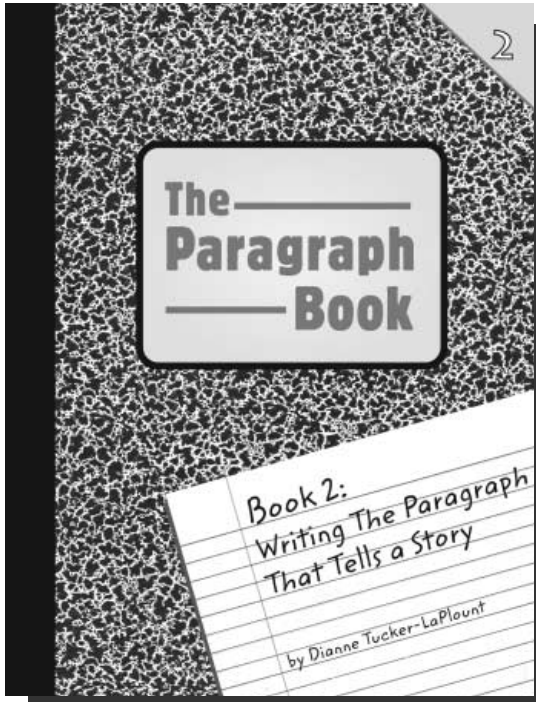


The Paragraph Book

Book 2: Writing the Paragraph That Tells a Story

By Dianne Tucker-LaPlount

Recommended for grades 5–8



Designed for the middle school LD student, *The Paragraph Book* follows a clear and innovative step-by-step format that provides instruction in the four basic strands required in content area curriculum and standardized tests. Examples, writing prompts, and chapter quizzes allow the instructor to model and assess and give student writers ample opportunities to apply new skills.

The following sample **Lesson 1** from *The Paragraph Book 2: Writing the Paragraph That Tells a Story* introduces students to the format for writing the paragraph that tells a story and reviews and expands upon the FNTF paragraph structure. Try this lesson today with an individual student, a small group, or the entire class. *The Paragraph Book* can be incorporated into almost any language arts curriculum.

Three easy ways to order:

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Recommended Companion Material

See our *Companion Material* recommendations on page 14 for great materials that complement *The Paragraph Book* series.



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YOUR PARAGRAPH THAT TELLS A STORY

LESSON 1: TELLING ABOUT SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED

The FNTF formula (*First, . . . Next, . . . Then, . . . Finally, . . .*) works with two kinds of paragraphs. In Book 1, you used the formula to write How-to Paragraphs. You can use the same formula to write Paragraphs That Tell a Story.

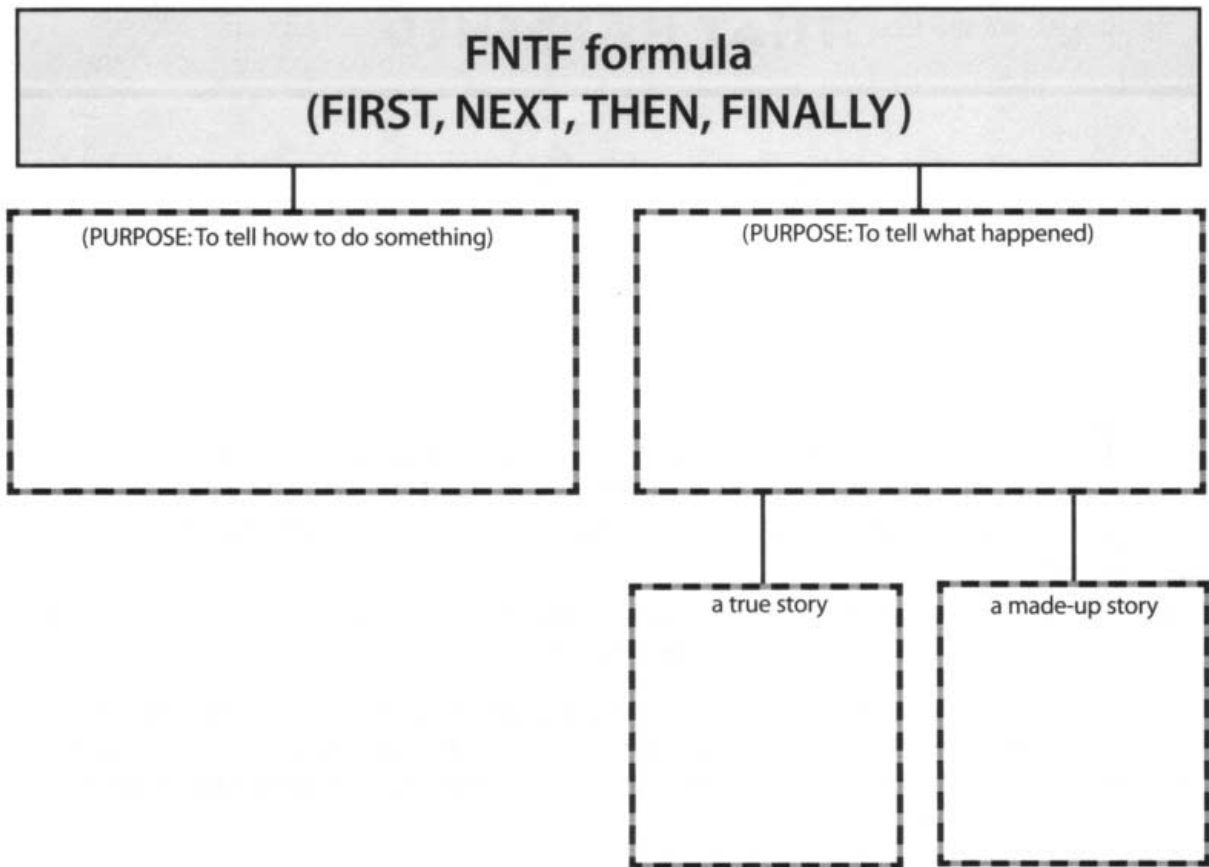
- ▼ Each kind of paragraph has a purpose. As you know, the purpose of a How-to Paragraph is to tell how to do something.

The purpose of a Paragraph That Tells a Story is to relate something that happened—to tell a story. Let's call this kind of paragraph a Story Paragraph for short. (It is sometimes called a narrative paragraph. **Narrative** is another word for story.)

- ▼ The story can be
 1. **fact**, which means that it's true—it really happened, or
 2. **fiction**, which means that it's made up—it didn't really happen.



- ▼ Complete this diagram. In each blank box, fill in the correct paragraph name.



- ▼ A factual Story Paragraph usually has a practical objective—to tell what really happened. With a fictional Story Paragraph, you can use your imagination.

THE FACTUAL STORY PARAGRAPH ▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲▲

- ▼ A factual Story Paragraph reports on a real event. TV and newspaper reporters describe real events. It's their job, but you may want to write about real events sometimes too. Knowing how is a useful skill. Here's an example.

- ▼ Anthony plays third base on the school baseball team. During a game with the team's rival, Anthony saw one of his teammates make an outstanding play. Anthony's coach asked him to write a story about it for the sports section of the school Web page.

Here's what Anthony wrote:

*The Play That Got Us
into the Playoffs*

First, the batter for the opposing team hit a long fly ball toward center field. Next, the center fielder kept his eye on the ball and started running back. Then, the ball looked like it was going to go over the fence. Then, the center fielder jumped as high as he could with his glove stretched up in the air. Finally, the center fielder caught the ball in the webbing of his glove and got the final out, which won the game and gave us a place in the playoffs.

Anthony knew exactly what to do. He wrote the facts in the order that they happened: *First, ... Next, ... Then, ... Finally, ...* Underline the formula words in the paragraph.

YOUR OWN LIFE AND OTHER EXCITING REAL EVENTS

- ▼ Anthony's paragraph is a real-life story. The story is about something that Anthony witnessed. It is a factual Story Paragraph.

You probably already have some experience with factual Story Paragraphs. Journal writing, e-mails, and letters to friends often contain factual stories. They tell what's happening in the life of the person who is writing.

People sometimes write stories about their life. This is called autobiography. You can do it too if you want. No one knows your life better than you do!





- ▼ Try writing a short autobiography. Complete the paragraph below. Fill in the blanks with information about your own life.

My Life: From Birth Until Now

First, I came into the world on the date of _____
in the city (or town) of _____. Next, I
started first grade at the age of _____
at a school called _____.
Then, I grew up with _____ sisters
and _____ brothers. Finally, I am now attending
_____, where I am _____.

This paragraph is autobiographical. It gives a very brief sketch of your entire life.

The Story Paragraph on page 19 gives an example of another kind of autobiographical writing. It will tell about only one weekend in the life of the writer.

TRY IT!

- ▼ Use your imagination. Make up a fantasy ending for this Story Paragraph.

Guess What I Found!

First, I was walking home from school after a heavy rain. Next, I dropped my ballpoint pen into a deep puddle of muddy water. Then, I rolled up my sleeve and reached down into the muddy water. Finally, _____

COMPARE

- ▼ Examine this Story Paragraph. This paragraph is also fiction, but it is not fantasy—it could really happen. Note how it looks on the page. Does it follow the same rules of format and of capitalization and punctuation as the How-to Paragraph? Answer the questions below.

	<i>The Snake and Me</i>
	<i>First, I lifted the lid of the trash can to stuff in some bags of trash.</i>
	<i>Next, I saw something out of the corner of my eye move on the ground by</i>
	<i>my foot. Then, I glanced down and saw a small snake looking up at me</i>
	<i>and flicking its tongue. Finally, I dropped everything and made a quick exit.</i>

- ▼ Check the format of the paragraph on page 17.

Ask yourself:

1. Is the title centered over the paragraph? _____
2. Is there a blank line after the title line? _____
3. Is the first line of the paragraph indented? _____
4. Does each new sentence begin right after the sentence before it? _____
5. After the first line, does each new line start at the left margin? _____
6. Is the right margin uncrowded? _____

- ▼ Check the **C** and **P** (Capitalization and Punctuation) of the paragraph on page 17.

Ask yourself:

1. Does each important word in the title, including the first word, begin with a capital letter? _____
2. Do the unimportant small words in the title begin with a lower-case letter? _____
3. Does each sentence begin with a capital letter? _____
4. Does each sentence end with a period or other end punctuation? _____
5. Does each formula word have a comma after it? _____
6. Is the letter *I* meaning "me" capitalized? _____
7. Are the formula words in the correct order: **First, . . . Next, . . . Then, . . . Finally, . . .**? _____

As you can see, the Story Paragraph and the How-to Paragraph follow the same rules of format. They also follow the same rules of Capitalization and Punctuation. And they both use the FNTF formula.

PRACTICE MAKING EDITING CORRECTIONS

- ▼ Below is an example of autobiographical writing. The writer, who lives in Los Angeles, spent Memorial Day weekend at the Mule Days celebration in Bishop, California. She wrote this four-sentence Story Paragraph describing her experience.

	<i>Mule Days</i>
	<i>Next, my friend and I got up early so we wouldn't miss the</i>
	<i>Mule Days parade in Bishop, California. First, we watched a long line</i>
	<i>of mules clop-clopping down Main Street pulling old fashioned wagons.</i>
	<i>Then, we went to the fairgrounds and saw the mule races in the arena</i>
	<i>and patted the mules in their stalls. Finally, it was time to say goodbye,</i>
	<i>and we headed back home to L.A.</i>

- ▼ Two of the formula words are out of place. Make the corrections. Draw a horizontal line through each formula word that is out of place. Write the correct formula word above it. Use a colored pencil or colored pen so your teacher can spot your corrections easily.

WHICH IS IT?

- ▼ After you read a paragraph, it's a good idea to ask yourself, "What kind of paragraph is it?" This is a good way to improve your reading comprehension.

You can tell the difference easily between a How-to Paragraph and a Story Paragraph. Just read the paragraph and decide what the purpose is. Sometimes you will read paragraphs that are neither How-to nor Story Paragraphs. You'll learn more about other kinds of paragraphs in Books 3 and 4 of this series.

To tell what kind of paragraph you are reading, ask yourself:

1. Is the paragraph telling me how to do something (a How-to Paragraph)?
 2. Is the paragraph telling me about something that happened (a Story Paragraph)?
 3. Does the paragraph have another purpose?
- ▼ Read the paragraph below. Decide which kind of paragraph it is. Write your answer on the blank line following the paragraph.

First, get a bottle of window cleaner and two or three paper towels. Next, hold the sprayer about ten inches from the mirror. Then, lightly spray the entire mirror. Finally, wipe the mirror clean and dry with the paper towels.

Is this a How-to Paragraph or a Story Paragraph?

REVIEW OF LESSON 1 and editing marks


Circle the letter in front of the correct answer.

1. The purpose of a Story Paragraph is
 - a. to tell a story.
 - b. to tell how to do something.
 - c. both *a* and *b*.
 - d. none of the above

2. A Story Paragraph
 - a. is always made up.
 - b. is always about a real event.
 - c. can be fact (true) or fiction (make-believe).
 - d. must give instructions.

3. If you tell a story about a talking turtle, you are telling
 - a. a factual story.
 - b. a fictional story.
 - c. how to do something.
 - d. none of the above


4. The FNTF paragraph organizes
 - a. only How-to Paragraphs.
 - b. only Story Paragraphs.
 - c. both How-to and Story Paragraphs.
 - d. none of the above

5. Autobiographical writing
- a. tells a true story about the writer's life.
 - b. tells a true story about someone else's life.
 - c. is factual.
 - d. is both *a* and *c*.
6. Use this editing mark to delete a word, words, or punctuation mark.
- a. #
 - b. ←
 - c. 
 - d.] [

Number correct _____ out of 6

Lesson 1 QUIZ

Now your teacher will give you the quiz for Lesson 1.

 **ASSIGNMENT 1** Write two paragraphs. Each paragraph should tell a story. Your teacher will give you your assignment sheets and flow charts.

Before you begin each paragraph assignment in this book, always read the title carefully. Think of interesting words to go with the title. On your flow chart page, make a list of those words. Choose some of them to use in your paragraph.

Edit each paragraph as soon as you finish writing it. Check and correct the format, C and P, and organization.

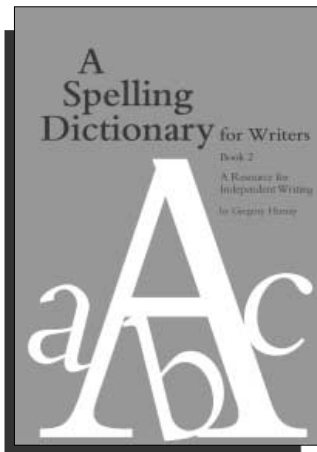
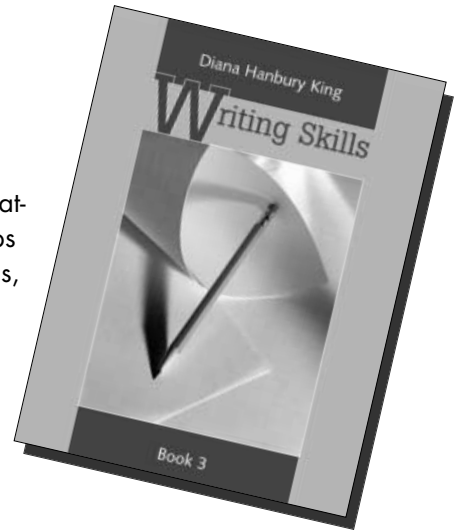
Recommended Companion Material

EPS offers a wide range of products and programs that complement the writing activities in *The Paragraph Book*. We recommend the following products to help students develop composition, grammar and editing skills.

Writing Skills

Grade Level/s: 2–12

Writing Skills teaches the writing process in a series of logical steps facilitating direct instruction in grammar, usage, and composition. This series helps beginning and struggling writers build sentence sense and paragraph skills, organize ideas, write persuasively, and support arguments.



A Spelling Dictionary for Writers

Grade Level/s: 4–8

This comprehensive but accessible reference tool provides the correct spellings of more than 5,000 frequently used words. A thesaurus offers alternatives for overused words and expressions, and thematic lists help students write about the major curriculum areas. An excellent resource, *A Spelling Dictionary* improves students' compositions and fosters competent and resourceful writers.

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