

# Sixth Grade Writing Lesson #1/Narrative Prompt

## Summary

To organize and draft a persuasive paper using a graphic organizer

## Time Frame

3 class periods of 30 minutes each

## Materials

Teacher Materials:

Book for read-aloud and discussion (select one)

- *My Rotten, Redheaded Older Brother*  
, Patricia Polacco
- *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*  
, Judy Blume
- *The Summer of the Swans*  
, Betsy Byars
- "Salvador Late or Early," Sandra Cisneros (short story from *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*)
- *Julius, the Baby of the World*  
, Kevin Henke

Student Materials:

Graphic organizer  
Writing paper  
Pencil

## Instructional Procedures

Discuss with the class the following questions: What does "place in the family" mean? What is your place in the family? How do you feel about your place?

Read aloud from one of the suggested books.

Complete the graphic organizer as a whole class. Using characters from the read-aloud, show how a paragraph with a main idea and supporting details develops.

Model a second graphic organizer for the whole class, using your own life experience.

Ask students to complete their own graphic organizers using one type you have taught and used.

Model for students how to create paragraphs using the information listed in each category on the graphic organizer (using a main idea and 4-5 supporting sentences with details).

Have students draft a persuasive paper using the completed graphic organizer. (Remind students to address the paper to a specific audience.)

Allow students to share excerpts from their drafts with small groups.

With the permission of student writers, place several sample papers on an overhead and discuss them as a class.

Using the Six Traits rubric, have the class score several papers.

Writing Prompt: Everyone has a place in a family. Write a paper telling the reader of the advantages and disadvantages of your place.

## EXAMPLE #1

[Not That Bad!](#) (pdf)

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [5]

The writer uses a personal experience. There are excellent main ideas with supporting details.

The writer shows control of the subject. The writing is enlightening and entertaining.

**ORGANIZATION: [5]**

The writer has produced a solid introduction and conclusion. The details follow the main ideas with effective transitions. The writing is well balanced.

**SENTENCE FLUENCY: [5]**

The writing is natural, powerful, and graceful. Sentences begin differently; some sentences are long and some are short. The writer uses fragments well. Questions lead to explanations.

**WORD CHOICE: [5]**

There are many well-chosen words used accurately; words are also striking but natural.

Expressions are fresh and appealing; there is no slang. Verbs and adjectives are strong and colorful. The writer uses similes to pull the reader in.

**VOICE: [5]**

The writer addresses the audience in a natural way. Similes and metaphors are used naturally, leaving the reader wanting more. There is a connection that comes from "knowing" the writer.

**CONVENTIONS: [5]**

Spelling, punctuation, and quotation marks are used accurately.

**EXAMPLE #2**

[The Oldest](#) (pdf)

**IDEAS AND CONTENT: [5]**

The writer uses a catchy beginning. Ideas are well connected, balanced, and hold the reader's attention. The writer successfully weaves a narrative throughout the paper.

**ORGANIZATION: [5]**

Excellent beginning and conclusion. There are well developed ideas that move from one paragraph to another.

**SENTENCE FLUENCY: [4]**

Sentences are generally well-crafted, but the writer begins several paragraphs the same way.

**WORD CHOICE: [5]**

Words are specific and used accurately. The writer uses strong imagery with similes throughout.

The paper is fresh and captivating.

**VOICE: [5]**

The writer took some risks to put across the story. The language brings life to the writing.

**CONVENTION: [5]**

Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are generally correct. The student has written enough text to demonstrate understanding of conventions.

**EXAMPLE #3**

[Only Child](#) (pdf)

**IDEAS AND CONTENT: [4]**

The writer has a main idea and supporting details. The ideas are connected. The writer has given some specific points, but the content should be stronger.

**ORGANIZATION: [3]**

The introduction and conclusion are weak. Some transitions are effective; others are weak. The pace is good but could have been smoother.

**SENTENCE FLUENCY: [3]**

Sentences are all generally short, but with good beginnings.

**WORD CHOICE: [3]**

Meaning is generally clear, but word choices do not distinguish the paper.

**VOICE: [4]**

The student starts out writing about wanting a brother, but does not sustain the voice.

CONVENTIONS: [3]

There are some spelling errors. Commas are missing, where needed. Several word endings are missing an "s."

EXAMPLE #4

[Are You the Youngest?](#) (pdf)

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [3]

Ideas are not developed thoroughly. The paper lacks depth.

ORGANIZATION: [3]

The paper shows good organization and conclusions, but it lacks effective transitions. Some details confuse rather than clarify.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [3]

Sentences are choppy and simplistic. Variety is missing; most sentences are the same length and start the same way.

WORD CHOICE: [3]

Style is conversational but ineffective. There are vague references rather than precise word choices.

VOICE: [3]

The writing is mundane; it lacks personality.

CONVENTIONS: [3]

Periods and capitals are missing in several sections. Abbreviations are used instead of complete words. Digits are used when numbers should be spelled out.

Authors

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