



Teacher Created Resources®

WRITING

LESSONS

Grades
5-6





Begin a Story with Onomatopoeia

An onomatopoeic word is a word that imitates the sound it represents. Onomatopoeic words at the beginning of a story will grab the reader's attention. These words can also be included throughout the story to help the reader visualize what is happening.

Independently Write an opening paragraph using any onomatopoeic word of your choice or find a word from the list below.

Onomatopoeic Words

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|---------|
| crackle | sizzle | gurgle | whoosh | growl | zoom | rustle | screech |
| slurp | jingle | zap | thud | fizz | snort | poof | rattle |

A. What onomatopoeic word did you choose? Why?

I chose the word _____ because _____.

Brainstorming Time!

B. List things that make the sound of the onomatopoeic word you chose.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

C. Write opening sentences for two of the topics you listed above.

- | |
|----------|
| 1. _____ |
| 2. _____ |

Select one of these sentences for your opening paragraph.

D. Write an opening paragraph about your topic using the onomatopoeic word you chose. Remember that onomatopoeic words can be used throughout your paragraph to paint a vivid picture for the reader.

Check Your Work

Did you remember to use onomatopoeic words throughout the paragraph?

Whole Group Share your paragraph with the class.



Begin a Story with an Interrogative Sentence

An interrogative sentence asks something. A writer can begin a story with an interrogative sentence to trigger the reader's interest and curiosity. Starting with a question will have the reader wondering what will happen next.

Interrogative Words

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|-------|------|-----|-------|-------|--------|
| who | what | where | when | how | which | why | whose |
| did | do | is | are | can | could | would | should |

Interrogative Sentences

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Where did I leave my book bag? | How can I get all this work done? |
| Whose jacket is this? | Should I invite Andrew to the party? |
| Whatever happened to the girl who lived down the street? | |

Independently Write an opening paragraph using any interrogative sentence of your choice or with a question from the box.

A. Write the interrogative sentence you will use to begin your paragraph.

B. Make a list of events you want to include in your paragraph. The events should be listed in the order in which they will appear in the paragraph.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

C. Write an opening paragraph beginning with the interrogative sentence from Part A. Make sure you include the events from Part B. Your interrogative opening should have the reader imagining what will happen next.

Check Your Work

Will the interrogative opener have the reader wondering what will happen next?

Whole Group Share your paragraph with the class.



Begin a Story with Dialogue

When a character speaks, his or her exact words are called dialogue. Dialogue lets the reader know what the character is saying and thinking. Dialogue can bring the characters to life.

Independently Write an opening paragraph using any dialogue of your choice or from the box.

Dialogue Starters

David declared, "The dog ate my homework!"

"No way!" yelled Mia. "I won't go!"

"Were you invited to the party?" Debbie asked.

"Wait a minute," complained the boy. "I can't find my phone."

Speaker Tags

| | | | | |
|---------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| argued | whispered | screamed | exclaimed | announced |
| blurted | cried | complained | screeched | yelled |
| groaned | shouted | explained | gaspd | sighed |
| laughed | declared | replied | answered | repeated |

A. Write the dialogue starter you will use in your paragraph.

B. Make a list of events you want to include in your paragraph. The events should be listed in the order in which they will appear in the paragraph.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

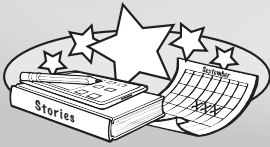
C. Write an opening paragraph beginning with the dialogue from Part A. Make sure you include the events from Part B.

Check Your Work

Does the opening dialogue make your character sound believable?

Did you put the quotation marks in the correct places?

Whole Group Share your paragraph with the class.



Begin a Story with a Prepositional Phrase

A writer can use prepositional phrases to include important information at the beginning of a story. A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun. Prepositional phrases expand sentences by adding details. These prepositional phrases can answer the questions *where*, *what kind*, *which one*, *when*, and *how*.

Independently Write an opening paragraph beginning with a prepositional phrase.

Prepositions

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|--------|--------|-------|------|----|---------|
| above | during | under | by | after | over | to | around |
| beneath | along | behind | before | below | on | at | against |
| beyond | between | across | until | about | out | in | into |

Prepositional Phrase Openers

After the game, I couldn't stop thinking about the last play.

For the parade, I was supposed to wear my uniform.

On the papers, Marie found a peculiar message.

A. Choose or create an opening sentence that includes a prepositional phrase. Write it here.

B. Make a list of events to include in the paragraph. The events should be written in the order they will appear in the paragraph.

1. _____

3. _____

2. _____

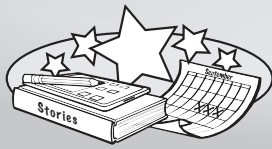
4. _____

C. Write an opening paragraph with the prepositional phrase opener from part A and the events from Part B. You can use prepositional phrases throughout the paragraph.

Check Your Work

What information did the reader learn from the opening phrase?

Whole Group Share your paragraph with the class.



Add Transitions to Connect Beginning Ideas

Connect ideas throughout the story by using transitional words and phrases. Transitional words and phrases can indicate the sequence, a purpose, or a contrast between ideas.

Independently Read the opening paragraph. Then create a second paragraph that includes transitional words or phrases.

The house looked empty. Where was everyone? Jerome's dad said to be home by five o'clock so that he could go to get a haircut. Well, Jerome was here, but where was his dad?

Transitional Sentences

First, Jerome had to beg Eddie's brother to drive him home.

As soon as Jerome saw what time it was, he started to panic.

Before coming home, Jerome had to eat a huge hamburger and a salad in two minutes.

Sequence, Purpose, and Contrast Transitions

| | | | | | |
|-------|---------------|------------|---------|------------------|-----------|
| first | to start with | as soon as | before | for that reason | just as |
| so | otherwise | however | instead | in the same way | but |
| now | earlier | presently | shortly | in the beginning | currently |

A. Write a sentence that includes a transitional word or phrase of your choice, or select a sentence from the box. Write the sentence you will use to begin your paragraph.

B. Make a list of events to include in the paragraph. The events should be written in the order that they will appear in the paragraph.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

C. Write the next paragraph using the sentence from Part A and the events in Part B. Use transitional words and phrases to connect your ideas and make your story flow.

Check Your Work

Are your ideas flowing from one paragraph to the next?

Whole Group Reread the opening paragraph, then share your paragraph with the class.



Close a Story with a Memory

A writer can end a story with a memory. The events in the story can be so meaningful that they become something the character will never forget, or the events can remind the character of an important memory.

Memory Words and Phrases

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| always remember | recall | never forget | reminds me | recollection |
| brings to mind | memory | remind | recollect | memorable |
| reminded me of | think of | reminisce | unforgettable | call to mind |
| remember the time | remember | think back to | looking back | keep in mind |

Memory Endings

My memory of that day . . .

I recall how . . .

This will always remind me of . . .

When I think back to . . .

Independently Write a closing paragraph, ending it with a memory. You can use one of the memory endings to start the final sentence, or you can come up with one of your own.

A. Write the memory closing for your paragraph. This will be the last sentence in the paragraph.

B. Now, make a list of events to include in the paragraph. The events should be written in the order they will happen in the paragraph.

1. _____

3. _____

2. _____

4. _____

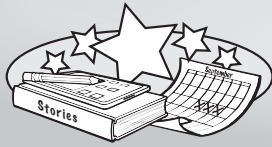
C. Write a closing paragraph using the events and memory above. Begin the paragraph with an ending transitional word or phrase, such as *finally*, *at last*, or *in the end*.

Check Your Work

Will the reader understand why the event was special?

Is your closing a memorable one?

Whole Group Share your paragraph with the class.



Close a Story with a Decision

People are always making decisions, and so are story characters. A writer can end a story with a decision the character has made based on earlier events in the story. This gives the reader an opportunity to understand the character's thinking and to agree or disagree.

Decision Words and Phrases

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|
| because of that | I will never | I will always | as a result |
| made up my mind | determine | since this time | resolve |
| therefore, I decided | conclusion | hereafter I will | concluded |

Decision Endings

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| After that day, I was determined to . . . | Before the race, I decided . . . |
| After what happened, I will always . . . | My choice was . . . |

Independently Write a closing paragraph, ending it with a decision. Start the last sentence with any of the decision words or phrases above or use a decision word or phrase of your own. You can also use one of the decision endings above to start the final sentence.

A. Write the ending decision sentence for the paragraph. This will be the last sentence in the paragraph.

B. Now, make a list of events to include in the paragraph. The events should be written in the order they will happen in the paragraph.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

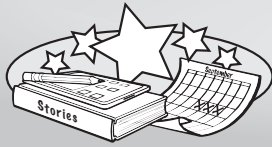
C. Write a closing paragraph. Begin the paragraph with a sentence that includes an ending transitional word or phrase, such as *finally*, *at last*, *in conclusion*, or *in the end*. Include the events and decision ending from above. The decision ending should give the reader the chance to agree or disagree with the choice.

Check Your Work

Do you think the reader will agree or disagree with the decision?

Did you begin your closing paragraph with a transitional word or phrase?

Whole Group Share the closing paragraph.



Close a Story with a Wish

A writer can end a story with a wish, having a character hope for something wonderful or exciting to happen. A wish at the closing of a story has the reader hoping for a dream to come true for the character.

Independently Write a closing paragraph, ending it with a wish.

A. Think of something you want to happen. Do you want to be the captain of your team? Do you want to do something special with your family? What will you wish for the next time you blow out your birthday candles? Write a closing sentence with each of the wish words and phrases on the lines below. The wish words and phrases can be written anywhere in the sentence.

1. **hopeful:** _____

2. **with any luck:** _____

3. **look forward to:** _____

4. **want:** _____

5. **hope:** _____

B. Select one of the above closings to end a paragraph. Circle that number.

C. Now make a list of events to include in the paragraph. The events should be written in the order they will happen in the paragraph.

1. _____

3. _____

2. _____

4. _____

D. Write a closing paragraph that begins with an ending transitional word or phrase, such as *finally*, *at last*, *in conclusion*, or *in the end*. Use the events and wish closing above.

Check Your Work

Does the closing make the reader think about the character's future?

Did you remember to include a transitional word or phrase in the paragraph?

Whole Group Share the closing paragraph.



Close a Story with a Feeling

When you express happiness or sadness, you are showing your feelings. A writer can close a story with a feeling so that the reader understands the emotions of the characters at the end of the story.

Feeling Words

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|--------|----------|---------|
| curious | embarrassed | brave | scared | angry | proud |
| afraid | furious | happy | sad | shy | guilty |
| impatient | nervous | delighted | upset | confused | excited |

Feeling Endings

I was delighted to find out . . . The winning team felt . . .
When the park closed early, Brandon felt . . . All at once, I felt . . .

Independently Write a closing paragraph, ending it with a feeling.

A. Write the feeling closing for your paragraph. You can use a Feeling Word or Feeling Ending from the box above, or you can come up with one of your own.

B. Now make a list of events to include in the paragraph. The events should be written in the order they will happen in the paragraph.

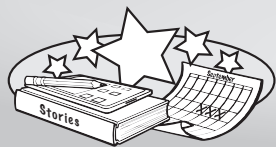
- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

C. Write a closing paragraph. Begin the paragraph with a sentence that includes an ending transitional word or phrase, such as *finally*, *at last*, *in conclusion*, or *in the end*. Complete the paragraph by including the events from Part B and the feeling ending in Part A. The closing should express the feelings of the character at the end of the story.

Check Your Work

Does the closing express the character's feelings at the end of the story?
Did you begin your closing paragraph with a transitional word or phrase?

Whole Group Share your paragraph.



Story Ideas



Can't think of an idea for a story? Try one of these.

You could write about . . .

having a nightmare
a special vacation
your grandparent
your life as a book
a trip to the moon
going on a hike
a sleepover
getting in trouble
going to the zoo
a special day at school
playing a sport
a talking giraffe
being a clown
winning a prize
planning a party for your dog
finding a treasure
a flower that won't stop growing
getting a new pet
winning a championship
breaking a promise
a strange creature

going on a picnic
being in a recital
a hurricane
your favorite holiday
meeting a movie star
your favorite movie
going to the mall
flying a kite
being the best at something
what you want to be someday
having your picture in the newspaper
babysitting a younger child
inventing a homework machine
being the teacher for a day
driving a car
a marathon
playing a musical instrument
decorating your bedroom
going skating
going on a roller coaster
being able to fly like a bird
