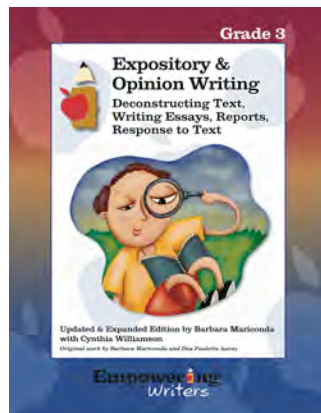




Grade 3
Expository and Opinion Writing
Deconstructing Text, Writing Essays, Reports, Response to Text

Student Pages for Print or Projection

SECTION 6: Authentic Writing Tasks



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Student Page

Name: _____

ANALYZING PROMPTS (1)

You've been invited to a sleepover! Write about the games you'll play and foods you'll eat at this special gathering.

GENRE: _____

Prewriting Framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____





Name: _____

ANALYZING PROMPTS (2)

Think about a person you really like. Write an essay describing the appearance and personality of this person.

GENRE: _____

Prewriting Framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____





Student Page

Name: _____

ANALYZING PROMPTS (3)

When is your next birthday? Write a piece describing the best birthday foods and party activities.

GENRE: _____

Prewriting Framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____





Name: _____

ANALYZING PROMPTS (4)

Gardening is a great summer activity. Write a piece telling about the fruits, vegetables and flowers you prefer to grow. Make sure to provide reasons.

GENRE: _____

Prewriting Framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____





Student Page

Name: _____

ANALYZING PROMPTS (5)

Most communities have a park. Write an essay explaining what parks have to offer people.

GENRE: _____

Prewriting Framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____





Name: _____

ANALYZING PROMPTS (6)

Write about a sport you enjoy. Tell about the rules of the game and the equipment needed to play this sport.

GENRE: _____

Prewriting Framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____





Student Page

Name: _____

ANALYZING PROMPTS (7)

You have read two texts and watched a video about several famous U.S. presidents. Based on these sources, write an essay about one of these presidents that includes information about this president's childhood and presidency. Be sure to include evidence from the texts.

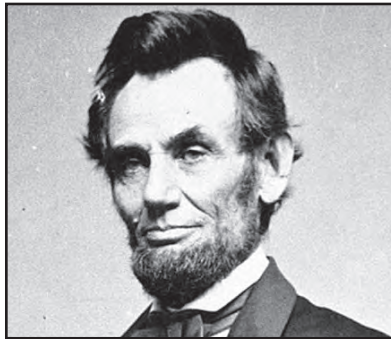
GENRE: _____

Prewriting Framework:

TOPIC: _____

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____





Student Page

Name: _____

EXPOSITORY WRITING PROMPT FOR PROCESS WRITING - BICYCLING

Here's an assignment for an expository piece. Come up with your main ideas and complete the prewriting framework below.

Learning how to ride a bike is a major milestone for most kids. Write a report telling us what you know about bike safety and taking care of your bicycle.

TOPIC: Bike Safety

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____





Name: _____

EXPOSITORY WRITING PROMPT FOR PROCESS WRITING - INTERESTING ANIMAL

Here's an assignment for an expository report. Come up with your main ideas and complete the prewriting framework below.

Think of an animal you are interested in. Write a report describing the animal's appearance, habitat, and behavior. Conduct research if you need to.

TOPIC: Interesting Animals

MAIN IDEA #1: _____

MAIN IDEA #2: _____

MAIN IDEA #3: _____





Student Page

Name: _____

OPINION WRITING PROMPT FOR PROCESS WRITING - MUSIC CLASS

Here's an assignment for an opinion piece. Come up with your main reasons and complete the prewriting framework below.

Most students have music class every week. Write an essay focusing on the activities you enjoy most in music class and those you dislike.

TOPIC: Music Class

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____





Name: _____

OPINION WRITING PROMPT FOR PROCESS WRITING - BIG DOGS VS. SMALL DOGS

Here's an assignment for an opinion piece. Come up with your main reasons and complete the prewriting framework below.

Pick a side! Would you rather have a big dog like a German Shepherd or a small dog such as a chihuahua for a pet? Write why you would prefer to care for and play with a big or a small dog.

TOPIC: Big Dogs vs. Small Dogs

MAIN REASON #1: _____

MAIN REASON #2: _____





Student Page

Name: _____

TEMPLATE FOR INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

Write your introduction paragraph. It should include a lead and a topic sentence. Your lead should be a question, an anecdote, or a descriptive segment. Your topic sentence should mention each of your main ideas or main reasons.

Sentence Starters for your Lead:

I remember when _____.

I learned that _____.

Do you think _____?

Are you wondering _____?

Sentence Starters for your Topic Sentence:

Let's discuss the _____ (*main idea/reason*)
and explain _____ (*main ideas/reasons*).

The reasons why _____.

I always enjoy _____.

You will surely agree _____.

Let's look closely at _____.

[illegible]

If you want _____.



Student Page

Name: _____

TEMPLATE FOR CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH(S)

Write your conclusion paragraph(s) by restating the main ideas or main reasons and providing one last statement that sums it all up.

Sentence Starters for your Last Statement:

After all, _____.

Without a doubt, _____.

It is truly _____.

It is clear that _____.

Sentence Starters for Restating your Main Ideas/Reasons:

Are you convinced _____?

Isn't it interesting to learn about _____?

The only question left is _____?

If you've ever dreamed of _____.

Suggested Research Questions

for Animal/Habitat Project



1. What does your animal look like? (*size, color, fur, feathers, claws, fins, scales, tail, etc.*) _____

_____ .

2. Where does your animal find shelter? _____

_____ .

3. Who are your animal's natural enemies? _____

_____ .

4. How does your animal defend itself? _____

_____ .

5. What does your animal eat? _____

_____ .



Sentence Starters

The Most Annoying Thing in the World

Have you ever had the experience of _____?

Don't you agree that _____?

I feel like ripping my hair out when _____.

Just the sound/sight/feeling/taste/smell of _____.

I could scream every time _____.

You better believe _____.

Imagine how _____.

It drives me crazy when _____.

Who wouldn't _____?

My least favorite _____.

The worst part is _____.

In addition to that, _____.

It reminds me of _____.

Another reason I oppose _____.

The result is _____.

I'd much rather _____.

Wouldn't it make better sense to _____?

Sentence Starters

Your Favorite Season



You know that ____ (season) ____ is right around the corner when ____ .

When the weather gets _____ .

One special occasion _____ .

A favorite activity at this time of the year is _____ .

It's important to _____ .

Just imagine how _____ .

Feel the _____ .

Listen to _____ .

See how _____ .

Do you wonder _____ ?

Why wouldn't _____ ?

A sure sign that ____ (season) ____ is on its way is _____ .

Don't you think _____ ?

Isn't it amazing how _____ ?



Student Page

Name: _____

A NONFICTION BOOK REPORT

1. What is the **title** and **author** of the book you read? _____ .

2. What was the author's **purpose**? (*please circle your choice*).

To inform

To share an opinion

To entertain

3. What were two facts you learned from reading this book?

4. What else would you like to know about the topic?

5. Using your answers to the questions above, write a report that gives us information about this book on a separate piece of paper. Use the sentence starters below if needed.

Sentence Starters:

This book is about _____.

I discovered _____.

I would like to learn _____.

The author tells us _____.

I am still wondering _____.

I already knew _____.

Finished Example

Letter to Next Year's Class



Dear Friend:

Welcome to Mrs. Corman's class. If you're anything like me, you are going to find spelling hard, but you will love math.

Mrs. Corman makes math really fun by telling math stories and playing games that help us remember our addition and subtraction facts. I am proud of how quickly I learned how to multiply numbers.

It's hard to get used to having spelling tests every single week, but Mrs. Corman says they are very important. You need to study for these tests by writing each of your spelling words five times. I am sorry to say that your hand will probably get really tired as you do this. Spelling was the hardest thing for me, but it got easier as the year wore on.

Good luck with spelling and have fun with math in Mrs. Corman's class. For sure, you should be ready for a fun, busy year.

Sincerely,
Theo Grant

Sentence Starters:

You are lucky to be _____.

Nobody really likes _____.

Just about everybody enjoys _____.

You will probably _____.

Be prepared for _____.



Name: _____

RESPONSE TO TEXT (1)

Read the expository piece below and answer the accompanying questions.

Does your family recycle? Most of us do because we know that recycling is a way we can help the environment. When we recycle, we can use resources again and produce less garbage. Let's learn how tin cans, plastic and paper can be recycled.

Tin cans are made from a mineral called aluminum that is very easy to recycle. These cans are just melted and molded into new tin cans or aluminum foil. They can be recycled again and again.

Like aluminum, some plastics are melted and molded into new products. But, recycling plastic can also start with shredding it into flakes. These flakes can be used to create fibers for cloth. Amazingly, you might find tiny flakes of recycled plastic in the filling of your sleeping bag!

For paper, the recycling process begins when the used paper is mixed with water. Then the ink is taken out. It is dried and pressed into new paper. Paper can be recycled as many as seven times.

Tin cans, paper and plastic bottles are part of our everyday lives. It is important that we recycle these valuable materials as much as we possibly can. Without a doubt, recycling today will help us keep our environment cleaner in the future.



Student Page

Name: _____

RESPONSE TO TEXT (1)

Read the piece about recycling and answer the following questions.

1. What is the topic of this piece? _____ .
2. What is the author's purpose? (please circle your choice).
To inform To share an opinion To entertain
3. What are the three main ideas? _____ ,
_____, and _____ .
4. What amazing fact did you learn in the third paragraph? How about the fourth? _____ .
5. Will what you read about the topic affect the decisions you make in the future? _____

6. On a separate sheet of paper, write one paragraph telling us what you learned about recycling from this piece. Use the sentence starters below if needed.

Sentence Starters:

This piece explores (topic) _____.

The author discusses _____.

I discovered that _____.

It was interesting to learn about _____.

I never realized that _____.

The author explained _____.

Amazingly, _____.



Name: _____

RESPONSE TO TEXT (2)

Read the piece below about parrots and answer the accompanying questions.

Do parrots make good pets? Some people believe so, but I am convinced that they are not suitable pets for most people. Before you make the mistake of getting a parrot as a pet, you need to know that most will not learn to talk and that parrots can bite!

Parrots have the well-known ability to imitate human speech, but most do not learn to repeat words or phrases even when owners spend hours teaching them. They will, however, screech loudly at all hours of the day and night. Your pet parrot just might keep you and your neighbors awake late into the night.

In the wild, parrots live in flocks of other parrots. While some can form friendly bonds with humans, many do not. These parrots are likely to get lonesome and aggressive toward their owners. They can and will bite and it will hurt! Pulling out their own feathers is another behavior seen in lonely parrots.

Never confuse a parrot with a tamed animal. It is a wild creature that will not speak on cue for you and may be deeply unhappy without the company of other parrots. Without a doubt, you should consider another type of pet.



Student Page

Name: _____

RESPONSE TO TEXT (2)

Read the piece about parrots and answer the following questions.

1. What is the topic of this piece? _____ .
2. What is the author's purpose? (please circle your choice).
To inform To share an opinion To entertain
3. The author gives us two main reasons why parrots may not be the best pets. The main reasons are _____
and _____ .
4. Do you agree or disagree with the author? Why? _____

_____ .
5. On a separate sheet of paper, write one paragraph explaining whether or not you'd get a parrot - why or why not? Be sure to include evidence from the text.

Sentence Starters:

This piece explores _____.

I discovered _____.

It was interesting to learn about _____.

In my opinion, _____.

The author believes that _____.

I changed my mind about _____.



Name: _____

RESPONSE TO TEXT (3)

Read the piece below about camping and answer the following questions.

I had more bug bites than I could count when I got home from my first camping trip last summer. Believe me when I tell you, camping is not a great summer activity. After all, who could possibly enjoy sleeping outside and cooking over a campfire?

Sleeping in a tent is uncomfortable. Even in your sleeping bag, you can feel the cold, hard ground beneath you. No matter how hard you try to keep them out, bugs do get into the tent and bite you all through the night. You can also hear the screeches and yowls of wild creatures outside your tent. It is scary!

On my camping trip, I was starving by the time we ate dinner. That was because it took so long to get the fire started. Plus, even after we got the fire started, we had to hunt endlessly for dry twigs to keep it burning. It was a lot of work and the dinner we finally ate was not very good.

Don't be fooled. Camping is not as much fun as some people tell you. Without a doubt, it is a summer activity that we all should avoid.



Student Page

Name: _____

RESPONSE TO TEXT (3)

Read the piece about camping and answer the following questions.

1. What is the topic of this piece? _____ .
2. What is the author's purpose? (please circle your choice).
To inform To share an opinion To entertain
3. What are the two main reasons why the author doesn't enjoy camping:

and _____ .
4. Do you agree or disagree with the author? Why? _____

_____ .
5. On a separate sheet of paper, write one paragraph explaining whether you agree with this author's point of view. Why or why not? Be sure to include evidence from the text.

Sentence Starters:

In my own life, I have _____.

After I read this piece, I decided _____.

It was interesting to learn about _____.

The author explains _____.

I do (or do not) agree that _____.

I do not understand how _____.



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?

EVIDENCE OF THEME CHART

Theme: _____

Evidence:_____

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Finished Example

EVIDENCE OF THEME CHART

Book Title: Brace Irene

Theme: Determination

- Evidence:
- Irene convinces her mother to let her deliver dress
 - When the wind and snow slowed her down she said to wind, "Easy does it!" and leaned hard against it.
 - she had to hop, skip over snow.
 - snow sifted in her boots but she "pushed out her lip and hurried on."
 - Irene "pressed on backwards."
 - When the wind howled "Go home" Irene snapped. "I will do no such thing!"
 - When wind took the box Irene "wouldn't yield."
 - When the dress flew out she "trudged on" to explain to the duchess.
 - When Irene twisted her ankle she went on, despite her pain.
 - She "plowed on" and "went plodding on."
 - When snow was above her knees she "shoved her way through it."
 - Irene "pushed on with all her strength" when she saw the palace.
 - She tried twice to use box as a sled.
 - She managed, despite the wind, to get gown back in the box.
 - Duchess called Irene "brave and loving."



Name: _____

NARRATIVE SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK & TEMPLATE FOR THEME

This story is about _____.

The problem, adventure, or experience was that _____

_____.

The problem was solved/adventure, experience concluded when _____

_____.

The theme of this story is _____ .

We see this when _____ , the main character,

_____ .

This was also demonstrated when _____

_____ .

The reader also recognizes the theme in the story when _____

_____ .



Finished Example

NARRATIVE SUMMARIZING FRAMEWORK & TEMPLATE FOR THEME

This story is about Irene.

The problem, adventure, or experience was that she had to deliver the dress to the duchess in a snow storm.

The problem was solved/adventure, experience concluded when she pressed on and finally used the box as a sled to get to the palace.

The theme of this story is determination.

We see this when Irene, the main character, insists on delivering the dress despite the terrible storm.

This was also demonstrated when she pushed out her lip stubbornly and walked backwards into the wind.

The reader also recognizes the theme in the story when despite her painful twisted ankle Irene "plowed and plodded" on through the freezing cold snow drifting over her head and tried not once but twice to get the box moving as a sled. She never gave up, even when it seemed impossible! This is what determination looks like.



Common Literary Theme Cards

REPRODUCE & CUT ALONG DOTTED LINES

Acceptance

Courage

Perseverance

Cooperation

Compassion

Honesty

Kindness

Loyalty

Responsibility

Individuality

Ambition

Friendship

Inequality - Justice

Forgiveness

The Value of Hard Work

Being a Graceful Loser

Learning from Mistakes

Being True to Yourself

Appreciating what you have

Importance of Family



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**?
- 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** throughout the story?
- 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 Turn the Cup Around, 12 year-old Evie is watching her little brothers, exploring the rocky shore along the coast of Maine. She gets distracted, loses track of the boys and slips and falls between the rocks. She finds herself in a cave, with no way to climb back out.

She opened her mouth to call out and shut it again. Why even bother? They'd never hear her. And on top of it, she'd promised Gram a million times that she wouldn't let her brothers explore the rocks alone, that she'd be right there looking out for them. And where were they now? Off on their own somewhere. How long would it be before they realized she was gone and come looking for her? Would they notice her sketch pad lying on the rocks, its pages shuffled and whipped by the wind? She thought of the two of them, traipsing across the cliffs, all taken up in their make-believe and exploring, and decided that she couldn't count on their coming back any time soon.

Taken from Turn the Cup Around by Barbara Mariconda

Delacorte Press © 1997



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 Evie.

Or:

- In this story Evie 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?



Student Page

6. Where does the author use suspense?

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 is the **theme** of the story and how is it demonstrated?

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



Name: _____

MELISSA'S MISTAKE

The town field was crowded with excited people. Teams in uniforms, parents, and coaches were all finding their places. It was the day of the big relay race!

Melissa and her team warmed up, stretching and running in place. They'd been practicing for weeks and Melissa knew they would win. No one was faster than she was. Her heart raced as she and her team exchanged high fives. Their coach blew his whistle and Melissa and the other three girls headed to the track. The idea was that each girl ran a quarter of the way around, handing a stick called a baton to the girl waiting at the next spot. She'd grab the baton and continue on.

"Remember," Coach Jones said. "Move fast, but be careful! Slow and sloppy loses the race!"

The girls took their places. The other team lined up too. Since Melissa was the fastest runner she would be the last to grab the baton and take off like lightning. Saving the best for last, is how she thought of it. A smile of pride crept across her face. She couldn't wait to begin!

"Take your places," a man called. "On your mark...get set...go!"

Off they went! The other team was leading, but not by much. Melissa watched the first runners pass the baton. The second runner on her team took off like a shot! Then, the baton changed hands again and Melissa would be next. Closer, closer her teammate came, pumping with her arms, barreling toward her. Melissa reached out, snatched the baton and the unthinkable happened. She felt it slip from her sweaty hand. "Oh no!" she gasped, lunging for the baton, losing her footing. She crashed into the ground, scraping both knees. She could hear her teammates groaning and the cheers for the other team as their last runner crossed the finish line.

Melissa stood, wiping the dirt from her hands and blood from her knees. Her face burned and she could hardly look at her teammates. She'd let them – and herself – down.

She took a deep breath and stepped forward. "I'm so sorry guys," she said to her team. "I was so excited. I guess I wasn't paying enough attention." Her teammates shrugged, disappointment written all over their faces.

There would be another race in a half an hour. Melissa fought back tears. It took all her determination to shake her sadness and embarrassment away. But she knew that this would never happen again. She had learned an important lesson. "Next race, I promise we'll win!" she said.

Her team exchanged high fives. They were ready to try again!



Annotated Page

title - problem

MELISSA'S MISTAKE

setting

The town field was crowded with excited people. Teams in uniforms, parents, and coaches were all finding their places. It was the day of the big relay race!

purpose for story action

tone: excitement/anticipation

Melissa and her team warmed up, stretching and running in place. They'd been practicing for weeks and Melissa knew they would win. No one was faster than she was. Her heart raced as she and her team exchanged high fives. Their coach blew his whistle and Melissa and the other three girls headed to the track. The idea was that each girl ran a quarter of the way around, handing a stick called a baton to the girl waiting at the next spot. She'd grab the baton and continue on.

evidence of her confidence and excitement

"Remember," Coach Jones said. "Move fast, but be careful! Slow and sloppy loses the race!"

The girls took their places. The other team lined up too. Since Melissa was the fastest runner she would be the last to grab the baton and take off like lightning. Saving the best for last, is how she thought of it. A smile of pride crept across her face. She couldn't wait to begin!

how she felt

"Take your places," a man called. "On your mark...get set...go!"

she motivation wants to win

suspense

Off they went! The other team was leading, but not by much. Melissa watched the first runners pass the baton. The second runner on her team took off like a shot! Then, the baton changed hands again and Melissa would be next. Closer, closer her teammate came, pumping with her arms, barreling toward her. Melissa reached out, snatched the baton and the unthinkable happened. She felt it slip from her sweaty hand. "Oh no!" she gasped, lunging for the baton, losing her footing. She crashed into the ground, scraping both knees. She could hear her teammates groaning and the cheers for the other team as their last runner crossed the finish line.

main event

story

Melissa stood, wiping the dirt from her hands and blood from her knees. Her face burned and she could hardly look at her teammates. She'd let them – and herself – down.

embarrassed problem

She took a deep breath and stepped forward. "I'm so sorry guys," she said to her team. "I was so excited. I guess I wasn't paying enough attention." Her teammates shrugged, disappointment written all over their faces.

There would be another race in a half an hour. Melissa fought back tears. It took all her determination to shake her sadness and embarrassment away. But she knew that this would never happen again. She had learned an important lesson. "Next race, I promise we'll win!" she said.

Her team exchanged high fives. They were ready to try again!

defining moment

theme: learning from mistakes, determination

learned to pay closer attention



Name: _____

NO MORE SOCCER!

Kenny's palms were sweaty. The crowd roared. It was the opening game of the season and the Smithfield Third Grade Soccer Team had been practicing for a month. Kenny hadn't wanted to play goalie but his coach insisted. Too much of the game was spent watching and waiting, and then all of a sudden it was all up to you to block a goal. The goalie had to catch, block, and roll the ball, all at the just the right moment. Kenny's stomach did a little flip flop as he headed out to the field. He'd do his best. But what if it wasn't enough?

The Wakefield team ran out onto the field. They were last year's champs. Kenny adjusted his shin guards and pulled on his gloves. He felt clumsy already. As the game began he tried to follow all the action on the field. His heart raced as the action on the field took the players to his side of the field. The closer they came, the more Kenny found it hard to concentrate. And then it happened. He saw the striker line up the ball to kick as if it was happening in slow motion. Kenny bent his knees and spread his arms, getting ready to lunge. In an instant the striker kicked and the ball shot toward him. Kenny jumped and threw himself toward the ball.

The crowd cheered.

But they weren't cheering for Kenny. Wakefield had scored a goal. Kenny hung his head. Just a few minutes into the game and they were already ahead. And it was all his fault.

Somehow Kenny got through the rest of the game. He didn't let another goal go through. The game ended in a tie, one-one, and they went into overtime. Finally Kenny's team scored. What a relief!

Kenny ran off the field toward his mom. She was clapping and cheering. "Great job!" she called. "You're off to a great season!"

Kenny shook his head. "No Mom," he said. "I don't want to do this anymore. It just isn't fun."

Kenny's Mom put her arm around him. "You don't have to play if you don't want to," she said. "But, be sure before you decide to quit. Sometimes you need to stick it out. You might feel differently later."

Kenny shook his head. He felt as though a weight had been lifted off his shoulders. He thought about his legos and his piano at home. That's what he wanted to do. Not this.

"Mom," he said, "I'm sure. No more soccer for me!" Kenny gave his team a high five and headed over toward his coach to tell him his decision: No more soccer!



Annotated Page

NO MORE SOCCER!

title suggests
a strong
feeling

nervous

Kenny's palms were sweaty. The crowd roared. It was the opening game of the season and the Smithfield Third Grade Soccer Team had been practicing for a month. Kenny hadn't wanted to play goalie but his coach insisted. Too much of the game was spent watching and waiting, and then all of a sudden it was all up to you to block a goal. The goalie had to catch, block, and roll the ball, all at the just the right moment. Kenny's stomach did a little flip flop as he headed out to the field. He'd do his best. But what if it wasn't enough?

story
problem

what Kenny
worried about

The Wakefield team ran out onto the field. They were last year's champs. Kenny adjusted his shin guards and pulled on his gloves. He felt clumsy already. As the game began he tried to follow all the action on the field. His heart raced as the action on the field took the players to his side of the field. The closer they came, the more Kenny found it hard to concentrate. And then it happened. He saw the striker line up the ball to kick as if it was happening in slow motion. Kenny bent his knees and spread his arms, getting ready to lunge. In an instant the striker kicked and the ball shot toward him. Kenny jumped and threw himself toward the ball.

The crowd cheered.

Kenny's regret
and embarrassment

But they weren't cheering for Kenny. Wakefield had scored a goal. Kenny hung his head. Just a few minutes into the game and they were already ahead. And it was all his fault.

main
event

Somehow Kenny got through the rest of the game. He didn't let another goal go through. The game ended in a tie, one-one, and they went into overtime. Finally Kenny's team scored. What a relief!

Kenny ran off the field toward his mom. She was clapping and cheering. "Great job!" she called. "You're off to a great season!"

defining
moment

Kenny shook his head. "No Mom," he said. "I don't want to do this anymore. It just isn't fun."

Kenny's Mom put her arm around him. "You don't have to play if you don't want to," she said. "But, be sure before you decide to quit. Sometimes you need to stick it out. You might feel differently later."

evidence he made the
right choice

Kenny shook his head. He felt as though a weight had been lifted off his shoulders. He thought about his legos and his piano at home. That's what he wanted to do. Not this.

"Mom," he said, "I'm sure. No more soccer for me!" Kenny gave his team a high five and headed over toward his coach to tell him his decision: No more soccer!

Defining action

theme: Being true to yourself



Name: _____

STORY COMPARISON TEMPLATE

MELISSA'S MISTAKE

MELISSA'S DECISION

KENNY'S MISTAKE

KENNY'S DECISION



STORY COMPARISON TEMPLATE

MELISSA'S MISTAKE

- fast runner
- drops baton
- falls causes team to lose

MELISSA'S DECISION

- decides to try again and remember to stay focused
- shows determination

KENNY'S MISTAKE

- was nervous
- allows a goal

KENNY'S DECISION

- decides to quit soccer and focus on things he enjoys like Legos and piano



Exemplar Text:

MAKING MISTAKES

I read two stories about characters who made mistakes. In the first story, the main character, Melissa, dropped the baton in her relay race and her team lost. She decides to try harder the next time. The main character, Kenny, in the second story plays soccer goalie and allows a goal. He decides that he's done with soccer. Both Melissa and Kenny had good reasons for the decisions they made.

In Melissa's Mistake, we see what helped Melissa make her decision. We see that she is really confident before her race when we read, "Melissa knew they would win." She also thinks that because she is the last person in the relay that her coach was "saving the best for last." In paragraph 3 her coach says, "Remember, move fast, but be careful!" This made me wonder whether Melissa was too confident. And, sure enough, when she "snatched" the baton she dropped it. In the beginning Melissa didn't seem nervous at all, and we see how much she enjoys running when the author writes: A smile of pride crept across her face." So, after she drops the baton and falls I wasn't surprised when Melissa decides to try harder and not give up running. That was the right decision for her.

In No More Soccer, Kenny also made a mistake when he didn't block a goal, but his decision was different from Melissa's. Unlike Melissa, Kenny seemed nervous before the game. The first line tells us, "Kenny's palms were sweaty." In the same paragraph it says, "Kenny's stomach did a little flip flop as he headed out to the field." Both of these actions show that Kenny was anxious and hint that he didn't really enjoy playing. We see Kenny's reaction when he says, "I don't want to do this anymore. It just isn't fun." Some people might think Kenny was a poor sport. But I think it took courage for him to decide to quit and focus on things that were more interesting to him. I think Kenny's decision was the right one for him too.

I have felt like both Melissa and Kenny. I goofed up my song at the talent show rehearsal, but was still determined to sing. I tried harder the next time. And when I signed up for skiing and decided I didn't like the cold, I quit. Sometimes quitting is the right thing to do and other times it isn't. It all depends on the situation and the person.