX the general adjectives.
- Circle the DEFINITIVE WORDS AND PHRASES in your revision.



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THE HYPOTHETICAL ANECDOTE (1)

One way to hold your reader’s attention in your conclusion paragraph is to use a *hypothetical anecdote*. In other words, place your reader in a situation in which they might encounter your topic.

If your topic was

SPIDERS

Your reader might encounter your topic:

- Cleaning the garage
- Rummaging through the attic
- Working in the garden

Your hypothetical anecdote might read: *So, the next time you’re rummaging through the attic or working in the garden, be on the lookout for this amazing arachnid!*

(Notice the use of the word referent amazing arachnid used in place of spider.)

If your topic was

VOLCANOES

Your reader might encounter your topic:

- Hawaii
- Pompeii
- A nature program on TV

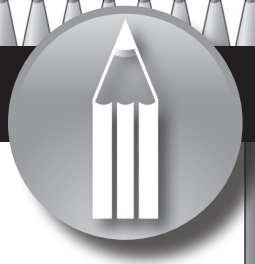
NOW YOU TRY IT:

If your topic was

MICE

Your reader might encounter your topic:

- _____
- _____
- _____



Name: _____

THE HYPOTHETICAL ANECDOTE (2)

One way to hold your reader's attention in your conclusion paragraph is to use a *hypothetical anecdote*. In other words, place your reader in a situation in which they might encounter your topic.

If your topic was

BEARS

Your reader might encounter your topic:

- On a camping trip
- A nature program on T.V.
- At a zoo

Your hypothetical anecdote might read:

If you ever find yourself camping out in the forest, or visiting a zoo, you might find yourself face to face with this furry carnivore.

(Notice the use of the word referent furry carnivore used in place of bear.)

If your topic was

CHIMPANZEES

Your reader might encounter your topic:

- _____
- _____
- _____

If your topic was

MOTORCYCLES

Your reader might encounter your topic:

- _____
- _____
- _____

BONUS: On another paper, use the following to turn your ideas into successful hypothetical anecdotes:

Sentence Starters:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Someday when you _____ . | If you ever decide to _____ . |
| If you ever have the chance to _____ . | The next time you _____ . |
| When you have the opportunity to _____ . | Should you ever _____ . |



Name: _____

ANALYZING MORE COMPLEX CONCLUSIONS (1)

The concluding paragraph should “sum up” the main ideas of an informational piece or the main reasons in an opinion piece. However, this should not be a totally redundant restating of these main ideas/reasons. Read this conclusion paragraph. It restates the main reasons in a boring way. Underline main reason #1 in red, main reason #2 in blue, main reason #3 in green.

It is obvious why I love St. Patrick’s Day. Everyone wears green, there’s a big parade, and great stories of leprechauns. THE END

Based on the conclusion paragraph, fill in the author’s prewriting plan below:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____

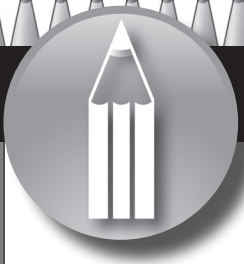
MAIN REASON #3: _____

Now read the revised conclusion below. Once again, underline main reason #1 in red, main reason #2 in blue, main reason #3 in green.

The next time March 17th rolls around, be sure to put on your best green outfit and celebrate St. Patrick’s Day! Attend a St. Patrick’s Day parade, explore the interesting and amusing tales of Leprechauns, and wish on a rainbow for a pot of gold. Without a doubt, this is the only day of the year when everyone is Irish! It definitely is a wonderful, fun-filled cultural celebration!

ANALYZE IT:

- Compare the “before and after” concluding paragraphs. (Compare color to color for main reasons.)
- Box the hypothetical anecdote that puts your reader in contact with your topic.
- CIRCLE the word referents the author used in place of the words “St. Patrick’s Day.”
- Underline the definitive words.
- Double underline the informational verb.
- Place a check beside the general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE.



Student Page

Name: _____

ANALYZING MORE COMPLEX CONCLUSIONS (2)

The concluding paragraph should “sum up” the main ideas of an informational piece or the main reasons in an opinion piece. However, this should not be a totally redundant restating of these main ideas/reasons. Read this conclusion paragraph. It restates the main ideas in a boring way. Underline main idea #1 in red, main idea #2 in blue, main idea #3 in green.

Now you know all the reasons why North Carolina is a great place to live. The beaches, the mountains, the shopping, and the climate are the reasons people go there. I hope you get to go there someday. THE END

Based on the conclusion paragraph, fill in the author’s prewriting plan below:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____

MAIN IDEA #3: _____

MAIN IDEA #4: _____

Now read the revised conclusion below. Once again, underline main idea #1 in red, main idea #2 in blue, main idea #3 in green.

If you’re planning a road trip through the American Southeast, you might consider a route through this popular state. Nature lovers can discover the miles of shoreline or explore the majestic mountains. Learning about the shops, malls, and outlets provides an adventure for those who love to shop. And, clearly, the North Carolina weather offers opportunities for outdoor lovers. It’s easy to see why visitors and residents alike appreciate the appealing state of North Carolina.

ANALYZE IT:

- Compare the “before and after” concluding paragraphs. (Compare color to color for main ideas.)
- Box the hypothetical anecdote that puts your reader in contact with your topic.
- CIRCLE the word referents the author used in place of the words “North Carolina.”
- Underline the definitive words.
- Double underline the informational verb.
- Place a check beside the general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE.



Name: _____

CRAFTING POWERFUL CONCLUSION PARAGRAPHS (1)

Use all of the techniques you know to REVISE the following dull conclusion paragraph.

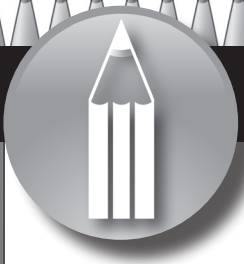
REMEMBER - *you can*:

- restate main reasons as questions
- use informational verbs
- use hypothetical anecdotes
- use word referents
- use definitive words/phrases
- use a general restatement of the topic sentence

So now I have told you all why I love Wallace School - the nice people who work there, the nice new building, and what you learn there. **THE END**

CHECK YOURSELF!

- Compare the “before and after” concluding paragraphs. Underline main reason #1 in red, main reason #2 in blue, main reason #3 in green.
- Box the hypothetical anecdote that puts your reader in contact with your topic.
- CIRCLE the word referents the author used in place of the topic words and main reason blurbs.
- Underline the definitive words/phrase.
- Double underline the informational verbs.
- Place a check beside the general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE.



Student Page

Name: _____

CRAFTING POWERFUL CONCLUSION PARAGRAPHS (2)

Use all of the techniques you know to REVISE the following dull conclusion paragraph.

REMEMBER - *you can*:

- restate main ideas as questions
- use informational verbs
- use hypothetical anecdotes
- use word referents
- use definitive words/phrases
- use a general restatement of the topic sentence

So this is the end of my report on what elephants look like, where they live, and how they act. I hope you liked reading about elephants.
THE END

CHECK YOURSELF!

- Compare the “before and after” concluding paragraphs. Underline main idea #1 in red, main idea #2 in blue, main idea #3 in green.
- Box the hypothetical anecdote that puts your reader in contact with your topic.
- CIRCLE the word referents the author used in place of the topic words and main idea blurbs.
- Underline the definitive words/phrase.
- Double underline the informational verbs.
- Place a check beside the general restatement of the TOPIC SENTENCE.



Name: _____

WRITING RESPONSE TO TEXT CONCLUSION PARAGRAPHS

You've read two source texts and created the following summarizing frameworks for these texts:

TOPIC: AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

MAIN IDEA #1: Appearance/Characteristics

MAIN IDEA #2: Habitat

MAIN IDEA #3: Communication

MAIN IDEA #4: Threats

TOPIC: ELEPHANTS IN DECLINE

MAIN IDEA #1: Deforestation

MAIN IDEA #2: Hunting for Tusks

MAIN IDEA #3: Work and Entertainment

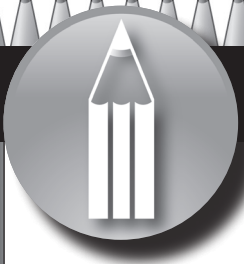
Now, imagine that you wrote to this assignment, below, but you still need to complete the conclusion paragraph:

You've read two articles on elephants – one about the African Elephant and the other about the declining elephant population. Based on these texts, write an essay about the challenges elephants face and what needs to be done to protect them.

Use the following to help craft your conclusion paragraph on the lines below:

- **REITERATE** your TOPIC and MAIN IDEAS.
- **SYNTHESIZE** information from both texts and draw a conclusion.
- **EVALUATE** how this information inspires, challenges, or changes you.

Challenge: Include word referents and informational verbs!



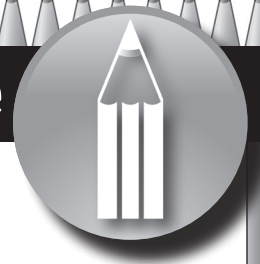
Name: _____

THE LARGEST LAND MAMMAL

What weighs as much as a school bus, can run almost fifteen miles per hour, and can lift up to six hundred pounds? If you guessed the elephant, you are correct!

You can recognize the elephant as the largest living land mammals on earth today. These wilderness giants stand up to 14 feet tall at the shoulder, and can measure almost 30 feet from their trunks to their tails – that’s almost as long as a school bus! These huge leathery-skinned **pachyderms** have large floppy ears, and a long, strong, flexible trunk. The trunk is used for breathing and sniffing, touching and feeling, for drinking and for picking up food and other objects with its finger-like tips. They are also known to use their trunks for showering! African elephants are born with tusks, which are actually very long curved teeth made of a bone-like material called ivory. These are used for rooting up food, digging for water, and for self-defense. Elephants have also been known to move wood and brush with their tusks to clear a way for themselves in the forest. The African elephant can live between 60-70 years.

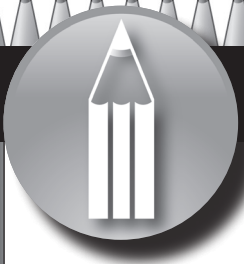
There are two types of African Elephants that live in different areas of the continent. Savannah elephants live throughout about thirty countries around the Sahara Desert in grasslands where trees grow sparsely and the ground is covered in low growing vegetation. In west and central Africa forest elephants occupy the dense, wet, rain forests. Because of their size, elephants require a lot of food and they rely on their habitats to provide them with it. Full-grown elephants spend 2/3 of every day eating about 350 pounds of leaves, grass, tree bark, and other vegetation! They are also known to steal bananas and other crops from nearby farmland. You can see why maintaining their habitat is critical to elephant populations. As habitats disappear, so does their food source.



Elephants are amazing communicators. They can make a wide range of sounds, many of which human beings cannot hear to signal different messages. Elephants can hear these sounds up to six miles away. They might trumpet to signal danger or excitement, rumble, grunt or bark to direct their young. If an elephant is feeling aggressive they might roar or growl. Just like human beings, they also use body language and touch as ways to tell others of their kind how they're feeling. When meeting an elephant friend they might wrap their trunks together – a little bit like holding hands! When they greet one another elephants can be seen running in circles and happily flapping their ears. All of this is evidence of the elephant's great intelligence, and ability to feel and express deep emotions. They often develop strong bonds with one another and even with people. They grieve when other elephants die, and exhibit happiness when meeting one another.

Because of their fascinating appeal, it is shocking to learn that these amazing animals are threatened in many ways – and that the elephants' worst enemies are people. Shrinking habitats and hunting have reduced the African elephant population from several million a hundred years ago, to about a half million today. Open grasslands are being taken over for farming, and forests harvested for lumber. When this happens elephants lose their source of food and begin to forage and destroy farmland and crops. According to the World Wildlife Foundation, since 1979, African elephants have lost over 50 % of their range. Another threat to the African elephant is hunting. Although it is against the law to kill elephants, hunters still continue to kill large numbers of elephants for their prized ivory tusks. This is why many wild life organizations have sprung up to continue to work to protect the African elephant and to preserve its habitat.

The African elephant is a majestic, strong, intelligent, communicative creature. If you ever get a chance to see an elephant in the wild, take careful note, and you'll learn to appreciate and protect these largest living land mammals.



Student Page

Name: _____

ELEPHANTS IN DECLINE

The statistics are shocking. According to National Geographic, 100,000 African elephants were killed in the span of only three years. In 2011 about one in every twelve elephants was brutally murdered, and in a single decade sixty four percent of the elephant population in Central Africa was lost to poaching. These beautiful, intelligent creatures - the largest land mammals on the planet - are threatened, abused, and killed in a number of ways. As their habitats are destroyed elephants are forced into work or entertainment, or killed for their ivory tusks.

One huge threat to elephants the world over is deforestation. Elephants require a habitat filled with lush vegetation to provide these herbivores with enough food to fuel their 6,000 -13,000 pound bodies. In fact, these huge creatures spend up to 75 % of each day foraging for food in the wild. Therefore elephants need to live in places where there is plenty of undeveloped land. Because of the logging industry, forests of teak and other types of wood are being destroyed. Companies buy forested land, cut down the trees, and sell the wood and lumber. This becomes an extremely profitable business in Africa because, according to the African Technology Forum, as many as 90 % of Africans use wood fuel for cooking. In addition to the loss of forests, grasslands are also being turned into farms. Farm fences disrupt elephant migration, and the loss of natural vegetation deprives elephants of their food. Hungry elephants can destroy a farm, devouring all the crops in a single night, and are often shot and killed in retaliation.

(continued)



Elephants are also threatened by poachers who kill them in order to sell their ivory tusks. In China and Japan ivory is prized as “white gold” and crafted into jewelry, trinkets, hair ornaments, chopsticks, and figurines. Because of the demand for ivory it is very expensive. Two male elephant tusks can weigh about 250 pounds and poachers can earn approximately \$1,500 per pound. Despite the fact that in most places hunting elephants for their tusks is against the law there are dangerous criminal networks that buy and sell ivory. Some poachers hunt by helicopter, shooting elephants with high-powered automatic rifles. Others poison elephant watering holes and the elephants die a slow and painful death. The tusks are then smuggled by boat to dealers all over the world.

Still other elephants are captured and forced into captivity to provide work and entertainment for people. These strong, intelligent beasts are forced to move logs for lumber companies, and to haul heavy loads of supplies. Others are taught to perform in circuses. Training an elephant often involves separating them from their family groups, chaining them in small areas, striking them, and using electric prods. Elephants can become depressed and are forced to live their lengthy lives in these unnatural circumstances.

Fortunately, animal activist groups and wildlife conservationists have worked with governments and police to improve conditions for elephants and preserve their dwindling numbers. But, protecting elephant habitats, enforcing laws against poachers, and monitoring elephants in captivity is an ongoing challenge.