## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Support Your Ideas</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Plot, Character, and Setting</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>Point of View</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>Figurative Language</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Story, Drama, and Poem Structure</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Compare and Contrast Literary Works</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Main Idea and Supporting Details</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Use Factual Details for Support</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
<td>Sequence</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 11</td>
<td>Cause and Effect</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 12</td>
<td>Compare and Contrast Informational Texts</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 13</td>
<td>Using Different Sources</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 14</td>
<td>Reasons and Evidence</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 15</td>
<td>Compare and Contrast Texts Across Genres</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 16</td>
<td>Write Opinions</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 17</td>
<td>Write Informative or Explanatory Pieces</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 18</td>
<td>Write Narratives</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 19</td>
<td>Respond to Literature</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 20</td>
<td>Respond to Informational Text</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 21  Revising, Editing, and Publishing  ........................................... 82
Lesson 22  Research and Resources  ......................................................... 86
Lesson 23  Capitalization and Spelling ...................................................... 90
Lesson 24  Punctuation ........................................................................... 94
Lesson 25  Grammar and Usage ............................................................... 98
Lesson 26  Determining Word Meanings .................................................. 102
Lesson 27  Reading in the Content Areas .................................................. 106
Lesson 28  Root Words and Affixes ............................................................ 110
Lesson 29  Idioms, Adages, and Proverbs .................................................. 114
Lesson 30  Word Relationships ................................................................. 118

Answer Keys .......................................................................................... 122
Getting the Idea

Sometimes you make generalizations about what you read. A **generalization** is a broad statement. You make this statement based on the text and your own experience. Quoting a phrase or sentence from a passage is a good way to support a generalization. Read the paragraph below.

Tables and chairs had been set up in the school gym for the big checkers tournament. The gym was packed with students talking excitedly as they waited to see whom they would be paired with. Suddenly, Steve walked into the gym. The students stopped talking and stared. A few began to bite their fingernails. Most of them hoped they would not have to face Steve in the first round.

What generalizations can you make from this paragraph? One generalization would be that checkers is important at this school. The paragraph also supports the generalization that the students fear and respect Steve’s skill as a checkers player. Generalizations must be supported by the text. In the example above, you could support your generalization by quoting from the passage. You could say, for instance, that the gym was “packed with students talking excitedly.” This would indicate that checkers is important at the school. If you mentioned that the students “stared” at Steve when he entered, this quote would support the generalization that they fear and respect his skills.

You will mainly support your generalizations about texts with **details**, such as names of characters, lines of dialogue, or descriptive sentences. On the next page are some examples of details you might encounter.
Types of Details | Examples
--- | ---
names of characters | Ramona Quimby has a great imagination.
description of the environment | The rain whipped across the deck.
names of places | Jimmy lives in Lexington, Kentucky.
dates and times | Keegan was born at 7:00 a.m. on May 21, 1999.
the things that the narrator tells you | Frank wanted to be rich when he grew up.
the things that characters say and do | Gary told Lewis, “Everybody loves a clown.”

There are many other types of details not listed in the chart. As you read, pay attention to all of the details in the text. The better you understand a story or poem, the easier it will be to form ideas and make statements about what you read.

Sometimes the author of a story does not tell you exactly what is happening. If you don’t know what’s happening in a story, it’s hard to make a broad statement about it. This means that you have to figure things out on your own. When you do this, you make an inference. An **inference** is a decision based on available details. When you make an inference, you must have some form of support to back it up. You will often be asked to cite details from the text that led you to make your inference. You can also use your prior knowledge. **Prior knowledge** is knowledge you have before you read a text. Suppose a writer has a character do the following things: tap his feet, look at his watch, scratch his head, look at his watch, stand up, sit down, and look at his watch again. You can infer from these actions that the character is waiting for someone and is getting impatient. Even if the author doesn’t tell you this, you can infer it from the information you have been given.

When you read, you can make inferences about

- a character’s personality, interests, or physical appearance
- a character’s history
- a character’s age
- the history of relationships between characters
- the reasons for a character’s specific behaviors
- a character’s intentions
- the next action a character will take
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

Manuel had been talking about his birthday for months. He kept reminding his mom and dad about the video games that would make great presents. The week before his birthday, Manuel made sure to finish his homework early and do extra chores around the house. While cleaning out one of the closets, Manuel saw a package wrapped in colorful paper. He looked around to make sure no one was around and carefully peeled off the tape to look inside.

Do you think Manuel is patient or impatient? Which details in the paragraph support your inference?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

HINT Remember, any inference you make must be based on specific details.

Discuss your answer with a classmate. Then tell about a time when you felt impatient about something. What made you feel that way?
Read the passage and answer the questions.

The Rodriguez family was very involved in their community. When the McDonnells’ house was leveled by a tornado, the Rodriguezes got the entire neighborhood to help rebuild the damaged home. Mr. Rodriguez and the other men worked on the roof, while Mrs. Rodriguez worked in the McDonnells’ garden with some of the women. Jose Rodriguez and his older sister, Angela, helped paint the walls. Jose tried painting with a roller brush, but he couldn’t reach very high. He jumped as high he could and splattered paint all over the windows. Angela shook her head and walked inside the house. Jose looked up and smiled when he saw Angela carrying a footstool. Jose stood on the stool while Angela showed him how to use the roller brush.

1. Based on the passage, you can infer that
   A. the Rodriguezes are selfish.
   B. Jose wants to work in the garden.
   C. Jose is not an experienced painter.
   D. the McDonnells’ house was beautiful.

2. Which detail from the passage does NOT support the idea that Angela is patient?
   A. She helps paint the walls.
   B. She brings a stool for Jose.
   C. She shows Jose how to use the roller brush.
   D. She shakes her head.

**HINT**
An inference is a conclusion based on available details.

**HINT**
Details from the passage should support any inferences you make.
Many elements make up a story. The three main elements are plot, character, and setting. The **plot** is the series of events in a story. The **characters** are the people or animals in a story. **Setting** is the location and time in which a story takes place. As you read, you need to fully understand these elements. There may be more than one setting in a story, and there may often be more than one character. A story may also have more than one plot; there may be a plot developing at the same time as a sub-plot. As you read, learn to compare and contrast characters with each other. Learn to notice how settings change from one part of a story to another.

Sometimes, the setting is stated directly in the story. Look at this example.

> It was a hot summer in the early 1940s. The Stevens’ house was nestled in rolling green hills that overlooked an ocean.

The paragraph shows the reader when and where the story takes place. Sometimes, however, the author does not say directly what the setting is. When this happens, you have to figure out the setting from clues in the story. Longer stories may have different settings for different parts of the plot.

Each story includes at least one character. Every character has at least one **trait**. Character traits are all the qualities that make up a character’s personality. For example, the following sentence shows a character trait.

> Sally’s backpack was overflowing with wrinkled bunches of papers, candy wrappers, and broken pencils.

This sentence shows that messiness is one of the girl’s traits. Sometimes, if a character speaks in a certain way, his or her **dialect** may also become one of his or her traits. The way a character looks and dresses might be a trait, as well.
A motivation is the reason a character does a certain thing or acts a certain way. A good way to learn about character motivation is to ask yourself, “Why is the character doing this?” or “Why is the character behaving this way?” If you can recognize both traits and motivations, you will have a good understanding of the characters in a story.

Characters and settings are both essential parts of the plot. Setting usually affects the plot, and all of the main characters are somehow involved in the plot. Each event in a story usually affects the event following it.

It’s not enough to say that a story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. There is much more to a story than that. One important element is exposition. Exposition introduces the reader to the characters and the setting early on in the story. Stories also have conflict. A conflict is the struggle between the characters in a story. The plot’s conflict could be between two characters who both want the same thing. It could be between two characters who have very different personalities. It might be between a character and his own feelings or wishes. It might also be between people and some aspect of nature, such as bad weather. The conflict often causes a problem that must be solved. The climax occurs when the main characters address the conflict directly. The climax is usually the most exciting part of the story. For example, a character might decide to try to solve a problem by having an argument. The argument itself then becomes the climax. The resolution is the solving of the story’s problem. For instance, if there were a fight in the story, the resolution would tell the reader the outcome of the fight.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

It was summertime, and all the lawns in the neighborhood had just been mowed. The sky was blue, and smoke reached into the sky from a neighbor’s barbeque. On days like these, Jamie could jump rope in the back yard for hours.

What is the setting of the story? How do you know?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

HINT Setting is where and when a story takes place. Check the paragraph for words that give clues to its time and location.

DISCUSS Describe a place you like to visit in the summer. Include details that would help listeners to picture what the place looks like. Share your ideas in a group.
Read the passage and answer the questions.

Olivia had been looking forward to the concert for months. Her favorite violinist was playing at the orchestra hall. However, she needed a nice outfit. Her best friend, Hailey, helped her repair an old dress. Hailey was always doing nice things for Olivia. Olivia couldn’t wait to show off the dress. Hours before the concert, however, Olivia remembered that she was supposed to clean out the garage before she could leave. She’d promised earlier, and she always kept her promises. When Olivia lifted up an old pile of newspapers, she saw a wooden box. She picked up the box and noticed some strange scribbles on the lid. They looked like they were from some kind of alphabet, but not one she had seen before. It looked like it might be a combination of Chinese and hieroglyphics. As Olivia rubbed the dust and grime off the lid, the box rumbled and the lid flew open. Olivia dropped the box and stood in amazement as a genie appeared before her. “You have one wish and one wish only,” the genie said. Olivia smiled.

1. What is the conflict of the story?
   A. Olivia wants to make a new dress.
   B. Olivia’s mother wants to clean the garage.
   C. Olivia’s friend, Hailey, wants to help sew a dress.
   D. Olivia wants to go to the concert but has to clean the garage instead.

HINT: The conflict is the problem that the characters are faced with.

2. What do Hailey and the genie have in common?
   A. They are both human.
   B. They are both superhuman.
   C. They both do favors for Olivia.
   D. They are both related to Olivia.

HINT: Find some actions in the passage that show the genie’s and Hailey’s character traits.
3 Theme

Getting the Idea

The theme is the central idea or meaning of a story. It is a lesson, moral, or comment on life that an author wants the reader to understand. You can think of theme as the author's message to the reader.

A written work may have a single theme or several themes. Many common themes can be expressed through well-known sayings that you might recognize in the box below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patience is a virtue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving is better than receiving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s good for one person might not be good for another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and friends are worth more than gold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People succeed when they work together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should treat others the way you would like to be treated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do you know what the theme of the story is? The author does not usually tell you the theme of the story. You have to figure it out yourself. To identify themes, the reader must consider the actions, feelings, thoughts, and words of characters in the story. Think about how the characters deal with conflicts. And then think about how these actions are connected to life in the real world. Ask yourself, “What lesson should I learn from this story?” Look at the example below.

Rebecca and I bought a cookie at the mall. She tried to break the cookie in half, but when she did, one side was bigger than the other. She gave me the bigger half.
Now ask yourself, “What lesson should I take away from this?” Your answer might be, *Think of others before yourself.*

Along with characters’ actions, you should also pay attention to characters’ feelings, thoughts, and words. Look at the following paragraph.

Allison became angry while trying to undo the knot in the kite string. “Why must this knot be so difficult?” she thought. Allison threw down the kite. She walked away and returned a few minutes later. Allison told herself to be calm. She took a few deep breaths and returned to the knot. This time, she was able to untie the knot.

A theme for this paragraph might be *Patience is a virtue.* Look at what Allison does before she solves the problem with the string. A character’s accomplishments in a story can point to the theme.

Sometimes, finding themes in literature will be more difficult. Some poetry, for example, will not have clear actions and conflicts. In such cases, you need to pay close attention to the speaker’s expression of feelings or thoughts about a topic. For example, a poem’s speaker might describe the beauty of nature, or the speaker might talk about his or her feelings about war. The speaker’s expression of feelings or thoughts about a topic can point to a theme in the poem. Sometimes, summarizing a poem can help you figure out its theme. A **summary** is a retelling of the important points of a story or poem in your own words. Recognizing themes in stories or poems can help you better understand what the author thinks is important or what the author is trying to say.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the question that follows.

Roger saw that his friend Brianna was stooped over and crying. He remembered that the last time he cried, his dad made him feel better. His dad simply made him laugh. He thought the best approach might be to make Brianna laugh. So he walked up to where she was sitting and waited for her to look up and see him. He stood quietly. When Brianna looked up, he began to stagger around, wave his arms, and make crazy faces. Roger crunched up his face, used his fingers to distort his mouth, and stuck out his tongue. Brianna immediately laughed. His trick worked!

What is the theme of this paragraph?

HINT

A theme is usually a lesson that applies to the real world. Think of a general statement that the author wants you to learn from the paragraph.

DISCUSS

Tell about a personal experience that is similar to the one in the paragraph. What did you learn from the experience?
Coached Example

Read the passage and answer the questions.

The Bragging Traveler

adapted from

a fable by Aesop

A man returned home after traveling around the world. He bragged about the many adventures he had. Among other things, he said that when he was in Greece, he made a huge jump. No man alive, in fact, had ever jumped farther than him. In fact, there were many people in Greece who saw him do it, and he could call witnesses. One of the bystanders interrupted him, and said: “Well, if this is all true, then we don’t need witnesses. Pretend we are in Greece right now and jump for us.”

1. What is the theme of the passage?
   A. Never trust anyone.
   B. Seeing is believing.
   C. There are liars everywhere.
   D. Do not believe people who travel.

   HINT Many common themes can be expressed through well-known sayings.

2. Which sentence from the passage BEST supports the theme?
   A. “A man returned home after traveling around the world.”
   B. “He bragged about the many adventures he had.”
   C. “Among other things, he said that when he was in Greece, he made a huge jump.”
   D. “Well, if this is all true, then we don’t need witnesses.”

   HINT Think about what the author’s message is to the reader.
Point of View

Getting the Idea

Everything you read is written from a point of view. The point of view is the position from which the story is told. Writers commonly use two main points of view: first person and third person.

A story in first person is told from the personal point of view of I or we. The narrator is a character in the story. Look at the following sentences; they are told in first person.

Cheryl and I went to the party at noon. We stayed for a few hours and then we went home.

The first sentence uses I and the second sentence uses we. A first-person story can show you a lot about the feelings and thoughts of the narrator. The story may give you this information directly, or it may suggest this information.

A story in third person frequently uses he, she, they, or someone’s name to narrate or to give information. A third-person story is not told by a character in the story. The following sentences are in third person.

Cheryl and Finn went to the party at noon. They stayed for a few hours and then they went home.

In a story from a third-person limited point of view, the reader finds out what characters say and do, and little else. In a story from a third-person omniscient point of view, the reader finds out the thoughts of most of the characters. The example above is in the third-person limited point of view.
Point of view is also the perspective, or attitude, of an author. It is the way an author feels about someone or something in a story. Read the paragraph below.

Adam liked listening to music with his headphones. Even though he kept the volume at a reasonable level, he began to have alarming problems with his hearing. His mother told him he needed to go to the doctor. The next week, Adam went to the doctor and found out that, unfortunately, the headphones had caused damage to his eardrums. They alone were the reason for his hearing loss.

What is the author’s point of view about headphones? To figure out the point of view, look carefully at the author’s choice of words. The words alarming, unfortunately, and they alone show that the author has a negative view of headphones. The author probably feels that people shouldn’t listen to them so much.

The author’s point of view may affect the overall tone of the writing. Pay attention to not only what the author says, but how the author says it. When an author feels particularly strongly about a topic, the tone of the writing may reflect that. For example, the tone may be happy, sad, angry, sarcastic, serious, or humorous. Think about tone as you read this paragraph.

Warren opened the door of his truck and was struck by the terrible stench. He was disgusted by the damage the oil spill had done. Tar balls covered the sand, broken up by an occasional oil-covered bird or fish. All over the beach, Warren could see the horrible effects of the disaster.

The author’s choice of words—terrible stench, disgusted, horrible—creates an angry tone.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the question that follows.

Gary had never seen so many people at a movie. He tried to move his popcorn out of the way in time, but it was too late! The older kids in the movie theater pushed right into him. The older kids didn’t care about Gary. They cared even less about his popcorn, as they knocked it right out of his hands. Gary knew his dad wouldn’t want to buy another bag. He also knew he would probably have to help clean up the mess.

Rewrite the first two sentences of the paragraph using the first-person point of view.

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

HINT When you write in first person you use I, so the person telling the story does the action.

Tell the rest of the story using the first-person point of view. How does this point of view affect your reading experience? Discuss your ideas with the class.
Read the passage and answer the questions.

excerpted and adapted from

The Dragon’s Teeth
by Nathaniel Hawthorne

King Agenor had three sons, Cadmus, Phoenix, and Cilix, and a beautiful daughter, Europa. One day, the children were playing together near the seashore. The children wandered far from their parents’ palace and found themselves in a green and blooming meadow next to the sea. The sea was sparkling and dimpling in the sunshine. It hummed gently as it lapped against the beach. The three boys were very happy, gathering flowers. They twisted them into garlands to place on Europa. She was seated on the grass and was almost hidden under all the buds and blossoms. Then her rosy face peeped happily out, and Cadmus said that she was the prettiest of all the flowers.

1. This passage is written from which point of view?
   A. first-person
   B. third-person limited
   C. third-person omniscient
   D. first- and third-person

   **HINT** Remember first person uses *I* and *we*. Third person uses *she, he, it, and they.*

2. Which word BEST describes the tone of this passage?
   A. lonely
   B. happy
   C. fearful
   D. humorous

   **HINT** Think about what the author says and how the author says it. What are the author’s word choices?
Many ideas and feelings are hard to express, so sometimes writers use **figurative language** to add meaning to their writing. Figurative language helps the reader picture parts of the story better—and that makes the text more fun to read. You’ll find figurative language most often in poetry and stories. The two most common forms of figurative word use are similes and metaphors.

A **simile** compares two things using *like* or *as*. It uses descriptive language. When you use a simile to make a comparison, you create an image in the reader’s mind. That image should connect qualities of the two items you are comparing. Read the sentence below.

> The clouds hung over the horizon.

You know what this means, but it’s not an interesting way to say it. Here is another way to say the same thing:

> The clouds hung over the horizon like misty gray curtains.

A simile usually compares two things that are different. Clouds and curtains are different things, but when they are compared, we know what the writer means. Clouds float above the horizon. Curtains look like they are floating above the floor because they are held up by rods.

The comparison drawn in a simile often involves exaggeration. For example:

> The dog was as big as a house!

In this sentence, the size of the dog is compared to the size of a house. In other words, the dog is quite large. However, the dog is not actually the size of a house. This is merely an exaggeration to make a point.
Lesson 5: Figurative Language

Sometimes a writer makes a comparison without using like or as. This is called a metaphor. A metaphor says that one thing is another. This suggests that the two things are alike. Writers may also use metaphors to help readers understand an unfamiliar idea or thing. They compare the unfamiliar idea to something they hope the reader will already know. Here is a metaphor:

The moon is a night watchman.

You know that the moon and a night watchman are two very different things. But the writer is telling you that he feels as if the moon watches him, because he is on Earth, and the moon is up above him, in the sky. Here is another example:

Barry was a real tiger on the playing field.

In this sentence, the writer states that Barry is a tiger when he’s on a playing field. This clearly isn’t possible, because a human being can’t turn into a tiger. The person writing this sentence means that Barry is brave and strong, much like a tiger might act. By using the metaphor, the writer immediately creates in the reader’s mind an image of Barry as a person who is a good athlete.

Some figurative language uses sound to make an impression on the reader. In poetry, alliteration occurs when the writer uses words that have the same beginning consonant sound. Alliteration can call attention to a phrase or image. Here is a famous example of alliteration from “Meeting at Night” by Robert Browning.

The grey sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i’ the slushy sand.

In this poem, the phrases “large and low” and “pushing prow” are examples of alliteration. Readers might pay more attention to these phrases, and what they mean, because of the way they sound.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

Darcie held her tennis racket tightly. Her heart was pounding like a jackhammer. Her knees were two rubber lumps at this point. She looked ahead and waited for the serve to come. Darcie liked playing tennis, but competing made her nervous. After two hours of playing, the tennis match came down to this last game.

Which sentence from the paragraph includes a simile? What is being compared?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

HINT A simile compares things using like or as.

DISCUSS Describe something in your classroom using a simile. For example, “the chalk is as white as snow.” Share your ideas with a partner.
Read the poem and answer the questions.

The runway is a pond, black from the night
Little airplanes swarm above it
They buzz in and out, unseen
They nose nearer, then farther away

1. Which line from the poem contains a metaphor?
A. line 4
B. line 2
C. line 3
D. line 1

HINT Remember, a metaphor makes a comparison without using like or as.

2. Which phrase from the poem contains alliteration?
A. “black from the night”
B. “Little airplanes swarm”
C. “They nose nearer”
D. “They buzz in and out”

HINT Alliteration occurs when two or more words have the same starting sound. Read each answer choice aloud to help answer the question.
Writers of literature create different types of texts, depending on the type of story they want to tell. Stories, dramas, and poems are all structured differently.

Works of fiction are usually novels and short stories, long, made-up works with characters, settings, and plots. Stories are written in sentences and organized into paragraphs. A paragraph is a group of sentences that support or explain one main idea. In stories, paragraphs help readers move from one event to another. Paragraphs begin with an indentation. Longer works of fiction, like novels, are broken up into sections called chapters. Some stories include pictures or illustrations to help the reader better understand the story. Heavily illustrated stories, such as graphic novels, are presented in comic-strip format.

Poetry is a type of writing which uses figurative language and literary devices to create meaning and invoke emotion in the reader. Poetry is usually easy to recognize because of its structure. It generally takes the form of a series of lines of text, or verses. A verse is a line of poetry. Verses may or may not be complete sentences. Poems are also broken up into groups of lines called stanzas. Poems have stanzas instead of paragraphs. Look at the following poem.

The dark skies of autumn  
Cry soft tears falling gently  
On fallen leaves curling on the ground  
Inside, kitchen windows fog  
With the kettle’s screaming  
Ready to steep tea, dark and gentle.

Pay attention to the structure of poems. Notice how the poem is separated into lines instead of sentences. Also, the poem is structured into stanzas instead of paragraphs. Stanzas can be short or long.
Drama is a type of literature that is written to be performed onstage by actors. All drama uses dialogue. Dialogue is a written conversation between two or more characters. A character’s dialogue may be written to reflect his or her dialect. Dialect is the way language is spoken by a particular group or in a particular region. When you read drama, you are often reading dialogue. Drama has several parts that are key to understanding it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element in Drama</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acts</td>
<td>the main sections of a drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scenes</td>
<td>smaller sections of an act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cast of characters</td>
<td>the people in a drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stage directions</td>
<td>actions that are performed (often written in italics)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following is a sample of dramatic literature.

JACQUES: I hear Monica coming up the stairs.

MOTHER: Quick, hide her birthday present before she comes into the room and sees the paint set.

(Jacques grabs the paint set and hides it under the bed.)

(The door opens and Monica walks in.)

MONICA: (smiling) Are you hiding my birthday present?

The names that are in capital letters are the characters. Lines are the words after the character’s name and are often spoken aloud.

The setting descriptions are often in italics. This shows the reader who or what is onstage and where and when the play is taking place.

The following is an example of a setting description.

Setting: The curtain opens and the light falls upon Alice. She is sitting in a chair knitting. There is a grandfather clock in the far corner. Next to Alice is a small table with a phone, and she sits waiting for the phone to ring.
Thinking It Through

Read the following poem, and then answer the question that follows.

The girls and boys walked happily
Into the woods and sat on the grass.

Emily brought pears,
Michael brought grapes,
Stacey brought bread,
And the sun brought warmth.

A red checkerboard blanket
Covered the tall grass—
Today, Earth would be their table.

Rewrite the poem into a small story.

HINT Poems are structured with lines and stanzas, while stories are structured with sentences and paragraphs.

DISCUSS Read the poem and your brief story aloud. In a group, talk about how they are alike and different. Which structure do you prefer? Why?
Lesson 6: Story, Drama, and Poem Structure

Read the passage and answer the questions.

Bobby loved trains. He could hear the trains whistling during the day from his house near the factories. Sometimes, he and his father would walk down to the railroad tracks to watch the trains go by.

Sometimes they would get to the tracks just in time to see the railroad crossing sign start flashing red. The sign had long, black-and-white striped arms. The arms came down when the lights flashed to prevent cars or bikes from crossing. The flashing red lights and the lowering arms were accompanied by loud ringing bells. The bells warned drivers and bicyclists that it was not safe to cross. Bobby never bothered to plug his ears like some other people. He liked the sounds of the warning bells and whistling trains. The train wheels also screeched, which sometimes sent shivers up his spine.

Bobby liked watching all the colorful cars go past him. He imagined what might be inside some of them. Maybe there were new, shiny motorcycles in them! He wondered if the cars with a lot of holes in the sides were carrying live animals to a new farm.

1. What type of passage is this?
   A. fairy tale
   B. poetry
   C. drama
   D. fiction

HINT Stories are organized by sentences and paragraphs. Poetry is organized by lines and stanzas. Dramas are organized by scenes and acts. What kind of passage is this?

2. What is the purpose of paragraph 3?
   A. to describe what is inside the train cars
   B. to explain how trains work
   C. to show what Bobby thinks about when he watches the trains
   D. to describe the way the train looks

HINT Think about the reasons authors include visual details in stories.
Getting the Idea

When you compare things, you tell how they are alike. When you contrast things, you tell how they are different. You can compare and contrast many things when you read different works of literature, including characters, plots, and themes. Sometimes you might compare two characters in the same work. You might also contrast elements in two or more works.

In literature, certain character types appear regularly. For example, many stories and dramas might have heroes and villains, wise or foolish rulers, or honest or dishonest characters. Read the following paragraphs.

**Passage 1**
King Ferdinand was a strict ruler. When his army had a huge victory, he didn’t celebrate. He built a larger army instead. To pay for his army, King Ferdinand created new taxes. Many people protested the new taxes. King Ferdinand placed all the protesters in jail.

**Passage 2**
In the mountain kingdom of Neverlandia, the farmers and villagers prepared to celebrate the birthday of King Fredo. The past year had been difficult for the farmers and villagers. There had been a large earthquake and a long drought. But King Fredo was wise. He had saved the taxes collected over the past few years. He made sure that hungry people were fed and sick people were nursed back to health.

The two stories both have a king as the main character. But one story’s king is a mean, unfair ruler, while the other king treats his people well and is loved by all. Comparing and contrasting across texts helps a reader better understand the characters in each text.
Readers can also compare and contrast plots. Many stories and dramas are based on classic plots. In a quest story, for instance, a character goes on a long journey, usually in search of something that will improve his or her life. In a challenge plot, a character has to perform one or more very difficult tasks. Read the following paragraphs.

**Passage 1**

Hawaiian legend tells of a boy named Maui who had three older brothers. Their parents were powerful gods. Maui had to perform many heroic acts to gain acceptance from his brothers. Maui fished islands from the sea. He even captured the sun with his snare!

**Passage 2**

It was Oliver’s first week at his new school, and the kids were not very friendly. One day, as Oliver stood on the playground, a basketball rolled by. He picked up the ball, tossed it to one of the boys, and asked if he could play. The boys agreed, and they encouraged him. Soon he was playing better than anyone else.

In both passages, the main characters deal with similar conflicts—feeling alone and unaccepted, and they both go through their own challenges.

Many stories and dramas are based on other classic themes as well, such as good vs. evil and not judging by appearances. For example, in the story of the little red hen, a hen doesn’t share the bread that she baked with the other animals because they did not help her. The theme of the story is that you shouldn’t expect to receive something if you do nothing to deserve it. This is a familiar theme in modern stories.

Prose stories can be compared with graphic novels. Unlike a prose version, a graphic novel uses detailed illustrations to tell the story. Some panels of a graphic novel use only pictures to tell the story. Other panels may use captions to explain what is happening or speech balloons to show what a character is saying. Read the panel at the right from the story of Maui.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

Jason and Lamar have been friends since kindergarten. Jason was a gifted athlete; he was good at every sport he ever tried. Lamar was not good at sports, but he was a gifted musician. Luckily, both boys liked humor a lot. When Jason was not at practice, the two friends were always together, cracking jokes and telling stories.

How are Jason and Lamar similar? How are they different?

—

—

—

—

HINT Look for similarities and differences before answering the question.

DISCUSS Think of two books, stories, or articles you read recently. How were they similar? How were they different? Share your ideas in a group.
Lesson 7: Compare and Contrast Literary Works

Coached Example

Read the passages and answer the questions.

The Forbidden Room

The newly married princess had just moved into a castle when, after a few weeks, the prince told her that he had to travel to see his father. The prince said, “While I’m away, please make yourself at home. You may go into any room in the castle except for the one room at the top of the stairs.”

The princess explored all the rooms of the castle except that one. She had promised, of course, that she would not go into the forbidden room. However, she was very curious about what could possibly be in there. Finally, she could not contain herself any longer; she just had to know what was in the forbidden room. The princess took a deep breath, slowly turned the doorknob, and opened the door. She was shocked at what she saw, and then she hung her head in shame. For there, inside the room, was the prince and his father. “We were wondering how long it would take you to arrive!” the prince exclaimed.

A Big Surprise
1. One way that the graphic novel differs from the first story is that
   A. it includes more characters and scenes.
   B. it takes place over a longer period of time
   C. it shows more details about the setting and characters.
   D. it includes more dialogue for the characters.

2. What is the conflict in both versions of the story?
   A. The prince leaves to go and visit his father.
   B. The prince’s father does not like the princess.
   C. The princess is not allowed in the forbidden room.
   D. The princess is very curious about what is inside the castle.

3. How do the illustrations of the princess in the graphic novel add to your understanding of her character? Write your answer below.

   ___________________________
   ___________________________
   ___________________________
   ___________________________

   Look closely at the princess in the panels of the graphic novel. What do her actions and expressions tell you about her?
The main idea of a passage is what it is mostly about. Supporting details are the facts or other pieces of information that prove the main idea. A detail may be a name, date, place, or action.

Every story and article has a main idea. You can usually find it near the beginning of a passage. Every paragraph has a main idea, too. This is often found in the first sentence of the paragraph, though it might occur later. A main idea is not the same as a topic. A topic is the subject of a passage. For example, the topic of a passage may be “bicycles.” The main idea would be a statement about bicycles: “Riding bicycles is good for the environment.”

As you read this paragraph, try to identify its main idea and supporting details.

There are many different kinds of carnivorous plants. Carnivorous plants are plants that get nutrients from trapping and eating insects and spiders. These plants are generally found in locations with poor soil. There are many different ways carnivorous plants trap and eat animals. Pitcher plants have a large cavity, or pitcher, that insects fall into. The Venus flytrap has leaves that close and trap insects.

The main idea of this passage is that there are many different kinds of carnivorous plants. Supporting details include the different ways pitcher plants and Venus flytraps capture and eat animals.

To figure out the main idea of a story, article, or paragraph, look for the idea that stands out as most important. The other ideas are details, and should only support the main idea of the passage. In many nonfiction works, the title is directly connected to the main idea. Looking at the title might help you if the passage doesn’t state its main point explicitly.

Also, thinking of a possible title for a passage can help you figure out which parts of it are most important.
In longer articles or essays, there may be more than one main idea. These main ideas will both be about the same topic, but they will cover different aspects of the topic in detail.

Look at the following two paragraphs from a longer passage. The main ideas are underlined. The other sentences provide details about the main ideas.

Cars are bad for the environment. Cars and trucks emit more than 300 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere each year in the United States. They are responsible for about one-third of our nation’s total production of carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is one of the greenhouse gases that contributes to global warming. Cars and trucks also consume almost 9 million barrels of oil per day. That is more than 25 percent of the world’s total!

The United States needs to explore different ways of traveling. Alternative transportation causes less pollution. Bicycling and walking are good alternatives for short distances. Trains, buses, and other public transportation should be used whenever possible. If more people use alternative transportation, we can make up for the negative impacts of cars and trucks.

The main idea of the first paragraph is that cars are bad for the environment. They cause pollution and consume a lot of oil. Meanwhile, the main idea of the second paragraph is that people should explore other forms of transportation. What is probably the main idea of the passage? Based on the two paragraphs, the most likely main idea of the passage is that the United States needs to explore transportation alternatives because cars are bad for the environment. Often, when you express the main idea of a passage you have read, you give a summary of its content. A summary is a brief restatement of the most important ideas of a passage in your own words.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the question that follows.

John Keats was a famous poet. He was known for his odes and sonnets. His books did not sell very well during his lifetime. However, he is regarded as one of the greatest poets in the English language.

What is the main idea of this paragraph?

HINT The main idea is the most important idea in the paragraph.

DISCUSS Discuss your answer with the class.
That morning, I found myself paying special attention to one rooster. It was about a hundred yards away, or a little more perhaps. All the other birdsongs seemed inferior to it. Its voice was uniquely clear and pure. The last note was very long and seemed to fall at the end. However, it didn’t collapse like long notes often do, ending with a little croak, as if the singer had run out of breath. It was perfect in its way, a finished performance. It was artistic, and, by comparison with other songs, brilliant. After I heard this bird, I paid little attention to the others. After each call it made, I counted the seconds until the call came again.

1. Which sentence BEST states the main idea of the passage?
   A. “That morning, I found myself paying special attention to one rooster.”
   B. “Its voice was uniquely clear and pure.”
   C. “It was perfect in its way, a finished performance.”
   D. “The last note was very long and seemed to fall at the end.”

2. What would make another good title for the passage?
   A. “What Roosters Like to Eat”
   B. “The Rooster’s Song”
   C. “Different Birdsongs”
   D. “Common Barnyard Animals”

HINT The title often gives clues about the main idea.

HINT When you are looking for the main idea, look for a broad concept, not specific details.
Use Factual Details for Support

As you read informational texts, you need to pay attention to the details. You know that a detail is a piece of information. Names, dates, and descriptions are all types of details. Pay close attention to the details. This will help you to understand what is happening in the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Details</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>names of people</td>
<td>George Washington served as commander of the Continental Army.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>names of places</td>
<td>They fought in Boston and New York.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dates and times</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facts in an article</td>
<td>Blue whales can reach up to 108 feet in length.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many other kinds of details not listed in the chart. As you read, pay attention to all the details in the text. The better you understand an article or essay, the easier it will be for you to answer questions about it, form ideas, and make statements about it.

Sometimes the author does not tell you exactly what is happening. This means that you have to figure things out on your own and make an inference. You already know that an inference is a decision based on available details. In order to make an inference, you must have some form of support to back up your inference.
When making an inference from informational texts, you use the facts available to you. Because inferences are often based only on the information in a piece, they can be incorrect. Sometimes an inference will be a generalization about what you have read. A generalization is a broad statement based on specific details. Read the paragraph below.

Before World War II, it was not unusual for low-income women to have jobs outside of the home. Women worked in sweatshops and other factories so they could support themselves and others. However, many middle-class women did not have jobs before the war. They were expected to stay at home and raise families. During the war, middle-class women took all sorts of jobs, including physical labor in factories. After the war, many of these women wanted to keep their jobs.

What generalizations and inferences can you make about this text? Well, because many of the middle-class women wanted to keep their jobs, you could say that working in factories was satisfying work for many middle-class women. You might also say that many low-income women worked in sweatshops and factories. But you might be incorrect. The paragraph says, “it was not unusual” for low-income women to work. This doesn’t mean that “many” of them worked. Make sure that any inferences and generalizations you make are supported by specific words or facts from the text.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

By the 1920s, African Americans began to prosper in some parts of the United States for the first time. People whose grandparents had lived through slavery became educated and had good jobs. In the New York neighborhood of Harlem, African American culture blossomed between 1920 and 1940. Music, dance, politics, literature, and art were all parts of the Harlem Renaissance.

Do you think the Harlem Renaissance could have happened before the 1920s? Which details in the paragraph support your inference?

Reread the paragraph. Remember, any inference you make must be based on specific details.

DISCUSS

Based on details in the text and the illustration, how would you define the Harlem Renaissance? Discuss your answer with the class.
Coached Example

Read the passage and answer the questions.

*The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett takes place in Misselthwaite Manor in England during the Victorian era. A spoiled orphan named Mary returns to England from India when her parents die. She is sent to live in Yorkshire with her uncle in his mansion. She meets all sorts of people like Martha, Dickon, and Colin. Martha is a maid on the grounds who has taken a fancy to Mary, and Dickon is her brother. Mary becomes interested in a secret garden that the children aren’t allowed to enter. She is determined to clear it out and bring it back to life. *The Secret Garden* is a great story with colorful characters and a positive message.

Frances Hodgson Burnett

1. Based on the passage, you can infer that the author
   A. liked the book.
   B. did not like the book.
   C. thought the book was boring.
   D. wants to live in a mansion.

   **HINT** Remember, an inference is a conclusion based on available details.

2. Which sentence from the passage supports the idea that the author recommends the book?
   A. “*The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett takes place in Misselthwaite Manor in England during the Victorian era.”
   B. “A spoiled orphan named Mary returns to England from India when her parents die.”
   C. “She meets all sorts of people like Martha, Dickon, and Colin.”
   D. “*The Secret Garden* is a great story with colorful characters and a positive message.”

   **HINT** Reread the passage. Look at each answer choice and see which one supports the inference.
Sequence is the order in which things happen. One of the most common ways in which authors organize their writing is chronological order. Chronological order is time sequence. Time-order words may be used to show what happens first, second, and last.

Some common time-order words are now, before, next, first, second, and finally. These words help the reader understand when things happen. Other examples of time-order words are currently, initially, and after. The chronological method is very effective when the author is writing about people and events. Ordering paragraphs chronologically gives the reader a stronger grasp of the topic.

Biographies and histories are often written in chronological order. In the following example, the events in the development of the Tour de France are presented in the order in which they happened. This helps the reader understand when each event occurred. As you read the example, look for the words that tell what happened first, second, and last.

The Tour de France is an annual bicycle race that winds around France and neighboring countries. Currently, the race is broken up into stages and lasts for three weeks. At first, however, the race was designed to run around the perimeter of France. The race ran for nineteen days. Cyclists would ride through the night. Then, after a few years, the race became very popular. Finally, the racecourse began to zigzag through France, gaining more and more fans.
There are other text structures that authors use to present things in a particular order. Some texts are written to show a series of steps. The different parts of directions and recipes, for example, need to be presented in a particular order. The correct results depend on following the steps in the right order. If you were writing about how to make a sandwich, for example, you would first talk about getting a piece of bread, then about putting something on it, and finally, about putting another piece of bread on top of that. This structure helps the reader to understand what is going on, and why. For example, read these directions for making a paper snowflake.

1) Find a piece of thin, white paper.
2) Fold the paper two or three times to make a small rectangle.
3) Cut small shapes around the edges of the rectangle.
4) Carefully unfold your snowflake to see its unique design.
5) Loop a piece of string through the snowflake and knot the ends.
6) Hang up the snowflake for everyone to see.

The directions show the order in which a project should be done, from first step to last. Think about the sequence. Could any of the steps happen in a different order? Authors use sequence to present their information in the most logical order.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then complete the activity that follows.

Glenn Gould was born on September 25, 1932. Then, he attended the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. His first piano teacher was his mother. Finally, on April 10, 1964, he gave his last public performance in Los Angeles. After leaving the conservatory, he performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Rewrite the sentences so that they are in chronological order.

HINT
Look at the time-order words in the paragraph.

Discuss your answer in a group. Tell how the time-order words in the paragraph helped you figure out the sequence of events.
Exploration of Mars has had a long and interesting history. The Mariner Mission took place between 1964 and 1971. During this mission, spacecraft took photographs of Mars and orbited the planet. The Viking Mission took place between 1976 and 1984. During this mission, U.S. spacecraft actually landed on Mars. During the Mars Pathfinder Mission, which lasted from 1997 to 1998, spacecraft landed and a robot vehicle was released on the planet’s surface. This vehicle was called a rover. The Mars Global Surveyor Mission began in 1997 and is still going on. In this mission, astronauts are making maps of the planet’s surface. In a more recent mission begun in 2003, two rovers have been exploring Mars in search of signs of water. The names of these rovers are Spirit and Opportunity. This mission began in 2003 and is still in progress.

1. According to the passage, what came BEFORE the Mars Pathfinder Mission?
   A. Viking Mission
   B. Mariner Mission
   C. Mars Global Surveyor Mission
   D. Spirit and Opportunity rovers

HINT: Reread the passage. Think about the order of the missions.

2. Which exploration occurred FIRST?
   A. Mars Global Surveyor Mission
   B. Mariner Mission
   C. Mars Pathfinder Mission
   D. Viking Mission

HINT: Look at the dates in the passage. Dates and times can help you figure out the sequence.
Some passages are organized around a cause and its effect. A **cause** is the reason something happens, and the **effect** is what happens as a result. As you read, look for examples of cause and effect. Ask yourself why things happen. Events in a selection happen for a reason. Anytime one event leads to another, this is an instance of cause and effect. For example, if a tornado forms and destroys several homes, the tornado is the cause and the effect is the destruction of homes. There can also be more than one result of a cause, or more than one cause for a single result. Read this graphic organizer.

A large tornado forms. → Many homes are destroyed. → Families lose their homes and live in an emergency shelter. → A town rallies behind the families and helps them rebuild their homes.

You can figure out the cause by asking yourself why the effect happened. To figure out the effect, ask yourself what happened after the cause occurred. Cause-and-effect words and phrases, such as so, because, since, thus, and if… then, can help you understand the reason for an event and its result.
As you read informational texts, you will see how different authors use cause and effect to organize texts. Some texts will show the cause and effect in one paragraph. Other times, each paragraph in a longer article or essay will talk about a cause or event. The paragraphs will build toward a conclusion that describes the effects. Look at these two paragraphs from a longer essay.

In the 1920s, the United States was booming financially, and many people invested money in the stock market. In October of 1929, stocks lost their value in a huge stock market crash. Over two days, the stock market fell 23 percent. It was the beginning of a recession that by 1932 became the Great Depression.

During the Great Depression, people could not pay back money they owed to banks. This meant that the banks lost money. Also, banks had invested in the stock market, just like people had. When the stock market crashed, the banks lost still more money. The banking system collapsed in 1932. By 1933, 15 million people, over one-quarter of the people who wanted jobs, were unemployed. Without money, people could not afford housing. As a result, shantytowns were common. Shantytowns were places where people lived in tents and shacks.

By reading the two paragraphs, you can see that the stock market crash helped begin a recession that turned into the Great Depression. The Great Depression had many effects. People could not pay back loans to banks, banks lost money, companies couldn’t afford to pay workers, people lost jobs, people became homeless, and shantytowns were built.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

*Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe is a book that brought changes to the United States. In 1852, slavery still existed. Stowe wanted to teach readers about the cruelty of slavery. Many people began to see that slavery was wrong after they read the book.

Why did Stowe write *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*? What were the effects of the book?

Reread the paragraph. Remember, a cause is why something happens, and an effect is what happens as a result.

In a group, talk about something you did recently that had an effect on someone else. Identify the cause and the effect.
Coached Example

Read the passage and answer the questions.

When two large blocks of earth move past each other quickly and suddenly, the result is an earthquake. The area where they move is called the fault. The location where the earthquake starts is the hypocenter. While the edges of the two blocks stay together, the other parts of the blocks continue moving. Pressure then builds on the point where the blocks touch. When the force of the moving blocks becomes too great, the blocks break and the pressure is released. The energy moves out from the fault in many directions. This movement is often in the form of waves. As these huge waves move through the earth, they shake the ground. They also shake houses, buildings, and other structures, sometimes causing extensive damage.

1. Earthquakes happen because
   A. the ground shakes.
   B. they have an epicenter.
   C. two blocks of earth slip past one another.
   D. two blocks of earth touch one another.

   **HINT** This question asks for a cause. You must find the reason why.

2. What is the effect of an earthquake?
   A. The ground and anything on it shakes.
   B. Energy is stored.
   C. Two blocks of earth slip past one another.
   D. The epicenter stores energy.

   **HINT** This question asks for an effect. The effect is what happens because of earthquakes.
You know to compare things is to tell how they are alike and to contrast things is to tell how they are different. When you compare and contrast informational texts, you think about how they are alike and different. There are many things to compare and contrast, including topic, text organization, scope, and main ideas. Comparisons can be made between different articles or essays.

To begin, you can look at how the texts are organized. For example, two books are about the Civil War. But one book tells about the major events in chronological order. The other examines the major causes and effects.

You can also compare and contrast the topics of two texts, or what kind of information they present. For instance, suppose two essays of the same length talk about classical music. One essay might discuss music in the eighteenth century. The other might tell about Italian composers in the eighteenth century. You could say that the first essay is broader, while the second essay is more specific.

Read the following examples.

**Passage 1**

Thurgood Marshall was the first African American to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. He was also the lawyer who argued for the Brown family in front of the Supreme Court in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case. President Lyndon Johnson appointed him to the Supreme Court in 1967.
Passage 2

The Supreme Court of the United States is the highest court in the United States. It consists of the chief justice and eight associate justices. Only the president has the power to nominate the justices. The justices are confirmed after voting and discussion by the Senate. Once appointed, justices effectively have life tenure, which terminates only upon death, resignation, or retirement. The Court meets in Washington, D.C., in the U.S. Supreme Court Building.

How are the two paragraphs similar? How are they different? Both paragraphs talk about the Supreme Court. However, the first paragraph talks about a specific Supreme Court justice, and the second paragraph talks generally about the Supreme Court. When comparing and contrasting informational texts, you will find that topic and scope are good initial points of comparison.

Another possible point of comparison is main idea. You may find that two essays or articles that are seemingly unrelated can have similar main ideas. For example, both an essay about a businessman and a magazine article about a writer might have the importance of education as their main ideas.

You will also sometimes compare people, places, or things across texts. For example, two articles might talk about leaders. But one article’s leader is cruel, while the other leader is generous. In longer essays or articles, you may compare people, places, or things within the passage. Some texts are organized to show how people, places, or things are alike and different. In these texts, remember to look for these words: also, as, like, same, similar, not, unlike, and yet.

Finally, you can read two passages in which the writers express a different point of view on a topic. A writer’s point of view is his or her opinion or perspective on an issue. For example, imagine that a town is planning to build a new mall. One writer may argue in favor of the idea, mainly because the mall will bring more jobs to the community. However, another writer may argue that the mall will be too expensive to build and will take business away from existing shop owners. You can compare each writer’s point of view and how effectively he or she develops it in the article.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraphs, and then complete the activity that follows.

Passage 1

Typhoons and hurricanes are both tropical cyclones. Tropical cyclones are storms with a mass of thunderstorms centered around a mass of rotating air. They also have an eye, or center, of calm air and winds. They both have wind speeds greater than 74 miles per hour. They can both create widespread damage with their winds and storm surges. Typhoons generally begin in the Western Pacific Ocean. Hurricanes form in the Atlantic Ocean and the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Passage 2

Typhoon Songda is one of the more famous typhoons in recent times. It began in September 2004, on the coast of Japan’s Okinawa islands. After that, it moved along the western coast of Japan, stopping at the island of Hokkaido. At their fastest, the winds of the typhoon were gusting at 115 miles per hour. After the storm, thousands of people had no power. The storm also did several hundred million dollars’ worth of damage.

Compare and contrast the topics of the two paragraphs.

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

HINT Remember, to compare things means to tell how they are alike, and to contrast things means to tell how they are different.

DISCUSS Discuss your answer in a group, identifying details in each paragraph that support your ideas.
Coached Example

Read the passages and answer the questions.

Andrew Carnegie

Andrew Carnegie and his family emigrated to the United States from Scotland and settled near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1848. Carnegie went to work in a cotton mill when he was thirteen. Later, Carnegie became a successful investor, and learned a faster and less expensive method for manufacturing steel from an English company. Carnegie used the technology in his first steel mill. In 1872, he visited the English manufacturer again and realized that U.S. industries had a growing need for steel. On his return to the United States, Carnegie combined smaller companies to make the Carnegie Steel Company. Carnegie sold his steel company in 1901 to J. P. Morgan for about $250 million. With that amount, Carnegie retired as one of the world’s wealthiest men. He gave away much of his money. He was famous for building hundreds of public libraries in the United States and other countries.

Henry Ford

Henry Ford was born on July 30, 1863, to Irish immigrant parents. He grew up on the family farm in Greenfield Township, Michigan. He showed an interest in engine mechanics from a very early age. As the founder of the Ford Motor Company, Ford was very original. His goal was to make cars affordable for everyone. He was one of the first people to make cars by using an assembly line. In the process, he changed the way industries produced things. Ford’s persistence was his greatest trait. Ford proved that he could change the world with one powerful idea. The foundation he created continues to strive for this goal. The Ford Foundation donates money to people and organizations that reduce poverty and injustice and advance human achievement.
1. How are Andrew Carnegie and Henry Ford similar?
   A. They were both immigrants.
   B. They both made a lot of money and were selfish.
   C. They both made and donated a lot of money.
   D. They both made automobiles.

   **HINT** Reread the passages. Think about what the two men have in common.

2. How are Andrew Carnegie and Henry Ford different?
   A. Carnegie made his money in steel manufacturing, while Ford manufactured cars.
   B. Carnegie wanted to make steel affordable for every family, while Ford just wanted to make money.
   C. Ford imported a faster and less expensive method for manufacturing steel.
   D. Ford combined smaller car companies to make a large car company.

   **HINT** Think about each man’s actions. How are their actions different?

3. How are the two passages similar?

   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

   **HINT** Think about different points of comparison between texts. Structure, scope, and topic are a few different points of comparison.
Reference materials are published works that contain information. One very familiar reference material is a textbook. Textbooks contain extensive information on subjects studied in schools. Common subjects for textbooks include math, science, and social studies. Dictionaries, encyclopedias, periodicals, atlases, and Web sites are all examples of reference materials. The key to selecting a reference is knowing which reference will give you the information you want.

A dictionary is a book that lists words alphabetically, tells how to pronounce them, and gives their definitions. If you are looking for the meaning of a word, you can use a dictionary. A dictionary entry has four main parts: the word, the pronunciation, the part of speech (such as a noun or a verb), and the definitions. Sometimes it also gives you the language of origin for the word. Look at this dictionary entry:

**clock** (klok): n. (1) a device that displays the time; (2) a measuring instrument with a dial or digital display; (3) the seed head of a dandelion; (4) an electronic circuit that synchronizes computer processes; (5) a design on a stocking or sock. v. (1) to record somebody’s or something’s time.

Use a dictionary when you want to find the meaning of a word and can’t figure it out from the context of the sentence.

An encyclopedia is a book or set of books that gives information, through short articles, about subjects listed alphabetically. An encyclopedia may give facts about many topics. Some encyclopedias focus on one subject, like science or history. Use an encyclopedia when you want to read a brief passage about a person, place, or thing.
A **periodical** is a publication, such as a newspaper, magazine, or brochure, which is released daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly. Some periodicals cover many different subjects at once, such as culture, news, and sports. Other periodicals cover very specific subjects or topics, such as engineering or dance. Because periodicals are released daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly, they are great resources for reading new articles. Use periodicals when you want current information.

An **atlas** is a book of maps. Atlases typically have a map of Earth as well as specific regions. Many atlases will feature information about specific countries or regions, such as population and economic data.

**Online directories** are very much like search engines. However, rather than give you a list of all Web sites containing information related to your topic, they provide you with a list of sub-topics and directories of sites that might be related to your topic. This allows you to locate more specific information about part of your topic easier and faster. Search engines and online directories both point you to Web sites that contain information related to your search terms. You must always be very careful when using Web sites for research. Just as with articles, you need to consider the source of your information before relying on it as fact. Sites that generally contain reliable information include:

- government Web sites (any Web address ending with .gov)
- college and university Web sites (any Web address ending with .edu)
- official Web sites of reputable news organizations
- official Web sites of reputable professional organizations and not-for-profits (sometimes ending with .org)

Many traditional reference books, such as encyclopedias and dictionaries, are also available as CD-ROMs or on Web sites.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the question that follows.

In Congress and in state government, a bill is legislation that lawmakers are trying to make official. A bill later becomes law if it is approved. Ideas for bills can come from individual lawmakers, the president, the governor, citizens, or special groups.

What reference material would be useful in finding out more about how a bill becomes a law?

HINT Think about which reference source gives basic information about a broad topic.

DISCUSS Use the reference source you identified to learn more about the process of how a bill becomes a law. Then share your findings with the class.
Read the passage and answer the questions.

Imagine riding a train that doesn’t touch the ground. For years, scientists have been researching Maglev, or magnetic levitation, technology. If you’ve ever played with magnets, you know that if you put the magnet ends together, they push away from each other. This is the basic principle behind the Maglev train. This train floats above the track, while a conventional train rolls along it. The other difference between these two trains is that a conventional train has an engine, while a Maglev train does not. Instead, the magnetic field created by the electrified coils in the track moves the Maglev train forward. In China, the Shanghai Transrapid line currently runs to and from the city’s center and the airport. It travels at an average speed of 267 mph.

1. Which reference material would be MOST useful in finding the definition of levitation?
   A. atlas
   B. dictionary
   C. encyclopedia
   D. periodical

HINT Think about the different reference materials listed. Which one lists words and definitions?

2. Which reference material would NOT be useful in finding out more about electromagnetic fields?
   A. atlas
   B. encyclopedia
   C. periodical
   D. Web site

HINT Think about the different reference materials listed. What information does each reference material give you?
Point of view is the way an author feels about someone or something. Many passages that you read make claims, or arguments. A claim expresses a writer’s point of view. A claim is also normally an opinion. An **opinion** is a statement that cannot be proven. Although you can’t prove a claim, necessarily, you can defend it. Writers defend their arguments with reasons that justify their opinion. If a writer supplies a reason, he or she will also supply evidence that supports that reason. This is where facts come in handy. A **fact** is something that can be proven true and can be used to prove something else true.

The purpose of a piece of persuasive writing is to convince people to take action or to think a certain way. Car advertisements, political speeches, and newspaper editorials on the environment are examples of persuasive writing. The writer clearly states his or her position, or argument, in support of something or against it. Then, he or she goes on to explain the reasons behind the claim. For the argument to be successful, those reasons have to be backed up by relevant evidence. As a reader, you should be able to identify relevant evidence when you see it.

**Relevant evidence** is any information that is related to the issue and supports a position. This isn’t as simple as it sounds. Let’s use an easy example. In an editorial about recycling in your community, the author states that we should recycle because it saves the environment. As evidence, the author supplies a chart of the chemicals factories release as they turn out new products. Another reason might be that recycling would clean up the community. In this case, relevant evidence would be quotes from residents who have noticed a difference in the area. If the author included a quote from a resident that simply stated how nice recycling was, that would not be relevant. Why? Because, while it supports the main argument, it simply repeats the author’s point of view. It would not help to convince someone to start recycling.
The following chart outlines a claim, its reasons, and some evidence to support those reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim: The citizens of Yakville should talk less on their cell phones.</th>
<th>Reason: Talking on your cell phone can be distracting and dangerous.</th>
<th>Reason: Your conversations might cause a public nuisance.</th>
<th>Reason: Cell phones are hazardous to your health.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence: A teenage girl was talking on her cell phone, riding a bicycle, and eating ice cream last Wednesday, and she ran into a tree.</td>
<td>Evidence: Last Thursday, an older woman on a bus had a loud argument with a girl who was talking too much on her cell phone. The girl and the woman had to be asked to leave the bus.</td>
<td>Evidence: Studies have shown that some cell phones emit powerful amounts of radiation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writers may try various tricks to convince their readers. One of the most common tricks of argument is appealing to the emotions. Writers appeal to your emotions when they express their own sadness, anger, or excitement through their word choice. For example, if a writer says, “Try to imagine the sadness parents will feel if their children can no longer use the library on Saturdays,” he’s appealing to your emotions. With the phrase *try to imagine* or the word *sadness*, the writer is clearly asking readers to feel something, or to imagine it. Also, appeals to the emotions often use exaggerated language. Appeals to the emotions are less solid supports than factual evidence, and they are often less convincing for readers.
Clearcutting is a terrible logging practice in which most or all of the trees in an area are cut down. Logging companies support clearcutting. Their owners argue that it is safe and economical. However, they are wrong. They do not talk about the negative impacts. Clearcutting destroys natural habitats. It also contributes to global warming. This harmful process must be stopped.

List two facts and two opinions from the paragraph.


HINT Remember, an opinion states someone’s belief or judgment. It is not something that can be proved.

DISCUSS Which specific words in the paragraph helped you determine if a sentence is a fact or an opinion? Discuss your ideas with a partner.
Coached Example

Read the passage and answer the questions.

excerpted and adapted from

Common Sense

by Thomas Paine

Some say that because America prospered under Great Britain in the past, America needs Great Britain to do well in the future. Nothing can be more wrong. We may as well say that because a child lived on milk, it should never have meat. Or, that the next twenty years of our lives will be just like the last twenty years. I think that America would have done just as well, and probably better, without Great Britain.

1. What is the author’s argument?
   A. America needs Great Britain to do well.
   B. America does not need Great Britain to do well.
   C. America is a young country.
   D. Some things never change.

2. Read this sentence.

   We may as well say that because a child lived on milk, it should never have meat.

   The sentence above is
   A. relevant evidence.
   B. irrelevant evidence.
   C. a statement of opinion.
   D. a fact based on science.

HINT Reread the passage. What is the author trying to say? How do the author’s reasons support the argument?

HINT Reread the sentence. Think about how the sentence works in the author’s argument.
Getting the Idea

When you compare and contrast informational texts that address the same topic, you think about how they are alike and how they are different. There are many things to compare and contrast in informational texts—how the texts are organized, the details each author uses to support the main ideas, and the author’s purpose for writing each text, to name a few.

Informational texts come in different genres, or forms. All informational text contains facts, but the way the facts are presented in different texts can vary considerably. For instance, in a biography, an author writes about someone else’s life. In an autobiography, an author writes about his or her own life. Both are informational texts, but the information is presented differently. One is presented from an outside observer, and one is presented in the first person. A biographical account can present a broader historical picture of the time and events affecting the subject. On the other hand, an autobiographical account will include emotions and thoughts that a biography could not.

Biography and autobiography are just two examples of different genres of informational text. Others include informational articles, news articles, memoirs, historical accounts, and public speeches. When you read different types of text that are about the same subject, you get a much fuller and richer understanding of the topic. For instance, a reader who has already read an objective history of a famous battle might enjoy reading a soldier’s eyewitness account of the same battle much more.
Read the two paragraphs below about iguanas. Think about how the texts are similar and how they are different.

**Passage 1**

The marine iguanas of the Galapagos Islands are unique. They are herbivores that feed both on land and in the ocean. Their faces are small, with wide-set eyes, and their skin is knotty and rough. They have blunt snouts and sharp teeth that help them scrape tough, hardened algae off ocean rocks for food. Marine iguanas search for food not only on land but also underwater. Their dark gray color allows them to absorb sunlight after they emerge from feeding in the cold Galapagos waters. Often when they emerge from the water, they sneeze to expel the salt from the ocean water they have inhaled. Sometimes the salt lands on their heads, giving them a distinctive white “wig.”

**Passage 2**

The marine iguana is the world’s only marine lizard. Scientists believe that land-dwelling iguanas from South America drifted to the Galapagos Islands on logs and other debris and adapted to the island environment. Although marine iguanas have evolved to successfully protect themselves against predators, they still face many threats. Dogs, cats, and rats that have been introduced to the Galapagos by humans eat iguanas and their eggs, causing a decline in the iguana population. Rising ocean temperatures also threaten their survival. As temperatures rise, the algae the lizards feed on dies off, and other algae species grow in its place. Disasters such as oil spills are another threat. One oil spill off the coast of the Galapagos caused the deaths of over 60 percent of the marine iguana population.

These texts are from informational articles about the marine iguana of the Galapagos Islands. Both texts give information that helps build the reader’s understanding of the marine iguana, but the details the authors provide are different. The first passage addresses the iguana’s appearance, its habitat, and what and how it eats. The second passage offers broader details about the animal’s environment and threats to its survival. By comparing and contrasting the information in both texts, the reader gets a better understanding of marine iguanas than either text alone could offer.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraphs, and then answer the question that follows.

Passage 1

In some countries, people don’t have access to clean water through plumbing. They must carry their water for long distances. Traditionally, women and children carried twenty-liter buckets on their heads. Now, an invention called the Hippo Roller has enabled women, children, and the elderly to collect five times that amount of water. The Hippo Roller is a large, barrel-shaped container with a handle that can be rolled on the ground. It is made of inexpensive plastic and metal. The Hippo Roller is a simple, effective solution with enormous benefits. It saves people the time, energy, and hardship involved with toting water long distances.

Passage 2

The Hippo Roller is a great way for anyone to transform the lives of others. In some parts of the world, people must carry water for long distances on their heads. As a result, they suffer neck problems, bone issues, and muscle damage. It can take many hours just to carry a day’s worth of water for cooking, cleaning, and drinking—hours that could be spent doing more productive things. Investing in the Hippo Roller is a way to positively impact the lives of others. For a few dollars, anyone can purchase a Hippo Roller for people living without ready access to water and radically improve their lives.

Compare and contrast the two paragraphs. Think about the main idea in each and the way supporting details are presented. Why were the two paragraphs written?

Hint
Think about who the intended audience is for the two texts.

Discuss
What is the author’s purpose for writing each passage?
Lesson 15: Compare and Contrast Texts Across Genres

Read the passages and answer the questions.

The Cacao Tree

Cacao is a tropical evergreen tree that grows in the lowland rain forests of the Amazon and surrounding river basins. The cacao tree is the source of cocoa beans that have been used to produce chocolate for generations.

Cacao trees usually grow between twenty and forty feet tall. The flowers of the cacao can be a variety of colors as they grow and develop. Depending on the plant, the flowers can be pink, yellow, or bright red. The flowers are pollinated by tiny flies called midges.

After four years, the mature cacao tree produces fruit. These fruits, or pods, are called cherelles and resemble squash. They range in color from bright yellow to deep purple. A cacao tree may yield up to seventy pods per year.

The cherelles ripen after six months, when they have reached a length of about fourteen inches. The pods are hard and have ridges running along their sides. Nestled in the center of the pods are cocoa beans. The beans are about one inch long and are covered with a sweet, sticky white pulp.

The cacao tree is also known as Theobroma cacao, which means “food of the gods” in Greek. Aztecs and Mayans of Central America had a long tradition of cultivating the plant. Today it is processed in a variety of ways around the world and still considered a divine gift.

Threats to the Cacao Plant

One of the biggest threats to the cacao plant is fungus. A fungus has killed off nearly all the cacao plants in Central America, where cacao was first cultivated by Mayans 1,500 years ago. As a result, nearly 70 percent of the world’s cacao crop is now grown in West Africa.

The cacao trees in West Africa have no resistance to the fungus found in Central America. Fungus varieties such as the “frosty pod” easily form spores that are scattered in the wind. If farmers are careless, the fungus can easily spread and infect the pods.

To combat this threat, biologists are identifying and breeding plants that are naturally resistant to the fungus. All of their efforts are a race against the clock. Scientists believe that if just a few cacao pods are infected by the fungus, it could lead to the loss of one third of the world’s production of the cacao plant.
1. How are the passages alike?
   A. Both passages are meant to inform readers.
   B. Both passages have fungus as the main idea.
   C. Both passages are types of biographies.
   D. Both passages are meant to persuade readers.

   **HINT** Think about the topic of each text.

2. Which of the following is true?
   A. One passage tells about the cacao plant, and the other does not.
   B. Both passages are about cacao, but they have different main ideas.
   C. Both passages address threats to the cacao plant.
   D. Both passages discuss the African cacao crop.

   **HINT** Is one passage more specific than the other? How?

3. How are the passages different? Use details to support your answer.

   [Blank lines for answer]

   **HINT** Consider the details that are used to support the main idea of each passage. How does each passage help you to better understand the cacao plant?
In **persuasive writing**, you offer the reader a certain point of view. You also try to get the reader to agree with that point of view. In doing that, you present facts and give your opinion on a topic. A **fact** is information that is true and can be proven. An **opinion** is a statement that cannot be proven.

When writing a persuasive letter or essay, the first thing you should do is identify the issue you will write about at the beginning of your paper. Then, state your position clearly. It is always important, when writing the introduction to a persuasive piece, to start off with your position. Otherwise, the reader will not understand your point. After you have written your opening statement, review it to make sure it is clear. Readers should not be confused about where you stand.

After you have stated your position, you need to support it. To do that, you must first decide how to organize your writing. The best method is to order your points from strongest to weakest. This means that your strongest and most relevant points should come first. Then, your less important points should follow. If you begin with your weaker points, your reader might think your position is weak. To see which points are strongest and which are weakest, think about how much you have to say about each point. If you can easily write an entire paragraph about one of your points, it is likely a strong point. If another one of your points is very simple, then it is probably a weaker point.

It is also a good idea to allow for opposing arguments in your piece. To do this, first think of what someone who disagreed with your position might say. Then, respond to that argument, pointing out why your position is more reasonable. When you present opposing arguments, it shows that you have thought through your position thoroughly.
A key to good writing is to make sure that your paragraphs flow smoothly from one to the next. The best way to do this is to use proper details and transitions when writing. **Transitions** are words writers use as they move between one idea and another. Examples of transitional words include: *at first, earlier, while, next, for example,* and *therefore.* Transition words are also used to compare and contrast; these include *but, by the same token, conversely, however, instead, nevertheless, on one hand, still, yet, in contrast, likewise,* and *similarly.*

The final paragraph is the summary, or **conclusion.** The conclusion restates the argument. It also summarizes the most important points, ideas, and details. It brings the paper to an end. Unlike the introduction, the conclusion does not lay out the groundwork for the presentation of the topic. It reminds readers of the most important point of the paper.

Prewriting is sometimes tricky but very important. As you think about your subject, you should organize your ideas before you start to write. One way to do this is by using a graphic organizer. A **graphic organizer** visually illustrates your ideas and helps you keep them clear as you write.

For example, a person writing about a new city plan might use the graphic organizer below. In this example, the main claim is: “The city should not build a new toll road.” It goes on the top row of the chart. The reasons that support the claim are in the three rows following that row. The conclusion is on the last row of the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim</th>
<th>The city should not build a new toll road.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>The toll road will cost the city millions of dollars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>The proposed toll road will destroy thousands of acres of nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>It will displace endangered wildlife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Building a new toll road will bring more problems than benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coached Example

Read the following opinions. Then rewrite each one so that the opinion is clearer.

1. Some people argue that every child in every school should have access to computers. Others believe that computers in the classroom may not be that valuable. They believe that computers may actually interfere with the learning process. I think computers might be good for students. They might be able to help students learn.

   HINT
   Think about the effect that phrases such as “I think” and “they might” have on a piece of writing. Are there other ways the sentences might be phrased?

2. Millions of people visit zoos around the world every year. However, some people believe that zoos are inhumane and that animals should not be kept in captivity. A lot of people learn about animals by visiting them at the zoo. But I guess some animals might be better in the wild and should not be held in captivity.

   HINT
   Remember that when you write an opinion piece, you need to be certain of your opinion. Look for spots here where the writer doesn’t seem certain.
Informational writing is writing that tells the reader about something or explains something. It must have a clearly defined topic, supported by well-chosen facts.

All informational writing includes an introduction. The introduction is the opening, or first part. It can be several sentences or several paragraphs. It provides the basic framework for the paper’s topic or subject and shows the goal of the paper.

Once you have chosen your topic, you must think about your main idea, your topic sentence, and the details you want to include. A topic sentence is a sentence that tells the central idea of a paragraph or passage. It usually lies near the beginning of the paragraph. You will have one topic sentence in the first paragraph of the composition, and each paragraph that follows it should have a topic sentence as well. You should develop the essay with facts, examples, or quotations. Details that are off-topic should be removed. Remember to use precise language and terms that relate to your topic. For example, in a report about earthquakes, you might use terms such as fault, stress, and Richter scale.

Finally, write a strong conclusion. The conclusion is similar to the introduction, but they contain slightly different types of information. The conclusion is more specific, while the introduction is more general. The conclusion also serves to restate the points made in the introduction. It should also neatly tie up the paper with a closing statement.

When doing your research, use more than one source whenever you can. Different sources provide a wider range of information. Ask yourself these questions as you choose sources: Do I need up-to-date information? Or can I use an older source? If you need up-to-date information, a newspaper or magazine is probably your best bet. If you don’t need particularly recent information, you can try a book or a Web site.
Sometimes, you may want to use an exact quotation from a source in your paper. Quotations, or quotes, are someone’s exact words. They are also the words that you have found in a book or other source. Place this type of text in quotation marks. Use quotes when the exact words are necessary for the passage.

Other times, you may choose to paraphrase the information. This means putting information in your own words. You can make information easier to understand this way. When you paraphrase, it’s important to mention the source, or the writer you are paraphrasing, so that readers will know who wrote or said the words. Additionally, you will need to list your sources in a bibliography.

As you present information to the reader, you will need to arrange your facts, examples, and quotes in a way that makes sense. You already know about different ways texts are organized. Some passages will compare and contrast things or ideas. Some passages include information in the order in which events happen. Make sure to include transition words, such as however, therefore, also, in addition, next, first, and finally. Good writing flows smoothly from one paragraph to the next.

A graphic organizer is a good way to sort out your thoughts. Think about your topic sentence first. Then, think about details that will support the main idea. In the example below, the center of the web has the main idea. The surrounding ovals contain supporting details. Remember that the information in your graphic organizer can later change. The important thing is to organize your thoughts and notes before you begin writing.

worked as a nurse in the Civil War
worked with the International Red Cross in Europe
was known as the “angel of the battlefield”
started the American Red Cross

Clara Barton was a brave and kind heroine.
Read the following paragraphs. Then rewrite each one so that the topic sentence is clearer.

1. Skinks are a group of lizards that are like other animals, but not quite. Skinks are the largest of the lizard families with about 1,200 species. Skinks look like lizards, but most species have very short necks. They often have relatively small legs. Some skinks have no limbs at all. Skinks move more like snakes than lizards.

How can you rewrite the first sentence to make the main idea of the paragraph clearer?

|
| |

HINT Remember, a topic sentence tells the central idea of a paragraph or passage. Look at the supporting details. What main idea do they support?

2. Due process is the idea that the government has to use the law fairly. And I am sure that nobody would like it if the law were unfair. It makes sure that every person is equal under the law. Due process says that the government has to follow the law just like citizens do. Due process protects people from unfair treatment by the government. Throughout history, there have been instances where people needed protection from someone or something.

Rewrite the paragraph to make sure that all the details support the topic sentence.

|
| |

HINT Reread the paragraph. What is the main idea of the paragraph? Which sentences do not belong in the paragraph?
Getting the Idea

Narrative writing tells a story. All stories have some parts in common: characters, setting, and plot.

Each story includes at least one character. Authors can develop a character in several ways. You could begin by asking yourself what you want the reader to know about the character. What does the character look like? What would other characters think of this character?

The setting is the place and time in which a story takes place. The setting can depend on the story you’re telling. For a ghost story, you might choose an old house at night. If it’s an adventure story, you might choose an ancient mythical village.

A narrative must also have a plot. A plot is a series of events that depends on a conflict, or a problem the characters have. Every problem must be solved with a resolution. The resolution you choose for the conflict will affect the story’s theme, or message.

After you have an idea about your plot, choose a point of view and narrator. Point of view is the position from which a story is told, and the narrator is the character who tells it. In a first-person story, the story is told by an I, while a third-person story is told about a he, a she, or even an it. If you want to surprise the reader in some way, a first-person narrator might be better. The I of the story is experiencing events for the first time, and so is the reader. If you want the reader to know something that the characters do not, the third-person point of view is a better choice.

Once you have started writing your story, you have to try to make it as interesting as possible. Begin by showing rather than telling. This means that you should try to show how it feels for someone to do an action, instead of just saying he or she did it.
Using the same words over and over can also make your writing dull. Use a variety of words when possible. Try thinking in more specific terms when you write. Instead of saying that someone sat down, think about how the character would sit. If it is a large, tired old man, for example, perhaps he settled into his chair. A small, energetic child might leap into her chair. Someone who is exhausted might collapse onto the sofa.

A good ending is hard to write, but a bad ending is hard to forgive. Often, writers get so involved in their plot and characters that they forget to work out an ending that would affect the reader. Try thinking about your story’s end before you start writing. You do not have to have all the details, but you should have a basic idea. Is it a happy ending? A sad ending? You decide.

Figure out the plot, as well, before you get too involved in writing. The plot is your blueprint, or plan, for the story. You can use a graphic organizer to do this. Look at the flowchart below. The first box introduces a problem. The middle boxes show the plot events. The last box is the resolution: the problem has been solved. The story described below follows a logical sequence, or order, from beginning to end.

Wyatt receives a new video game for his birthday, but he has to finish his science project. Wyatt plays video games all weekend and forgets about his science project. Wyatt comes to class empty-handed and gets in trouble. Wyatt learns his lesson, and his parents and teacher give him another chance.
Coached Example

Read the following stories. Then rewrite each one so that they are more entertaining.

1. Summer had arrived. It was time, once again, for Christie to go on vacation with her parents. This year, they decided to rent a house on the coast instead of going camping. At first, Christie was bored because the only things her parents wanted to do were read books and sleep. But then she met a friend. They went swimming. Then they made sandcastles.

HINT
There are many ways to make the story more interesting. One way is to show the action through dialogue or description rather than just telling what happened. Another way is to give more details. You can use colorful language to describe the house and the beach, as well as Christie and her friend. Notice how the transitional phrases at first and but then help make the flow of events clear.

2. It was cold outside. Amiri was standing in the middle of a large field. She was taking a walk, because she wanted to be alone. Suddenly she saw a figure in the distance. The person seemed to be wearing a red jacket. She wasn’t sure who it was. Then the figure came closer. She saw it was her cousin Ahmad. She was relieved. She had thought it was going to be her little brother. She and Ahmad kept walking.

HINT
In this story, you could tell about the field. How did it smell? What was growing there? Additionally, you could say where the field was. Was it near her house? Was she visiting someone? Then you might tell more about the figure approaching, giving more clothing details. You might also explain why Amiri was relieved it was not her little brother.
Getting the Idea

**Literature** includes written works such as novels, short stories, poems, and plays. For an assignment or during a test, you may be asked to respond to a work of literature by answering a short-answer question or writing a longer essay. This is your chance to express your ideas about and reactions to the text. For example, you may be asked to tell how the writer develops the plot of a story or to interpret the actions of one or more characters. When you interpret a character’s thoughts, words or actions, you decide what they show about a character’s personality. You may also be asked to compare elements in two stories or plays.

Be sure to read the prompt carefully. Underline the words in the prompt that tell you what is expected. Read the example below.

**Provide two examples** that show where the story takes place. Use details from the text to support your answer.

This prompt is asking you to focus on the setting and **analyze**, or think more deeply about, the ways in which the author establishes it. Sometimes, a writer does not describe the setting directly. Instead, he or she will provide clues that help the reader figure it out. Read this response to the example prompt.

The story takes place in a remote, wooded setting. The author uses examples to show this. For example, “As the students walked, they realized they hadn’t seen another person in two hours.” This detail shows that the students are very isolated. If the friends haven’t seen anyone in two hours, most likely they are in a remote area. The author writes, “Surrounded by so many trees, it was dark.” Trees suggest a forest.

The topic sentence of this response answers the prompt: Where does the story take place? The statement is supported with examples shown in quotation marks, which indicate that these are words taken directly from the story.
Whether you are writing a short answer or a long essay, it is important to organize your response. You need a clearly defined topic, supported by well-chosen details from the story. By using a graphic organizer and taking notes, you can develop stronger answers. Read the following prompt.

Compare and contrast the two main characters, Sam and Alex. What do they have in common? In what ways are they different? Use evidence from the story to support your answer.

First, think about composing your topic sentence. For example, you may write: The two main characters in the story, Sam and Alex, are brothers and share a few of the same character traits. But in many more ways, they are very different from each other. Then identify the details from the story that you will use to support this idea. Details can include examples, anecdotes, descriptions, or quotations from the story. For example, the author may portray Sam as introverted or shy and Alex as extroverted or outgoing. The characters reveal their traits through specific actions and behaviors. A graphic organizer like the one below will help you organize your thoughts.

In this example, you may plan to write two supporting paragraphs about the boys’ differences and one paragraph about what they have in common. Remember to include a strong conclusion. It should sum up the main points in your essay and let the reader know that you have addressed all parts of the prompt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Character Traits</th>
<th>Supporting Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>• introverted</td>
<td>• stands to the side at a party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• intelligent</td>
<td>• enrolled in honors classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• punctual</td>
<td>• is always on time for everything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>• extroverted</td>
<td>• tells jokes to a crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• intelligent</td>
<td>• enrolled in honors classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• clumsy</td>
<td>• bumps into things often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coached Example

Read the following passage, and then answer the questions that follow.

Matthew and Jason were inseparable; they never left each other’s side until they had to go home from school. People always wondered why the two boys were friends. Matthew didn’t talk much. Jason, on the other hand, loved to talk. He could talk from morning until night, and his mom said he even talked in his sleep. Matthew loved anything technical. Anytime something broke down in the neighborhood, it was sure to find its way to Matthew’s garage. Jason wasn’t into anything technical. He’d rather be doing something outside instead of spending time on a computer. But what people didn’t know is that both boys loved taking things apart and trying to put them back together. When they were given something that didn’t work, they would tinker with it until it was working again. They both loved a good challenge.

1. In what ways are Matthew and Jason similar? In what ways are the boys different? Provide examples from the passage.

   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

   **HINT** Look for words and phrases that signal similarities and differences, such as both, but, and on the other hand.

2. What might the theme of this passage be?

   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

   **HINT** Theme is the message that the writer wants to convey. The theme is often a lesson about life. Here, two boys share a friendship that may seem unlikely to other people. What theme does that suggest?
Getting the Idea

**Informational text** is writing that explains something and communicates facts about it. Being able to write an intelligent response to an informational text is an important skill to have. Whether the response is in the form of a short answer or a longer essay, we all need to be able to think about information and form an opinion about it. What is the author trying to say? Are the author’s ideas convincing?

Before responding, analyze the text. Is it an opinion piece in which the author expresses a personal point of view, or is it an objective informational article? Knowing the difference will help you evaluate the writing. Can you identify the reasons and evidence that the author provides? If so, do those reasons and evidence clearly support the author’s point of view?

Read and reread the prompt. Highlight or underline what it is asking. Decide exactly what is being asked and is expected from you in your response. You don’t want to write a long essay only to realize that you didn’t address all parts of the question. Read the prompt below.

How does the writer build an argument in favor of wearing seatbelts while riding in any vehicle? Provide facts included in the article to support your response.

Notice that the prompt asks for facts from the article, not opinions. So, if the passage includes opinions, then you have to distinguish the facts from the opinions. Also, the prompt asked for facts from the text. You may know additional facts about seatbelts or you may have your own opinions about their use; neither of these is needed, or wanted, according to this prompt.

Responses to informational texts may require you to do a lot of thinking and reasoning before you actually start to write. Your essay should look like the informational texts that you often read. Include an introduction and a conclusion, as well as supporting paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting details. Cite details, examples, and quotations from the article to strengthen your response. These provide evidence, or proof, that shows how and why you formed your conclusion.
If you are asked to compare more than one text, make sure to distinguish between the texts that you quote. Read the following short response.

Many teachers have differing opinions about the assigning of homework. According to Mr. Parker, “Homework teaches responsibility. Students should have at least thirty minutes of homework every night.” However, the second opinion piece that we read by Mrs. Evans was dramatically different. According to her, “Students work hard in school all day. Their evening hours should be devoted to family and recreation.”

Each quote is credited to its specific author. This makes it easy for the reader to know where you obtained your evidence.

Suppose you read an article about ice hockey. Here is a prompt relating to it.

Identify the details that the author uses to support the main idea that hockey is a physically intense, fast-paced sport.

Though this prompt is short, it requires a number of things for you to do. First, confirm the main idea. Next, identify the details that the author uses to support the main idea. By highlighting, underlining, or taking notes before you start writing, you can identify the important information for your response. Then you can organize your ideas and evidence by using a graphic organizer. Look at the graphic organizer below.
Cavities can be prevented by practicing good dental health. Some of the most important things you can do to prevent cavities can be done right in your own home. First, brush your teeth at least twice a day. Brush after breakfast and before bed. Then, floss at least once a day. Flossing removes all the food particles that get caught between teeth or in the gums. Leftover food causes cavities and bad breath! Another preventative measure is to schedule dental visits every six months. The staff will clean your teeth and remove any plaque buildup that you may have.

1. What are three things you can do to prevent cavities? Use specific examples from the passage in your answer.

   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

   HINT Look for clue words in the passage, such as first, then, and another, that help you identify the three activities.

2. Write a paragraph expressing your opinion about dental health. Use facts from the passage, as well as examples from your own life.

   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

   HINT Think about your personal experience. For example, maybe you brushed your teeth regularly twice a day, every day, and still got six cavities. You may have a different opinion than someone who never gets cavities without brushing regularly.
Getting the Idea

A writer does not usually hand in his or her first attempt at writing. A draft is one of the first versions of a writer’s work. A writer may make more than one draft before he or she is ready to hand in the work. In the first attempt you make to write a paper, your goal is to list the information you want to provide. Because you are focusing on getting the information down on paper, you are likely to make errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. It is also common for a first draft to include errors in clarity, meaning that what you have written is not exactly what you meant to say. After you have finished your first draft, you need to review, evaluate, and revise it.

A writer can revise a draft to make it better. When you revise, you read your draft carefully and make improvements. If you’re writing an argument, you might switch paragraphs so that your strongest supporting point comes first. If you’re writing a story, you might change the order of events to increase suspense. You might also come across a point about which you have more to say. Maybe there is an additional detail you want to add, or maybe you want to further justify or describe something. When you have more to say, you will want to add a sentence or several sentences. When you do this, be sure to read the paragraph completely first. Then insert the new sentence, or sentences, where you feel they make the most sense. In some cases, you might take out a sentence, if you feel it gives unnecessary information.

You might also want to choose a better word to express your idea. Remember, you are familiar with your topic, but your readers may not be. So clarity is very important. If you’re writing about geology, for instance, you might want to say quartz instead of rock, or trilobite instead of fossil. Ask another classmate or your teacher to read your draft. Their feedback can help you decide what needs to be revised.
**Editing** is the process of preparing your paper for its final draft. This means that when you edit, you change the way in which you present information, to help ensure clarity.

Proofreading is a basic part of editing. **Proofreading** is the process of reading your writing and looking for errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Here are some pointers that will help you as you proofread:

Be careful not to confuse *it’s* and *its*. *It’s* is the contraction for *it is*. *Its* is the possessive form of *it*.

- Incorrect: Its awfully hot outside, for September.
- Correct: It’s awfully hot outside, for September.
- Incorrect: The dog chased it’s tail for a while and then bit my leg.
- Correct: The dog chased its tail for a while and then bit my leg.

Don’t confuse *their*, *they’re*, and *there*. *Their* is the possessive of *they*. *They’re* is the contraction for *they are*. *There* is a pronoun used to indicate a specific place.

- Incorrect: There leaving they’re backpacks their, but they’ll be back for them later.
- Correct: They’re leaving their backpacks there, but they’ll be back for them later.

Be sure that sentences end with the proper punctuation mark.

- Incorrect: Do you know the way to Fernando’s Hideaway!
- Correct: Do you know the way to Fernando’s Hideaway?

Editing also involves checking for mistakes in grammar or sentence structure. You might, for instance, check for subject-verb agreement. A singular subject must be followed by a singular form of a verb.

- Incorrect: He go to the same restaurant for breakfast every morning.
- Correct: He goes to the same restaurant for breakfast every morning.

You should also avoid run-on sentences. These should be broken up into smaller sentences, or they should be shortened with conjunctions.

- Incorrect: We went to the mall and we went to the movies and we went to the zoo.
- Correct: We went to the mall, the movies, and the zoo.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

A submarine is a vessel, or ship, that can go underwater. Submarines are called “subs” for short. The words submarine, sandwiches, and substitute are also sometimes shortened to sub. Militaries and scientists use submarines to travel deep under the ocean. The Turtle was the first submarine used in combat. David Bushnell designed it to sink British ships during the American Revolutionary War. David Bushnell also designed other weapons.

Which details do NOT belong in the paragraph? Why?

Reread the paragraph. Look for details that have nothing to do with the rest of the paragraph. Remember, all details should support the main idea.

Discuss your answers with a partner. Do you both agree on what the main idea of the paragraph is?
Read the passage and answer the questions.

(1) Elizabeth Coleman, later known as Bessie Coleman, was a famous African American aviation pioneer born on January 26, 1893, in Texas. (2) As a child, she was very good in math. (3) When she grew older, she became fascinated by aviation. (4) However, it was hard for her to get into aviation school because many of these schools did not accept African Americans. (5) There were a lot of aviation schools at that time. (6) When she was twenty-seven, she started aviation training in France. (7) She got her pilot’s license in 1921. (8) She was the first woman to get this license. (9) She became an expert stunt flier and parachutist. (10) In 1921, she became the first African American woman to make a public flight. (11) She became a very popular stunt flier in America, where they’re weren’t many female fliers. (12) Sadly, Coleman died in a plane crash in 1926.

1. Which is the correct way to write sentence 11?
   
   A. She became a very popular stunt flier in America, where their weren’t many female fliers.
   
   B. She became a very popular stunt flier in America, where there weren’t many female fliers.
   
   C. She became a very popular stunt flier in America, where there aren’t many female fliers.
   
   D. She became a very popular stunt flier in America, where they’re weren’t many female fliers.

2. Which sentence in the passage is unnecessary?
   
   A. sentence 5
   
   B. sentence 6
   
   C. sentence 7
   
   D. sentence 9

HINT Watch out for words that sound alike but are spelled differently.
Finding facts and other information in books, encyclopedias, and newspapers is called **research**. The materials where you find information are called **resources**. You can also use digital resources, such as Web sites and online encyclopedias. Writing often requires research. If you are writing a narrative set in colonial times, you might research how people talked and dressed in that period to make your story more realistic. If you are writing an opinion piece about a landmark that is being torn down, you might find out about the history of the landmark. If you were writing an informational paper about the life of a famous artist, you’d find biographical information to put in the paper.

When you are researching your topic, you should never rely on one source for all of your information. That source may not have the most current information. It may also be unreliable. Use at least two reference sources. Make sure the references are trustworthy. You don’t want to put opinions or incomplete facts in a research paper.

As you know, when you read books and passages, you find lots of important and useful information. To help yourself remember key ideas and facts, you can take notes. When you take notes, don’t try to write down everything from the passage. Notes should include important concepts, or ideas. Ask yourself, “What is this passage mainly about?” or “What is this paragraph mainly about?” If the passage explains how to do or make something, take notes on the steps in the process. Remember to **paraphrase** the information, or express it in your own words.

Before you write, organize your notes. As you learned, webs can be used to sort notes and ideas by importance. Start with the topic in the center. Then branch out to the topic’s main ideas. Draw more branches to add supporting details. For informational writing, ask **who**, **what**, **where**, **when**, **how**, and **why** questions to fill the web. For persuasive writing, each part of the web will be a reason that supports your opinion.
An outline is another way to help you get organized. An **outline** lists your ideas in the order you plan to write about them. An outline will help to keep track of main ideas and facts that have been gathered. Each main idea will be a heading. Put supporting details under each main idea and place smaller details under each supporting detail. An outline can look something like this:

I. Photography
   
   **A. History**
   
   1. The first black-and-white photograph was taken in 1826.
   2. Color photography was made available to the public in 1907.
      
   a. Instant color film was invented in 1963.
   b. Digital cameras are popular today.

   **B. Uses of Photography**
   
   1. People keep pictures of family members in photo albums.
   2. Museums often have artistic photographs in their exhibitions.

When you are doing research, you need to keep track of all the resources you use in your writing. A **bibliography** is a listing of the resources used for a written project. Here are some sample bibliographic entries:

**A Book by a Single Author**


(Author) (Title of work) (City) (Publisher) (Year)

**A Book by More Than One Author**


(Authors) (Title of Work) (City) (Publisher) (Year)

**A Magazine Article**


(Author) (Title of article) (Name of publication) (Date of issue) (Page numbers)
Thinking It Through

Read the following bibliography, and then answer the question that follows.


Based on the bibliography, what is the topic of the research report?

HINT Reread the entries. What do they have in common?

DISCUSS Do some research in the library about a topic you are interested in. Choose two sources, and write bibliography entries for them like the ones you learned about in this lesson. Share your bibliography in a group.
Read the passage and answer the questions.

A volcano is a kind of mountain. An opening inside it stretches far beneath Earth’s surface. At the bottom of that opening is a pool of liquid, which is actually melted rock. Pressure sometimes builds up at that depth. When the pressure is strong enough, it may push gas and rock through the opening in an eruption. Eruptions can have various results. They can cause mudslides, floods, avalanches, earthquakes, and other natural disasters.

The most active volcanoes in the United States are found in Hawaii and Alaska. However, they may also be found in California, Oregon, Montana, or Washington. Mount St. Helens, in Washington, erupted on May 18, 1980, killing fifty-eight people and causing over a billion dollars in property damage. The area within twenty miles of a volcano is considered highly dangerous.

1. Take notes on paragraph 1.

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   HINT What is the paragraph mainly about?

2. Take notes on paragraph 2.

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   HINT Are there any important dates, events, or facts that you should take notes on?
Capitalization is the use of capital letters at the beginning of sentences and certain kinds of words. Capital letters, or uppercase letters, are used only in certain situations. For example, all proper nouns are capitalized. A **proper noun** is a word that names a particular person, place, or thing. Capital letters are mostly used at the beginnings of the following words:

- words that begin a sentence
- proper names (Robert, Donna, Uncle Willie, Smith, Johnson)
- geographical places (Mississippi, Chicago, Gulf of Mexico, Rocky Mountains)
- historical periods (Middle Ages, the Jurassic Period)
- days and months (Thursday, October)
- holidays (Veteran’s Day, Columbus Day)
- personal titles before a person’s name (Dr., Mr., Mrs.)
- organizations (Girl Scouts, Red Sox)
- abbreviations and acronyms (in this case, all letters are usually capitalized—for example, FBI, YMCA, or NAACP)
- first and last word in a title, and other important words (*The Wind in the Willows*, *Little House on the Prairie*)
- the greeting of a letter (Dear Patricia)
- the closing of a letter (Yours truly)
- proper adjectives (Florida oranges, American flag)
- the pronoun *I* (referring to oneself)
Read the following sentences. Write them correctly on the lines provided. If the sentence is correct, write “correct as is.”

1. Mr. and mrs. sabrowski visited the grand canyon last summer.

   HINT Words that name a particular person, place, or thing should be capitalized.

2. in class, Ty presented a report. it was on the Revolutionary War.

   HINT Words that begin a sentence should be capitalized.

3. Dr. Adams told My Mother to eat healthier.

4. Alix grew up in miami, florida.

5. Aunt Sharon flew into town on President’s Day.

6. Ms. Romero told Me to submit my book report after i revise the errors.


8. Mrs. Andrews studied the stone age in College.
Spelling is the correct arrangement of letters in a word. Different letters can make the same sound—as in here and hear. The same letters can make different sounds—as with ou in bought, bounce, and tour. Here are some general rules and hints you can follow to spell correctly.

- When adding a suffix beginning with a vowel to a word ending with a silent e, drop the e.
  
  Example: The noun form of behave is behavior.

- When adding a suffix beginning with a consonant to a word ending with a silent e, keep the e.
  
  Example: The adverb form of rare is rarely.

- When pluralizing nouns that end in s, z, x, sh, or ch, add -es.
  
  Example: The plural of dish is dishes.

- When pluralizing nouns ending in y, drop the y and add -ies.
  
  Example: The plural of body is bodies.

- When pluralizing nouns ending with f, change the f to v and add -es.
  
  Example: The plural of shelf is shelves.

- When a one-syllable word ends in a consonant after one vowel, double the final consonant before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel.
  
  Example: bat becomes batting, batted, batter.

- If the word has more than one syllable, but the emphasis is on the final syllable, the same rule applies: double the final consonant.
  
  Example: occur becomes occurred, occurring.

A word can be broken into syllables. A syllable is the smallest unit of sound in a word that contains at least a vowel or a vowel and a consonant. Look at these two words:

in • for • ma • tion

mol • e • cule

Breaking a word into parts can help you spell it correctly.
Thinking It Through 2

Read the following sentences. Write them correctly on the lines provided. If the sentence is correct, write “correct as is.”

1. Their nieghbor bakes cookies every Saturday.

   HINT: To determine whether to use *ie* or *ei*, think about how the word sounds. Words with a long *e* are spelled *ie*.

2. Instead of putting a whole slice of cheddar on the bread, Alice decided to shred the cheese.

   HINT: The same letters can make different sounds, and different letters can make the same sound.

3. Allison was ecstatic when she received an award at school.

4. Because Ron barly made the team, he worked harder than his other teammates.

5. The pack of wolfs ran in the snow.

6. Corrine spilled a bucket of water when she mopped the floor.

7. After he finished moving, Timothy had to flaten the moving boxxes.

8. Rosy was full of greif after a theif broke into her house and stole her computer.
Getting the Idea

**Punctuation** marks make sentences easier to understand. **Exclamation points (!)** end sentences that show excitement or strong emotion. **Periods (.)** end sentences that are more declarative or informational.

Two common punctuation marks with complex uses are commas and quotation marks.

A **comma (,)** indicates a pause in a sentence. Commas are used after introductory words. For example: *Later, we all went out for ice cream.* They set off the words *yes* and *no* (as in *Yes, I’ll have more mashed sweet potatoes. No, I’ve never liked Brussels sprouts.*) They are used to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (as in *It’s pretty outside, don’t you think?*) They are also used to set off a direct address from the rest of the sentence. We use direct address when we name the person we are speaking to in a sentence. For example: *Karen, you are my favorite cousin.*

Commases are used when linking ideas or phrases with conjunctions, such as *and, or, or but.* For example: *Sherman went to the laboratory, and then he went back home.* Commas are used when you are listing several items in a series. For example: *Cindy plays soccer, basketball, handball, racquetball, pinball, and squash.* They are also used in dates, to separate a year from a day of the month. For example: *January 1, 2009.*

**Quotation marks (“ ”)** are most commonly used to enclose the exact words of a speaker. For example: *“Do you want to go to the dentist?” asked Ricky.* Ricky’s exact words are *“Do you want to go to the dentist?”* so the quotation marks should appear around those words. Now read this sentence. *“I am going to the dentist,” said Ricky.* The spoken words *“I am going to the dentist”* would normally end in a period. Because these words are in a quotation, the period should be replaced with a comma, inside the quotation marks. The words *said Ricky* follow them, and are not in quotation marks. If that statement were at the end of the sentence, the statement would end with a period, inside the quotation marks. What’s the mistake in this sentence? *“I turned the air conditioner off because my toes were numb.” said Jaime.* The period after *numb* needs to be replaced with a comma.
Thinking It Through 1

Read the following sentences. Write them correctly on the lines provided. If the sentence is correct, write “correct as is.”

1. Angelina likes to read poetry, fables, and, science, fiction novels.

   
   HINT: Commas are used after each item in a list.

2. “Shania, are you going to the movies tonight? she asked.”

   
   HINT: Remember, quotation marks go around the words a speaker says.

3. Yes I, would like to join you on Thursday.

4. Bicycles, skateboards, and scooters are very popular in school.

5. Last month she forgot, her keys and was locked out of the house.

6. I was thinking of going to the beach what, do you think?

7. Ice cream, popsicles, and, frozen, yogurt are good treats in the summer.

Quotation marks will appear elsewhere in your writing and in the books you read. Quotation marks are also used around the titles of:

- articles
- short stories
- poems
- chapters in books
- songs

This means that you would use quotation marks when referring to the name of any of these types of writing. Look at the examples below.

I read an article entitled “Retracing the Path” in today’s newspaper.

My favorite poem is “Hiawatha.”

They all sang “Ding Dong, the Witch Is Dead” together.

Open your books to Chapter 4, “Algae and You.”

Titles of longer written works are italicized or underlined. In a printed text, or a paper you write on a computer, titles should be italicized. When writing by hand or using a typewriter, you underline anything that would normally be in italics. Longer written works include: books, full-length plays, films, and periodicals.

*Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* is my older sister’s favorite movie.

My brother’s school performed the play *Romeo and Juliet*.

*Movies Monthly* printed a review of *Anchor in the Sea*, the movie based on the novel *Mysterious Lights below the Bering Sea*. 
Thinking It Through 2

Read the following sentences. Write them correctly on the lines provided. If the sentence is correct, write “correct as is.”

1. In class, we read the short poem *Laughter Never Fades*.

   **HINT** Only titles of longer works, like novels, should be italicized.

2. “Electronics Monthly” and “Pet Fashion” were two magazines in the doctor’s office.

   **HINT** Unlike magazine titles, articles from magazines should be placed in quotation marks.

3. Evelyn’s mom wrote a book called *Bakers at Dawn*.


5. The new issue of “Gourmet Today” had a great article called “How to Cook Squash.”

6. His favorite poem in the book *The Pictures* is *Birds in the Morning*.

7. Felicia’s band wrote a song called “The Sun Falls Down” about the novel *Winter Sunset*.

8. My brother wrote an article called *Painting Landscapes* in the latest issue of “Movies Today” about the movie “Desert Skies Forever.”
A verb is a word that shows action, how two things are connected, or a state of being. Verb tense is the time when the action takes place.

**Past tense:** The action has already happened. *We traveled.*

**Present tense:** The action is happening right now. *We travel.*

**Future tense:** The action is going to happen. *We will travel.*

The perfect tense shows action already completed. This tense is formed with the appropriate tense of the verb *to have*, plus the past tense of the verb.

**Present Perfect:** Present tense of *to have* plus past tense of a verb. *Lucy has traveled.*

**Past Perfect:** Past tense of *to have* plus past tense of a verb. *Lucy had traveled.*

**Future Perfect:** Future tense of *to have* plus past tense of a verb. *Lucy will have traveled.*

When writing, it is very important to make verb tenses agree. If a writer shifts tense for no reason, this can confuse the reader.

**Conjunctions** are words that connect two words or thoughts in a sentence. Some common conjunctions are *and*, *or*, *either*, *neither*, *nor*, *but*, *for*, *so*, and *yet*. Use conjunctions to connect adjectives, phrases, and main clauses.

A preposition is a word that links nouns, called *objects*, to other words in a sentence. Some common prepositions are: *above*, *by*, *in*, *to*, *after*, *for*, *of*, *through*, *around*, *from*, *on*, and *with*. Together, the preposition and the object form a **Prepositional phrases**. Prepositional phrases describe nouns or verbs. They often indicate directions, or describe motion more precisely. (Bring me the book *on the table.*)

An interjection is a word or phrase that shows strong feeling. Interjections are sometimes set off from the rest of the sentence by an exclamation point. (Wow!)
Read the following sentences. Write them correctly on the lines provided. If the sentence is correct, write “correct as is.”

1. They will have baked a dozen cookies last week.

   **HINT** In the future perfect tense, action is completed in relation to the future.

2. Wyatt wanted to walk the dog and he had to finish his homework first.

   **HINT** How does the conjunction connect the two sentences? Are the two verbs in the sentence the same tense?

3. We will have sleep well after we have hiked for hours.

4. She had played basketball with her teammates already that day.

5. Whoa you’re driving too quickly.

6. They after dinner watch a movie.

7. Alex walked his dog over the block.

8. Carefully carried the heavy box, making sure it did not fall.
An independent clause is a phrase with a subject and predicate. It can stand alone. For example: Jeannie jogs every day. A simple sentence has one subject and at least one predicate. In the sentence “The popsicle melts quickly,” popsicle is the subject and melts is the verb. The predicate is melts quickly.

Sometimes writers create a run-on sentences—long sentences that should really be two or more sentences. For example, “A lever is a simple machine levers can be used to help lift objects” runs two thoughts together. Change a run-on sentence into two simple sentences: A lever is a simple machine. Levers can be used to help lift objects. You could also add a conjunction to join the parts of the sentence: A lever is a simple machine which can be used to help lift objects.

Sometimes, you may find a sentence fragment, a sentence missing a subject or a verb which does not express a complete thought. Either add words to complete the sentence or combine the fragment with another sentence. “Under the dark sky” does not express a complete thought. Correct a sentence fragment by adding a subject and a predicate, like this: They wandered under the dark sky.

You can also combine a sentence fragment with another sentence, using a comma and a conjunction: They wandered under the dark sky, and then they slowly went home.

Another way is to rephrase the thoughts by fitting them into one sentence. For example: The box of cereal in the cupboard. It was full this morning, but now it is empty. “The box of cereal in the cupboard” is a sentence fragment. Here is one way to rephrase it: The box of cereal in the cupboard was full this morning, but now it is empty.

Sometimes several small complete sentences may occur next to each other. These sentences may make sense by themselves, but they have a choppy rhythm. To make them read more smoothly, combine them with appropriate punctuation and conjunctions. Be sure that the new sentence has the same essential meaning as the originals.
Read the following sentences. Write them correctly on the lines provided. If the sentence is correct, write “correct as is.”

1. Gina and Gabby hurriedly unwrapped the popsicles Gina likes cherry-flavored popsicles.

2. Thomas and Janet baked different muffins. Blueberry, bran, and raspberry.

3. Covered in sweat, he ran around the track under the blazing sun.

4. The energetic boys and girls in the playground.

5. Roman and Ben went camping. They camped by the lake. There were a lot of mosquitoes at the lake.

6. Letitia walked to the store. While she was there, she bought eggs, milk, and lettuce.

7. Arturo and Crystal stayed up all night. Watched a scary movie.

8. While Angel and Carol looked in the garage, Darius went through the kitchen looking for the missing keys the keys belonged to Angel’s mom.
If you find a word you don’t know, you can always check for context clues. **Context clues** are words or phrases surrounding an unknown word that give hints about its meaning. The way a word is used in a sentence may also be a context clue. Consider this example:

My friend Joy loves playing squash. I often see her heading for the indoor courts, racquet in hand.

The passage says that Joy loves “playing squash.” From context clues, it is clear that squash is a game, because people play games. The next sentence says that squash involves “courts” and a “racquet.” These two words are connected with sports.

Here are five different kinds of context clues.

- **definition** The author explains the word’s meaning.
  
  Jill’s old computer is *obsolete*. It is no longer useful.

- **antonym** The author gives an example to show the opposite meaning of a word.

  The story didn’t make sense, and the ideas seemed confused. There wasn’t a single *lucid* thought in it.

- **synonym** The author gives another word that has a similar meaning to the unknown word.

  The trees were heavily covered with *foliage*, or leaves.

- **restatement** A restatement clue sums up an idea.

  Lake George was *halcyon* that morning. Not a single movement rippled its surface.

- **example** The author provides specific examples of the unknown word.

  Dinner included many *delicacies*, such as squab, truffles, oysters, and escargot.
As always, you can check the meaning of unfamiliar words in the dictionary. This will help you to be sure you have used context clues correctly.

**Multiple-meaning words** are words that are spelled the same but have more than one meaning. The word *cut*, for example, can mean “to slice something into pieces.” It can also mean “a wound or an injury.” When you come across a word with multiple meanings, use context clues to figure out the right definition. Read this sentence.

> A winter storm was blowing snow everywhere.

A storm can be a very dramatic weather event (“The storm went on all afternoon”). Or it can be a verb, meaning to attack suddenly and ferociously (“The army stormed the dark castle, knowing they were deciding their fate”). Look at the clues. The storm is described as being a winter storm. The sentence also mentions snow, so we know the word *storm* has something to do with weather. You can guess that the first definition of *storm* is used here.

Some multiple-meaning words are spelled the same but are pronounced differently. These words are called **homographs**. Read this sentence.

> If you address a letter to the wrong address, it will probably not get there.

The first *address* is a verb, or action word, that means “to mark with a destination.” When you say this word aloud, the stress is on the second syllable. The second *address* is a noun that means “a specific location.” The stress on this word is on the first syllable.

Another way to tell the definition of a multiple-meaning word is to look at how the word is used. Is the word a verb (an action word)? Is it a noun (a person, place, or thing)? Is it an adjective (a descriptive word)? Choose the usage that makes the most sense in the sentence.
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

To stop the spread of infectious diseases, doctors recommend that sick people cover their mouths when they sneeze. If people don’t cover their mouths, they spread their germs and give other people their cold.

What does the word infectious mean? Which words from the paragraph help you figure out the meaning of infectious?

HINT Reread the paragraph. Think about how the word is used here.

DISCUSS Use the word infectious in a new sentence. Share your sentence in a group.
Lesson 26: Determining Word Meanings

Read the passage and answer the questions.

I was walking downtown with my mother when we found two little birds on the sidewalk. They must have plummeted from their nests, but when we looked up all we saw were tall buildings. I wanted to bring them home, but my mother refused. “No, we don’t know how to take care of birds,” she said.

I beseeched her until she finally agreed. On our way home, we passed by the pet shop and stopped to buy some bird food. Surprisingly, my mother was much more interested in feeding the birds than I was. She helped nurse them back to health by feeding them and keeping them warm. We brought them downtown and released them in a park near the place where we had found them.

1. The word plummeted means
   A. flew.
   B. fell.
   C. rose.
   D. looked.

   **HINT** Look at the words and sentences around plummeted. Which of the choices could replace plummeted?

2. Which phrase from the passage helps you figure out the meaning of beseeched?
   A. “until she finally agreed”
   B. “‘know how to take care of birds’”
   C. “to buy some bird food”
   D. “my mother was much more interested”

   **HINT** How is beseeched being used in the sentence? Which of the choices helps you figure out how beseeched is being used?
When you read, you need to pay attention to what type of words are used. The language, or words, you read change depending on the subject. For example, you might notice that the words used in this book are different than the words used in your science and social studies books. Each subject uses words that have meanings that are special to that subject. You will come across many words that you won’t know. Sometimes, you will come across a word you do know being used differently than what you’ve read before. That’s because sometimes the same word may have different meanings.

Think about the word state. When you read science texts, the word state stands for a condition or stage in the physical being of something. But, when you read social studies texts, the word state can mean a territory or a political organization. The same word can have different uses and meanings.

Read these two passages.

**Axis Grids**

You encounter axis grids more often than you might think. An axis grid is a chart with at least one horizontal line and one vertical line in it. The horizontal line, which runs from left to right, is the x-axis. The vertical line is called the y-axis. Axis grids are very important in geometry. They also show up in other forms of mathematics. You see axis grids all the time in everyday life. For instance, the next time you see a table in a textbook, look at how it is set up. The heads along the top run along the imaginary x-axis, while the information in the side column could form a y-axis.

**The Axis Powers**

The term “Axis Powers” was used during World War II. It referred to Germany, Italy, and Japan, the three main
countries at war during that time. They made a series of agreements with each other that guaranteed they would help to protect and support each other throughout the conflict. Their enemies were the Allied Powers: the Soviet Union, China, the United States, Great Britain, and France, among other countries.

The two passages are very different in their subjects. They also use identical terms differently. The first passage is about grids in mathematics. The second passage is a social studies text about World War II. The word *axis* is used differently in the passages. In the first passage, the word *axis* refers to a line on a grid. In the second passage, *axis* refers to a group of countries united during a world war.

Since nonfiction texts do not have plots, what keeps you going through the text? A **transition** is a word that helps you go from one sentence or paragraph to the next, showing some relationship between the two. Transitional words are most commonly used to indicate:

- additional information—*also, besides, furthermore, in addition, again.*
- that the following sentence or paragraph is the result of the previous sentence or paragraph—*accordingly, consequently, therefore, thus, as a result.*
- a summary or restatement of the preceding material—*in short, in summary, all in all.*
- a contrast or comparison to the previous sentence or paragraph—*instead, yet, but, however, still, nevertheless.*
- a sequence of events—*next, then, later, earlier, meanwhile, simultaneously.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Sample Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to provide additional information</td>
<td>The test was too hard. <em>Furthermore,</em> we didn’t have enough time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to indicate the following sentence or paragraph is the result of the previous sentence or paragraph</td>
<td>I failed my English test. <em>Therefore,</em> I must repeat the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to give a summary or restatement of the preceding material</td>
<td>The car broke down, we lost our luggage, and the hotel was overbooked. <em>All in all,</em> the vacation was a disaster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to make a contrast or comparison to the previous sentence or paragraph</td>
<td>I don’t want to have chicken for dinner. <em>Instead,</em> I’d prefer roast beef.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to clarify a sequence of events</td>
<td>First, you need to spread peanut butter on one slice of bread. <em>Next,</em> you spread some jam on the other slice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

Modern dance is very hard to define. Many types of dancing fall under the name of modern dance. Some modern dance movements use very diverse elements. They take techniques from Native American, African, and South American dances. Still, other modern dance movements use bits and pieces from ballet and theater.

How is the word elements used in the paragraph? Which words from the paragraph help you figure out the meaning of elements?

HINT Sometimes, words have different meanings in different contexts. Reread the paragraph. What is the paragraph mainly about?

DISCUSS Share your answers with a partner.
Read the passage and answer the questions.

It took a long time before “The New York Stock Exchange” got its name. Over two hundred hundred years ago, in 1792, it was called the “Buttonwood Agreement.” Men used to trade under a huge sycamore tree that they often called the buttonwood tree. In 1817, the organization was given the name “New York Stock and Exchange Board.” The group of New York brokers moved to a building on Wall Street. In the 1830s–1860s, trading increased as America expanded. More money was spent on infrastructure; America was building railroads, canals, and turnpikes all over the country.

In 1863, the “New York Stock and Exchange Board” was changed to “The New York Stock Exchange.” This is the name it still has. In 1903, the organization moved into a specially designed building on Broad Street where trading is still done today.

1. In paragraph 1, the word trade means
   A. a career.
   B. to exchange, buy, or sell.
   C. a custom.
   D. a publication.

   HINT: How is the word being used in the paragraph? Is it a verb or a noun?

2. Which phrase from the passage helps you figure out the meaning of infrastructure?
   A. “as America expanded”
   B. “money was spent”
   C. “railroads, canals, and turnpikes”
   D. “trading increased”

   HINT: Look at the words and sentences around infrastructure. Are specific examples of the unknown word provided?
Getting the Idea

A root is the basic word that another word is made from. A root gives a word its main meaning. Many roots come from Latin or Greek. A base word is a part of a longer word that can stand on its own. We often call base words root words.

An affix is a special group of letters that is added before or after a root. A prefix is an affix added at the beginning of a root word. A suffix is an affix added at the end of a root word. When you understand how affixes change the meaning of a root word, you can figure out what the new word means. To find a root word, look for the “hidden” word that gives the main word its meaning. Sometimes you can see the entire word hidden inside, and other times it may be missing a letter. For example, the -e at the end of a word is often dropped when a suffix is added. Be careful, though. Not every hidden word is the root word. Look at the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>distribute</td>
<td>hand out</td>
<td>trib</td>
<td>pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>describe</td>
<td>tell what something looks like</td>
<td>scrib</td>
<td>write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infamous</td>
<td>having a very bad reputation</td>
<td>fam</td>
<td>glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memorize</td>
<td>learn something by heart</td>
<td>memor</td>
<td>mindful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formative</td>
<td>important to development</td>
<td>forma</td>
<td>make</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each prefix or suffix has its own meaning. When you add the affix to the root word, the meaning of the new word is a combination of the meanings of the root and the affix together. Look at the charts on the next page to see some common prefixes and suffixes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anti-</td>
<td>against, the opposite of</td>
<td>antibacterial—defending against bacteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be-</td>
<td>to make something happen</td>
<td>behold—to put or have something in your line of sight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-</td>
<td>together</td>
<td>cooperate—to act together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counter-</td>
<td>against</td>
<td>counteract—to act against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dis-</td>
<td>the opposite of, not</td>
<td>discourage—to put down, to not encourage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter-</td>
<td>between, among</td>
<td>interoffice—between offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mis-</td>
<td>wrong</td>
<td>misinform—to wrongly inform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-</td>
<td>without</td>
<td>nontoxic—not toxic, not poisonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre-</td>
<td>before</td>
<td>preview—to view before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>re-</td>
<td>again</td>
<td>reevaluate—to think about something again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semi-</td>
<td>partly, half</td>
<td>semicircle—a half circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un-</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>unopened—not yet opened</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-able, -ible</td>
<td>able</td>
<td>edible—able to be eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ation</td>
<td>act or process</td>
<td>imagination—the act of imagining something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er, -or</td>
<td>one who does</td>
<td>teacher—one who teaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>brighter—more bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-est</td>
<td>most</td>
<td>funniest—most funny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ful</td>
<td>full</td>
<td>mindful—full of awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ian</td>
<td>from, relating to</td>
<td>Italian—a person from Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ic</td>
<td>consisting of, relating to</td>
<td>Icelandic—relating to Iceland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ion</td>
<td>act of doing something</td>
<td>election—act of electing someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-less</td>
<td>without</td>
<td>clueless—without a clue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ly</td>
<td>in a certain way</td>
<td>loudly—in a loud way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ment</td>
<td>state of doing something</td>
<td>engagement—state of being engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ous</td>
<td>full of something</td>
<td>mysterious—full of mystery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ward</td>
<td>in a direction</td>
<td>downward—in a down direction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

Yoga was once thought of as a specialized Eastern practice. Today, however, yoga is practiced by millions of people in the United States alone. Practicing yoga helps many people reduce stress in their lives. People are also realizing the health benefits of yoga. From lowering blood pressure to reducing pain from spinal misalignment, yoga does wonders for the body.

What is the root word in misalignment? How do the prefix and suffix change the meaning of the word?

With a partner, think of three words with the prefix mis- (for example: mismanage) and three words with the suffix -ment (for example: treatment). What do the words mean? Share your ideas with the class.
Read the passage and answer the questions.

There is a redwood tree so big that you can drive right through it! When people visit The Redwood National and State Parks in Northern California, they often say things like: amazing! incredible! unbelievable! Imagine a 35-story building in your town, and that is how tall some redwood trees are. The redwood seed is no bigger than a tiny tomato seed, and yet the trees can grow up to 367 feet high and 22 feet wide. They can live up to 2,000 years; most live up to 600 years. According to the U.S. National Park Service, the ancestors of today’s coastal redwoods grew in the Jurassic Era. (The Jurassic Era was 160 million years ago.) These trees live long because they are very near to the coast. This keeps them safe from fire and drought because of the moisture coming off of the Pacific Ocean. They are also free from infection and insects because of the wood’s composition.

1. What is the root word in unbelievable?
   A. lie
   B. able
   C. believe
   D. un

   **HINT** Remember, to find a root, look for the "hidden" word that gives the main word its meaning.

2. What is the suffix in infection?
   A. infect
   B. in
   C. ection
   D. ion

   **HINT** The suffix is the end part of a word.
Idioms, Adages, and Proverbs

Getting the Idea

Literary devices are tools the author uses to make his or her writing interesting and enjoyable to read. One common tool is figurative language. Idioms, adages, and proverbs, like other types of figurative language, have a different or deeper meaning than the literal, or actual, meaning.

An idiom is a common figurative phrase. The words of an idiom mean something entirely different from what they seem to mean. For example, “Jenny is on the fence about going to the beach or the movies” does not mean Jenny is actually sitting on a fence. It means she has not made up her mind. The expression on the fence is an idiom meaning “undecided.” Read the following example.

When Jill left, she broke Jack’s heart.

Jill did not physically break Jack’s heart. Instead, when Jill left, Jack felt very sad and lonely. Here are two more examples.

I thought that project was easy. It was a piece of cake!

When I took this job, I bit off more than I could chew.

The actual meaning of the first sentence is that the project was as enjoyable to do as eating a piece of cake. In the second sentence, “bit off more than I could chew” means taking on more work than I could handle.

To understand idioms and figurative phrases, consider the context of a word or phrase. If a phrase seems impossible or silly and does not make sense as it is written, the writer probably means something else.
A **proverb** is a simple and concrete saying popularly known and repeated. Proverbs often express advice based on common sense or practical experience. *Bad news travels fast* and *better late than never* are proverbs that you have probably heard before. They differ from idioms in that their meaning is literal—they mean exactly what they say.

Some proverbs are used metaphorically. For example, a *chain is no stronger than its weakest link*. The meaning is literal, but it is often applied to people or situations.

The basketball team’s poor shooting will hurt them in the playoffs, because a chain is no stronger than its weakest link.

Proverbs are phrases that represent some advice or commonly believed fact. In this case, the proverb means that everyone has to play equally well for good performance in the playoffs.

An **adage** is a saying that has been popularly accepted over a long period of time. It expresses a truth or insight. For example: *Where there’s smoke, there’s fire*. Adages may be interesting observations, practical or ethical guidelines, or comments on life. Adages are very similar to proverbs. In fact, the two are often mistaken for each other. Look at the chart below to see some other examples of proverbs and adages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Proverbs and Adages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actions speak louder than words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A leopard cannot change its spots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birds of a feather flock together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He can’t see the forest for the trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every rose has its thorn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great minds think alike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty is the best policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s no use crying over spilt milk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One man’s trash is another man’s treasure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow and steady wins the race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

Before the discovery of the Rosetta Stone in Egypt in 1799, people could not understand the meaning of Egyptian hieroglyphics. They couldn’t make heads or tails out of them. The symbols did not make any sense. The Rosetta Stone allowed scholars to translate the hieroglyphics into Greek. From the Greek, scholars could then translate into other languages.

Which sentence contains an idiom? What does the idiom mean?

Idioms do not mean what you usually think the words mean. Reread the paragraph and see which words do not mean exactly what they say.

DISCUSS

Which words in the paragraph helped you understand the meaning of the idiom? How else could the sentence have been written? Present your ideas in a group.
Lesson 29: Idioms, Adages, and Proverbs

Read the passage and answer the questions.

When you’re on a bumper car ride at the amusement park, things may seem out of hand. All the crashing and bumping can get a bit crazy at times. Actually, though, the bumper cars are a great way to learn about physics. Your car has an electric pole extending from the back of your car and up to an electric grid in the ceiling. Electric energy travels down to your car and turns into kinetic energy, which causes movement. And that’s where Isaac Newton comes in. He came up with a law of motion. Bumper cars follow that law, believe it or not.

According to Newton’s third law of motion, when two objects interact, there is an action and a reaction. The action happens when one object crashes into another. The second object goes in the opposite direction of the first object. This is the reaction.

So, think about what happens when someone bumps into your bumper car. Your car goes in the opposite direction of the person that hit you, and it travels with the same amount of force. A lot of people get a kick out of this ride, but now you know the science of how it works!

1. Which sentence from the passage contains an idiom?
   A. “When you’re on a bumper car ride at the amusement park, things may seem out of hand.”
   B. “This is the reaction.”
   C. “The action happens when one object crashes into another.”
   D. “He came up with a law of motion.”

2. What does get a kick mean?
   A. to kick somebody
   B. to be kicked by somebody
   C. to have a bad time
   D. to have a good time

HINT Remember, to understand idioms, think about the context.

HINT Idioms mean something entirely different from what the individual words in the phrase mean.
Getting the Idea

Writers choose words with care. Some writers use simple language and short sentences. Some writers use specific language and longer sentences. There are many different ways to say the same thing. A writer has to have a large vocabulary, or set of words he or she knows how to use when writing. A good vocabulary helps a writer express ideas and actions clearly.

**Synonyms** are words that have the same, or almost the same, meaning. For example, the words *speedy* and *quickly* are synonyms because they both mean that something moves fast. The chart below lists some common synonyms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Synonyms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>tiny, small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>huge, large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laugh</td>
<td>chuckle, giggle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wet</td>
<td>damp, moist, soaked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silly</td>
<td>ridiculous, crazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smart</td>
<td>clever, intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretty</td>
<td>beautiful, gorgeous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rich</td>
<td>wealthy, well-off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Antonyms** are words that have the opposite meaning, such as *hot* and *cold*. For words to be antonyms, it is not enough for them to have different meanings—they must have opposite meanings. For example, the words *table* and *chair* are often used as a pair, and they have different meanings. They are not opposites, however, so they cannot be antonyms. The chart on the next page lists some common antonyms.
Identifying synonyms and antonyms can help you build your vocabulary and teach you relationships between words. Synonyms teach you different ways to say the same thing. For example, three synonyms for sad are gloomy, miserable, and heartbroken. These words mean almost the same thing as sad, but there are slight differences between them. Writers often choose between synonyms to show such differences. Heartbroken expresses greater unhappiness than the word sad. In learning synonyms, you will find that words have different shades of meaning. You will find that certain words are more suggestive. They hint or imply certain feelings or ideas that other words do not.

Recognizing and understanding synonyms and antonyms can help readers understand passages with unfamiliar words or phrases. At the same time, understanding synonyms and antonyms can help writers express their thoughts and ideas more precisely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Antonym</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ugly</td>
<td>beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tall</td>
<td>short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inside</td>
<td>outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asleep</td>
<td>awake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difficult</td>
<td>easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happy</td>
<td>sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broken</td>
<td>fixed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking It Through

Read the following paragraph, and then answer the questions that follow.

Surfing is one of the oldest sports practiced on the planet. It involves riding a board along breaking waves by the shore. Early surfboards were very large. Today, surfboards are smaller and lighter. Surfers lie on their stomach and paddle out to the breaking waves. When a tall wave approaches, surfers stand on their boards and ride the wave.

What is an antonym for oldest? What are synonyms for large?

Discuss your answers with a partner. Then find other words in the paragraph, such as early, smaller, lighter, and tall, and come up with synonyms or antonyms for them. Share your ideas in a group.
Coached Example

Read the passage and answer the questions.

There was once a cat named Snowflake. When she was a kitten, she sat at the windowsill and tried to catch the snowflakes coming down. Snowflake lived in a tall apartment building. Consequently, she never went outside, because there wasn’t a yard or patio for her to go out and play. She often sat looking out the window, rain or shine. Snowflake wasn’t distracted by other animal life like other dogs or cats, because she was too far from the sidewalk to even notice them. Sometimes, the chirping of a bird or the squirrels playing in the tall trees caught her eye.

When Snowflake had to move, she was sad and excited. The new house was much larger than the old apartment, and it had a yard. The first week at the new house gave Snowflake plenty of surprises. She played in the flowerbeds and was startled by the barking dog next door. Next, she was attacked by another cat. Then, she got fleas. Now, when she sits by the window, she sees her enemy cats outside and doesn’t know what to do. Poor Snowflake wants to be back in her old apartment!

1. What is a synonym for distracted?
   A. focused
   B. known
   C. bothered
   D. confused

   HINT: Synonyms are words that have the same, or almost the same, meaning. Which of the answer choices could fit in the sentence?

2. The word startled means the opposite of
   A. calmed.
   B. spooked.
   C. amazed.
   D. surprised.

   HINT: Remember, for this question, it is not enough for words to have different meanings. They must have opposite meanings.
Lesson 1
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: Manuel is impatient because he looked at his present before he was supposed to see it.

Coached Example
1. C
2. D

Lesson 2
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: The setting is summertime in a suburban neighborhood. Mowed lawns and barbeques are common in the suburbs.

Coached Example
1. D
2. C

Lesson 3
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: If someone you care about has a problem, try to be helpful.

Coached Example
1. B
2. D

Lesson 4
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: I had never seen so many people at a movie. I tried to move my popcorn out of the way in time, but it was too late!

Coached Example
1. B
2. B

Lesson 5
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: Her heart was pounding like a jackhammer. The sentence is comparing Darcie’s heartbeat to the hard and fast beat of a jackhammer.

Coached Example
1. D
2. C

Lesson 6
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: The girls and boys walked happily into the woods and sat on the grass. Emily brought pears, Michael brought grapes, Stacey brought bread, and the sun brought warmth. A red checkerboard blanket covered the tall grass. Earth was like a many-colored picnic table.

Coached Example
1. D
2. C

Lesson 7
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: They are both gifted. Jason is a good athlete, while Lamar is a good musician.

Coached Example
1. C
2. C
3. Answers will vary. Sample answer: The illustrations in the graphic novel reveal more about the personality of the princess. Her expressions change from curious to surprised as she opens the door to the forbidden room, not knowing what she will find inside.

Lesson 8
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: John Keats was a famous poet.

Coached Example
1. A
2. B

Lesson 9
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: No, the Harlem Renaissance happened because African Americans began to prosper in the 1920s.

Coached Example
1. A
2. D
Lesson 10
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: Glenn Gould was born on September 25, 1932. His first piano teacher was his mother. Then, he attended the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. After leaving the conservatory, he performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Finally, on April 10, 1964, he gave his last public performance in Los Angeles.

Coached Example
1. A
2. B

Lesson 11
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: She wanted to write about the cruelty of slavery. Many people began to see that slavery was wrong after they read the book.

Coached Example
1. C
2. A

Lesson 12
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: Both paragraphs are about storms that take place in the ocean. Both paragraphs also mention typhoons. The first paragraph gives general information about typhoons and hurricanes. The second paragraph, however, gives information about a specific typhoon.

Coached Example
1. C
2. A
3. Answers will vary. Sample answer: Both passages talk about historical figures. They are both organized sequentially.

Lesson 13
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: A social studies textbook would give more information about how a bill becomes a law.

Coached Example
1. B
2. A

Lesson 14
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: Facts: Logging companies support clearcutting. Clearcutting destroys natural habitats. Opinions: However, they are wrong. This harmful process must be stopped.

Coached Example
1. B
2. C

Lesson 15
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: Both passages are about the Hippo Roller. The main idea of the first passage is what the Hippo Roller is like. The main idea of the second passage is that people can buy Hippo Rollers for others. The second passage is about investing in Hippo Rollers to help others, and the first passage describes the Hippo Roller.

Coached Example
1. A
2. B
3. Answers will vary. Sample answer: The passages are different because one tells about the cacao plant and how it grows. The other tells about threats to the cacao plant.

Lesson 16
Coached Example
1. Answers will vary. Sample answer: I feel that every child in every school should have access to computers.
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: I think that animals would be better off in the wild and should not be held in captivity.

Lesson 17
Coached Example
1. Answers will vary. Sample answer: Skinks are a group of lizards that are similar to snakes in many ways.
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: Due process is the idea that the way the government uses the law has to be fair. It makes sure that every person is equal under the law.
process says that the government has to follow the law just like citizens do. Due process protects people from unfair treatment by the government.

Lesson 18
Coached Example
1. Answers will vary. Sample answer: Christie went on a month-long vacation with her parents. Instead of camping in the forest, they decided to rent a house on the Oregon coast. At first, Christie was bored because the only things her parents wanted to do were read books and sleep. But, then one day while she was walking on the beach, she met a friend, Martha. Martha was very spirited. She suggested they go swimming in the frigid Pacific with its rolling breakers.
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: The cold wind whipped against Amiri’s skin. She was standing in the middle of a large field of rolling green grass. She was taking a walk, because she wanted to get away from her family for a while. She was enjoying visiting them, but she needed some time alone. Suddenly, she saw a figure in the distance. The person seemed to be wearing a red jacket, along with a black cap. She wasn’t sure who it was. Then the figure came closer. She saw it was her cousin, Ahmad. She was relieved. She had thought it was going to be her little brother—he had been bothering her all day. She and Ahmad kept walking, talking about what they could do during the rest of the week.

Lesson 19
Coached Example
1. Answers will vary. Sample answer: Matthew and Jason both “loved taking things apart and trying to put them back together.” They both like challenges and solving problems. Matthew is quiet, while Jason “could talk from morning until night.” Matthew “loved anything technical,” while Jason would rather be outside being active.
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: You can’t always judge people by how they seem on the surface.

Lesson 20
Coached Example
1. Answers will vary. Sample answer: There are three things that you can do to prevent cavities. The first is to brush your teeth twice a day. Also, you should floss at least once a day. Finally, you should get a checkup at the dentist every six months.
2. Answers will vary. Sample answer: I know that the experts say to brush your teeth at least twice a day, but I don’t know if that is enough. I’ve always brushed my teeth twice a day since I was old enough to hold a toothbrush, but my dentist finds cavities during every checkup. I think that you really need to brush your teeth more than twice a day.

Lesson 21
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: The following details are unnecessary: Submarines are called “subs” for short. David Bushnell also designed other weapons. These sentences do not support the main idea.

Coached Example
1. B
2. A

Lesson 22
Thinking It Through
The topic of the report is Frank Lloyd Wright.

Coached Example
1. Answers will vary. Sample answer: A volcano is a mountain with an opening through its core. Eruptions occur when pressure builds up from below.

Lesson 23
Thinking It Through
1. Mr. and Mrs. Sabrowski visited the Grand Canyon last summer.
2. In class, Ty presented a report. It was on the Revolutionary War.
3. Dr. Adams told my mother to eat healthier.
4. Alix grew up in Miami, Florida.
5. Correct as is.
6. Ms. Romero told me to submit my book report after I revise the errors.
7. Correct as is.
8. Mrs. Andrews studied the Stone Age in college.

Thinking It Through 2
1. Their neighbor bakes cookies every Saturday.
2. Instead of putting a whole slice of cheddar on the bread, Alice decided to shred the cheese.
3. Correct as is.
4. Because Ron barely made the team, he worked harder than his other teammates.
5. The pack of wolves ran in the snow.
6. Correct as is.
7. After he finished moving, Timothy had to flatten the moving boxes.
8. Rosy was full of grief after a thief broke into her house and stole her computer.

Lesson 24
Thinking It Through 1
1. Angelina likes to read poetry, fables, and science fiction novels.
2. “Shania, are you going to the movies tonight?” she asked.
3. “Yes, I would like to join you on Thursday.”
4. Correct as is.
5. Last month, she forgot her keys and was locked out of the house.
6. I was thinking of going to the beach. What do you think?
7. Ice cream, popsicles, and frozen yogurt are good treats in the summer.
8. Correct as is.

Thinking It Through 2
1. In class, we read the short poem “Laughter Never Fades.”
2. *Electronics Monthly* and *Pet Fashion* were two magazines in the doctor’s office.
3. Correct as is.
5. The new issue of *Gourmet Today* had a great article called “How to Cook Squash.”

Lesson 25
Thinking It Through 1
1. They baked a dozen cookies last week.
2. Wyatt wanted to walk the dog but he had to finish his homework first.
3. We slept well after hiking for hours.
4. Correct as is.
5. Whoa! You’re driving too quickly.
6. They watch a movie after dinner.
7. Alex walked his dog around the block.
8. They carefully carried the heavy box, making sure it did not fall.

Thinking It Through 2
1. Gina and Gabby hurriedly unwrapped the popsicles. Gina likes cherry flavored popsicles.
2. Thomas and Janet baked different muffins, including blueberry, bran, and raspberry.
3. Correct as is.
4. The energetic boys and girls in the playground played a game of foursquare.
5. Roman and Ben went camping by the lake that was filled with mosquitos.
6. Correct as is.
7. Arturo and Crystal stayed up all night and watched a scary movie.
8. While Angel and Carol looked in the garage, Darius went through the kitchen looking for the missing keys. The keys belonged to Angel’s mom.

Lesson 26
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: spreading; spread. Sick people give other people their colds.

Coached Example
1. B
2. A
Lesson 27
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: parts; techniques, bits, pieces.
Coached Example
1. B
2. C

Lesson 28
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: align. The suffix -ment means “the state of,” while the prefix mis- means “wrong.”
Coached Example
1. C
2. D

Lesson 29
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: “They couldn’t make heads or tails out of them.” The idiom means that people could not figure out what the symbols meant.
Coached Example
1. A
2. D

Lesson 30
Thinking It Through
Answers will vary. Sample answer: One antonym for oldest is youngest. Some synonyms for large are big, bulky, and huge.
Coached Example
1. C
2. A