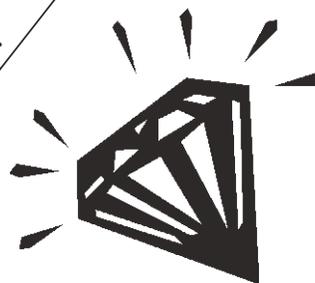
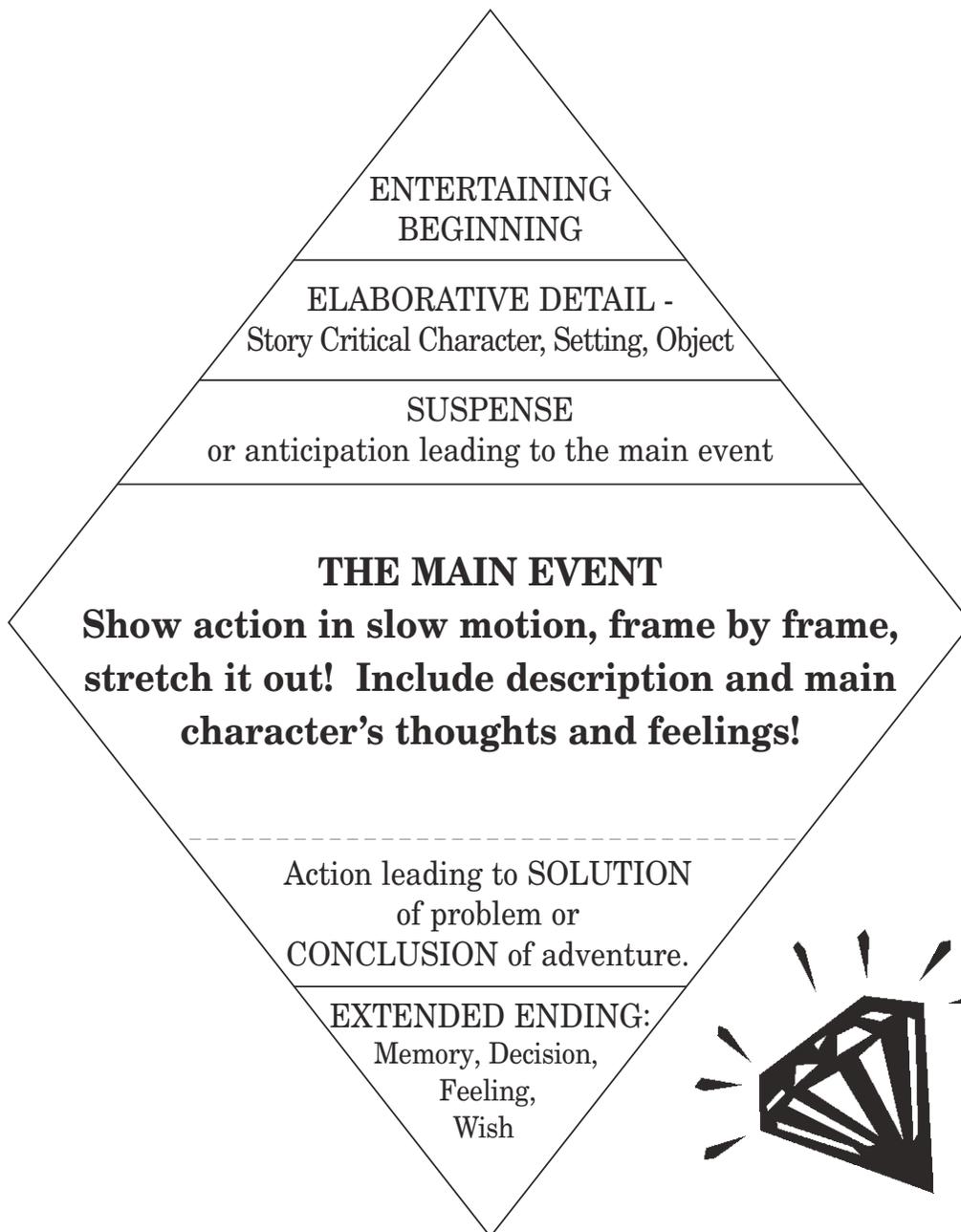


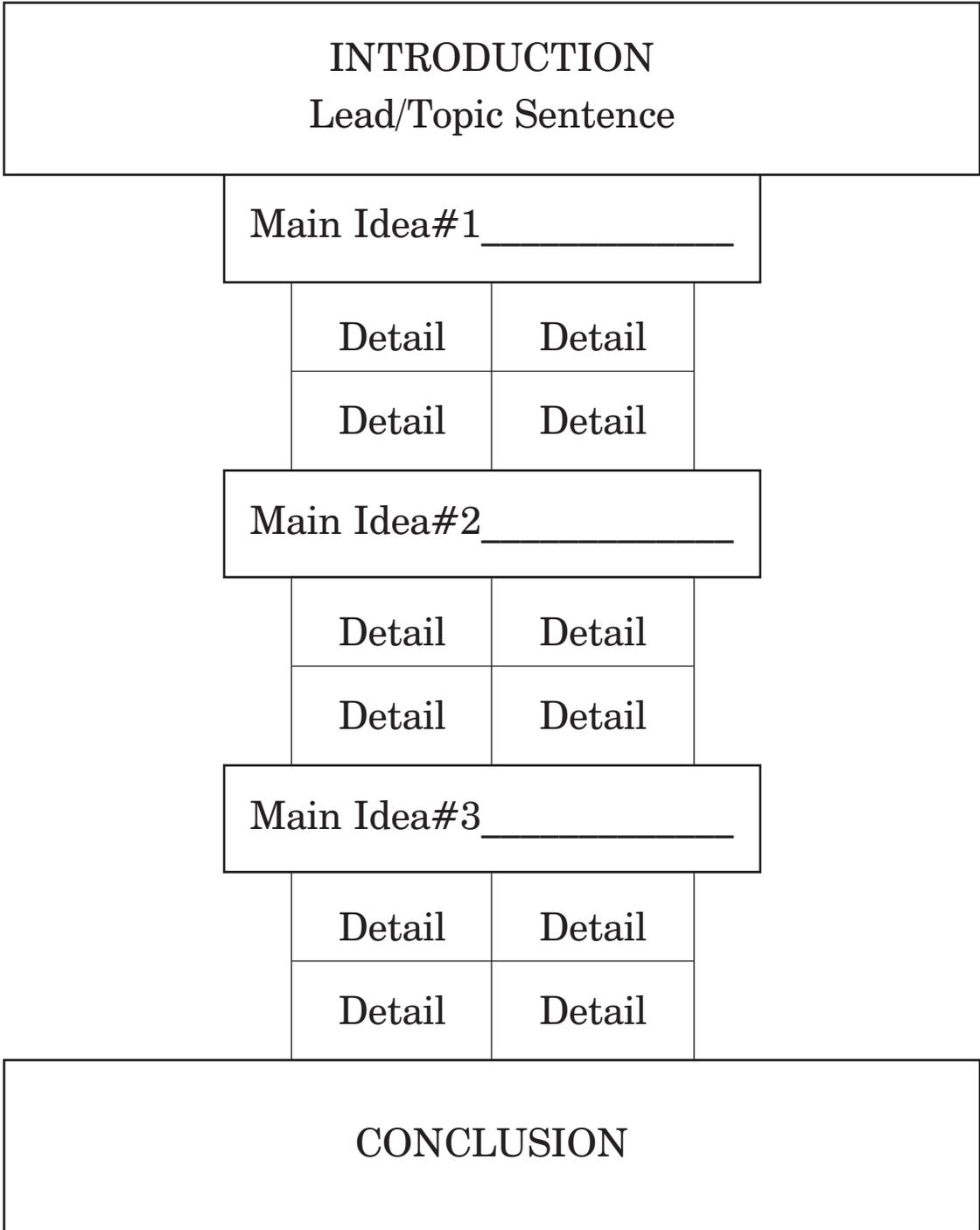
Empowering Narrative Writers



Narrative Writing Diamond



THE EXPOSITORY PILLAR



The Garden School Monster

entertaining beginning

dialogue

story questions

It all started with a dare. "Bet you don't have the guts to sneak down to the basement of the school," Jackson taunted. I regretted my response the moment the words flew from my mouth. "How much you wanna bet?"

description of setting

We'd all heard about the basement of the century old building. It was rumored to be dark as a dungeon and smelled musty and damp. Up in our classrooms we could hear the gigantic old boiler churning and belching. It was like a big mechanical monster hiding in its cave waiting for an unsuspecting student to happen by.

Jackson grinned wickedly. "I'll bet you twenty bucks you won't do it!" He must have been pretty sure of himself.

"Deal!" I said, thinking of what I could buy with that money. The question was, how would I do it? Students weren't allowed down there.

suspense story tension

All day long I worried. Sweat formed on my brow and my knees felt like rubber. I looked at the clock. Five minutes until dismissal. I raised my hand and pointed to the bathroom pass. Miss Tucker nodded. I got up, grabbed the pass, and headed out the door.

I slunk past the boy's room, casting a glance over my shoulder to see if anyone was around. The hall was deserted. I took a deep breath and ran toward the stairwell. Down the first flight, then the second. I hesitated. But there was no turning back. I took hold of the doorknob with trembling hands and slipped through the door. It closed behind me with a swoosh and a clunk. The sounds of the school disappeared as I entered this dim, mysterious inner sanctum. I crept down the stairs, sweaty hand on the railing. It was dark down there, with no light coming in except through the narrow windows along the top of the wall.

main event

Suddenly a coughing, sputtering sound stopped me short. It was followed by a huge whooshing noise - the boiler! At the same time a

(narrative, cont.)

grotesque shadow loomed across my path and danced against the wall. A monster-like silhouette - huge head with wild hair, an enormous nose and protruding jaw, something that looked like a club clenched in its paws. I jumped back into the shadows, my heart racing. The shadowy beast shuffled toward me, closer and closer. I shut my eyes and held my breath, hoping against hope that I wouldn't be detected.

"Ahhhh!" the beast hollered.

"Ahhhh!" I screamed. My eyes flew open.

Mr. Mac, our custodian, stood before me, holding a mop, his other hand over his heart. "What are you doing here?" he cried. "You scared me half to death!"

"I'm sorry!" I gasped. "Jackson dared me to come down here. Kids say that..."

Mr. Mac grinned. "I know what they say. That there's a monster in the basement." He winked at me. "I have an idea..." He pulled out a pair of scissors, and snipped off a few filthy wet strands of yarn from the mop and handed them to me. "Monster hair," he said.

"Thanks Mr. Mac," I answered, and headed up the stairs. As I opened the door I came face-to-face with my class heading to the bus. Jackson stared, wide-eyed. I held up the proof that I'd ventured into the basement. "Monster hair!" I exclaimed. "Time to pay up!"

Miss Tucker glared at me, took me by the shoulder, and marched me toward the office. But, seeing Jackson's surprise made it all worthwhile. As I took a seat in the detention chair I dreamed about how I would spend my twenty bucks!

main event, cont.

conclusion

extended ending

Garden School in the Old Days

introduction

lead-descriptive segment

1) Imagine the sound of the old school bell clanging, and the sight of boys in knickers and suspenders, and girls in pipe curls, long dresses and high button boots, all waiting to file inside. The year was 1902, the year that Garden School opened its doors. School was not the same then - the building and furniture, the way teachers taught, and the school rules were all very different than what we experience today. Let's take a look back at this typical turn of the century school.

2) If you walked into Garden School the day it opened you might be surprised at the building itself and the furniture within. This three story

brick structure had twelve foot high ceilings and each outside classroom wall was lined with rows of huge, paned windows that could only be opened with a long window pole hook. A black chalkboard covered the front wall of each classroom. Student desks were made of oak and came with a hole on the writing surface called an inkwell that held a pot of ink. Each desk was attached to the chair by fancy metal trim. The tops of the desks opened up, so there was no reaching into your desk as you worked! In the back of the class was a cloakroom where students hung their coats and belongings.

3) Teachers taught differently in 1902. Most of the teachers were women and they were very stern. This was a necessity with forty or fifty students in a class! Students had to read aloud from books called primers. They memorized poetry and their math facts in order to improve their powers of memory. Practicing penmanship with a fountain pen was difficult, and students would be punished for spilled ink, stained hands, and splotted papers. To maintain order, desks were arranged in neat rows. Because of the large numbers of students there was little time for individual help. There were no computers, videos, or other modern tools. Instead they depended on books, the blackboard, and pull-down maps to access and list information they needed.

building/furniture

teaching differences

body of the piece

When Garden School opened, schools were much stricter. No one was allowed to talk out of turn or get up without permission. In those days no ~~few~~^{one} recognized the value of peer conversations or cooperative learning. If students broke the rules they might be whacked on the knuckles with a ruler or be made to write an apology on the board a hundred times. A common punishment for either poor behavior or less than acceptable school work was the "dunce cap". The student would sit on a stool in the corner and be forced to wear a large pointed hat. It was meant to embarrass a student in front of his or her peers. Students who misbehaved might be immediately sent home or to the principal's office for a spanking.

rules

body cont.

what does it look like?

why is it important?

Think about your ^{hypothetical anecdote} experience in school. How does it compare to Garden School in 1902? The ^{main idea #1} building and furnishings, the ^{main idea #2} methods of teaching, and the ^{main idea #3} rules all made learning very different than it is now. Can you imagine what school might be like one hundred years in the future?

conclusion

Using These Materials

Using these Materials

An in-depth introduction to each skill area, complete with samples from literature are provided, along with clear lesson plans for each activity.

- **All teacher information and lesson plan pages which precede the student activities are coded with a border of “Apples”.** 
- **Student reproducible reference and activity pages are coded with a border of “Pencils”.** 

The METHODOLOGY we recommend is as follows:

- 1.) **INTRODUCE** the concept or skill through published examples. We recommend that you use examples from literature to demonstrate the specific techniques presented. We provide examples in the text.
- 2.) **MODEL** the technique for the class, “thinking out loud” the thoughts and questions of an author. Specific questioning techniques as well as sample passages and examples are provided within the teacher preparation pages to assist you in this critical step. Students will not demonstrate the skills presented by simply reading, discussing, and analyzing literature. *Modeling is the necessary bridge between recognizing the techniques and applying them.* The various skills are presented and modeled in isolation, allowing the students to focus on a specific technique, without being overwhelmed by the pressure of constantly producing entire pieces of writing. Also, modeling is a powerful vocabulary building opportunity.
- 3.) Numerous **GUIDED PRACTICE** opportunities for students are provided through the use of the reproducible student pages. First, the teacher models the technique highlighted on the student page, asking effective detail generating questions, eliciting thoughtful responses from students, which are then incorporated by the teacher into the model. Students are affirmed in their efforts and then encouraged to try the same activity on their own. They benefit through the teacher’s effective use of vocabulary, language, and the specific technique being modeled. The teacher circulates, commenting on individual examples, encouraging, and assisting where necessary.
- 4.) After numerous **MODELING** and **GUIDED PRACTICE** opportunities the students’ **APPLICATION** of these skills will emerge in examples of both timed and process writing.

PLEASE NOTE: Our copyright agreement allows the purchaser to copy the student activity pages **FOR USE WITHIN HIS OR HER INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOM ONLY.** Copying materials for use in other classrooms or for training purposes is a violation of copyright law. Materials may not be reproduced for use on the internet or beyond the purchaser’s individual classroom. Please pass along the order form in the back of this book to your colleagues who may be interested in using these activities with their students.



Name _____

Starting Off on the Right Foot!



One way to make your writing more interesting and entertaining is by starting off with a great, attention grabbing beginning! Here are some techniques authors use to begin their stories:

1.) AN ACTION - *Put your main character in your setting doing something interesting and relevant to the story.*

Ask: What would you do?

ex. Joey ran full steam ahead across the corral and jumped on the back of the wild stallion!

2.) DIALOGUE - *Have your main character say something.*

Ask: What might you say or exclaim?

ex. "I can't wait to see the Grand Canyon!" I shouted.

3.) A THOUGHT OR QUESTION - *Show the main character's thoughts, or raise a story question.*

Ask: What would you wonder or worry?

ex. I wondered if we'd make it out alive.

4.) A SOUND - *Grab the reader's attention through the use of a sound.*

Ask: What might you hear?

ex. BOOM! Jack flinched as the thunder and lightning rolled in over the hills.

Beginning tips - Begin your story as close to the main event as possible. For example, if it's a story about being marooned on a tropical island, don't begin the story two weeks before you leave, reading through travel brochures. Begin on or near the island. If you're writing about a day at the beach, don't begin waking up, getting dressed, and having breakfast--begin at the beach! Get right into the action so that you don't lose your reader! Also, since it is very difficult to weave many characters throughout the story, a good strategy is to have your main character start off alone.



Introduction to Elaborative Detail

Name _____

Story Critical Characters, Settings, Objects

In every story there are certain people, places, and things that are especially important. These are called **story critical characters, settings, objects**. Authors highlight these story critical characters, settings, and objects by stopping and taking time to **describe** these. Read each story plan below. Think about the characters, settings, and objects that would be most interesting to the reader.

Underline story critical characters in RED, settings in BLUE, and objects in GREEN. On the lines below each plan, list the character/setting/ and or object that will later be described in an elaborative segment.

- 1.) This story is about exploring a mysterious cave. Inside I discover a talking dragon. The dragon gives me a magical stone to take home with me.
- 2.) A space alien knocked on my door. He captured me and took me in his spacecraft. At a stop on an unusual planet I overpowered him, took over the controls and landed at home.
- 3.) I took a trip to a beautiful rain forest. I met a most unusual creature there. It shared a piece of amazing tropical fruit with me.
- 4.) One autumn day I strolled along a country road collecting colorful fallen leaves.
- 5.) I baked some delicious chocolate chip cookies with my grandmother in her cozy kitchen.

BONUS: Circle the story plans that are realistic personal experience narratives. Box those which seem to be imaginative or fantasy narratives. Put a star beside the character/problem/solution story plans.



Name _____

General or Specific?



Read each pair of descriptions below. Circle the example in each pair that uses effective specific detail, rather than overly **general detail**. Which description tells you more? Which is more entertaining?

- 1.) She wore a really pretty fancy cape.

A cape of purple velvet trimmed in soft white fur covered her shoulders.

- 2.) The dog had a luxurious reddish coat, long silky ears, and alert black eyes.

It was a nice, awesome dog that looked so cute.

- 3.) The field was covered in tall golden grass and dotted with red and blue wildflowers.

The view across the big field was very beautiful and nice.

- 4.) The cake looked really good and delicious to eat.

The double chocolate cake dripped in thick white frosting.

- 5.) A cute little bird perched there on the brown branch of the tree.

A small green bird with bluish wings and a delicate yellow beak perched on the branch.

- 6.) The shutters hung crookedly and the windows were shattered.

Faded paint peeled around the rickety front stairs.

The old house was really a mess and looked like it needed some attention.

- 7.) What an interesting looking old man over there!

The old fellow had a long white beard and bushy silver eyebrows curled in arcs above his golden colored eyes.

BONUS: Go back and read each GENERAL description. Underline the overly general adjective that the author used ineffectively.



Name _____

SNOW MONSTER 

REMEMBER: • When you elaborate, you STOP THE ACTION and observe.

- Use the five senses to describe!
- Your elaborative segment should make the reader feel as though he or she is *right there* with the main character.
- Use specific rather than general details.
- Remember that sentence variety is important!

Write an ELABORATIVE SEGMENT of the **character** below. Tell SPECIFICALLY what it looked like (color, features, size), what sounds it made, how it behaved. Do NOT write a grocery list. Use interesting words and make it entertaining!

The Snow Monster appeared on the icy path!



Teaching Suggestions -

Snow Monster Description

Possible Detail Generating Questions:

- How big was it?
- What kind of hair/fur/scales/feathers did it have?
- What kind of eyes/ears/ mouth/teeth did it have?
- What kind of noise did it make?
- What kind of expression was on its face?
- How did it move?
- And . . . any others you can think of!

Sample Sentence Starters (Chart these for guided practice):

It was as big as _____.

The creature was the size of _____.

Its body was covered in _____.

The monster had _____.

Its eyes/ear/teeth _____.

The beast's _____.

It opened its mouth and _____.

The sound it made was like _____.

It looked as though _____.

The look on its face was _____.

It moved _____.

When it walked _____.



Teaching Suggestions -

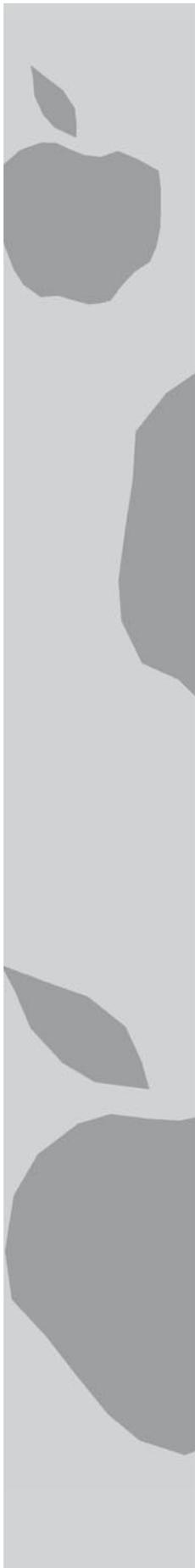
Snow Monster Description

Sample Modeled Revision - Snow Monster

The creature was the size of a towering tree. Its body was shaggy and covered with dirty white fur. The monster had long strands of matted gray hair hanging from its head. Its tufted ears stood straight up on its head and the sunlight glinted off its pointy black fangs. The beast's yellow eyes rolled back as it let out a hideous roar. It swung its long, lanky arms back and forth as it moved. When it walked the ground seemed to shake with each treacherous step it took!

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS:

- Art connection - On blue construction paper children draw their monsters. (They look great with white crayon details) Cut out and display with writing.
- Read about the Abominable Snowman or the Yeti.
- Generate a list of WORD REFERENTS to use in place of the words "Snow Monster":
Ex. • the beast • the wild thing • the monstrous being • the ferocious creature
- Extension: Imagine meeting this beast. How would you feel? (frightened?) Write an elaborative segment showing WHAT FRIGHTENED LOOKS LIKE.



How to Generate Elaborative Detail

• Note the sentence variety in the elaborative segment describing the wheel barrow. It was not a “grocery list”—“It was big, old, gray, peeling, in good shape.” Nor was it a “broken record”—“It was big. It was old. It was gray. It was peeling. It was, it was, it was...” Instead, each sentence began in a slightly different way. The elaborative segment allows the reader to see the wheel barrow through the five senses of the main character. ***The vivid word choice and specific detail not only make for an interesting paragraph, but become powerful tools for building student vocabulary.***

Below, you will find a generic list of detail generating sentences that you may apply when creating elaborative segments of story critical characters, settings, objects:

MENU OF DETAIL GENERATING QUESTIONS AND SENTENCE STARTERS

QUESTIONS ABOUT A STORY CRITICAL CHARACTER -

• How tall/big was this character? • What color hair/eyes? • How old was the character? • What kind of eyes/nose/mouth/ears did he/she have? • What kind/color of hair did he/she have? (long, short, curly, straight, etc.) • What kind of marks, scars, or distinguishing characteristics did he/she have? • What was he/she wearing? • What kind of expression was on his/her face? • How did this character make you feel? • Who or what did this character remind you of?

QUESTIONS ABOUT A STORY CRITICAL SETTING -

• What was the temperature/weather like? • What kinds of trees/plants grew there? • How did the air feel? • What kinds of animals were there? • What kinds of buildings were there? • What kind of objects were around? • What kinds of sounds did you hear? • How did you feel about being there? • What did you smell?

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT A STORY CRITICAL OBJECT -

• What color was it? • What did it feel like? • What was its shape? • What size was it? • How old was it? • What was it made of? • What did it smell like? • What kind of sound did it make? • How heavy was it? • Who did it belong to? • Where did it come from? • What did it remind you of?

Notice that none of these are yes/no questions! Detail generating questions must be specific and must ask for particulars--not true/false/positive/negative! These are just some suggestions. Not all of them are applicable all the time, nor are these the only questions you can ask - students will likely think of other effective questions to add to this list.





SECTION 4: Suspense

Introduction to Suspense

A sense of suspense and anticipation is what hooks the reader and moves the story into the main event. Suspense building raises questions in the reader's mind. If the main character is wondering or worrying, so is the reader! The reader is so eager, anxious or involved that they feel compelled to read on to relieve the worry, fulfill the wonder, and answer the questions. Suspense, contrary to what people often think, does not have to be scary. It certainly can be, as readers love to be frightened (a powerful entertainment tool). But, another way to look at suspense is as story tension or a sense of anticipation.

There are several ways to build suspense or anticipation:

• Story Questions

Story questions can be raised directly or indirectly. The simplest way (directly) is to have your main character raise a question - to wonder or worry. In turn, the reader wonders and worries as well. The indirect approach involves telling the reader only part of what is going on—just a hint. This raises questions in the readers' mind and compels them to read on.

ex. Catherine couldn't believe her eyes. What in the world did Grandma have in that huge wrapped package? (Catherine and the reader wonder what's inside - and, if it is a gift for Catherine.)

• Word Referents

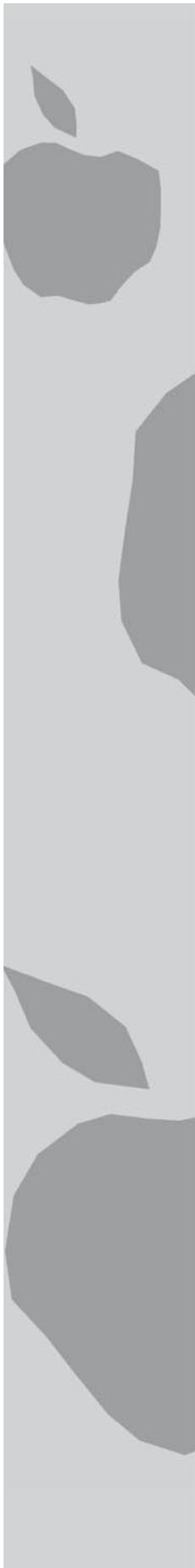
Tease the reader by not immediately revealing what "it" is. Describe a story critical character or object without naming it. Use word referents instead.

ex. Instead of writing: I saw a dragon in the cave. Use word referents. The creature was huge and dark as night. It made a soft rumbling sound. I could feel the mythical beast's hot breath on my face. (What is it? The reader is dying to know!)

Again, this doesn't need to be scary - read this example which provides a sense of anticipation:

Staring into the large box I felt my mouth curl into a smile. My heart began to race at the amazing gift inside. I covered my mouth, stifling the laugh I felt ready to erupt. I couldn't believe my good luck!

• **The Magic of 3** This technique involves the convention in which a series of three sensory hints (involving any of the senses) are provided in a way that builds tension - the third hint leading directly to a revelation. (*see example next page*)



Student Reference sheet

Name _____

MAIN EVENT

Don't Summarize! Make a Scene!

FULLY ELABORATED MAIN EVENTS are made up of a balance of:

- **ACTION**
- **DESCRIPTION**
- **THOUGHTS/FEELINGS**
- **DIALOGUE/EXCLAMATION**

And just for fun...

- **SOUND EFFECT**

Here are the productive questions that help to generate a fully elaborated MAIN EVENT:

ACTION: What did you do?

(Tell it in slow motion, S-T-R-E-T-C-H I-T O-U-T!)

DESCRIPTION: What did you see, hear, feel?

THOUGHTS/FEELINGS: What were you wondering, worrying, feeling?

DIALOGUE/EXCLAMATION: What did you say or exclaim?

SOUND EFFECT: What did you hear?



Name _____

Menu for Extended Endings

🍏 **A MEMORY:**

What did you remember most?

🍏 **FEELINGS:**

How did you feel about what happened?

🍏 **WISH or HOPE:**

What would you wish or hope?

🍏 **DECISION:**

What did you decide?

🍏 **DEFINING ACTION:**

What did you do?

