



Grade 4 Informational Writing Guide

Student Pages for Print or Projection

SECTION 6: Authentic Writing Tasks

**www.empoweringwriters.com
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Name: _____

PROMPT (1)

Breakfast is an important meal. Explain why breakfast is important. Write about the kind of breakfast you'd have at home, and the kind you might have at a restaurant.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

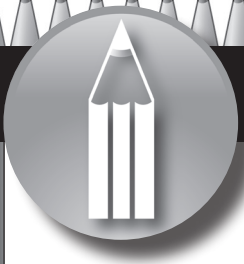
MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: _____ (etc...)

REMEMBER:

- Use the prewriting framework to plan your essay.
- Refer to the PILLAR to help write a well-organized, fully elaborated piece.
- Analyze prompt for GIVENS and VARIABLES.
- Begin with a strong lead and clear topic sentence.
- Be sure your main idea/reason sentences are broad yet distinct.
- Use the detail-generating questions to generate vivid, specific details.
- Include anecdotes, quotes, statistics, amazing facts, and/or descriptive segments.
- Creatively restate your main ideas/reasons in your conclusion.



Student Page

Name: _____

PROMPT (2)

Explain how to plan your idea of the perfect sleep-over party. Write about the refreshments you'd serve, the games you'd like to play, and your favorite party favors.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: _____ (etc...)

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Name: _____

PROMPT (3)

Animals serve people in many ways. They can be trained to do chores, to provide food and products. Discuss these ways that animals are helpful to human beings.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: _____ (etc...)

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Name: _____

PROMPT (4)

All of us have people in our lives we love and respect. Write a piece about someone close to you who has made a difference in your life. Explain what you admire about him/her, what he/she has done for you, and what you still hope to learn from this special person.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: _____ (etc...)

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PROMPT (5)

Dogs and cats are probably the world's most popular pets. Some people prefer dogs and some prefer cats. Write a piece that compares caring for a cat or a dog. Outline the equipment necessary for successful cat or dog ownership. Also discuss the temperament and behavior of cats and dogs.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

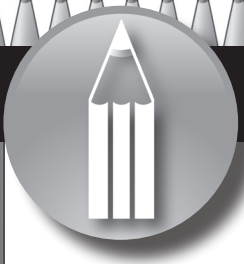
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Student Page

Name: _____

PROMPT (6)

Write about a particular hobby or sport you engage in. Describe this activity to your audience, explaining how to become involved in this activity, what supplies or equipment they'll need, and where or how a person might learn how to participate in this activity.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #1: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #2: _____

MAIN IDEA/REASON #3: _____ (etc...)

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PROMPT (7)

Music is all around us. Write a piece that explains the many ways in which people enjoy and participate in music.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

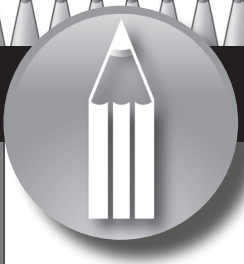
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Student Page

Name: _____

PROMPT (8)

Parks are wonderful places. Write a piece examining what parks have to offer the children and adults who visit them.

Think about it - is this prompt informational or opinion? How do you know?

PREWRITING FRAMEWORK:

TOPIC: _____

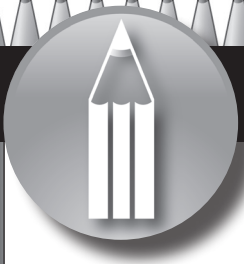
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COMMON LITERARY THEMES

- Acceptance
- Courage
- Perseverance
- Cooperation
- Compassion
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Loyalty
- Responsibility
- Ambition
- Appreciating what you have
- Forgiveness
- The Value of Hard Work
- Being a Graceful Loser
- Learning from Mistakes
- Being True to Yourself
- Individuality
- Importance of Family
- Friendship
- Determination
- Inequality – Justice

Can you think of any others?



Student Reference Page

FRAMING QUESTIONS FOR READING AND RESPONDING TO LITERATURE

- Who is the *main character*? (point of view character or protagonist)
- Where is the story set?
- What is the *tone* or *mood* of the story?
- What is the main character's *problem, challenge, or adventure*?
- What is the main character's *motivation*? (what the character wants)
- *Who/what stands in the way* of the main character's motivation? (antagonist)
- Where does the author use *suspense* and/or *foreshadowing*?
- *How does the main character feel* about the situation?
- How does the main character *show his/her feelings*?
- How did the main character *grow and change* in response to story events?
- What figurative language did the author use and why?
- What is the *theme* of the story and how is it demonstrated?
- *What would you do* if faced with a similar challenge or adventure?



Student Page

Name: _____

READ LIKE AN AUTHOR

In this excerpt from Lucy at Sea, 13 year-old Lucy is onboard a tall ship out on the open sea. The year is 1906. She finds the First Mate, Quaide, bullying a sailor named Coleman who has a terrible stutter, forcing Coleman to explain that he was going beneath deck to the bilge of the ship.

Abruptly a peculiar sound behind me cut through my reverie. Harsh laughter, and then a voice: “B-neet, b-neet, b...b...b...b-neet.” More laughter. B-b-b-b-neet, b-neet, b...b...b..b-neet.”

Then another voice. “Come on, spit it out! You can do it!” The voice was Quaide’s. I turned and tiptoed forward. Ducked behind the lifeboat and peered toward the bow.

Coleman stood, his face pale, hair ruffling like downy feathers in the breeze. Quaide, his hulking back to me, poked the man’s thin wiry frame with a thick finger. “Cat got your tongue? Tell me where you’re goin’!” Coleman’s lips labored in slow motion, as if paralyzed. His jaw stretched painfully. He thrust his head forward, the sinews in his neck straining.

“B...b...b...” His nostrils flared. Hands fisted and unfisted. “B...b...b...b-neet...”

Quaide closed the space between them. Thrust his doughy face directly in front of Coleman’s. “Come on, say it, you moron! Out with it! You gotta tell your superior what you’re gonna be doin’. And that’s me! So say it!”

Coleman tried to scoot around him. Quaide blocked his way.

I felt weak in the knees. I’d never actually heard Coleman speak, assuming he was just an odd, solitary sort. It never occurred to me that he was a stutterer.

I lowered my head, heart pounding. I was about to shout at Quaide, but stopped. I couldn’t bear for Coleman to know I’d witnessed this.

I turned. Ran to get the cap’n. “Cap’n!” I shouted. “Cap’n Adams!”

Taken from Lucy at Sea by Barbara Mariconda
Katherine Tegen Books, HarperCollins Publishers © 2013



Name: _____

READ LIKE AN AUTHOR

You've read an excerpt from a narrative story. Now read each framing question, below. On the lines beneath each question, turn the key words into a simple response, using evidence from the story.

Ex. Who is the main character (point of view character or protagonist) in the story?

- The main character in this story, also known as the point of view character or protagonist, is Lucy.

Or:

- In this story Lucy is the main character, also known as the point of view character or the protagonist.

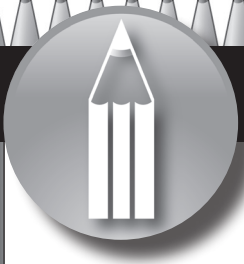
1. Where is the story set? _____

2. What is the tone or mood of the story? _____

3. What is the main character's problem, challenge, or adventure?

4. What is the main character's motivation (what does the main character want)?

5. Who or what stands in the way of the main character's motivation?



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6. Where does the author use suspense and/or foreshadowing?

7. How does the main character feel about the situation?

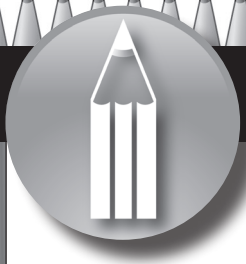
8. How does the main character show his/her feelings?

9. How did the main character grow and change in response to story events?

10. What figurative language did the author use and why?

11. What is the *theme* of the story and how is it demonstrated?

12. What would you do if faced with a similar challenge or adventure?



Student Page

Name: _____

	SUMMER CHOICES	DECISIONS, DECISIONS
Doing the Right Thing		
What is the Sacrifice?		



SENTENCE STARTERS FOR A LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK EXPLORING THEME IN STORY AND POETRY

I believe the theme of both texts is _____.

In paragraph # _____ we learn that _____.

Both texts explore _____.

For example, _____.

This is evidenced by _____.

Another example of this is _____.

The author/poet illustrates how _____.

The dialogue shows us _____.

The text highlights _____.

When Gretchen says “_____”, we see that _____.

We learn in paragraph _____ that _____.

On the other hand, the poet uses _____.

The reader understands how _____.

The theme in the poem is expressed in _____.

In paragraph _____, the author shows how _____.

When you read the poem aloud you notice _____.

In each stanza, the poet presents _____.

I could relate to this theme because _____.

It is interesting to note that _____.

In my life I experienced _____.

The difference between the texts is _____.

In both the story and the poem _____.

The author/poet points out that _____.

In addition, _____.

Furthermore, _____.

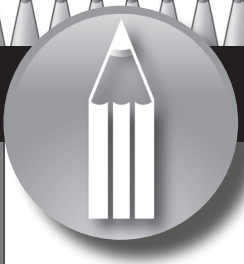
Both the author and the poet _____.

The details suggest that _____.

If I were in Gretchen’s situation I would _____ because _____.

The reader can conclude that _____.

I’d agree that _____.



Student Page

Name: _____

IDENTIFY THE THEME

Identify a theme in Decisions, Decisions and in Summer Choices. Write an essay that explains how the theme of the story is demonstrated through the dialogue and description and how the theme is shown in the poem through the examples provided. Be sure to include specific details from both texts to support your main ideas. Also, describe a time in your life when you had a difficult choice to make and how that helped you understand the theme of these texts.

Decisions, Decisions

by Arden Davidson

If innocence cost
fifty cents and
crime cost just a dime,
I'd reach into my
pocket for two quarters
every time.

If joy was way on
down the road
and thrills came by
real fast.

I'd put on my good
hiking shoes
and make my
journey last.

If a good friend had
a sprinkler
and a bad friend
had a pool,
I'd be jumping
through that sprinkler,
every day,
right after school.

Wanna know how I
can choose right
when decisions
come along?
Because if my gut
feels funny,
then I know
I'm choosing wrong.

1 - "Decisions, Decisions – Copyright Arden Davidson. Used by permission from the author."



SUMMER CHOICES

The sun was shining, the thermometer edging toward 80, and school was out for summer. I dashed up the front steps and through the door, letting it slam behind me. I'd spent the morning at my best friend Chelsea's house and could barely wait to share my good news! "Mom!" I yelled. "Guess what?"

My mother started down the stairs. "Hello to you too!" she said playfully. "What's up, Gretchen?"

I could barely get the words out. My heart was racing from charging all the way home from Chelsea's house in the heat. In between breaths I exclaimed, "Chelsea's mom invited me to go with them on their family vacation! To the lake in New Hampshire - for two whole weeks! They have canoes there! A motor boat! They're going to teach me to water ski! There's a bonfire at night! Chelsea and I will share the loft in the cabin! We might even see a moose!" The words tumbled out in one excited rush.

My mother reached out to push a sweaty strand of hair off my forehead. "When is the trip?" she asked, with less enthusiasm than I'd expected.

"In two weeks!"

She raised an eyebrow. "Aren't you forgetting something?"

"No," I said, "I really, really, really want to do this!"

Mom stepped back and looked at me. I knew the look. Her lips pursed, head tipped.

"What?" I demanded.

"Your grandmother's 70th birthday, remember?"

I'd completely forgotten. The party at some fancy restaurant in New Jersey. We'd be there the night before and then stay a few days at my grandmother's house. "But Mom..." I began.



Student Page

She had her hands on her hips. “I’m really sorry,” she said. “But your grandmother only turns 70 once. We’re all going to be there.”

I tried not to frown. I’d be the only kid there. The idea of spending time hanging around with the adults when I could be with Chelsea...

“Please Mom,” I persisted. “I’ll make Grandma a card. And a present. She’ll understand.

“Of course she’d understand,” my mother said. “I’m sure she’d tell you to go on ahead and have a wonderful time in New Hampshire. But that doesn’t mean it’s the right thing to do.”

“Oh, come on!” I persisted. Tears pricked the edges of my eyes. “This isn’t fair!”

My mother shrugged. “I can understand how disappointed you feel. I feel disappointed too.” She paused for a moment, studying me. “You’re growing up. Starting middle school in the fall. With that will come many decisions you’ll need to make. So, I’ll tell you what. You can start with this one. The choice is yours. Think about it really carefully and you decide.” She turned and left the room.

I could go with Chelsea! All I’d need to do was contact Grandma and explain. I should have felt elated. But something kept nagging at me. I nibbled the inside of my cheek. Plopped down in the chair and let the air conditioning blast over me until goose bumps rose on my arms. I thought of my Grandma with her soft buff colored hair and glasses balanced on the edge of her nose. The way she always winked and called me “her girl.” How she’d taken two trains to get to every dance recital and birthday party of mine. The time she’d played Twister with me and wrenched her back and laughed all the way to the emergency room.

The phone rang. I glanced at the number. It was Chelsea. My hand hovered over the phone. I picked it up. “Hello?”



“So Gretchen, did she say you could come?”

“Well...” I began.

“Yes?”

“She said it’s my decision...”

Chelsea laughed. “So, it’s settled!”

The tears welled up again. “It’s not that easy,” I murmured.

“What’s the matter?” Chelsea asked.

I explained about Grandma. “I don’t know what I should do,” I said. But, in truth, I did know. I just didn’t want to let Chelsea down. Or my grandma.

Chelsea made a ‘tsk’ sound with her tongue and sighed. “Even your mom said your grandma would tell you to come!”

“I know,” I replied. Let me call you back, okay?”

“Okay,” Chelsea said, softly. I could almost see her furrowed brow and the concern on her face. She could never stay mad for long. “You’ll figure it out. But I hope you come to New Hampshire!”

I hung up the phone and saw my mom standing in the doorway. “I’m going to tell Chelsea I’m going to Grandma’s party,” I said. “She’s going to be disappointed.” I wondered who would be more disappointed, Chelsea or me.

“I’m proud of you, Gretchen,” Mom said. “You had a tough decision to make, and you made a good choice. Another good choice you made is having Chelsea as a friend. She’ll understand. And she’ll respect you too.”

I headed to my room, a little sad, but relieved. I tried not to think about water skiing, or the cabin by the lake. Instead I imagined my grandma’s smile, and how happy she’d be at the party.

With that, I took a deep breath, picked up the phone, and dialed Chelsea’s number. I felt better already.



Student Page

Name: _____

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK - THEME IN A NARRATIVE STORY AND A POEM

The story Summer Choices and poem Decisions, Decisions each center around the theme of sacrifice. Both texts show that making the right choices often involves sacrifice.

In Summer Choices the narrator (main character) Gretchen has the chance to go with her best friend Chelsea and her family on a two-week vacation to a lake house in New Hampshire. In paragraph three we learn that the vacation will include canoeing, motor boating, and water skiing. Gretchen and Chelsea would go to the bonfire at night and share a loft together in the cabin. They might even see a moose! The author uses both action and dialogue to show Gretchen's excitement. For example, in paragraph one our narrator can "hardly wait to share her good news" "Mom!" she yelled. "Guess what?" In paragraph two her "words tumbled out in one excited rush."

When Gretchen's mom reminds her of her grandma's seventieth birthday party Gretchen realizes it's smack in the middle of the New Hampshire vacation. Her disappointment is evidenced by her reaction to the news. She tries not to frown and tears prick the corners of her eyes. Her mother surprises her by allowing her to make her own decision about whether to go to New Hampshire or to her grandmother's party. When Gretchen recalls all of the kindness her grandma showed her she has second thoughts. We learn that her grandma took two trains to get to every one of Gretchen's dance recitals and birthday parties. The reader understands what a special person Gretchen's grandmother is when Gretchen

(continued)

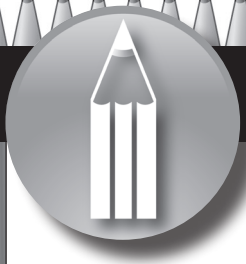


remembers how she jarred her back playing Twister with her. Even though she knows she can go with Chelsea she doesn't feel right about it. The author describes the narrator's "nagging feeling" and the way she "nibbled the inside of her cheek." In the end Gretchen decides to go to her grandma's party. She feels sad to miss the vacation but also felt relieved. She'd made a sacrifice in order to do the right thing.

In each stanza of the poem Decisions, Decisions the poet presents a choice. For example, in stanza three he writes: "If a good friend had a sprinkler and a bad friend had a pool, I'd be jumping through that sprinkler every day right after school." The poet illustrates how doing the right thing (sticking by a good friend) might involve a sacrifice (choosing the sprinkler instead of the pool.) The theme of sacrifice appears in every stanza and in every choice that the poet describes. When you read the poem aloud you notice that the theme is expressed through a series of choices told in a rhythmic, rhyming pattern.

Although the structures are different, both the story and the poem encourage the reader to consider the cost of making good decisions. Both texts provide examples of difficult decisions and show what kinds of sacrifices might be required. They also describe the uncomfortable feeling we get when we know, deep down, that we're making the wrong decision. In the poem the poet says, "if my gut feels funny, then I know I'm choosing wrong." This is probably what Gretchen was feeling when she had a "nagging feeling."

I'd agree, based on my own experiences, that making the right decision can often require a sacrifice, but it's worth it in the end.



Student Page

Name: _____

	JEREMY	MARISSA
Situation		
Evidence of Feelings		
How Setting Reflects <u>Point of View</u>		



ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?

Jeremy trailed after his mother, dragging his feet through the cavernous hall of the museum. This particular gallery was a somber space, the walls lined with portraits in dark hues, mostly of serious looking men from centuries past. Some seemed to glare from beneath bushy brows as though their ruffled collars and velvet shirt coats were too tight, others sat haughtily atop war horses, waiting for a battle to begin. The worst were the ones who appeared even more bored than Jeremy felt, their heavy-lidded eyes staring out over the heads of the crowds, looking at who knows what.

It was hot and crowded in the room, with adults stopping right in front of him to study some portrait or other. He walked right up the back of one man who abruptly halted in front of painting of a bloody battlefield. “Sorry,” Jeremy murmured, when the fellow looked over his glasses at him. “Sorry.”

“Pay attention to where you’re going,” the man scolded.

Jeremy’s mom turned, smiled at the man and shook her head. “My apologies,” she said quietly. “You know how boys can be...”

Jeremy leaned in toward her as the man turned his attention back to the war scene. “How long is this going to take?” he asked. He realized he was whining. His mother sighed. “Look, can you just make the best of it? I told you you’d have to come to work with me. Plenty of kids would give their right arm for a chance to visit a museum like this.”

“Like who?” Jeremy whispered. Good thing his mother had already turned, making her way to her office. One of the guards nodded toward him. Motioned for Jeremy to



Student Page

come closer. “Hey, kid,” he said softly. “Stuck here waiting for your mom?”

Jeremy nodded. “I’m off from school this week and my uncle was supposed to come stay at the house with me. We were going to watch a movie, shoot some hoops, play video games, get a pizza...”

“Sounds like your uncle couldn’t make it.”

Jeremy shook his head. “Nope. So I had to come here with my mom. She restores old paintings.”

“Dr. Elias – I know her. Nice lady.” He nodded, then ran a hand across his chin. “You know, I have a boy about your age, and he’s come here with me a few times. I sent him to see the exhibit of Arms and Armor. Knights in chain mail on metal-clad horses, spears, shields, all of that. And the Egyptian Collection. You might see a mummy there! More exciting than pizza,” he said with a grin, and pointed his thumb toward a large map on the wall. “You’ll find them. Just let your mother know where you’re headed.”

That sounded better, Jeremy thought. Exciting almost. “Thanks!” he said, his voice echoing in the dark gallery. It suddenly seemed more mysterious. The kind of place where you might have an adventure. He waved to the guard and headed to his mom’s office. Knights and mummies made the day ahead seem like something to get excited about after all.



NEW TO 4B

“It will be just fine Marissa, you’ll see,” Mom said as she dropped me off at the door of my new school. I shook my head, ashamed at the tears welling up behind my eyes. I blinked them away and dragged myself out of the car, forced a smile and waved. Mom gave me a thumbs-up and drove off.

My heart raced as I stared at the building, scores of kids congregating outside. The school was huge and sprawling, all modern concrete and glass. One wing curved sharply around a long walkway past what I’d been told was a pool, framed by a row of frosted windows. The few trees that lined the walk were small and spindly, having just been planted after the school had been completed last spring. “All the latest technology,” my dad had said. “New science labs, media center, and cafeteria – everything brand spankin’ new!” I know he was trying to get me excited, but the more he told me, the more anxious I became. Why did we have to move anyway? My old school was worn out and old, three stories of crumbling bricks, the tall narrow stairwells painted dark green, cracked linoleum peeling up on the floors. Old gnarly oak trees shaded the front entrance and littered the walk with leaves and acorns. We had only one computer in each classroom, and we sure didn’t have a pool. But it felt like home to me. As comfortable as a worn-out pair of favorite sneakers. I knew all the nooks and crannies there, the teachers had been there for years and they knew us all by name. And then there were all the familiar faces of my friends inside that cozy old building. By contrast this new school seemed sharp and cold, all the strange modern angles, and bare grounds surrounding it. No history here, no desks carved with someone’s initials that I recognized. No memories of the playground, no way to head into the old wing to visit my first grade teacher. I shook my head to try and erase the memories.



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They were only making this harder.

Lines were forming around the bus circle, under signs for each classroom. I had memorized mine - 4B. Four for my grade and B for my teacher, Mrs. Booth. I took my place and waited, staring at my shoes. A small woman with a brown ponytail and red-rimmed glasses approached. She had a clipboard in her hand. "You must be Marissa!" she exclaimed. I looked up. Her eyes were brown specked with gold and she smiled gently. "I'm Mrs. Booth. I've been waiting for you! I can't wait to introduce you to the others." She nodded toward the line of yellow buses pulling in. I had never ridden the bus. My old school was close enough to walk to. I bit my lower lip. So much to get used to!

In moments the buses lined the bus circle in a cloud of exhaust. The doors burst open and what seemed like thousands of kids poured out. In minutes they noisily found their teachers. One by one students assembled under the 4B sign. We all eyed one another shyly. Most seemed to know one another, but Mrs. Booth introduced us all. She somehow knew everyone's name. There was one girl named Virginia who seemed as lost as I was. "Virginia is new here too, Marissa," Mrs. Booth said, winking at me. In moments our class followed Mrs. Booth inside. Virginia and I fell into step together. "Let's try to sit near each other," Virginia said. I already liked her. She had twinkling eyes and a crooked smile that suggested mischief. Inside the corridors gleamed. The hallways were drenched in sunlight. The tension I'd felt began to melt away. Maybe this new school wouldn't be as bad as I thought.

"Yes," I said, smiling back at Virginia as we approached room 4B. It was marked with a brightly colored welcome sign. "We'll definitely sit together."

Virginia grinned and grabbed hold of the strap on my backpack and we headed inside together.



SENTENCE STARTERS FOR A LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK: EXPLORING POINT OF VIEW AND SETTING

- The narrator's point of view was that _____.
- Both texts illustrate how _____.
- The author uses action to show us _____.
- For example, _____.
- This is evidenced by _____.
- Another example of this is _____.
- The narrator makes a connection between _____.
- The dialogue shows us _____.
- The narrator's feelings are illustrated through _____.
- In paragraph # _____.
- (Jeremy's) view of the museum was _____.
- (Marissa's) impression of the new school _____.
- When (she) compares (both schools) we see _____.
- The author uses the following phrase _____ to show _____.
- In paragraph # the narrator describes _____.
- It's clear that _____.
- It is interesting to note that _____.
- This is clear when _____.
- (Marissa's) POV is reflected by _____.
- We know how (Jeremy) feels when _____.
- Furthermore, _____.
- The narrator points out that _____.
- In contrast, _____.
- The author effectively describes _____.
- The details suggest that _____.
- The words, _____, show that _____.
- (Marissa's) POV changes when _____.
- (Jeremy's) attitude changes when _____.
- The reader can conclude that _____.
- In conclusion, _____.



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Name: _____

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK - POINT OF VIEW AND SETTING

In the stories Are We Having Fun Yet? and New to 4B both narrators have strong feelings about their situations that are reflected in the way they describe the setting. Both texts illustrate how the narrator's point of view influences the way the setting is described. Let's explore the points of view of both narrators.

Jeremy, the main character in Are We Having Fun Yet?, had to go to work with his Mom. He was supposed to spend a fun day with his uncle, going to a movie, playing basketball and video games and having pizza. When his uncle couldn't come Jeremy had to go to the museum where his mom works and spend the day there, and he wasn't happy about it. The narrator's feelings are clearly illustrated in paragraph one when he trails after his mother, dragging his feet. His boredom is evidenced when the author describes a man in a painting on display as follows: "he appeared even more bored than Jeremy felt." The dialogue in paragraphs two and three shows us that Jeremy would rather be someplace else: "How long is this going to take?" he asks, realizing he is whining.

Jeremy's view of the museum matched his mood. In paragraph one he describes a "somber space" filled with "portraits in dark hues." It is interesting to note that some of the men in the portraits "glared" and he described others with "heavy-lidded eyes staring over the heads of the crowds." Everything Jeremy noticed reflected his feelings at the time. Jeremy's attitude changed when the museum guard suggested that he visit the Arms and Armor and Egyptian exhibits. We know Jeremy's mood is improving when



he thought, "It suddenly seemed more mysterious. The kind of place where you might have an adventure."

Marissa, the narrator in New to 4B, was starting at a new school. Her feelings of fear and sadness are evidenced in the first two paragraphs. In fact, in the very first line of the story her mother says, "It will be fine Marissa, you'll see." In paragraph two Marissa's eyes well with tears that she blinks away, she drags herself out of the car and forced a smile.

When Marissa compared her new school to her old we see her feelings reflected clearly. She viewed the new school as cold and forbidding. In paragraph three Marissa described the new school as "huge and sprawling" all "concrete and glass". She uses words like "sharp, cold, strange, modern angles, bare grounds." It's clear that she didn't feel welcome or comfortable there. In contrast, she described her old school this way: "as comfortable as a worn-out pair of favorite sneakers." She also pointed out the shade trees surrounding her former school and the familiar faces inside the cozy old building. Marissa's impression of the new school began to change in paragraph 4 when she met her new teacher, Mrs. Booth, and in paragraphs 5 and 6 when her classmate Virginia said, "Let's try to sit near each other." As Marissa began to feel more at home her view of the new school changed. We discover this when the narrator noted that: "Inside the corridors gleamed. The hallways were drenched in sunlight." At the end, the "brightly colored welcome sign" cheered her up.

The reader can conclude that the narrator's point of view, feelings, and attitudes will always be reflected in the way the setting is described and will change as the character grows and changes.



Name: _____

ORLANDO TAKES A RIDE

“See you round, little bro!” Hector exclaimed. Orlando watched as his brother grabbed his keys and headed out the door. “Going to take a drive,” Hector called over his shoulder. And then he was gone.

Ever since Hector had gotten his license Orlando had begged his brother to take him for a spin. But their mother had said no. She didn’t want them clowning around while Hector was behind the wheel. Orlando heard the car door slam and the engine rev. Just to rub it in Hector tooted the horn twice as he pulled out of the driveway.

I can’t wait to get my license, Orlando thought. But it would be years before that happened. He picked up the remote, flopped onto the couch and flipped through the channels. There was nothing on worth watching. Orlando sighed. He was itching for a little excitement. He and Hector used to go bike riding together, but since Hector got his license he hadn’t had the time. That was when the idea occurred to him. Orlando turned off the TV, dropped the remote on the table, and headed out to the garage.

The bikes were parked in the corner, both his and Hector’s. His father had promised that when he turned thirteen he’d get a 12 speed bike like Hector’s. But, Hector hadn’t even looked at his bike since he got his license. It was a shame to let that beautiful bike just sit there.

Orlando went over to the 12 speed, grabbed the curved handlebars and gave the kickstand a nudge with the side of his foot. If he hurried he could take the bike for a quick ride around the neighborhood. Hector would never know – and probably wouldn’t even care. He wheeled the bike out to the street, swung his leg over the bar and hopped on. The bike was bigger than his and it wobbled until he got the hang of it. Tickticktick



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went the gears as he coasted down the slight hill, picking up speed. With the wind in his face Orlando swept around the curve. He was sitting up higher than he was used to, and this bike was lighter and faster than his. He gave the handbrake a squeeze and the bike jerked to a stop, almost tossing him over the handlebars. “Whoa...” he gasped, his heart racing. He slid off the seat and tried to straddle the crossbar, but it was higher than he was used to. Losing his balance, Orlando sprawled on the ground and the bike toppled to the left against the stone curb. His head hit the grassy ground alongside the road. If he had fallen a couple of inches further he would have whacked his head on the pavement.

He looked around to see if anyone had witnessed his embarrassing fall. No. Thank goodness! Orlando climbed back on and tentatively started pedaling. It was harder going back up the hill, so he decided to switch gears. He twisted the knob beside the hand-grip, forward and then back. There was a ratcheting sound and he could hear the chain grinding. The bike refused to lock into gear. The pedals spun wildly and again he lost control. He veered wildly off into the road. A car horn blared and he jerked the handlebars to the left. The bike bumped up onto the grass and he toppled off a second time, whacking his head on the edge of a metal sign post. The car pulled up to the curb and parked, the engine still running. It was Hector. The car idled as he jumped from the car.

“You all right?” Hector demanded, kneeling beside him. Orlando couldn’t tell if Hector was angry or frightened. His brow was furrowed and he looked him over through squinted eyes.

“I’m okay,” Orlando mumbled, dropping his gaze. He could see that the side of the bike was dented. Hector noticed it too.

(continued)



“Just get in!” Hector ordered, grabbing the bike and strapping it to the rack on the back of the car.

Orlando scrambled in, and Hector slipped into the driver’s seat. “At least buckle up,” Hector told him. “Be responsible, will you?”

“I am responsible,” Orlando said. He could feel himself blush as he said it.

“Couldn’t prove it by me,” Hector replied, pointing to the lump that was already forming on Orlando’s forehead.

“I’m sorry...” Orlando began.

“Why didn’t you just ask me?” Hector said.

“You won’t tell Mom...” Orlando pleaded.

“Not if you promise to be bike-smart from now on.”

They pulled into the driveway and Hector turned off the car. Orlando tried to help his brother take the bike off the rack. “Didn’t you have enough trouble with this bike today?” Hector said. “Just go on inside!”

Slinking into the house, Orlando shook his head as he thought about what might have happened. In the blink of an eye he could have catapulted off the bike into the street, or been hit by a car. Instead of a bump on the head he could have had a concussion. Or worse. Hector was right. From now on he’d have to be bike smart!