Our Place in the World

HISTORY, CULTURE, AND THE AUTHOR

• In Fiction
• In Nonfiction
• In Media
• In Poetry
If you were to write a book about your life, where would you begin? If you’re like many authors and artists, what you say would probably reflect the influence of your family, friends, and culture. Although you can’t always see it, culture plays an important part in shaping your world. The language you speak, the holidays you celebrate, the games you play, and the music you listen to are all part of your culture.

**ACTIVITY** What parts of your history and culture influence you the most? Think about the important people, places, and events in your life. Then reflect on your family’s traditions and your own taste in entertainment. Make a collage out of images and mementos that symbolize what shapes you.
## Preview Unit Goals

### Literary Analysis
- Identify and analyze influence of writer’s background
- Identify and analyze historical and cultural context of selections
- Identify and analyze author’s perspective

### Reading
- Make inferences
- Analyze sensory details
- Compare and contrast

### Writing and Grammar
- Write a cause-and-effect essay
- Combine sentences to form a compound-complex sentence
- Use colons and semicolons correctly

### Speaking, Listening, and Viewing
- Identify visual aspects of illustrations
- Compare different points of view in nonprint media sources
- Deliver a multimedia presentation

### Vocabulary
- Use context to determine the meaning of homographs
- Use similes to figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words

### Academic Vocabulary
- author’s background
- author’s perspective
- historical context
- cultural context
- cause-and-effect
History, Culture, and the Author

Have you ever heard the lyrics to a song and wondered what motivated the musician to write them? What about a work of literature—do you ever wonder what inspired its creation? In this workshop, you’ll learn about different factors that can affect writers. By examining the layers of a writer’s experience, you can “read into” literature with far more insight.

Part 1: A Writer’s Background

You are the unique product of many factors, including your heritage, family life, national identity, and economic status. Just as all these factors shape your ideas and beliefs, they influence writers as well. Writers may not consciously realize it, but their heritage, traditions, attitudes, and beliefs are reflected in what they choose to write about and also in how they express their ideas.

For instance, consider “Eating Together,” a poem that paints a touching picture of a close-knit family. First, read the poem itself. Then go back and read the background on Li-Young Lee to identify aspects of his heritage and customs that are reflected in the poem. Notice how your knowledge of Lee’s personal history deepens your understanding of the poem.

Eating Together

Poem by Li-Young Lee

BACKGROUND Li-Young Lee was born to Chinese parents in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 1957. The family moved many times during Lee’s childhood—often to avoid anti-Chinese sentiments—before settling in the United States. Lee’s poetry frequently focuses on his close-knit, traditional Chinese family, and many poems express the poet’s grief over his father’s death.

In the steamer is the trout seasoned with slivers of ginger, two sprigs of green onion, and sesame oil. We shall eat it with rice for lunch, brothers, sister, my mother who will taste the sweetest meat of the head, holding it between her fingers deftly, the way my father did weeks ago. Then he lay down to sleep like a snow-covered road winding through pines older than him, without any travelers, and lonely for no one.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

What evidence of the author’s heritage and customs do I see? The Asian family described in the poem seems close-knit and traditional, much like Lee’s own family.

What might have been the author’s motivation for writing this poem? Lee may have wanted to express his feelings about his father’s death and to reflect on how his father’s absence has affected his family.
MODEL 1: ANALYZING A POEM
Read this poem a first time, without knowing anything about the author behind the words and ideas. How would you describe the speaker?

Each morning I wrote my name on the dusty cabinet, then crossed the dining table in script, scrawled in capitals on the backs of chairs, practicing signatures like scales while Mother followed, squirting linseed\(^1\) from a burping can into a crumpled-up flannel.

She erased my fingerprints from the bookshelf and rocker, polished mirrors on the desk scribbled with my alphabets. My name was swallowed in the towel with which she jeweled the table tops. The grain surfaced in the oak and the pine grew luminous. But I refused with every mark to be like her, anonymous.

1. **linseed**: yellowish oil made from flax seeds, often used to help preserve the shine of natural wood furniture.

Close Read
1. What images does Alvarez use to help you visualize the actions of the speaker and her mother? Find three examples.

2. Think about what the speaker means by what she says in the boxed lines. How is she different from her mother?

MODEL 2: THE WRITER’S BACKGROUND
Read this background information about Julia Alvarez. Then go back and read the poem a second time.

Julia Alvarez was born in New York in 1950. When she was three months old, her parents returned with her to their native country, the Dominican Republic. However, the family came back to the United States for political reasons when Alvarez was ten years old. Alvarez grew up speaking Spanish, with English as a second language. Her mother worked as a housekeeper and, as a young girl, Alvarez would often go with her mother to work. Alvarez has said, “As I followed my mother cleaning house, washing and ironing clothes, rolling dough, I was using the material of my housebound girl life to claim my woman’s legacy.” Alvarez later became a writer and continues to share her childhood experiences in her works.

Close Read
1. In what way does the background information help you to better understand the poem?

2. What connection can you draw between the last two lines of the poem and Alvarez’s career?
Part 2: Historical and Cultural Influences

Knowing about a writer’s personal background can help you to appreciate his or her work more fully. Similarly, knowing the historical and cultural contexts in which the work was written can help you interpret and analyze that work more accurately. Historical and cultural contexts refer to the events, social problems, traditions, and values that may have influenced the author and the writing. For example, what events and issues of the time was the author concerned about? How are those concerns reflected in the writing?

Take a look at this excerpt from a story by James Baldwin. Notice how reading the background and answering some questions can give you new insights into Baldwin’s vivid descriptions.

**from Sonny’s Blues**

**Short story by James Baldwin**

Text not available.
Please refer to the text in the textbook.

**QUESTIONS TO ASK**

What aspects of Baldwin’s background are reflected in the writing?
Baldwin uses words and phrases like “smothering,” “encircled by disaster,” and “the trap” to describe the poverty-stricken Harlem neighborhood of his youth.

What might have prompted the author to write this story?
Baldwin may have wanted to explore why former residents of Harlem who “escaped the trap” still feel so connected to the neighborhood in which they grew up.
**MODEL 1: ANALYZING FICTION**

In this story, a British pilot wakes up in a French hospital during World War II. Find out what he’s thinking about as a nurse tends to him. First, read this excerpt and answer the Close Read questions. Then read the background that follows.

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**from Beware of the Dog**

Short story by Roald Dahl

“I believe there’s someone coming down to see you from the Air Ministry after breakfast,” she went on. “They want a report or something. I expect you know all about it. How you got shot down and all that. I won’t let him stay long, so don’t worry.”

He did not answer. She finished washing him and gave him a toothbrush and some toothpowder. He brushed his teeth, rinsed his mouth, and spat the water out into the basin.

Later she brought him his breakfast on a tray, but he did not want to eat. He was still feeling weak and sick and he wished only to lie still and think about what had happened. And there was a sentence running through his head. It was a sentence which Johnny, the Intelligence Officer of his squadron, always repeated to the pilots every day before they went out. He could see Johnny now, leaning against the wall of the dispersal hut with his pipe in his hand, saying, “And if they get you, don’t forget, just your name, rank, and number. Nothing else. For God’s sake, say nothing else.”

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**MODEL 2: HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT**

The following background helps to explain why a British pilot would be nervous about waking up in a French hospital.

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World War II began with Germany’s 1939 invasion of Poland, which caused Britain and France to declare war on Germany. By 1941, German forces had occupied France and much of Western Europe, but Great Britain was still fighting back. Other countries joined the war on both sides of the conflict, dividing into the Axis forces and the Allies. France was not liberated from German occupation until 1944.

Roald Dahl joined the British Royal Air Force in 1939. He became a fighter pilot and flew missions over North Africa, Greece, and the Middle East during the war. After his plane crashed in Egypt, he spent six months in a hospital, recovering from a head injury.

When he was asked later to share his experiences, Dahl’s career as a writer began. “Beware of the Dog” was published in 1944.

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**Close Read**

1. What do you learn about the pilot in this passage?
2. The hospital staff is being kind to the pilot, but he believes they are only trying to get information from him. Which words and phrases convey his anxiety?

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**Close Read**

1. What exactly is the pilot worried about? Explain how the background helps you to understand his situation.
2. In your opinion, is Dahl’s tone in the story sympathetic to the pilot? Explain.
Part 3: Analyze the Literature

Before reading “Origami,” read the following background information about the author, Susan K. Ito, and the topics mentioned in her story.

BACKGROUND

Crafting Words and Mending Old Wounds

Seeking to Belong
As a child, Susan K. Ito often struggled with her sense of identity. She says, “I felt like I was the only one of my kind: mixed-race, adopted, only child.” She often found herself envying women who were full-blooded Japanese, since she was only part Japanese. When she began taking literature and creative writing classes in graduate school, Ito felt like she had found where she belonged: “I was finally immersing myself in the world that I’d longed to be in forever: the world of words.” Life as a Japanese American and the struggle for a sense of belonging have been the focus of much of her writing.

Peace Cranes
“Origami” is named after a paper-folding craft that has been practiced for centuries in Japan. Its popularity has now spread to many other countries. One of the most popular paper designs is the crane—a type of bird. In many Asian countries, the crane is a symbol of peace. Many people from around the world send paper cranes to a memorial in Hiroshima, Japan, every year. It is done in memory of those who died there during World War II and as an expression of the senders’ wish for world peace.

Japanese Internment
During World War II, nations were divided between the Axis and Allied forces. In 1941 Japan—a member of the Axis powers—bombed the U.S. military base at Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii, prompting the United States to declare war on Japan. Four years later, the United States dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese cities: Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Americans were fearful of another attack within their borders. As a precaution, Japanese immigrants and Americans of Japanese ancestry were sent to and held in facilities called internment camps in order to isolate them from the rest of the American public. The largest camp was the Tule Lake Segregation Center in California. At the time, limiting the rights of one ethnic group was viewed as being done in service of the greater good of the American public. The last internment camp closed in 1948. However, it was not until 1988 that the U.S. government issued its first official apology for its treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Japanese internment camp in Santa Anita, California
The narrator of this short story views herself as an outsider struggling to prove that she belongs. As you read this excerpt, consider how the background information enhances your understanding of the story.

I take my place, hesitantly, among the group of Japanese women, smile back at the ones who look up from their task to nod at me. Their words float around me like alphabet soup, familiar, comforting, but nothing that I clearly understand. The long cafeteria table blooms with folded paper birds of all colors: royal purple, light gray, a small shimmering silver one. They’re weaving an origami wreath for Sunday’s memorial service, a thousand cranes for the souls of those who died at Tule Lake’s internment camp.

I spread the square of sky-blue paper flat under my hands, then fold it in half. So far, this is easy. I’m going to follow all the directions. It’s going to be a perfect crane, tsuru, flying from my palm. Fold again, then flip that side of the triangle under to make a box. Oh no. What? I didn’t get that. I’m lost. The women around me keep creasing, folding, spreading, their fingers moving with easy grace. My thumbs are huge, thick, in the way of these paper wings that are trying to unfold but can’t.

My heart rises and flutters, beating against its cage in panic, in confusion. I try to retrace my steps, turn the paper upside down, in reverse. It’s not working. I want to crumple the paper into a blue ball, an origami rock.

But instead I unfold the paper with damp, shaking fingers. I persevere. Gambaro. Don’t give up. I’m going to make this crane if it kills me. I’m going to prove that I can do this thing, this Japanese skill. I’m going to pull the coordination out of my blood, make it flow into my fingers. I have to.

But what if I can’t? Then it only proves the thing that I fear the most, don’t want to believe. That I’m not really Japanese. That I’m just an imposter, a fake, a watered-down, inauthentic K-mart version of the real thing.

Close Read

1. Reread the boxed text. How does the background enhance your reading of this passage?

2. Why does the narrator feel insecure in this situation? Support your answer.

3. Does Ito seem to sympathize with the narrator? Explain.

4. Which details show you that the narrator admires people who are Japanese?

5. Which details in the background help you understand why Ito might have chosen to write this story?
Where do we get our VALUES?

KEY IDEA  Do you remember where you learned that honesty is the best policy? Or that hard work pays off? We get our values from a patchwork of different sources, including important people in our lives, the communities around us, and mass media. The boy in the story you’re about to read gets many of his values from his grandparents, but as you’ll see, these values are put to the test.

LIST IT  Take one minute to list some of the values that are important to you. Circle the value that most influences how you live your life. Then, as a class, generate a list that reflects the group’s responses, and discuss where you learned these values.
LITERARY ANALYSIS: INFLUENCE OF AUTHOR’S BACKGROUND

An author’s background, including life experiences and cultural heritage, shapes his or her way of looking at the world and often affects what he or she writes. For example, Joseph Bruchac was raised by his grandparents, one of whom was Native American. Many of his stories, in turn, have Native American characters and reflect Native American values.

Before you read, learn more about Bruchac from the biography on this page. Then, as you read, notice how Bruchac’s characters reflect his own cultural heritage, beliefs and values, and life story.

READING SKILL: COMPARE AND CONTRAST

When you compare two or more things, you identify ways in which they are alike. When you contrast them, you find ways in which they are different. Thinking about characters’ similarities and differences can help you recognize their qualities and values. In “The Snapping Turtle,” you will compare and contrast

• the narrator and other boys
• the narrator’s grandmother and grandfather

As you read, use Venn diagrams to compare and contrast these characters’ attitudes, backgrounds, and values.

Narrator Other Boys

loves nature

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

The boldfaced words help Bruchac tell about a boy’s relationship with nature. Try restating each sentence, using a different word or phrase for the boldfaced word.

1. My philosophy is “Leave nothing but footprints.”
2. The memorial garden seemed to give the hero immortality.
3. Amy and I like to traipse around the meadow.
4. I have no inclination to go indoors when it’s nice outside.
5. It takes craftiness to successfully trick a raccoon.
6. I cache my camping gear behind a tree while I hike.
7. Following their migration route, the geese flew north.
8. The thick undergrowth made the forest impregnable.
9. The basking sunbather enjoyed the afternoon breeze.
10. Undaunted, the bird flew on in search of food.

More about the author
For more on Joseph Bruchac, visit the Literature Center at ClassZone.com.
My grandmother was working in the flower garden near the road that morning when I came out with my fishing pole. She was separating out the roots of iris. As far as flowers go, she and I were agreed that iris had the sweetest scent. Iris would grow about anywhere, shooting up green sword-shaped leaves like the mythical soldiers that sprang from the planted teeth of a dragon. But iris needed some amount of care. Their roots would multiply so thick and fast that they could crowd themselves right up out of the soil. Spring separating and replanting were, as my grandmother put it, just the ticket.¹

Later that day, I knew, she would climb into our blue 1951 Plymouth to drive around the back roads of Greenfield, a box of iris in the back seat. She would stop at farms where she had noticed a certain color of iris that she didn’t have yet. Up to the door she would go to ask for a root so that she could add another splash of color to our garden. And, in exchange, she would give that person, most often a flowered-aproned and somewhat elderly woman like herself, some of her own iris.

It wasn’t just that she wanted more flowers herself. She had a philosophy. If only one person keeps a plant, something might happen to it. Early frost, insects, animals, Lord knows what. But if many have that kind of plant, then it may survive. Sharing meant a kind of immortality. I didn’t quite understand it then, but I enjoyed taking those rides with her, carrying boxes and cans and flowerpots with new kinds of iris back to the car. “Going fishing, Sonny?” she said now.

Of course, she knew where I was going. Not only the evidence of the pole in my hand, but also the simple facts that it was a Saturday morning in late May and I was a boy of ten, would have led her to that natural conclusion. But she had to ask. It was part of our routine.

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¹. just the ticket: the perfect solution.
“Un-hun,” I answered, as I always did. “Unless you and Grampa need some help.” Then I held my breath, for though my offer of aid had been sincere enough, I really wanted to go fishing.

Grama thrust her foot down on the spading fork, carefully levering out a heavy clump of iris marked last fall with a purple ribbon to indicate the color. She did such things with half my effort and twice the skill, despite the fact I was growing, as she put it, like a weed. “No, you go on along. This afternoon Grampa and I could use some help, though.”

“I’ll be back by then,” I said, but I didn’t turn and walk away. I waited for the next thing I knew she would say.

“You stay off of the state road, now.”

In my grandmother’s mind, Route 9N, which came down the hill past my grandparents’ little gas station and general store on the corner, was nothing less than a Road of Death. If I ever set foot on it, I would surely be as doomed as our four cats and two dogs that met their fates there.

“Runned over and kilt,” as Grampa Jesse put it.

Grampa Jesse, who had been the hired man for my grandmother’s parents before he and Grama eloped, was not a person with book learning like my college-educated grandmother. His family was Abenaki Indian, poor but honest hill people who could read the signs in the forest, but who had never traipsed far along the trails of schoolhouse ways. Between Grama’s books and Grampa’s practical knowledge, some of which I was about to apply to bring home a mess of trout, I figured I was getting about the best education a ten-year-old boy could have. I was lucky that my grandparents were raising me.

“I’ll stay off the state road,” I promised. “I’ll just follow Bell Brook.”

Truth be told, the state road made me a little nervous, too. It was all too easy to imagine myself in the place of one of my defunct pets, stunned by the elephant bellow of a tractor-trailer’s horn, looking wild-eyed up to the shiny metal grill; the thud, the lightning-bolt flash of light, and then the eternal dark. I imagined my grandfather shoveling the dirt over me in a backyard grave next to that of Lady, the collie, and Kitty-kitty, the gray cat, while my grandmother dried her eyes with her apron and said, “I told him to stay off that road!”

I was big on knowledge but very short on courage in those years. I mostly played by myself because the other kids my age from the houses and farms scattered around our rural township regarded me as a Grama’s boy who would tell if they were to tie me up and threaten to burn my toes with matches, a ritual required to join the local society of pre-teenage boys. A squealer. And they were right.

I didn’t much miss the company of other kids. I had discovered that most of them had little interest in the living things around them. They were noisier than Grampa and I were, scaring away the rabbits that we could creep right

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2. **spading**: digging.
3. **a mess of**: an amount of (food).
Instead of watching the frogs catching flies with their long, gummy tongues, those boys wanted to shoot them with their BB guns. I couldn’t imagine any of them having the patience or inclination to hold out a hand filled with sunflower seeds, as Grampa had showed me I could, long enough for a chickadee to come and light on an index finger.

Even fishing was done differently when I did it Grampa’s way. I knew for a fact that most of those boys would go out and come home with an empty creel. They hadn’t been watching for fish from the banks as I had in the weeks before the trout season began, so they didn’t know where the fish lived. They didn’t know how to keep low, float your line in, wait for that first tap, and then, after the strike that bent your pole, set the hook. And they never said thank-you to every fish they caught, the way I remembered to do.

Walking the creek edge, I set off downstream. By mid-morning, my bait can of moss and red earthworms that Grampa and I had dug from the edge of our manure pile was near empty. I’d gone half a mile and had already caught seven trout. All of them were squaretails, native brook trout whose sides were patterned with a speckled rainbow of bright circles—red, green, gold. I’d only kept the ones more than seven inches long, and I’d remembered to wet my hand before taking the little ones off the hook. Grasping a trout with a dry hand would abrade the slick coat of natural oil from the skin and leave it open for infection and disease.

As always, I’d had to keep the eyes in the back of my head open just as Grampa had told me to do whenever I was in the woods.

“Things is always hunting one another,” he’d said.

And he was right. Twice, at places where Bell Brook swung near Mill Road I’d had to leave the stream banks to take shelter when I heard the ominous crunch of bicycle tires on the gravel. Back then, when I was ten, I was smaller than the other boys my age. I made up for it by being harder to catch. Equal parts of craftiness and plain old panic at being collared by bullies I viewed as close kin to Attila the Hun kept me slipperier than an eel.

From grapevine tangles up the bank, I’d watched as Pauly Raffmeier, Ricky Holstead, and Will Backus rolled up to the creek, making more noise than a herd of hippos, to plunk their own lines in. Both times, they caught nothing. It wasn’t surprising, since they were talking like jaybirds, scaring away whatever fish might have been within half a mile. And Will kept lighting matches and throwing them down to watch them hiss out when they struck the water. Not to mention the fact that I had pulled a ten-inch brook trout out of the first hole and an eleven incher out of the second before they even reached the stream.

I looked up at the sky. I didn’t wear a watch then. No watch made by man seemed able to work more than a few days when strapped to my wrist. It was a common thing on my Grampa’s side of the family. “We jest got too much ’lectricity in us,” he explained.

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4. Attila the Hun: a barbarian leader who successfully invaded the Roman Empire in the A.D. 400s.
Without a watch, I could measure time by the sun. I could see it was about ten. I had reached the place where Bell Brook crossed under the state road. Usually I went no further than this. It had been my boundary for years. But somewhere along the way I had decided that today would be different. I think perhaps a part of me was ashamed of hiding from the other boys, ashamed of always being afraid. I wanted to do something that I’d always been afraid to do. I wanted to be brave.

I had no need to fish further. I had plenty of trout for our supper. I’d cleaned them all out with my Swiss Army knife, leaving the entrails where the crows and jays could get them. If you did that, the crows and jays would know you for a friend and not sound the alarm when they saw you walking in the woods. I sank the creel under water, wedged it beneath a stone. The water of the brook was deep and cold and I knew it would keep the flesh of the trout fresh and firm. Then I cached my pole and bait can under the spice bushes. As I looked up at the highway, Grama’s words came back to me:

“Stay off the state road, Sonny.”
“Under,” I said aloud, “is not on.”

Then, taking a deep breath, bent over at the waist, I waded into the culvert that dove under the Road of Death. I had gone no more than half a dozen steps before I walked into a spider web so strong that it actually bounced me back. I splashed a little water from the creek up onto it and watched the beads shape a pattern of concentric circles. The orb-weaver sat unmoving in a corner, one leg resting on a strand of the web. She’d been waiting for the vibration of some flying creature caught in the sticky strands of her net. Clearly, I was much more than she had hoped for. She sat there without moving. Her wide back was patterned with a shape like that of a red and gold hourglass. Her compound eyes, jet black on her head, took in my giant shape. Spiders gave some people the willies. I knew their bite would hurt like blue blazes, but I still thought them graced with great beauty.

“Excuse me,” I said. “Didn’t mean to bother you.”

The spider raised one front leg. A nervous reaction, most likely, but I raised one hand back. Then I ducked carefully beneath the web, entering an area where the light was different. It was like passing from one world into another. I sloshed through the dark culvert, my fingertips brushing the rushing surface of the stream, the current pushing at my calves. My sneakered feet barely held their purchase on the ridged metal, slick with moss.

When I came out the other side, the sunlight was blinding. Just ahead of me the creek was overarched with willows. They were so thick and low that there was no way I could pass without either going underwater or breaking a way through the brush. I wasn’t ready to do either. So I made my way up the

**AUTHOR’S BACKGROUND**

How are the author’s beliefs reflected in the narrator’s reaction to the spider? Explain.

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5. **entrails** (ên’trälz’): the internal organs.
6. **culvert** (kül’vərt): a drain that passes under a road.
7. **the willies**: a feeling of fear and/or disgust.
8. **held their purchase**: gripped; refrained from slipping.
bank, thinking to circle back and pick up the creek farther down. For what
purpose, I wasn’t sure, aside from just wanting to do it. I was nervous as a hen
yard when a chicken hawk is circling overhead. But I was excited, too. This
was new ground to me, almost a mile from home. I’d gone farther from home
in the familiar directions of north and west, into the safety of the woods, but
this was different: Across the state road, in the direction of town; someone
else’s hunting territory. I stayed low to the ground and hugged the edges of the
brush as I moved. Then I saw something that drew me away from the creek:
The glint of a wider expanse of water. The Rez, the old Greenfield Reservoir.
I’d never been to the Rez, though I knew the other boys went there. As I’d
sat alone on the bus, my bookbag clasped tightly to my chest, I’d heard them
talk about swimming there, fishing for bass, spearing bullfrogs five times as
big as the little frogs in Bell Brook.

I knew I shouldn’t be there, yet I was. Slowly I moved to the side of the wide
trail that led to the edge of the deep water, and it was just as well that I did:
Their bikes had been stashed in the brush down the other side of the path.
They’d been more quiet than usual. I might have walked up on them if I
hadn’t heard a voice. . . .
I picked up some of the dark mud with my fingertips and drew lines across my cheeks. Grampa had explained it would make me harder to see. Then I slid to a place where an old tree leaned over the bank, cloaked by the cattails that grew from the edge of the Rez. I made my way out on the trunk and looked. . . .

“It’s not gonna come up,” Ricky said. He picked up something that looked like a makeshift spear. “You lied.”

“I did not. It was over there. The biggest snapper I ever saw.” Will shaded his eyes with one hand and looked right in my direction without seeing me.

“If we catch it, we could sell it for ten dollars to that man on Congress Street. They say snapping turtles have seven different kinds of meat in them.”

“Hmph,” Pauly said, throwing his own spear aside. “Let’s go find something else to do.”

One by one, they picked up their fishing poles and went back down the path. I waited without moving, hearing their heavy feet on the trail and then the rattle of their bike chains. . . . All I could think of was that snapping turtle.

I knew a lot about turtles. There were mud turtles and map turtles. There was the smart orange-legged wood turtle and the red-eared slider with its cheeks painted crimson as if it was going to war. Every spring Grama and Grampa and I would drive around, picking up those whose old migration routes had been cut by the recent and lethal ribbons of road. Spooked by a car, a turtle falls into that old defense of pulling head and legs and tail into its once impregnable fortress. But a shell does little good against the wheels of a Nash or a DeSoto.9

Some days we’d rescue as many as a dozen turtles, taking them home for a few days before releasing them back into the wild. Painted turtles, several as big as two hands held together, might nip at you some, but they weren’t really dangerous. And the wood turtles would learn in a day or so to reach out for a strawberry or a piece of juicy tomato and then leave their heads out for a scratch while you stroked them with a finger.

Snappers though, they were different. Long-tailed, heavy-bodied and short-tempered, their jaws would gape wide and they’d hiss when you came up on them ashore. Their heads and legs were too big to pull into their shells and they would heave up on their legs and lunge forward as they snapped at you. They might weigh as much as fifty pounds, and it was said they could take off a handful of fingers in one bite. There wasn’t much to recommend a snapping turtle as a friend. 🦎

Most people seemed to hate snappers. Snappers ate the fish and the ducks; they scared swimmers away. Or I should say that people hated them alive. Dead, they were supposed to be the best-eating turtle of all. Ten dollars, I thought. Enough for me to send away to the mail-order pet place and get a pair of real flying squirrels. I’d kept that clipping from Field and Stream magazine

9. Nash . . . DeSoto: car brands that were popular during the 1950s.
thumbtacked over my bed for four months now. A sort of plan was coming into my mind. People were afraid of getting bit by snappers when they were swimming. But from what I’d read, and from what Grampa told me, they really didn’t have much to worry about.

“Snapper won’t bother you none in the water,” Grampa said. If you were even to step on a snapping turtle resting on the bottom of a pond, all it would do would be to move away. On land, all the danger from a snapper was to the front or the side. From behind, a snapper couldn’t get you. Get it by the tail, you were safe. That was the way.

And as I thought, I kept watch. And as I kept watch, I kept up a silent chant inside my mind.

*Come here, I’m waiting for you.*

*Come here, I’m waiting for you.*

Before long, a smallish log that had been sticking up farther out in the pond began to drift my way. It was, as I had expected, no log at all. It was a turtle’s head. I stayed still. The sun’s heat beat on my back, but I lay there like a basking lizard. Closer and closer the turtle came, heading right into water less than waist deep. It was going right for shore, for the sandy bank bathed in sun. I didn’t think about why then, just wondered at the way my wanting seemed to have called it to me.

When it was almost to shore, I slid into the water on the other side of the log I’d been waiting on. The turtle surely sensed me, for it started to swing around as I moved slowly toward it, swimming as much as walking. But I lunged and grabbed it by the tail. Its tail was rough and ridged, as easy to hold as if coated with sandpaper. I pulled hard and the turtle came toward me. I stepped back, trying not to fall and pull it on top of me. My feet found the bank, and I leaned hard to drag the turtle out, its clawed feet digging into the dirt as it tried to get away. A roaring hiss like the rush of air from a punctured tire came out of its mouth, and I stumbled, almost losing my grasp. Then I took another step, heaved again, and it was mine.

Or at least it was until I let go. I knew I could not let go. I looked around, holding its tail, moving my feet to keep it from walking its front legs around to where it would snap at me. It felt as if it weighed a thousand pounds. I could only lift up the back half of its body. I started dragging it toward the creek, fifty yards away. It seemed to take hours, a kind of dance between me and the great turtle, but I did it. I pulled it back through the roaring culvert, water gushing over its shell, under the spider web, and past my hidden pole and creel. I could come back later for the fish. Now there was only room in the world for Bell Brook, the turtle, and me.

The long passage upstream is a blur in my memory. I thought of salmon leaping over falls and learned a little that day how hard such a journey must be.
When I rounded the last bend and reached the place where the brook edged our property, I breathed a great sigh. But I could not rest. There was still a field and the back yard to cross.

My grandparents saw me coming. From the height of the sun it was now mid-afternoon, and I knew I was dreadful late.

“Sonny, where have you . . . ?” began Grama.

Then she saw the turtle.

“I’m sorry. It took so long because of . . .” I didn’t finish the sentence because the snapping turtle, *undaunted* by his backward passage, took that opportunity to try once more to swing around and get me. I had to make three quick steps in a circle, heaving at its tail as I did so.

*undaunted* (ün-dənt′id) adj. not discouraged; courageous

**ANALYZE VISUALS**
What details on the snapping turtle do you notice most? What details are difficult to see?
“Nice size turtle,” Grampa Jesse said.
My grandmother looked at me. I realized then I must have been a sight.
Wet, muddy, face and hands scratched from the brush that overhung the creek.
“I caught it at the reservoir,” I said. I didn’t think to lie to them about where
I’d been. I waited for my grandmother to scold me. But she didn’t.
“Jesse,” she said, “Get the big washtub.”
My grandfather did as she said. He brought it back and then stepped next
to me.
“Leave go,” he said.
My hands had a life of their own, grimly determined never to let loose of
that all-too-familiar tail, but I forced them to open. The turtle flopped down
Before it could move, my grandfather dropped the big washtub over it. All was
silent for a minute as I stood there, my arms aching as they hung by my side.
Then the washtub began to move. My grandmother sat down on it and it
stopped.
She looked at me. So did Grampa. It was wonderful how they could focus
their attention on me in a way that made me feel they were ready to do
whatever they could to help.
“What now?” Grama said.
“I heard that somebody down on Congress Street would pay ten dollars for a
snapping turtle.”
“Jack’s,” Grampa said.
My grandmother nodded. “Well,” she said, “if you go now you can be
back in time for supper. I thought we were having trout.” She raised an
eyebrow at me.
“I left them this side of the culvert by 9N,” I said. “Along with my pole.”
“You clean up and put on dry clothes. Your grandfather will get the fish.”
“But I hid them.”
My grandmother smiled. “Your grandfather will find them.” And he did.
An hour later, we were on the way to Congress Street. . . . In the 1950s,
Congress Street was like a piece of Harlem10 dropped into an upstate town.
We pulled up in front of Jack’s, and a man who looked to be my grandfather’s
age got up and walked over to us. His skin was only a little darker than my
grandfather’s, and the two nodded to each other.
My grandfather put his hand on the trunk of the Plymouth.
“What you got there?” Jack said.
“Show him, Sonny.”
I opened the trunk. My snapping turtle lifted up its head as I did so.
“I heard you might want to buy a turtle like this for ten dollars,” I said.
Jack shook his head. “Ten dollars for a little one like that? I’d give you
two dollars.”
I looked at my turtle. Had it shrunk since Grampa wrestled it into the trunk?

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10. Harlem: a New York City neighborhood that was and is largely African American.
“That’s not enough,” I said.
“Three dollars. My last offer.”

310 I looked at Grampa. He shrugged his shoulders.
“I guess I don’t want to sell it,” I said.
“All right,” Jack said. “You change your mind, come on back.” He touched
his hat with two fingers and walked back over to his chair in the sun.

As we drove back toward home, neither of us said anything for a while.
Then my grandfather spoke.
“Would five dollars’ve been enough?”
“No,” I said.
“How about ten?”
I thought about that. “I guess not.”

320 “Why you suppose that turtle was heading for that sandbank?” Grampa said.
I thought about that, too. Then I realized the truth of it.
“It was coming out to lay its eggs.”
“Might be.”

I thought hard then. I’d learned it was never right for a hunter to shoot a
mother animal, because it hurt the next generation to come. Was a turtle any
different? 1
“Can we take her back?” I asked.
“Up to you, Sonny.”

And so we did. Gramp drove the Plymouth right up the trail to the edge of
the Rez. He held a stick so the turtle would grab onto it as I hauled her out of
the trunk. I put her down and she just stayed there, her nose a foot from the
water but not moving.

“We’ll leave her,” Grampa said. We turned to get into the car. When I
looked back over my shoulder, she was gone. Only ripples on the water,
widening circles rolling on toward other shores like generations following
each other, like my grandmother’s flowers still growing in a hundred gardens
in Greenfield, like the turtles still seeking out that sandbank, like this story
that is no longer just my own but belongs now to your memory, too.
Comprehension

1. Recall What actions does the narrator take to make sure he fishes responsibly?
2. Recall Why does the narrator decide to cross under the state road?
3. Represent How does the narrator get the snapping turtle out of the water? Reread lines 234–243, and sketch the scene.

Literary Analysis

4. Visualize How well does Joseph Bruchac help you visualize the characters, events, and settings in the story? Choose a passage that you find visually descriptive and explain what words and phrases help you picture the scene.
5. Make Inferences About Relationships Describe the narrator’s relationship with his grandparents. Do you think the other boys in the story would have similar relationships with the adults in their lives? Explain your answer.
6. Compare and Contrast Characters What are the similarities and differences between Grama and Grampa? Consider their backgrounds, values, and traits. Use the notes from one of your Venn diagrams to help you answer the question, and cite evidence from the story.
7. Analyze Influence of Author’s Background Reread Bruchac’s biography on page 751 to remind you of his Abenaki beliefs. In what ways does “The Snapping Turtle” reflect these values? In a graphic like the one shown, give examples from the story.

Abenaki Values

- Honor Elders
- Respect the Earth
- Share with Others

8. Evaluate the Ending Reread the last paragraph of the story. How well do you think it wraps up the plot and summarizes the theme? Refer to specific phrases in the paragraph as you explain your answer.

Extension and Challenge

9. Inquiry and Research In Native American cultures, stories are often used to teach children. Find a retelling of a Native American story, perhaps from one of Joseph Bruchac’s collections, and present it to the class. Explain what lesson it is meant to teach.

For more on Abenaki stories, visit the Research Center at ClassZone.com.
Vocabulary in Context

**VOCABULARY PRACTICE**

Choose the word in each group that is closest in meaning to the boldfaced word.

1. **craftiness**: (a) intelligence, (b) slyness, (c) dishonesty
2. **traipse**: (a) stroll, (b) slither, (c) bounce
3. **cache**: (a) spend, (b) waste, (c) conceal
4. **migration**: (a) relocation, (b) nesting, (c) settlement
5. **impregnable**: (a) frightening, (b) unguarded, (c) impenetrable
6. **inclination**: (a) wisdom, (b) desire, (c) strength
7. **basking**: (a) sunbathing, (b) swimming, (c) cooking
8. **undaunted**: (a) unhurt, (b) unafraid, (c) uncaring
9. **immortality**: (a) birth, (b) death, (c) permanence
10. **philosophy**: (a) belief, (b) style, (c) story

**VOCABULARY IN WRITING**

Using at least two vocabulary words, write a paragraph telling about your own views on nature. You may want to compare yourself with the boys in the story. You could start this way.

**EXAMPLE SENTENCE**

*Unlike the narrator, I don’t have an inclination toward fishing.*

**VOCABULARY STRATEGY: ANALOGIES**

An analogy compares similar aspects of two or more different things. Analyzing an analogy is one way of figuring out the meanings of unfamiliar words in context. For example, you can determine the meaning of the word *generations* from the thing it is compared to in this passage:

*Only ripples on the water, widening circles rolling on toward other shores like generations following each other.* . . . (lines 334–336)

**PRACTICE** Determine the literal meaning of each analogy, then the figurative. Use that information to help you understand the boldfaced word.

1. **Defunct** Web sites are like ghost towns that once bustled with life.
2. Like a **makeshift** shelter, a flimsy excuse soon falls apart.
3. Carmina **tended** to the mold she was growing for the science fair the way a mother bird looks after her nest.
4. Like a baseball player stealing second base, Tomás **sprinted** down the hall and slid into his seat just as the bell finished ringing.

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For more practice, go to the Vocabulary Center at ClassZone.com.
**Reading-Writing Connection**

Demonstrate your understanding of “The Snapping Turtle” by responding to these prompts. Then complete the Grammar and Writing exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRITING PROMPTS</th>
<th>SELF-CHECK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **A. Short Response: Write a Letter**  
Think about the narrator’s relationship with his grandparents. Then imagine the narrator as an adult. Write a one-paragraph letter in which the grown-up narrator expresses his appreciation to his grandparents for raising him.  

A well-written letter will . . .  
- sound like it’s written by an adult  
- use details to show why the narrator is appreciative |

| **B. Extended Response: Examine Values**  
Do you think that modern American society respects the Native American values described in Joseph Bruchac’s story? Explain why or why not in a two- or three-paragraph response.  

An insightful response will . . .  
- include a clear position statement  
- demonstrate an understanding of Abenaki values |

**GRAMMAR AND WRITING**

*FORM COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCES* A compound-complex sentence contains two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses. (Recall that a dependent clause cannot stand alone as a sentence and is introduced by words such as after, because, if, and though.) Compound-complex sentences can help add variety to writing by allowing short, related sentences to be combined.

*Original:*  
I did something wrong. You were ready to help. You made me feel safe.

*Revised:*  
Though I did something wrong, you were ready to help, and you made me feel safe.

**PRACTICE** In each item, combine the sentences to form one compound-complex sentence. Use the first word in parentheses to join two independent clauses. Use the second word to change one sentence to a dependent clause.

1. You wanted to add a new color to both your garden and hers. You’d ask the woman for her iris roots. You’d give her some of your own. **(and, if)**
2. I was going to sell the turtle. I didn’t. I remembered your lessons. **(but, after)**
3. We’d catch turtles. Then we’d release them. You didn’t want them to die. **(and, because)**
4. The other boys couldn’t catch fish. We could. We were quiet. **(but, because)**

*For more help with compound-complex sentences, see page R64 in the Grammar Handbook.*
How do you know what’s RIGHT?

**KEY IDEA** Can you think of a situation when you weren’t sure what to do? If so, you know that it’s not always easy to tell right from wrong. Sometimes you must rely on your internal compass to guide your behavior. In this story, a boy decides to disobey a rule in order to help someone in need.

**DISCUSS** What purpose do rules serve in families and society? When might rules have to be changed? Discuss these questions with a small group.
LITERARY ANALYSIS: CULTURAL CONFLICT

When you read a story set in another country, knowing about the area’s history and culture can be important background. It can help you to understand the characters’ behavior and the cultural conflicts that unfold. A cultural conflict is a struggle that arises because of the differing values, customs, or circumstances between groups of people. For example, if a story is set in a place where one religious group has been fighting against another, parents might be angry if their child becomes friends with someone from outside their group.

“Our Bounds” takes place in South Africa. As you read the selection, notice how the conflicts reflect the history and culture of South Africa. The background on this page will provide you with some of the information you need.

READING SKILL: MAKE INFERENCES

Fiction writers do not always make direct statements about characters or the cultures in which they live. Instead, writers provide certain details and expect readers to combine these details with their own knowledge to “read between the lines” of a story. This process of forming logical guesses is called making inferences. As you read, use a chart like the one shown to record your inferences about the characters and their culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence from Story</th>
<th>My Knowledge</th>
<th>Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father tops wall with wire.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

The boldfaced words help Beverley Naidoo describe a society influenced by its history of racial injustice. Using context clues, try to write a definition for each word.

1. Afraid to go to a school where they would be teased, the boys straggle behind their older brother.
2. The flood could maroon many people on rooftops.
3. Members of the newer sect didn’t agree with people from the orthodox church.
4. The Africans fought vigorously for equality.
5. The peace talks gave people a glimmer of hope.
6. The evening news was interesting enough to engross him.
7. We watched the energized boy bound up the hill.
8. Poor communication will hamper efforts to get along.

Writing for Justice

Beverley Naidoo grew up in Johannesburg, South Africa, when the country was racially segregated. It wasn’t until she went to college that she recognized the injustice of the laws. After she moved to England, she decided to write children’s books that speak honestly about South African society. She published her first book, Journey to Jo’burg, in 1984. It was banned in her home country until 1991.

Background

Apartheid South Africa is the southernmost country on the African continent. The nation is ethnically diverse, with whites forming the smallest group. However, up until 1994, whites ruled the country under a system called apartheid (apartness). Apartheid was based on segregation between the races. The white government classified non-whites into three groups. Africans made up the largest group but had the fewest rights. “Coloureds” (people of mixed race) and those of Indian descent were granted limited rights in 1984. The government decided where each group could live, conduct business, or own land. The effects of apartheid continue to influence South African society today. Africans, on average, remain poorer and have less access to education than other groups.

Storms and Floods “Out of Bounds” is set in 2000. That year, severe storms devastated southern Africa. Floods swept away schools, roads, crops, and livestock. About 540,000 people were left homeless.

MORE ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND BACKGROUND

To learn more about Beverley Naidoo and South Africa, visit the Literature Center at ClassZone.com.
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Comprehension

1. **Recall** Why doesn’t Rohan go to his hideout anymore?

2. **Recall** Where has Rohan seen Solani before Solani comes to his house?

3. **Represent** Make a sketch showing Rohan’s house and the squatters’ camp. Think about what these places look like and where they are in relation to one another. Use descriptions in the story to guide you.

Literary Analysis

4. **Make Inferences About Characters** Review your chart of inferences about the characters and their culture. Why does Rohan think it’s the **right** decision to help Solani? Name three reasons why these two boys might be drawn together.

5. **Analyze Cultural Conflict** What causes the residents of Mount View to discriminate against the squatters? Consider what you know about the history and culture of South Africa as well as events in the story’s plot. Record your response in a diagram like the one shown.

6. **Evaluate Attitudes** Describe the attitudes of Rohan’s mother and father toward the squatters. Do you think they are prejudiced against Africans? Then consider Rohan’s experience in the squatters’ camp. Do you think the Africans are prejudiced against him? Explain your responses, citing evidence from the story.

7. **Make Judgments** Who do you think took the greater risk by going out of bounds—Rohan or Solani? Explain your answer.

8. **Predict** Do you think that Rohan and Solani will be able to maintain their friendship? Why or why not?

Extension and Challenge

9. **Literary Criticism** As a child, Beverley Naidoo didn’t notice that she lived in an unfair society. “It was like being brought up to be a horse with blinkers,” she has said. “Luckily when I left school, I met people who challenged me . . . and I was able to take off the blinkers.” How do Rohan’s experiences in “Out of Bounds” reflect the author’s background?

10. **SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTION** Research Nelson Mandela’s role in ending the system of apartheid in South Africa. Why is he considered an inspirational leader?
Vocabulary in Context

**VOCABULARY PRACTICE**

For each item, choose the word that differs most in meaning from the other words. Refer to a dictionary if you need help.

1. (a) bound, (b) leap, (c) spring, (d) stroll
2. (a) engross, (b) distract, (c) involve, (d) interest
3. (a) glimmer, (b) trace, (c) fraction, (d) excess
4. (a) hamper, (b) free, (c) prevent, (d) hinder
5. (a) maroon, (b) rescue, (c) save, (d) retrieve
6. (a) sect, (b) denomination, (c) group, (d) everyone
7. (a) straggle, (b) lead, (c) scatter, (d) dawdle
8. (a) vigorously, (b) energetically, (c) enthusiastically, (d) weakly

**VOCABULARY IN WRITING**

Using at least two vocabulary words, write a paragraph from Solani’s point of view telling how he felt as he approached Rohan’s house to ask for water.

**EXAMPLE SENTENCE**

I was afraid, but I couldn’t let that **hamper** me because my mother needed water.

**VOCABULARY STRATEGY: HOMOGRAPHS**

Homographs are words that look the same but have different meanings, origins, and sometimes pronunciations. For example, in the phrase “out of bounds,” **bounds** means “boundaries.” However, in the sentence “Solani bounds up the hill,” **bounds** means “springs forward.”

If a familiar-looking word does not make sense to you, look at the words around it for context clues to other possible meanings. For further help, check a dictionary.

**PRACTICE** Use context clues to define the boldfaced words. Then check your definitions in a dictionary and note the word’s origin.

1. She said goodbye to him in front of a **bank** of elevators.
2. The goatherd **drove** his flock up the hill.
3. Great-Grandma’s **lined** face shows her age.
4. Your **pupils** grow tiny when you step into bright sunlight.
5. Cowhands herded longhorn **steers** into a corral.
Reading-Writing Connection

Demonstrate your understanding of “Out of Bounds” by responding to these prompts. Then complete the Grammar and Writing exercise.

WRITING PROMPTS

A. Short Response: Write a Journal Entry
How has reading this story affected your beliefs about whether it’s right to go “out of bounds” to help another person? Write a one-paragraph journal entry explaining how the story changed your thinking or confirmed your beliefs.

B. Extended Response: Create a Community Plan
How could the residents of Mount View improve their relationship with the squatters? Write a two- or three-paragraph plan to help the two communities better understand one another.

SELF-CHECK

A well-written entry will . . .
- state your original ideas about whether it’s ever good to go out of bounds
- use examples from the story to explain why your thinking changed or stayed the same

A strong plan will . . .
- reflect an understanding of the relationship between the communities in the story
- present several ideas to bring the two communities together

GRAMMAR AND WRITING

USE COLONS CORRECTLY A colon should be placed after a formal greeting in a business letter (To Whom It May Concern:) and before a list of items (I had the following foods for breakfast: eggs, toast, and cereal). When using a colon to introduce a list, avoid placing it directly after a verb or a preposition. Instead, insert the colon after a noun or after the words the following.

Original: The squatters suffer from: poverty, homelessness, and a lack of water.

Revised: The squatters suffer from the following: poverty, homelessness, and a lack of water. (Inserting the following after the preposition from makes use of the colon correct.)

PRACTICE Rewrite the following letter, correcting the colon errors.

Dear Mount View residents
To improve our relationship with the squatters, we are recommending that residents provide squatters with: food, water, and blankets. Also, we request that these professionals offer aid to the squatters, doctors, nurses, and teachers. From the walls, please remove: wire, spikes, and broken glass.

For more help with using colons correctly, see page R50 in the Grammar Handbook.
What is a Folk Hero?

**KEY IDEA** A steel-driving man who defeats a machine through hard work and perseverance. An outlaw who steals from the rich to give to the poor. A cowgirl who can circle the moon. Every culture has its **folk heroes**, characters whose courage, generosity, or accomplishments inspire ordinary people. Some folk heroes are real people or are based on the lives of real people; others are invented to symbolize the values of a particular culture. In the tall tale you are about to read, you will meet a fictional American folk hero known for his strength and bravery.

**DISCUSS** Imagine you were on a committee to select a folk hero to speak at your school. In small groups, choose a real person or a character you’ve read about who would inspire you and your classmates. What qualities does this person possess that make him or her a folk hero? What topics would you like to see this person address at your school?
LITERARY ANALYSIS: TALL TALE

Folk heroes often appear in tall tales, which are humorous stories about impossible events. Many of these stories were originally passed down from generation to generation by being told out loud. Some of them even started off with a kernel of truth, but as you’ll see, they aren’t exactly realistic. Tall tales have these characteristics:

- The hero or heroine is often larger than life, which means he or she is bigger, louder, stronger, or stranger than any real person could be.
- Problems are solved in humorous ways.
- Hyperbole, or exaggeration, is used to emphasize the main character’s qualities and create humor.

As you read, note how these characteristics apply to “Pecos Bill.”

READING STRATEGY: VISUALIZE

Tall tales are funny and action-packed. To enjoy them fully, it helps to visualize, or picture in your mind, the incredible events in the story as you read about them. To visualize, focus on descriptions that appeal to your senses, especially those of sight, sound, and touch. Use these sensory details to form a mental picture of the characters and action. As you read, use a chart like the one shown to note descriptive words and phrases that help you visualize the tall tale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character or Event</th>
<th>Descriptive Words or Phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Bill falls out of the wagon.</td>
<td>“sat there in the dirt” “rattle off in a cloud of dust”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding Her Way
After graduating from college, Mary Pope Osborne decided to explore the world. She traveled around Europe, the Middle East, and southern Asia. She slept outdoors and bathed in rivers in Iraq, Afghanistan, and India. And, she says, she was “terrified” almost the whole time. She survived an earthquake and a riot, only to end up sick in a hospital, all alone and far from home. While she rested, she read J. R. R. Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings series. She identified with Tolkien’s hero, Frodo, whose dangerous journey seemed to resemble her own. Says Osborne, “Ultimately Frodo’s courage and powers of endurance became mine,” which helped her recover from her illness and make her way home. Eventually, she began writing children’s stories for fun and discovered her new career.

Background
Tall Tales and the American Frontier
Tall tales are often set on the American frontier—large parts of the West and Southwest that had small populations in the 19th century. Life on the frontier was often adventurous and free-spirited, and sharing stories became an important social activity. Tall tales may have started as bragging contests held by ranch hands on the frontier. As they tried to outdo each other, they exaggerated stories about their abilities more and more. The achievements described in tall tales often center around the characteristics of courage, determination, and cleverness, all of which were needed to survive on the frontier.
Ask any coyote near the Pecos River in western Texas who was the best cowboy who ever lived, and he’ll throw back his head and howl, “Ah-hooo!” If you didn’t know already, that’s coyote language for Pecos Bill.

When Pecos Bill was a little baby, he was as tough as a pine knot. He teethered on horseshoes instead of teething rings and played with grizzly bears instead of teddy bears. He could have grown up just fine in the untamed land of eastern Texas. But one day his pappy ran in from the fields, hollering, “Pack up, Ma! Neighbors movin’ in fifty miles away! It’s gettin’ too crowded!” Before sundown Bill’s folks loaded their fifteen kids and all their belongings into their covered wagon and started west.

As they clattered across the desolate land of western Texas, the crushing heat nearly drove them all crazy. Baby Bill got so hot and cross that he began to wallop his big brothers. Pretty soon all fifteen kids were going at one another tooth and nail. Before they turned each other into catfish bait, Bill fell out of the wagon and landed kerplop on the sun-scorched desert.

The others were so busy fighting that they didn’t even notice the baby was missing until it was too late to do anything about it.

Well, tough little Bill just sat there in the dirt, watching his family rattle off in a cloud of dust, until an old coyote walked over and sniffed him.

“Goo-goo!” Bill said.

Now it’s an amazing coincidence, but “Goo-goo” happens to mean something similar to “Glad to meet you” in coyote language. Naturally the old coyote figured he’d come across one of his own kind. He gave Bill a big lick and picked him up by the scruff of the neck and carried him home to his den.

1. wallop (wəlˈəp): to beat up.
2. tooth and nail: very fiercely.
Bill soon discovered the coyote’s kinfolk were about the wildest, roughest bunch you could imagine. Before he knew it, he was roaming the prairies with the pack. He howled at the moon, sniffed the brush, and chased lizards across the sand. He was having such a good time, scuttling about naked and dirty on all fours, that he completely forgot what it was like to be a human.

Pecos Bill’s coyote days came to an end about seventeen years later. One evening as he was sniffing the sagebrush, a cowpoke3 came loping by on a big horse. “Hey, you!” he shouted. “What in the world are you?”

Bill sat on his haunches and stared at the feller.

“What are you?” asked the cowpoke again.

“Varmint,”4 said Bill hoarsely, for he hadn’t used his human voice in seventeen years.

“No, you ain’t!”

“Yeah, I am. I got fleas, don’t I?”

“Well, that don’t mean nothing. A lot of Texans got fleas. The thing varmints got that you ain’t got is a tail.”

“Oh, yes, I do have a tail,” said Pecos Bill.

“Lemme see it then,” said the cowpoke.

Bill turned around to look at his rear end, and for the first time in his life he realized he didn’t have a tail.

“Dang,” he said. “But if I’m not a varmint, what am I?”

“You’re a cowboy! So start acting like one!”

Bill just growled at the feller like any coyote worth his salt5 would. But deep down in his heart of hearts he knew the cowpoke was right. For the last seventeen years he’d had a sneaking suspicion that he was different from that pack of coyotes. For one thing, none of them seemed to smell quite as bad as he did.

So with a heavy heart he said good-bye to his four-legged friends and took off with the cowpoke for the nearest ranch.

Acting like a human wasn’t all that easy for Pecos Bill. Even though he soon started dressing right, he never bothered to shave or comb his hair. He’d just throw some water on his face in the morning and go around the rest of the day looking like a wet dog. Ignorant cowpokes claimed Bill wasn’t too smart. Some of the meaner ones liked to joke that he wore a ten-dollar hat on a five-cent head.

The truth was Pecos Bill would soon prove to be one of the greatest cowboys who ever lived. He just needed to find the kind of folks who’d appreciate him. One night when he was licking his dinner plate, his ears perked up. A couple of ranch hands were going on about a gang of wild cowboys.

3. cowpoke: cowhand; cattle herder.
4. varmint: wild and/or vicious animal.
5. worth his salt: worthy of respect.
“Yep. Those fellas are more animal than human,” one ranch hand was saying.
“Yep. Them's the toughest bunch I ever come across. Heck, they're so tough,
they can kick fire out of flint rock with their bare toes!”
“Yep. 'N' they like to bite nails in half for fun!”
“Who are these fellers?” asked Bill.

“The Hell's Gate Gang,” said the ranch hand. “The mangiest, meanest,
most low-down bunch of low-life varmints that ever grew hair.”
“Sounds like my kind of folks,” said Bill, and before anyone could holler
whoa, he jumped on his horse and took off for Hell's Gate Canyon.
Bill hadn't gone far when disaster struck. His horse stepped in a hole and
broke its ankle.
“Dang!” said Bill as he stumbled up from the spill. He draped the lame
critter around his neck and hurried on.
After he'd walked about a hundred more miles, Bill heard some mean
rattling. Then a fifty-foot rattlesnake reared up its ugly head and stuck out its
long, forked tongue, ready to fight.
“Knock it off, you scaly-hided fool. I'm in a hurry,” Bill said.
The snake didn't give a spit for Bill's plans. He just rattled on.
Before the cussed varmint could strike, Bill had no choice but to knock
him cross-eyed. “Hey, feller,” he said, holding up the dazed snake. “I like your
spunk. Come go with us.” Then he wrapped the rattler around his arm and
continued on his way.
After Bill had hiked another hundred miles with his horse around his neck
and his snake around his arm, he heard a terrible growl. A huge mountain lion
was crouching on a cliff, getting ready to leap on top of him.
“Don't jump, you mangy bobtailed fleabag!” Bill said.
Well, call any mountain lion a mangy bobtailed fleabag, and he'll jump on
your back for sure. After this one leaped onto Bill, so much fur began to fly
that it darkened the sky. Bill wrestled that mountain lion into a headlock, then
squeezed him so tight that the big cat had to cry uncle.
When the embarrassed old critter started to slink off, Bill felt sorry for him.
“Aw, c'mon, you big silly,” he said. “You're more like me than most humans
I meet.”
He saddled up the cat, jumped on his back, and the four of them headed for
the canyon, with the mountain lion screeching, the horse neighing, the rattler
rattling, and Pecos Bill hollering a wild war whoop.
When the Hell's Gate Gang heard those noises coming from the prairie,
they nearly fainted. They dropped their dinner plates, and their faces turned as
white as bleached desert bones. Their knees knocked and their six-guns shook.
“Hey, there!” Bill said as he sidled up to their campfire, grinning. “Who's
the boss around here?”

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6. flint rock: a very hard, fine-grained quartz that sparks when struck with steel.
7. bobtailed: having a very short tail or one that has been bobbed (cut short).
8. cry uncle: give up fighting; admit that one has been beaten.
A nine-foot feller with ten pistols at his sides stepped forward and in a shaky voice said, “Stranger, I was. But from now on, it’ll be you.”

“Well, thanky, pardner,” said Bill. “Get on with your dinner, boys. Don’t let me interrupt.”

Once Bill settled down with the Hell’s Gate Gang, his true genius revealed itself. With his gang’s help, he put together the biggest ranch in the southwest. He used New Mexico as a corral and Arizona as a pasture. He invented tarantulas and scorpions as practical jokes. He also invented roping. Some say his rope was exactly as long as the equator; others argue it was two feet shorter.

Things were going fine for Bill until Texas began to suffer the worst drought in its history. It was so dry that all the rivers turned as powdery as biscuit flour. The parched grass was catching fire everywhere. For a while Bill and his gang managed to lasso water from the Rio Grande. When that river dried up, they lassoed water from the Gulf of Mexico.

No matter what he did, though, Bill couldn’t get enough water to stay ahead of the drought. All his horses and cows were starting to dry up and blow away like balls of tumbleweed. It was horrible.

Just when the end seemed near, the sky turned a deep shade of purple. From the distant mountains came a terrible roar. The cattle began to stampede, and a huge black funnel of a cyclone appeared, heading straight for Bill’s ranch.

The rest of the Hell’s Gate Gang shouted, “Help!” and ran.

But Pecos Bill wasn’t scared in the least. “Yahoo!” he hollered, and he swung his lariat and lassoed that cyclone around its neck.

Bill held on tight as he got sucked up into the middle of the swirling cloud. He grabbed the cyclone by the ears and pulled himself onto her back. Then he let out a whoop and headed that twister across Texas.

The mighty cyclone bucked, arched, and screamed like a wild bronco. But Pecos Bill just held on with his legs and used his strong hands to wring the rain out of her wind. He wrung out rain that flooded Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, until finally he slid off the shriveled-up funnel and fell into California. The earth sank about two hundred feet below sea level in the spot where Bill landed, creating the area known today as Death Valley.

“There. That little waterin’ should hold things for a while,” he said, brushing himself off.

After his cyclone ride, no horse was too wild for Pecos Bill. He soon found a young colt that was as tough as a tiger and as crazy as a streak of lightning. He named the colt Widow Maker and raised him on barbed wire and dynamite. Whenever the two rode together, they back-flipped and somersaulted all over Texas, loving every minute of it.

9. Rio Grande (rō’grānd’): a river that forms part of the U.S.-Mexican border.
One day when Bill and Widow Maker were bouncing around the Pecos River, they came across an awesome sight: a wild-looking, red-haired woman riding on the back of the biggest catfish Bill had ever seen. The woman looked like she was having a ball, screeching, “Ride 'em, cowgirl!” as the catfish whipped her around in the air.

“What’s your name?” Bill shouted.

“Slue-foot Sue! What’s it to you?” she said. Then she war-whooped away over the windy water.

Thereafter all Pecos Bill could think of was Slue-foot Sue. He spent more and more time away from the Hell’s Gate Gang as he wandered the barren cattle-lands, looking for her. When he finally found her lonely little cabin, he was so love-struck he reverted to some of his old coyote ways. He sat on his haunches in the moonlight and began a-howling and ah-hooing.

10. slue (slú): to rotate, turn sharply, or pivot.
Well, the good news was that Sue had a bit of coyote in her too, so she completely understood Bill’s language. She stuck her head out her window and ah-hooed back to him that she loved him, too. Consequently Bill and Sue decided to get married.

On the day of the wedding Sue wore a beautiful white dress with a steel-spring bustle,11 and Bill appeared in an elegant buckskin suit.

But after a lovely ceremony, a terrible catastrophe occurred. Slue-foot Sue got it into her head that she just had to have a ride on Bill’s wild bronco, Widow Maker.

“You can’t do that, honey,” Bill said. “He won’t let any human toss a leg over him but me.”

“Don’t worry,” said Sue. “You know I can ride anything on four legs, not to mention what flies or swims.”

Bill tried his best to talk Sue out of it, but she wouldn’t listen. She was dying to buck on the back of that bronco. Wearing her white wedding dress with the bustle, she jumped on Widow Maker and kicked him with her spurs.

Well, that bronco didn’t need any thorns in his side to start bucking to beat the band. He bounded up in the air with such amazing force that suddenly Sue was flying high into the Texas sky. She flew over plains and mesas,12 over canyons, deserts, and prairies. She flew so high that she looped over the new moon and fell back to earth.

But when Sue landed on her steel-spring bustle, she rebounded right back into the heavens! As she bounced back and forth between heaven and earth, Bill whirled his lariat13 above his head, then lassoed her. But instead of bringing Sue back down to earth, he got yanked into the night sky alongside her!

Together Pecos Bill and Slue-foot Sue bounced off the earth and went flying to the moon. And at that point Bill must have gotten some sort of foothold in a moon crater—because neither he nor Sue returned to earth. Not ever.

Folks figure those two must have dug their boot heels into some moon cheese and raised a pack of wild coyotes just like themselves. Texans’ll tell you that every time you hear thunder rolling over the desolate land near the Pecos River, it’s just Bill’s family having a good laugh upstairs. When you hear a strange ah-hooing in the dark night, don’t be fooled—that’s the sound of Bill howling on the moon instead of at it. And when lights flash across the midnight sky, you can bet it’s Bill and Sue riding the backs of some white-hot shooting stars.

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11. **bustle** (büs’əl): a springy steel framework worn under the back of a woman’s skirt to make it puff out.

12. **mesas** (mā’əsəs): high, flat-topped areas of land.

13. **lariat** (lär’ē-at): a rope with a slip-knotted loop at one end that a cowhand throws over an animal’s head or body and pulls tight.
Comprehension

1. Recall Why does a coyote decide to take care of Bill?
2. Clarify How does Bill become the leader of the Hell’s Gate Gang?
3. Summarize How do Bill and Sue end up leaving Earth and living in the sky?

Literary Analysis

4. Examine a Tall Tale In what ways does “Pecos Bill” exhibit the characteristics of a tall tale? Review the characteristics on page 801. Give examples from the story to support each one.
5. Visualize Review the chart you filled in as you read. What person or event did you picture most clearly? Tell what descriptions and sensory details helped you. Overall, how well do you think the author helped you visualize the story? Explain.
6. Analyze Characterization How does the author help you get to know what Pecos Bill is like? Use a character map to show what you learn about Bill through each of the four methods of characterization.

Extension and Challenge

8. Creative Project: Comic Strip The incredible characters and events in tall tales have much in common with cartoons. Choose one of the events described in “Pecos Bill.” Create a three- to four-panel comic strip that illustrates this event.
9. Social Studies Connection What were the lives of cowboys in the 19th century really like? Research the topic, and then compare your findings with the life of Pecos Bill in the story. Are there similarities?

Research Links
For more on 19th-century cowboys, visit the Research Center at ClassZone.com.
Meet John Steinbeck

John Steinbeck grew up in Salinas, California. Some of his earliest jobs were in sugar factories and ranches in this fertile area of the state. He worked alongside many Mexican Americans, and he gained respect for their culture and sympathized with their tough living and working conditions. Later, he lived in Mexico for a time, which made him even more aware of how poverty affects people’s lives. Even after achieving success, he never flaunted his wealth. He lived simply and traveled often.

Steinbeck wrote stories about the poor at a time when many people preferred not to think about such things. Though Steinbeck won many prominent awards, including the 1962 Nobel Prize in literature, he also received hate mail from some readers, and some of his work was even banned.

Try a Novella

Some stories are too short to be called novels but too long to be called short stories. These fall into the category of the novella, a story ranging from about 50 to 100 pages in length. Being limited in length, a novella usually focuses on a particular situation or conflict and has fewer characters than a novel.

Some of John Steinbeck’s best-known works are novellas. The brief form allows his stories to seem simple while conveying powerful themes. He based his novella The Pearl on a Mexican parable, a traditional story that is meant to teach a lesson. He heard it while traveling around the Gulf of California, also known as the Sea of Cortez.
“It is as I thought,” he said. “The poison has gone inward and it will strike soon. Come look!” He held the eyelid down. “See—it is blue.” And Kino, looking anxiously, saw that indeed it was a little blue. And he didn’t know whether or not it was always a little blue. But the trap was set. He couldn’t take the chance.

The doctor’s eyes watered in their little hammocks. “I will give him something to try to turn the poison aside,” he said. And he handed the baby to Kino.

Then from his bag he took a little bottle of white powder and a capsule of gelatine. He filled the capsule with the powder and closed it, and then around the first capsule he fitted a second capsule and closed it. Then he worked very deftly. He took the baby and pinched its lower lip until it opened its mouth. His fat fingers placed the capsule far back on the baby’s tongue, back of the point where he could spit it out, and then from the floor he picked up the little pitcher of pulque and gave Coyotito a drink, and it was done. He looked again at the baby’s eyeball and he pursed his lips and seemed to think.

**Read a Great Book**

“If this story is a parable, perhaps everyone takes his own meaning from it and reads his own life into it.” So begins the story of Kino, the poor fisherman, his wife, Juana, their baby, Coyotito, and the great pearl that was found and lost again. When Coyotito is stung by a scorpion, Kino and Juana travel from their village to take him to the nearest doctor. However, being poor, they are unable to pay for treatment and are turned away. But once they have a large pearl in their possession, the greedy doctor makes a house call, hoping to get a share of the profits.
At last he handed the baby back to Juana, and he turned to Kino.

“I think the poison will attack within the hour,” he said. “The medicine may save the baby from hurt, but I will come back in an hour. Perhaps I am in time to save him.” He took a deep breath and went out of the hut, and his servant followed him with the lantern.

Now Juana had the baby under her shawl, and she stared at it with anxiety and fear. Kino came to her, and he lifted the shawl and stared at the baby. He moved his hand to look under the eyelid, and only then saw that the pearl was still in his hand. Then he went to a box by the wall, and from it he brought a piece of rag. He wrapped the pearl in the rag, then went to the corner of the brush house and dug a little hole with his fingers in the dirt floor, and he put the pearl in the hole and covered it up and concealed the place. And then he went to the fire where Juana was squatting, watching the baby’s face.

The doctor, back in his house, settled into his chair and looked at his watch. His people brought him a little supper of chocolate and sweet cakes and fruit, and he stared at the food discontentedly.

In the houses of the neighbors the subject that would lead all conversations for a long time to come was aired for the first time to see how it would go. The neighbors showed one another with their thumbs how big the pearl was, and they made little caressing gestures to show how lovely it was. From now on they would watch Kino and Juana very closely to see whether riches turned their heads, as riches turn all people’s heads. Everyone knew why the doctor had come. He was not good at dissembling and he was very well understood.

Out in the estuary a tight woven school of small fishes glittered and broke water to escape a school of great fishes that drove in to eat them. And in the houses the people could hear the swish of the small ones and the bouncing splash of the great ones as the slaughter went on. The dampness arose out of the Gulf and was deposited on bushes and cacti and on little trees in salty drops. And the night mice crept about on the ground and the little night hawks hunted them silently.

The skinny black puppy with flame spots over his eyes came to Kino’s door and looked in. He nearly shook his hind quarters loose when Kino glanced up at him, and he subsided when Kino looked away. The puppy did not enter the house, but he watched with frantic
interest while Kino ate his beans from the little pottery dish and wiped it clean with a corncake and ate the cake and washed the whole down with a drink of pulque.

Kino was finished and was rolling a cigarette when Juana spoke sharply. “Kino.” He glanced at her and then got up and went quickly to her for he saw fright in her eyes. He stood over her, looking down, but the light was very dim. He kicked a pile of twigs into the fire hole to make a blaze, and then he could see the face of Coyotito. The baby’s face was flushed and his throat was working and a little thick drool of saliva issued from his lips. The spasm of the stomach muscles began, and the baby was very sick.

Kino knelt beside his wife. “So the doctor knew,” he said, but he said it for himself as well as for his wife, for his mind was hard and suspicious and he was remembering the white powder. Juana rocked from side to side and moaned out the little Song of the Family as though it could ward off the danger, and the baby vomited and writhed in her arms. Now uncertainty was in Kino, and the music of evil throbbed in his head and nearly drove out Juana’s song.

The doctor finished his chocolate and nibbled the little fallen pieces of sweet cake. He brushed his fingers on a napkin, looked at his watch, arose, and took up his little bag.

The news of the baby’s illness traveled quickly among the brush houses, for sickness is second only to hunger as the enemy of poor people. And some said softly, “Luck, you see, brings bitter friends.” And they nodded and got up to go to Kino’s house. The neighbors scuttled with covered noses through the dark until they crowded into Kino’s house again. They stood and gazed, and they made little comments on the sadness that this should happen at a time of joy, and they said, “All things are in God’s hands.” The old women squatted down beside Juana to try to give her aid if they could and comfort if they could not.

Then the doctor hurried in, followed by his man. He scattered the old women like chickens. He took the baby and examined it and felt its head. “The poison it has worked,” he said. “I think I can defeat it. I will try my best.” He asked for water, and in the cup of it he put three drops of ammonia, and he pried open the baby’s mouth and poured it down. The baby spluttered and screeched under the
treatment, and Juana watched him with haunted eyes. The doctor spoke a little as he worked. “It is lucky that I know about the poison of the scorpion, otherwise—” and he shrugged to show what could have happened.

But Kino was suspicious, and he could not take his eyes from the doctor’s open bag, and from the bottle of white powder there. Gradually the spasms subsided and the baby relaxed under the doctor’s hands. And then Coyotito sighed deeply and went to sleep, for he was very tired with vomiting.

The doctor put the baby in Juana’s arms. “He will get well now,” he said. “I have won the fight.” And Juana looked at him with adoration.

The doctor was closing his bag now. He said, “When do you think you can pay this bill?” He said it even kindly.

“When I have sold my pearl I will pay you,” Kino said.

“You have a pearl? A good pearl?” the doctor asked with interest.

And then the chorus of the neighbors broke in. “He has found the Pearl of the World,” they cried, and they joined forefinger with thumb to show how great the pearl was.

“Kino will be a rich man,” they clamored. “It is a pearl such as one has never seen.”

The doctor looked surprised. “I had not heard of it. Do you keep this pearl in a safe place? Perhaps you would like me to put it in my safe?”

Kino’s eyes were hooded now, his cheeks were drawn taut. “I have it secure,” he said. “Tomorrow I will sell it and then I will pay you.”

The doctor shrugged, and his wet eyes never left Kino’s eyes. He knew the pearl would be buried in the house, and he thought Kino might look toward the place where it was buried. “It would be a shame to have it stolen before you could sell it,” the doctor said, and he saw Kino’s eyes flick involuntarily to the floor near the side post of the brush house.

When the doctor had gone and all the neighbors had reluctantly returned to their houses, Kino squatted beside the little glowing coals in the fire hole and listened to the night sound, the soft sweep of the little waves on the shore and the distant barking of dogs, the creeping of the breeze through the brush house roof and the soft speech of his neighbors in their houses in the village. For these people do not sleep
soundly all night; they awaken at intervals and talk a little and then go to sleep again. And after a while Kino got up and went to the door of his house.

He smelled the breeze and he listened for any foreign sound of secrecy or creeping, and his eyes searched the darkness, for the music of evil was sounding in his head and he was fierce and afraid. After he had probed the night with his senses he went to the place by the side post where the pearl was buried, and he dug it up and brought it to his sleeping mat, and under his sleeping mat he dug another little hole in the dirt floor and buried the pearl and covered it up again.

And Juana, sitting by the fire hole, watched him with questioning eyes, and when he had buried his pearl she asked, “Who do you fear?”

Keep Reading
Is Kino right to fear that something bad is going to happen now that he has the “Pearl of the World”? As you continue to read the novella, you’ll follow Kino and Juana as they seek their fortune, dodging danger at every turn. Discover how finding the pearl will change their lives forever.
What can you learn from a JOB?

KEY IDEA  Does the thought of taking out the trash make you groan? Would you rather stay in bed than deliver newspapers on a rainy morning? Lots of times, jobs don’t sound fun. But they can teach important lessons and help you figure out your goals for the future. In this memoir, the author discovers that finding out what he doesn’t want to do is almost as important as finding out what he does want to do.

QUICKWRITE  What have you learned from a job? Whether it was inside or outside your home, describe a job you’ve had or a chore you’ve done and the lessons you took away from it.
**LITERARY ANALYSIS: AUTHOR’S PERSPECTIVE**

Your view of the world is based on the people you know, the places you’ve lived, and the experiences you’ve had. Similarly, an **author’s perspective**—the way a writer looks at a topic—is shaped by his or her experiences, environment, and values.

In his memoir, Gary Soto describes his teenage years working as a field laborer. As you read, look for direct statements, thoughts, and actions that reflect Soto’s heritage, attitudes, and beliefs.

**READING STRATEGY: ANALYZE SENSORY DETAILS**

Does it ever feel like you’re actually seeing or hearing the experiences described on the page? If so, it’s probably because of the author’s expert use of sensory details. **Sensory details** are words and phrases that appeal to a reader’s five senses. By using such details, a writer helps the reader create vivid mental pictures of settings, people, and events.

For example, in “One Last Time” Soto describes a bus that “started off in slow chugs”—a detail that helps you “hear” the rickety old bus. As you read, look for two or three details that appeal to each sense and record them in a web.

**VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT**

The words in Column A help Soto describe his jobs. See how many you know by matching each word to the word or phrase in Column B that is closest in meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ramble</td>
<td>a. weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. foreman</td>
<td>b. angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. grope</td>
<td>c. workers’ boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. stoop</td>
<td>d. bend over at the waist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. contractor</td>
<td>e. unpleasant situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. irate</td>
<td>f. awkwardly grab for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. feeble</td>
<td>g. talk on and on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. predicament</td>
<td>h. one who provides services for a price</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MORE ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

For more on Gary Soto, visit the Literature Center at ClassZone.com.
Yesterday I saw the movie Gandhi and recognized a few of the people—not in the theater but in the film. I saw my relatives, dusty and thin as sparrows, returning from the fields with hoes balanced on their shoulders. The workers were squinting, eyes small and veined, and were using their hands to say what there was to say to those in the audience with popcorn. . . . I didn’t have any, though. I sat thinking of my family and their years in the fields, beginning with Grandmother who came to the United States after the Mexican revolution to settle in Fresno where she met her husband and bore children, many of them. She worked in the fields around Fresno, picking grapes, oranges, plums, peaches, and cotton, dragging a large white sack like a sled. She worked in the packing houses, Bonner and Sun-Maid Raisin, where she stood at a conveyor belt passing her hand over streams of raisins to pluck out leaves and pebbles. For over twenty years she worked at a machine that boxed raisins until she retired at sixty-five.

Grandfather worked in the fields, as did his children. Mother also found herself out there when she separated from Father for three weeks. I remember her coming home, dusty and so tired that she had to rest on the porch before she trudged inside to wash and start dinner. I didn’t understand the complaints about her ankles or the small of her back, even though I had been in the grape fields watching her work. With my brother and sister I ran in and out of the rows; we enjoyed ourselves and pretended not to hear Mother scolding us to sit down and behave ourselves. A few years later, however, I caught on when I went to pick grapes rather than play in the rows.

Mother and I got up before dawn and ate quick bowls of cereal. She drove in silence while I rambled on how everything was now solved, how I was going to make enough money to end our misery and even buy her a beautiful copper tea pot, the one I had shown her in Long’s Drugs. When we arrived I was frisky and ready to go, self-consciously aware of my grape knife dangling at my wrist. I almost ran to the row the foreman had pointed out, but I returned to help Mother with the grape pans and jug of water. She told me to settle down and reminded me not to lose my knife. I walked at her side and listened to her explain how to cut grapes; bent down, hands on knees, I watched her demonstrate by cutting a few bunches into my pan. She stood over me as I tried it myself, tugging at a bunch of grapes that pulled loose like beads from a necklace. “Cut the stem all the way,” she told me as last advice before she walked away, her shoes sinking in the loose dirt, to begin work on her own row.

I cut another bunch, then another, fighting the snap and whip of vines. After ten minutes of groping for grapes, my first pan brimmed with bunches. I poured them on the paper tray, which was bordered by a wooden frame that kept the grapes from rolling off, and they spilled like jewels from a pirate’s chest. The tray was only half filled, so I hurried to jump under the vines and begin groping, cutting, and tugging at the grapes again. I emptied the pan, raked the grapes with my hands to make them look like they filled the tray, and jumped back under the vine on my knees. I tried to cut faster because Mother, in the next row, was slowly moving ahead. I peeked into her row and saw five trays gleaming in the early morning. I cut, pulled hard, and stopped to gather the grapes that missed the pan; already bored, I spat on a few to wash them before tossing them like popcorn into my mouth. I cut another bunch, then another, fighting the snap and whip of vines. After ten minutes of groping for grapes, my first pan brimmed with bunches. I poured them on the paper tray, which was bordered by a wooden frame that kept the grapes from rolling off, and they spilled like jewels from a pirate’s chest. The tray was only half filled, so I hurried to jump under the vines and begin groping, cutting, and tugging at the grapes again. I emptied the pan, raked the grapes with my hands to make them look like they filled the tray, and jumped back under the vine on my knees. I tried to cut faster because Mother, in the next row, was slowly moving ahead. I peeked into her row and saw five trays gleaming in the early morning. I cut, pulled hard, and stopped to gather the grapes that missed the pan; already bored, I spat on a few to wash them before tossing them like popcorn into my mouth.

So it went. Two pans equaled one tray—or six cents. By lunchtime I had a trail of thirty-seven trays behind me while Mother had sixty or more. We met about halfway from our last trays, and I sat down with a grunt, knees wet from kneeling on dropped grapes. I washed my hands with the water from the jug, drying them on the inside of my shirt sleeve before I opened the paper bag for the first sandwich, which I gave to Mother. I dipped my hand in again to unwrap a sandwich without looking at it. I took a first bite and chewed it slowly for the tang of mustard. Eating in silence I looked straight ahead at the vines, and only when we were finished with cookies did we talk.

“Are you tired?” she asked.

“No, but I got a sliver from the frame,” I told her. I showed her the web of skin between my thumb and index finger. She wrinkled her forehead but said it was nothing.

“How many trays did you do?”

I looked straight ahead, not answering at first. I recounted in my mind the whole morning of bend, cut, pour again and again, before answering a feeble “thirty-seven.” No elaboration, no detail. Without looking at me she told me how she had done field work in Texas and Michigan as a child. But I had a difficult time listening to her stories. I played with my grape knife, stabbing it
into the ground, but stopped when Mother reminded me that I had better not lose it. I left the knife sticking up like a small, leafless plant. She then talked about school, the junior high I would be going to that fall, and then about Rick and Debra, how sorry they would be that they hadn’t come out to pick grapes because they’d have no new clothes for the school year. She stopped talking when she peeked at her watch, a bandless one she kept in her pocket. She got up with an “Ay, Dios,” and told me that we’d work until three, leaving me cutting figures in the sand with my knife and dreading the return to work.

Finally I rose and walked slowly back to where I had left off, again kneeling under the vine and fixing the pan under bunches of grapes. By that time, 11:30, the sun was over my shoulder and made me squint and think of the pool at the Y.M.C.A. where I was a summer member. I saw myself diving face first into the water and loving it. I saw myself gleaming like something new, at the edge of the pool. I had to daydream and keep my mind busy because boredom was a terror almost as awful as the work itself. My mind went dumb with stupid things, and I had to keep it moving with dreams of baseball and would-be girlfriends. I even sang, however softly, to keep my mind moving, my hands moving.

I worked less hurriedly and with less vision. I no longer saw that copper pot sitting squat on our stove or Mother waiting for it to whistle. The wardrobe that I imagined, crisp and bright in the closet, numbered only one pair of jeans and two shirts because, in half a day, six cents times thirty-seven trays was two dollars and twenty-two cents. It became clear to me. If I worked eight hours, I might make four dollars. I’d take this, even gladly, and walk downtown to look into store windows on the mall and long for the bright madras shirts from Walter Smith or Coffee’s, but settling for two imitation ones from Penney’s.

That first day I laid down seventy-three trays while Mother had a hundred and twenty behind her. On the back of an old envelope, she wrote out our numbers and hours. We washed at the pump behind the farm house and walked slowly to our car for the drive back to town in the afternoon heat. That evening after dinner I sat in a lawn chair listening to music from a transistor radio while Rick and David King played catch. I joined them in a game of pickle, but there was little joy in trying to avoid their tags because I couldn’t get the fields out of my mind: I saw myself dropping on my knees under a vine to tug at a branch that wouldn’t come off. In bed, when I closed my eyes, I saw the fields, yellow with kicked up dust, and a crooked trail of trays rotting behind me.

The next day I woke tired and started picking tired. The grapes rained into the pan, slowly filling like a belly, until I had my first tray and started my second. So it went all day, and the next, and all through the following week, so that by the end of thirteen days the foreman counted out, in tens mostly, my pay of fifty-three dollars. Mother earned one hundred and forty-eight dollars. She wrote this on her envelope, with a message I didn’t bother to ask her about.

3. Ay, Dios ([ə ðə-əs’]) Spanish: “Oh, God.”
4. madras (mæd’ras): cotton cloth, usually with a plaid pattern.
The next day I walked with my friend Scott to the downtown mall where we drooled over the clothes behind fancy windows, bought popcorn, and sat at a tier of outdoor fountains to talk about girls. Finally we went into Penney’s for more popcorn, which we ate walking around, before we returned home without buying anything. It wasn’t until a few days before school that I let my fifty-three dollars slip quietly from my hands, buying a pair of pants, two shirts, and a maroon T-shirt, the kind that was in style. At home I tried them on while Rick looked on enviously; later, the day before school started, I tried them on again wondering not so much if they were worth it as who would see me first in those clothes.

Along with my brother and sister I picked grapes until I was fifteen, before giving up and saying that I’d rather wear old clothes than stoop like a Mexican. Mother thought I was being stuck-up, even stupid, because there would be no clothes for me in the fall. I told her I didn’t care, but when Rick and Debra rose at five in the morning, I lay awake in bed feeling that perhaps I had made a mistake but unwilling to change my mind. That fall Mother bought me two pairs of socks, a packet of colored T-shirts, and underwear. The T-shirts would help, I thought, but who would see that I had new underwear and socks? I wore a new T-shirt on the first day of school, then an old shirt on Tuesday, then another T-shirt on Wednesday, and on Thursday an old Nehru shirt⁵ that was embarrassingly out of style. On Friday I changed into the corduroy pants my brother had handed down to me and slipped into my last new T-shirt. I worked like a magician, blinding my classmates, who were all clothes conscious and small-time social climbers, by arranging my wardrobe to make it seem larger than it really was. But by spring I had to do something—my blue jeans were almost silver and my shoes had lost their form, puddling like black ice around my feet. That spring of my sixteenth year,

⁵. Nehru (nəˈrō) shirt: an Indian-style shirt with a stand-up collar.
Rick and I decided to take a labor bus to chop cotton. In his old Volkswagen, which was more noise than power, we drove on a Saturday morning to West Fresno—or Chinatown as some call it—parked, walked slowly toward a bus, and stood gawking at the . . . blacks, Okies,6 Tejanos7 with gold teeth, . . . Mexican families, and labor contractors shouting “Cotton” or “Beets,” the work of spring. 

We boarded the “Cotton” bus without looking at the contractor who stood almost blocking the entrance. . . . We boarded scared. . . . We sat . . . looking straight ahead, and only glanced briefly at the others who boarded, almost all of them broken and poorly dressed in loudly mismatched clothes. Finally when the contractor banged his palm against the side of the bus, the young man at the wheel, smiling and talking in Spanish, started the engine, idled it for a moment while he adjusted the mirrors, and started off in slow chugs. Except for the windshield there was no glass in the windows, so as soon as we were on the rural roads outside Fresno, the dust and sand began to be sucked into the bus, whipping about like irate wasps as the gravel ticked about us. We closed our eyes, clotted up our mouths that wanted to open with embarrassed laughter because we couldn’t believe we were on that bus with those people and the dust attacking us for no reason. 

When we arrived at a field we followed the others to a pickup where we each took a hoe and marched to stand before a row. Rick and I, self-conscious and unsure, looked around at the others who leaned on their hoes or squatted in front of the rows, almost all talking in Spanish, joking . . . all waiting for the foreman’s whistle to begin work. Mother had explained how to chop cotton by showing us with a broom in the backyard.

“Like this,” she said, her broom swishing down weeds. “Leave one plant and cut four—and cut them! Don’t leave them standing or the foreman will get mad.”

The foreman whistled and we started up the row stealing glances at other workers to see if we were doing it right. But after awhile we worked like we knew what we were doing, neither of us hurrying or falling behind. But slowly the clot of men, women, and kids began to spread and loosen. Even Rick pulled away. I didn’t hurry, though. I cut smoothly and cleanly as I walked at a slow pace, in a sort of funeral march. My eyes measured each space of cotton plants before I cut. If I missed the plants, I swished again. I worked intently, seldom looking up, so when I did I was amazed to see the sun, like a broken orange coin, in the east. It looked blurry, unbelievable, like something not of this world. I looked around in amazement, scanning the eastern horizon that was a taut line jutted with an occasional mountain. The horizon was beautiful, like a snapshot of the moon, in the early light of morning, in the quiet of no cars and few people. 

6. Okies (ō’kēz): people from Oklahoma and other midwestern states who moved to California to find work during the Great Depression of the 1930s.
7. Tejanos (tä-hä’nös): Texans of Mexican ancestry.

AUTHOR’S PERSPECTIVE
Reread lines 119–141. What reasons does Soto give for rejecting field work? Tell why his views change.

irate (i-rāt’) adj. very angry

SENSORY DETAILS
Reread lines 142–154. What words and phrases help you feel, hear, and see what it was like to ride the “Cotton” bus?

contractor (kōn’trāk’tar) n. one who agrees to provide services for a specific price

SENSORY DETAILS
What sensory details does Soto use to help you see the beauty of his surroundings?
The foreman trudged in boots in my direction, stepping awkwardly over the plants, to inspect the work. No one around me looked up. We all worked steadily while we waited for him to leave. When he did leave, with a feeble complaint addressed to no one in particular, we looked up smiling under straw hats and bandanas.

By 11:00, our lunch time, my ankles were hurting from walking on clods8 the size of hardballs. My arms ached and my face was dusted by a wind that was perpetual, always busy whipping about. But the work was not bad, I thought. It was better, so much better, than picking grapes, especially with the hourly wage of a dollar twenty-five instead of piece work. Rick and I walked sorely toward the bus where we washed and drank water. Instead of eating in the bus or in the shade of the bus, we kept to ourselves by walking down to the irrigation canal9 that ran the length of the field, to open our lunch of sandwiches and crackers. We laughed at the crackers, which seemed like a cruel joke from our Mother, because we were working under the sun and the last thing we wanted was a salty dessert. We ate them anyway and drank more water before we returned to the field, both of us limping in exaggeration. Working side by side, we talked and laughed at our predicament because our Mother had warned us year after year that if we didn’t get on track in school we’d have to work in the fields and then we would see. We mimicked Mother’s whining voice and smirked at her smoky view of the future in which we’d be trapped by marriage and screaming kids. We’d eat beans and then we’d see.

Rick pulled slowly away to the rhythm of his hoe falling faster and smoother. It was better that way, to work alone. I could hum made-up songs or songs from the radio and think to myself about school and friends. At the time I was doing badly in my classes, mainly because of a difficult stepfather, but also because I didn’t care anymore. All through junior high and into my first year of high school there were those who said I would never do anything, be anyone. They said I’d work like a donkey and marry the first Mexican girl that came along. I was reminded so often, verbally and in the way I was treated at home, that I began to believe that chopping cotton might be a lifetime job for me. If not chopping cotton, then I might get lucky and find myself in a car wash or restaurant or junkyard. But it was clear; I’d work, and work hard.

I cleared my mind by humming and looking about. The sun was directly above with a few soft blades of clouds against a sky that seemed bluer and more beautiful than our sky in the city. Occasionally the breeze flurried and picked up dust so that I had to cover my eyes and screw up my face. The workers were hunched, brown as the clods under our feet, and spread across the field that ran without end—fields that were owned by corporations, not families.

I hoed trying to keep my mind busy with scenes from school and pretend girlfriends until finally my brain turned off and my thinking went fuzzy with boredom. I looked about, no longer mesmerized by the beauty of the

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8. **clods**: hardened clumps of soil.

9. **irrigation canal**: a ditch that brings water to crops.
landscape, . . . no longer dreaming of the clothes I’d buy with my pay. My eyes followed my chopping as the plants, thin as their shadows, fell with each strike. I worked slowly with ankles and arms hurting, neck stiff, and eyes stinging from the dust and the sun that glanced off the field like a mirror.

By quitting time, 3:00, there was such an excruciating pain in my ankles that I walked as if I were wearing snowshoes. Rick laughed at me and I laughed too, embarrassed that most of the men were walking normally and I was among the first timers who had to get used to this work. “And what about you . . .” I came back at Rick. His eyes were meshed red and his long hippie hair was flecked with dust and gnats and bits of leaves. We placed our hoes in the back of a pickup and stood in line for our pay, which was twelve fifty. I was amazed at the pay, which was the most I had ever earned in one day, and thought that I’d come back the next day, Sunday. This was too good.

Instead of joining the others in the labor bus, we jumped in the back of a pickup when the driver said we’d get to town sooner and were welcome to join him. We scrambled into the truck bed to be joined by a heavy-set and laughing Tejano whose head was shaped like an egg, particularly so because the bandana he wore ended in a point on the top of his head. He laughed almost demonically as the pickup roared up the dirt path, a gray cape of dust rising behind us. On the highway, with the wind in our faces, we squinted at the fields as if we were looking for someone. The Tejano had quit laughing but was smiling broadly, occasionally chortling tunes he never finished. I was scared of him, though Rick, two years older and five inches taller, wasn’t. If the Tejano looked at him, Rick stared back for a second or two before he looked away to the fields.

I felt like a soldier coming home from war when we rattled into Chinatown. People leaning against car hoods stared, their necks following us, owl-like; . . . Chinese grocers stopped brooming their storefronts to raise their cadaverous faces at us. We stopped in front of the Chi Chi Club where Mexican music blared from the juke box and cue balls cracked like dull ice. The Tejano, who was dirty as we were, stepped awkwardly over the side rail, dusted himself off with his bandana, and sauntered into the club.

Rick and I jumped from the back, thanked the driver who said de nada and popped his clutch, so that the pickup jerked and coughed blue smoke. We returned smiling to our car, happy with the money we had made and pleased that we had, in a small way, proved ourselves to be tough; that we worked as well as other men and earned the same pay.

We returned the next day and the next week until the season was over and there was nothing to do. I told myself that I wouldn’t pick grapes that summer, saying all through June and July that it was for Mexicans, not me. When August came around and I still had not found a summer job, I ate my words, sharpened my knife, and joined Mother, Rick, and Debra for one last time.
Today it’s going to cost us twenty dollars
To live. Five for a softball. Four for a book,
A handful of ones for coffee and two sweet rolls,
Bus fare, rosin¹ for your mother’s violin.

5        We’re completing our task. The tip I left
For the waitress filters down
Like rain, wetting the new roots of a child
Perhaps, a belligerent cat that won’t let go
Of a balled sock until there’s chicken to eat.

As far as I can tell, daughter, it works like this:
You buy bread from a grocery, a bag of apples
From a fruit stand, and what coins
Are passed on helps others buy pencils, glue,
Tickets to a movie in which laughter

10       Is thrown into their faces.
If we buy a goldfish, someone tries on a hat.
If we buy crayons, someone walks home with a broom.
A tip, a small purchase here and there,
And things just keep going. I guess.

¹. rosin (rōz’ən): a substance derived from tree sap that is used
to increase sliding friction on stringed instruments’ bows.
Comprehension

1. **Recall**  What does Gary Soto dream of buying his mother?
2. **Recall**  What does Soto think about when he is bored at work?
3. **Summarize**  Describe Soto’s first day chopping cotton.

Literary Analysis

4. **Make Inferences**  How might Soto’s family history affect his thoughts and feelings about working in the fields? Cite evidence from the story and the biography on page 817 to support your response.
5. **Analyze Sensory Details**  Review the sensory details you noted in your web. What single detail best captures for you what it was like to pick grapes or chop cotton?
6. **Compare and Contrast**  Which does Soto like more, picking grapes or chopping cotton? Note the similarities and differences between the two jobs. Then explain why Soto prefers the one he does.
7. **Examine Author’s Perspective**  In what ways does Gary Soto’s perspective toward work change throughout the selection? Consider what happens to Soto’s dreams the longer he works in the fields. Track his attitude toward his jobs on a timeline like the one shown. Record his positive feelings above the line and negative feelings below the line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Feelings</th>
<th>Negative Feelings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>enthusiastic about job and making money</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8. **Compare Literary Works**  Think about Gary Soto’s childhood experiences as a field laborer. What effect might they have had on the view of money he expresses in his poem “How Things Work” on page 826? Explain.

Extension and Challenge

9. **Big Question Activity**  What might Soto say he learned from his jobs working in the fields? Respond to the Quickwrite activity on page 816 as if you were Soto.
10. **Readers’ Circle**  Writers choose titles for their selections very carefully. Why do you think Gary Soto titled this memoir “One Last Time”? Reread the last paragraph of the memoir and think about the ideas Soto emphasizes. Then, in small groups, brainstorm other possible titles. Share your best idea with the class.
Vocabulary in Context

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
Show that you understand the vocabulary words by telling whether each statement is true or false.

1. Someone who rambles on about a topic gets right to the point.
2. It is a foreman’s job to tell workers what to do.
3. Someone who gropes for an item finds it right away.
4. If you drop something on the floor, you can stoop to pick it up.
5. Contractors supply labor and materials for a project.
6. Most people feel irate on their birthdays.
7. A feeble voice is difficult to hear.
8. Having two appointments at the same time might be called a predicament.

VOCABULARY IN WRITING
What is the worst summer job you can imagine? Using at least two vocabulary words, write a paragraph describing your first day.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE
The labor contractor hired us to work.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY: SIMILES
Writers sometimes use similes, or figures of speech that compare two unlike things using the words like or as. In “One Last Time,” the author says that the dust and sand flying into their moving bus was “whipping around like irate wasps.” This simile helps readers imagine what it would feel like to be riding in the bus.

Similes can also provide context clues to help you figure out unfamiliar word meanings. If you know that “whipping around” implies fast, curving motion and that wasps move more quickly when they’re angered, then you can figure out that irate means “very angry.”

PRACTICE Use the simile in each sentence as a context clue to help you define the boldfaced word.

1. His elaborate story was as layered as a wedding cake.
2. The idling engine purred like a lazy kitten.
3. She stared at me as intently as a cat watches a bird.
4. The lightning illuminated the sky like a fireworks display.
5. Her excruciating sense of homesickness felt like physical pain.
## Reading-Writing Connection

Deepen your appreciation of “One Last Time” by responding to the prompts. Then complete the **Grammar and Writing** exercise.

### Writing Prompts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Short Response: Write a Letter to the Editor</th>
<th>Self-Check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think children under the age of 16 should be allowed to work <em>jobs</em> harvesting crops? Write a <strong>one-paragraph letter to the editor</strong> of a newspaper, expressing your opinion.</td>
<td><strong>A strong letter will . . .</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• clearly state your position for or against the issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• give reasons that support your opinion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Extended Response: Compare Narrators

Gary Soto in “One More Time” and the narrator in “The Snapping Turtle” (page 766) are both deeply affected by their cultural heritage. In a **two- or three-paragraph response**, compare and contrast how their heritages influence their actions.

### Self-Check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Extended Response: Compare Narrators</th>
<th>An effective comparison will . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gary Soto in “One More Time” and the narrator in “The Snapping Turtle” (page 766) are both deeply affected by their cultural heritage. In a <strong>two- or three-paragraph response</strong>, compare and contrast how their heritages influence their actions.</td>
<td>• identify each person’s heritage and how he feels about it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• support your points with evidence from the selections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grammar and Writing

**Use Semicolons Correctly** When there are commas within parts of a series, you must use a **semicolon** to separate the parts.

- **Original**: Some children need to earn money to buy bus tokens, clothing, and school supplies, such as pencils, paper, and notebooks.
- **Revised**: Some children need to earn money to buy bus tokens; clothing; and school supplies, such as pencils, paper, and notebooks. (Because one part of the series contains commas, a semicolon should separate the parts.)

### Practice

In the following sentences, insert semicolons as needed.

1. Not all parents can afford to buy food, clothing, and other necessities, pay for their children’s education, and maintain a roof over their heads.
2. Hard work teaches children responsibility, independence, and self-respect, enables them to earn a living, and instructs them in the value of money.
3. Children should be able to work on farms if they attend school, don’t handle pesticides, machinery, or dangerous animals, and are paid a decent wage.
4. A job harvesting crops provides children with exercise, sunshine, and clean air, gets them away from TV, and teaches them to appreciate their food.

*For more help with semicolons, see page R49 in the Grammar Handbook.*
Can CARTOONS have a point?

KEY IDEA In the United States, everyone can express an opinion, and there are countless ways opinions are expressed. In this lesson, you’ll look at how images and words can be carefully combined to make timely statements about American life.

Background

Cartoon Comments A political cartoon is a humorous drawing that makes a comment about a political issue or an event. Political cartoons usually appear on the editorial pages of newspapers, alongside writings that express opinions. These cartoons can reflect current topics in a funny or serious way.

The following cartoon presents two characters who might look familiar. In political cartoons, the elephant often appears as the symbol of the Republican Party and the donkey stands for the Democratic Party. These characters often represent two sides of an issue. In this case, though, does the cartoonist seem to think that either side is correct?

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Media Literacy: Messages in Political Cartoons

For any cartoon, the cartoonist’s aim is to include images and details that help you figure out his or her message. One of the most enduring images in political cartoons is the figure of Uncle Sam. Political cartoonists use him as a symbol for the United States. His appearance may vary from cartoon to cartoon. However, he’s usually easy to recognize, and the message he communicates is tied to a national issue. Use the following strategies to analyze political cartoons.

STRATEGIES FOR ANALYZING A POLITICAL CARTOON

Identify the subject.
Look for labels. Any words you see might be used to identify people, groups, or events. What label appears in this cartoon?

Identify symbols and specific details.
Almost every detail in a political cartoon is carefully chosen to communicate part of the message. What key symbols and images appear in this cartoon?

Look for exaggeration.
Just as in ordinary comics, the humor in political cartoons is delivered often through exaggeration. In this political cartoon, what details appear to be extreme or unusual?

Figure out the point of view.
In any political cartoon, look for clues to the cartoonist’s point of view. Are characters portrayed positively or negatively? Are their actions admirable, foolish, or criminal?

Notice how the art elements are used to catch the eye and to create certain effects.
• Political cartoons usually appear in black and white. When you spot any other color, consider what the cartoonist is highlighting and what message he or she is communicating.
• Lines convey certain moods. Straight lines can signal an issue is serious. Curvy lines convey playfulness.
• To get your attention, cartoonists exaggerate shapes, often making objects appear to be larger than life. Most often, cartoonists exaggerate by changing the sizes of familiar objects or of labels.

Viewing Guide for
Political Cartoons

Use the DVD to see larger versions of the political cartoons. As you examine each one, think about when it was created and the issue it comments on. The political cartoon on page 851 was published at a time when the effects of acid rain first became a topic in the news. The cartoon here first appeared in 1890, when the U.S. Congress passed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. This act called for the government to put more money into circulation by purchasing more silver than ever before.

Think about the way Uncle Sam is drawn in each political cartoon and the images and words each cartoonist uses to make a comment. Use these questions to help you interpret the messages.

NOW VIEW

FIRST VIEWING: Comprehension

1. Identify Name any object that appears unusually large in size in the “Acid Rain” political cartoon.
2. Clarify Apart from the title, “The Silver Sun of Prosperity,” what helps you to understand the subject of this political cartoon?

CLOSE VIEWING: Media Literacy

3. Identify Exaggeration In the “Acid Rain” political cartoon, what looks exaggerated about the appearance of Uncle Sam and the rain?
4. Analyze the Message In “Acid Rain,” Uncle Sam seems to be a bit confused. What comment might the political cartoonist be making by drawing Uncle Sam in this way?
5. Analyze the Message The political cartoonist of “The Silver Sun of Prosperity” was in favor of the Sherman Silver Act. What evidence do you see of this in the political cartoon? Think about
   • Uncle Sam’s action in the cartoon and what he symbolizes
   • the color choices and the use of text and exaggeration
   • the specific objects the cartoonist chose to depict
Write or Discuss

**Compare Political Cartoons** You’ve seen how the image of Uncle Sam has spanned generations. The political cartoons in this lesson were created at different times to address different issues. How else are they alike or different? Write a brief comparison-contrast paragraph that describes at least two more differences. Think about

- whether the political cartoon includes many details or only a few
- the message of each political cartoon
- whether each cartoonist uses color

Produce Your Own Media

**Create a Political Cartoon** Choose an issue that you think would make a good subject for your own political cartoon. This issue may be something that affects your school, your neighborhood, or the entire nation. The basic rule is to choose an issue that’s familiar to your audience and that is important enough for them to care about. It may help you to briefly discuss your ideas with your teacher.

**HERE’S HOW** Use these suggestions in making your political cartoon:

- What details could you use to represent the issue?
- What might you exaggerate in the image to highlight your point?
- Draw attention to the most important part of your image through the use of art elements. For example, make the person or object that matters most larger in size than the other objects.
- Draw or label the people or objects in the political cartoon so that they’re easy to recognize. You can also use speech balloons to show what a character is saying. Make sure there are reasons for using any words you include.

**STUDENT MODEL**

![Big Oil Rules](image)

Tech Tip
If available, use a software program to make a slideshow of the cartoons in your class.
I Want to Write
Sit-Ins
Poems by Margaret Walker

How can we fight INJUSTICE?

KEY IDEA A girl is blamed for someone else’s mistake. A boy is accused because of the color of his skin. People are denied rights because of the group they belong to, or they are put into danger because of what they believe. Witnessing injustice can make you feel angry, powerless, or even physically sick. But there are ways to fight back. In the poems you’re about to read, Margaret Walker celebrates working for what’s right.

LIST IT How can people fight injustice? With a small group, brainstorm a list of ways people can help make the world a fairer place. Then compare your lists with those of other groups. Who came up with the most examples? Who came up with ideas no one else did?
LITERARY ANALYSIS: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Just as a writer’s cultural background can affect his or her work, the time period in which a writer lives also can influence his or her subject matter and attitude. When you look at literature in its historical context, you consider what was happening in society at the time a piece of writing was created.

Margaret Walker wrote the two poems you are about to read in different decades. She wrote “I Want to Write” in the 1930s and “Sit-Ins” in the 1960s. First study the background on this page, and read the excerpt from *A Dream of Freedom* on page 823. Then, as you read the poems, try to connect historical events with Margaret Walker’s words.

READING SKILL: ANALYZE REPLICATION

Sound devices can add interest and appeal to all types of poems, whether long, short, funny, or serious. One of the sound devices used in Walker’s poems is repetition, in which a sound, word, phrase, or line is repeated for emphasis or unity. To understand the effect of repetition in a poem, follow these steps:

• Write down repeated words, phrases, or lines.
• Think about what ideas these repeated elements emphasize.
• Notice how the repetition relates to the poem's overall message.

As you read each poem, record examples of repetition in a chart like the one shown, and describe the effect each has on your understanding of Walker’s ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repetition</th>
<th>Effect</th>
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</table>

Privilege and Pain
Margaret Walker had a middle-class upbringing in the South at a time when many African Americans weren’t so lucky. Her parents’ jobs provided a nice income, but the family still suffered from discrimination. In an interview, she recalled the effects of racial prejudice: “Before I was 10, I knew what it was to step off the sidewalk to let a white man pass; otherwise he might knock me off. . . .”

For Her People
While Walker was growing up in the 1920s, an African-American cultural movement called the Harlem Renaissance was flourishing in New York City. Walker discovered the works of these new writers when she was 11 years old. Already showing a gift for writing, Walker knew that she, too, wanted to tell the stories of African Americans. Encouraged by poet Langston Hughes, Walker went to college in the North in 1932. Ten years later, Yale University published her first collection of poetry, *For My People*.

Background

Civil Rights
In the South, “Jim Crow” laws kept blacks and whites separated in public places, such as schools and restaurants. In the 1960s, Martin Luther King Jr. and other leaders organized nonviolent protests against segregation. Tactics included boycotts (refusing to buy products from companies that supported segregation) and sit-ins (peacefully demanding service at segregated businesses).

MORE ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND BACKGROUND
To learn more about Margaret Walker and the civil rights movement, visit the Literature Center at ClassZone.com.
I want to write
I want to write the songs of my people.
I want to hear them singing melodies in the dark.
I want to catch the last floating strains\(^1\) from their sob-torn throats.
I want to frame their dreams into words; their souls into notes.
5 I want to catch their sunshine laughter in a bowl;
fling dark hands to a darker sky
and fill them full of stars
then crush and mix such lights till they become
a mirrored pool of brilliance in the dawn. \(^{10}\)

\(^1\) strains: tunes.

**ANALYZE VISUALS**
Look at the image on this page. **Describe** the expression on the girl’s face. What do you think her personality is like?

**REpetition**
Note the phrase in this poem that is repeated. What idea does it emphasize?
Greensboro, North Carolina, in the Spring of 1960

You were our first brave ones to defy their dissonance of hate
With your silence
With your willingness to suffer
Without violence
5 Those first bright young to fling your names across pages
Of new southern history
With courage and faith, convictions, and intelligence
The first to blaze a flaming path for justice
And awaken consciences
10 Of these stony ones.

Come, Lord Jesus, Bold Young Galilean¹
Sit Beside this Counter, Lord, with Me!  

---

1. Galilean (gā’lī-ə-lē’ən): According to the Bible, Jesus lived near the Sea of Galilee, in Israel.
Comprehension

1. Recall In “I Want to Write,” what does the speaker want to write about?

2. Recall In “Sit-Ins,” what qualities do the people participating in the sit-ins have?

Literary Analysis

3. Understand Imagery Recall that imagery consists of words and phrases that appeal to readers’ senses. In a chart like the one shown, note the images in “I Want to Write” that appeal to the senses of hearing, sight, and touch. What do these images help you to understand about the people Walker wants to write about?

4. Examine Historical Context Margaret Walker writes, “I want to write the songs of my people.” Tell what you know about conditions and events that affected African Americans in the 1930s. How might Walker have been trying to protest racial injustice in “I Want to Write”? Support your answer with quotations from the poem.

5. Interpret a Passage In “Sit-Ins,” Walker describes those participating in the sit-ins as “The first to blaze a flaming path for justice / And awaken consciences / Of these stony ones.” Who might the “stony ones” be? Think about the qualities the word stony suggests.

6. Compare Texts What information in the excerpt from A Dream of Freedom does the most to help you understand the poem “Sit-Ins”? What details do you get in the poem that help you understand the book excerpt? Explain.

7. Analyze Repetition Look at the chart you completed as you read. Decide which poem makes greater use of repetition. What is the overall effect of this repetition on your understanding of Walker’s ideas?

Extension and Challenge

8. Big Question Activity Review the list you came up with on page 818. After reading the poems and the book excerpt, do you have anything you want to add to the list? With your group, decide which method you think would be most effective in achieving justice.

9. SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTION Research another major event in the civil rights movement, such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott or the March on Washington. How did people participating in these events hope to achieve justice? In a presentation to the class, explain the event and its significance.

RESEARCH LINKS
For more on the civil rights movement, visit the Research Center at ClassZone.com.
On the last day of January 1960, a North Carolina teenager named Ezell Blair Jr. announced to his mother, “Mom, we are going to do something tomorrow that may change history, that might change the world.” Blair attended a black college in Greensboro called North Carolina Agricultural and Technical. On Monday afternoon, February 1, he and three A&T classmates, Franklin McCain, David Richmond, and Joseph McNeil, went downtown to Woolworth’s department store, took a seat at the lunch counter, and ordered a doughnut and coffee.

“I’m sorry,” said the waitress, “we don’t serve you here.”

Though white-only lunch counters were a fact of southern life, one of the students replied, “We just beg to disagree with you.” Before sitting down, they had deliberately bought some school supplies. Holding up a receipt, they pointed out that they had just been served at a nearby cash register. One of the most insulting hypocrisies of segregation was that stores in the South, as Franklin McCain put it, “don’t separate your money in this cash register, but, no, please don’t step down to the hot dog stand.”

The youths sat at the counter for an hour. They were heckled by a black dishwasher, and stared at by a white policeman. An elderly white woman cheered in a loud whisper: “You should have done it ten years ago!”

The store manager turned off the lights at five-thirty, half an hour before closing time. “By then,” McCain recalled, “we had the confidence, my goodness, of a Mack truck.” In a week, the Greensboro Four had grown to hundreds. Within two months, protests had taken place in 125 cities in nine states.

The sit-ins, as the lunch counter campaign became known, sparked a freedom flame.
Cause-and-Effect Essay

In this unit, you learned the effects that some early experiences had on Gary Soto, Beverley Naidoo, and other writers. Check out the Writer’s Road Map and begin writing about a cause-and-effect relationship that is important to you.

**WRITER’S ROAD MAP**

**Cause-and-Effect Essay**

**WRITING PROMPT 1**

**Writing from the Real World**  Write an essay about a cause-and-effect relationship that you think is important or interesting. Make sure you can show clearly how one event caused another event to happen.

**Topics to Consider**
- a natural event, such as a hurricane or a storm
- a historical event, such as the California gold rush
- a community event, such as building a skate park

**WRITING PROMPT 2**

**Writing from Literature**  Literature can be full of cause-and-effect relationships. Write an essay that traces a cause-and-effect relationship in a literary work.

**Literature to Consider**
- experiencing how others live (“Out of Bounds”)
- the effects of political protest (“Sit-Ins”)

**KEY TRAITS**

1. **Ideas**
   - Identifies a true cause-and-effect relationship
   - Presents a thesis that explains how causes and effects are connected
   - Supports points with evidence
   - Differentiates between facts and opinions

2. **Organization**
   - Uses parallel structure to present causes and effects
   - Uses transitions to show the cause-and-effect relationship
   - Is well balanced, with an introduction, body, and conclusion

3. **Voice**
   - Uses a tone that is appropriate for the audience and purpose

4. **Word Choice**
   - Uses precise language to explain each cause and effect

5. **Sentence Fluency**
   - Uses a variety of sentence types (statements, questions, and exclamations)

6. **Conventions**
   - Uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation

**WRITING TOOLS**

For prewriting, revision, and editing tools, visit the Writing Center at ClassZone.com.
Chris Hawkins
Danvers Intermediate School

Why Is It So Noisy?

One afternoon last week, I was sitting in the park, trying to relax. I had gone there because I thought the sound of the wind in the trees and the waves on the shore of the lake would help get my mind off a problem that was bothering me. What I heard instead wasn’t soothing natural sounds, but noise, noise, and more noise. The blaring car horns, beeping trucks, squealing bus brakes, shrieking ambulance sirens, and barking dogs made me even more nervous than I was before. “I can’t even hear myself think!” I shouted. This kind of noise pollution is everywhere, and it’s not just annoying—it’s harmful because it may lead to hearing loss.

Traffic sounds like the ones I heard in the park are the major cause of noise pollution. Just think how much noise a passing car, truck, bus, train, or motorcycle makes. Can you imagine hearing dozens of them at once? It doesn’t take much imagination, because we actually experience that racket every time we go outside. Don’t look up for relief, either. According to the Council on the Environment of New York City, an airplane 2,000 feet away makes a noise as loud as a car blowing its horn just a step away. The sound of a jet taking off can actually cause buildings near an airport to vibrate, so just imagine what it does to our bodies.

Another cause of noise pollution is machinery like jackhammers, bulldozers, leaf blowers, and lawnmowers. As anyone who lives in the city or suburbs knows, the annoying vibrations from these machines can have immediate and dramatic effects. The noise interrupts our thoughts, makes conversations difficult, and can even be painful to our ears.
When it’s loud, music becomes noise, too. The noise level at concerts, arcades, parties, and other events can be almost deafening. We have actually gotten so used to blaring music that it doesn’t even seem loud to us. As a result, when we listen to music at home, or even through headphones, we turn the volume way up.

The effects of all this noise pollution are frightening. According to an article I read in the Danvers Ledger, “Loud noises can actually destroy the cells inside our ears.” The longer we’re exposed to the noise and the louder it is, the worse the damage will be. If these cells are destroyed, there is no way to restore them or our hearing. The House Ear Institute estimates that almost 10 million Americans suffer from hearing loss caused by noise.

Living in the world means dealing with noise. However, since we understand the causes of noise pollution, we can try to prevent its harmful effects. We can avoid noisy environments as much as possible and wear earplugs or earmuffs when we’re in construction zones or at the airport. We can turn down our TVs, DVD and CD players, computers, and personal music players. Finally, we need to tell other people about the dangers of noise pollution and start doing what we can to prevent it—now.
Part 2: Apply the Writing Process

**Prewriting**

**What Should I Do?**

1. **Decide on the right topic for you.**
   Think of events in your life or the world that made you ask yourself “Why did that happen?” or “What happened after that?” List the ideas that come to mind. *Circle* the topic that interests you most.

   **Tip:** Grouping your ideas into categories can help you focus.

2. **Use a flow chart to explore causes and effects.**
   Ask yourself if the events are true causes and effects. One event may follow another but not be caused by it. “I went out without drying my hair and caught pneumonia” is an example of a false cause. Germs cause illness; wet hair does not.

3. **Draft a coherent, well-defined thesis.**
   Your thesis should make a clear and knowledgeable judgment. In other words, it should state your opinion. An opinion is a statement that can’t be proved or disproved because it expresses someone’s feelings.

4. **Collect details in support of your key points.**
   Now it’s time to support your opinion with facts, statistics, anecdotes, and quotations from experts. A fact is a statement that can be proved. A statistic is a fact that includes a number.

**What Does It Look Like?**

**My World**
- Sid’s skateboarding accident
- Leslie wanting to get a dog
- getting lost during school field trip
- earning my blue belt in judo

**The Wider World**
- melting glaciers
- noise pollution
- lowering the voting age to 16
- stereotypes of teenagers

**Causes**
- Traffic noise
- Machinery noise
- Loud music

**Effect**
- Hearing loss

**Working thesis statement**
Our world is definitely not a quiet place, and the noise pollution we experience every day is annoying and can also cause hearing problems.

**Key point:** Noise pollution is damaging.

**Evidence:**
- Danvers Ledger reports, “Loud noises can actually destroy the cells inside our ears.”
- According to the House Ear Institute, almost 10 million Americans have loss of hearing due to noise.
## DRAFTING

### What Should I Do?

1. **Organize your thoughts with an informal outline.**
   
   This writer described the major causes of noise pollution and then discussed its most significant effect. You can also present the effects first and then analyze their causes. This outline has **parallel structure**. Each important cause has a paragraph devoted to it.

   **TIP** Your essay should have a controlling impression. In other words, every part of your essay should relate to your thesis.

2. **Use evidence, examples, and reasoning.**
   
   Remember the details you collected in step 4 on the previous page? Include those and other specific, relevant details to help your reader understand the cause-and-effect relationship.

3. **Write a clear, well-supported conclusion.**
   
   Your conclusion should use fresh, new language to summarize the causes and effects. If possible, it should also show how the topic is important to the reader’s life or suggest what the reader can do to change the situation. This conclusion uses **parallel structure**. The sentences have the same pattern of words—“we understand,” “we can avoid,” and “we need to tell”—to show that all three points are important.

### What Does It Look Like?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss how noise affects my life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis: Noise pollution annoying and damaging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most important cause: Traffic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cars, buses, trains, airplanes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second most important cause: Machinery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jackhammers, bulldozers, leaf blowers, lawnmowers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third most important cause: Music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concerts, parties, personal music players</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most important effect: Hearing loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent damage to ear cells; 10 million Americans affected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to take action to prevent harmful effects of noise pollution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another cause of noise pollution is machinery like jackhammers, bulldozers, leaf blowers, and lawnmowers. As anyone who lives in the city or suburbs knows, the annoying vibrations from these machines can interrupt our thoughts, make conversations difficult, and even be painful to our ears.

We understand the causes of noise pollution, so we can try to prevent its harmful effects. We can avoid noisy environments as much as possible and turn down our personal music players. Finally, we need to tell other people about the dangers of noise pollution and start doing what we can to prevent it—now.
# Writing Workshop

## Revising and Editing

### What Should I Do?

1. **Have a classmate review your introduction.**
   - Ask a peer reader if the first few sentences of your essay make him or her want to read on.
   - If the answer is no, try **eliminating sentences that give little information** or adding an interesting detail, quotation, question, or anecdote.

   See page 830: Ask a Peer Reader

2. **Evaluate your supporting information.**
   - **Bracket** the facts and examples that illustrate your key points.
   - Consider **adding quotations, statistics, or other details** that make your statements easy to understand.

3. **Use transitions wisely.**
   - **Underline** the transitional words and phrases you used to begin a paragraph, to end a paragraph, or within a paragraph.
   - Think about **adding transitions** such as however, since, and as a result to show how ideas are connected.

   See page 830: Add Transitional Words

4. **Add a question or exclamation where appropriate.**
   - Reread your essay. Do all your sentences end with periods?
   - Consider **including an exclamation or a question** for a change of pace.

   **TIP** Use exclamations and questions sparingly to avoid sounding overexcited or confused.

### What Does It Look Like?

- **My essay is about noise pollution because I think it is very important. This issue is getting worse.**

  One afternoon last week, I was sitting in the park, trying to relax. I had gone there because I thought the sound of the wind in the trees and the waves on the shore of the lake would help get my mind off a problem that was bothering me. What I heard instead wasn’t soothing natural sounds, but noise, noise, and more noise.

- **Don’t look up for relief, either. [Jet planes make a terrible racket.] According to the Council on the Environment of New York City, an airplane 2000 feet away makes a noise as loud as a car blowing its horn just a step away.**

- **We understand the causes of noise pollution, so we can try to prevent its harmful effects. Living in the world means dealing with noise. However, since we understand the causes of noise pollution, we can try to prevent its harmful effects.**

- **Just think how much noise a passing car, truck, bus, train, or motorcycle makes. Then imagine hearing dozens of them at once? Can you**
Consider the Criteria
Use this checklist to make sure your essay is on track.

Ideas
✓ explains an actual cause-and-effect relationship
✓ presents a thesis and supports it with evidence
✓ differentiates between facts and opinions

Organization
✓ uses parallel structure
✓ links ideas with transitions
✓ has an introduction, body, and conclusion

Voice
✓ maintains an appropriate tone

Word Choice
✓ precisely describes each cause and effect

Sentence Fluency
✓ varies sentence types

Conventions
✓ uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Ask a Peer Reader
• How can I improve my introduction?
• Which causes or effects need more explanation?
• Which point that I made was most interesting, surprising, or disturbing? Why?

Add Transitional Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>as a result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>consequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provided that</td>
<td>so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>since</td>
<td>then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>therefore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check Your Grammar
Use a comma to set off an introductory word or phrase.

One afternoon last week, I was sitting in the park.

As a result, we turn the volume way up when we listen to music at home.

However, we can try to prevent the harmful effects of noise pollution.

See page R49: Quick Reference: Punctuation

Writing Online

For publishing options, visit the Writing Center at ClassZone.com.

For writing and grammar assessment practice, go to the Assessment Center at ClassZone.com.
Creating a Multimedia Presentation

Now that you have traced a cause-and-effect relationship, share that information with others by creating a multimedia presentation.

Planning the Presentation

1. **Decide on your technology.** Ask your school’s media specialist about doing a power presentation, a slide show, or an interactive display.

2. **Think about the visuals and audio.** You may be able to present supporting evidence through spoken words, video clips, photographs, animations, maps, charts, or graphs. Consider adding music or sound effects to get your message across.

3. **Create a storyboard.** Sketch exactly what your audience will see and hear. Include details about text, voiceovers, music, effects, and other images and sounds.

Delivering the Presentation

1. **Put it all together.** Scan or download all of your images and sounds onto a computer. Record voiceovers and insert them in the proper places. Create title screens, text, and any other elements you want to include.

   **TIP** Be sure to get permission for words, images, or audio that you did not create yourself.

2. **Share your results.** Deliver your presentation to an audience or invite small groups to explore it on their own. If you present to an audience, make sure that your grammar and word choice are appropriate for a formal presentation. Use standard American English, the same kind of language you find in a textbook.

3. **Find out what others thought.** Ask your audience for positive and negative comments on your presentation. Use the feedback to improve your next presentation.
Viewing Guide for Political Cartoons

Use the DVD to see larger versions of the political cartoons. As you examine each one, think about when it was created and the issue it comments on. The political cartoon on page 831 was published at a time when the effects of acid rain first became a topic in the news. The cartoon here first appeared in 1890, when the U.S. Congress passed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. This act called for the government to put more money into circulation by purchasing more silver than ever before.

Think about the way Uncle Sam is drawn in each political cartoon and the images and words each cartoonist uses to make a comment. Use these questions to help you interpret the messages.

NOW VIEW

**FIRST VIEWING: Comprehension**

1. Identify  Name any object that appears unusually large in size in the “Acid Rain” political cartoon.

2. Clarify  Apart from the title, “The Silver Sun of Prosperity,” what helps you to understand the subject of this political cartoon?

**CLOSE VIEWING: Media Literacy**

3. Identify Exaggeration  In the “Acid Rain” political cartoon, what looks exaggerated about the appearance of Uncle Sam and the rain?

4. Analyze the Message  In “Acid Rain,” Uncle Sam seems to be a bit confused. What comment might the political cartoonist be making by drawing Uncle Sam in this way?

5. Analyze the Message  The political cartoonist of “The Silver Sun of Prosperity” was in favor of the Sherman Silver Act. What evidence do you see of this in the political cartoon? Think about
   • Uncle Sam’s action in the cartoon and what he symbolizes
   • the color choices and the use of text and exaggeration
   • the specific objects the cartoonist chose to depict
“Amazing,” I said aloud. It was amazing that I would be greeted on the sea with such enthusiasm, amazing that on one of the most populated coasts in the world, near a metropolis that stretched nearly two hundred miles from San Diego to Santa Barbara, where nearly eighteen million people jammed the freeways and sidewalks, I would be completely alone with the sea and my boat; amazing that the planet still held such a place.

from *The Voyage of the Frog*

Gary Paulsen

And at two in the morning he saw the light in the water. He saw it first to the stern. In his wake, in the silent bubbles left by the *Frog* moving through the water, there was a rippled, dotted line of eerie light glowing up from the water. It was blue-green, seemed to come from down in the water, and at first it startled and frightened him. But then he remembered hearing about it. Small animals in the water, microscopic organisms, sometimes phosphoresced—gave off light almost like lightning bugs—when disturbed. He must be going through a mass of them. In back of the *Frog* was a long line of blue light, fading as the water settled down again.

He tied the tiller off, leaned over the side, and looked toward the front where the bow cut a wave that curled over.

“Ohhh . . .” It slipped out of his mouth unbidden, almost a sigh of amazement. The boat was moving through blue fire, blue fire in the night. The bow wave was a rolling curve of blue light, sparkled with bits of green that seemed to want to crawl up the side of the boat and then fold back and over, splashing out in ripples and droplets of light.

It could not be as beautiful as it was—not be that beautiful and be real. It was so bright and shining a thing that the *Frog* seemed to be moving through, a lake of cold fire, and as he watched he saw a form move beneath the boat, caught in the blue glow of the bow wave, a torpedo form that shot forward with an incredible burst of speed. He saw first the glowing curved line around the head of the creature and the line showed him that it was the front of a dolphin. All in seconds, in short parts of seconds, he saw the head and the body moving forward beneath the boat and then it exploded—the dolphin blew out of the water in front of the boat.

It rose in a clean curve just in front of the bowsprit, five, six feet out of the water in a leap of joy that only dolphins can make, carrying with it a shroud of splashing blue-green fire that whirled and spiraled in the darkness to follow.
the dolphin up, over and down, back into the water and plunging in green light back to the depths beneath the *Frog*.

David was frozen with it, did not know how long he stayed with one hand reaching up as if to touch where the dolphin had been, touch the curve of blue fire. It was all there and gone—just as suddenly gone as if it had never been—and his breath burst suddenly out into the night.

He looked back, expecting to see the dolphin as the boat went over it but there was nothing.

**Comprehension**

**DIRECTIONS** Answer these questions about the excerpt from *Caught by the Sea*.

1. Reread lines 1–9. To which of your senses do the details in this excerpt appeal?
   A sight and hearing
   B sight, hearing, and touch
   C sight, hearing, touch, and taste
   D sight, hearing, taste, and smell

2. Reread lines 10–14. To which of your senses do the details in this excerpt appeal?
   A sight
   B sight and hearing
   C sight and touch
   D sight, hearing, and touch

3. Which sentence tells you that Paulsen enjoys his sailing experience?
   A “I lowered the mainsail and sat peacefully drifting around in circles, feeling at home, truly at home.”
   B “I made a small pot of oatmeal on the little stove and some instant coffee and ate breakfast in the cockpit. . . .”
   C “I did not dare to walk forward in the dark and put up the jib. . . .”
   D “While I lay in the calm, all around the boat the sea seethed with life.”

4. Reread lines 1–5. Paulsen turns off the motor of his boat because he
   A has to save fuel
   B is bothered by its noise
   C senses danger ahead
   D doesn’t want to scare the fish

5. In lines 19–20, Paulsen writes that there is “something wrong” about using the motor on a beautiful morning. What can you infer about him from this statement?
   A He worries about disturbing others.
   B He enjoys the peaceful setting.
   C He is learning how to operate the boat.
   D He is hiding from someone.

6. What attracts the seabirds, dolphins, and sharks to the waters around the boat?
   A light from the moon
   B the smell of a human
   C swarms of small fish
   D the sound of the boat’s motor

7. In lines 20–23, what sensations does Paulsen describe?
   A the feeling of being warmed and gently rocked
   B hearing the slap and splash of the water hitting the sides of the boat
   C the cozy, warming feeling of eating oatmeal and sipping hot coffee
   D the aromas of oatmeal and coffee
**DIRECTIONS** Answer these questions about the excerpt from *The Voyage of the Frog*.

8. Paulsen’s experience as an outdoorsman is reflected in the story’s
   A. point of view   B. conflict   C. setting   D. chronology

9. At first, the “eerie light glowing up from the water” in lines 3–5 causes David to feel
   A. scared   B. giddy   C. alone   D. confused

10. Reread lines 6–9. Why are the small animals in the water giving off light?
    A. Their bright light helps them locate food.
    B. The movement of the boat stirs them up.
    C. They sense that predators are nearby.
    D. They are signaling to other fish in the water.

11. Reread lines 26–34. You can infer that David holds his breath when he sees the dolphin because he
    A. plans to capture the dolphin
    B. does not want to disturb the dolphin
    C. is amazed at the sight of the dolphin
    D. thinks that the dolphin might hurt him

12. When he sees the leaping dolphin and the glowing water around it, David
    A. tries to sail after the dolphin
    B. reaches out as if to touch what he sees
    C. hides in the bow of the boat
    D. shouts out in disbelief

13. The presence of a dolphin suggests that the *Frog* is sailing in
    A. an ocean   B. a stream   C. a pond   D. a river

**DIRECTIONS** Refer to both selections to answer this question.

14. The excerpt from *The Voyage of the Frog* reflects which experience in Paulsen’s background?
    A. staying up all night to watch the sunrise
    B. getting an unexpected glimpse of sea animals
    C. cooking and sleeping on a boat
    D. learning how to operate a sailboat

**Written Response**

**SHORT RESPONSE** Write two or three sentences to answer the questions.

15. Name two things Paulsen finds amazing in the excerpt from *Caught by the Sea*. Use quotations from the excerpt to support your answer.

16. Choose one experience described in *The Voyage of the Frog* that is similar to Paulsen’s experiences in *Caught by the Sea*, and explain the similarity between the two.

**EXTENDED RESPONSE** Write a paragraph to answer this question.

17. Reread lines 1–9 and 15–17 in *Caught by the Sea*. What effect does his sailing experience have on Paulsen? Support your answer with examples from the excerpt.
Vocabulary

DIRECTIONS  Use context clues and your knowledge of homographs to answer the following questions.

1. Which sentence uses *pod* as it is used in line 27 of the excerpt from *Caught by the Sea*?
   “...within minutes a huge pod of dolphins, hundreds of them, showed up.”
   A. The divers descended to the ocean floor in a small pod.
   B. A pod of gray whales was visible from the shore.
   C. The pod separated from the spacecraft during reentry.
   D. Some insects lay eggs in clusters that are called pods.

2. Which sentence uses *wake* as it is used in line 2 of the excerpt from *The Voyage of the Frog*?
   “In his wake, in the silent bubbles left by the *f*rog moving through the water. . . .”
   A. The floodwaters ruined every house and barn in their wake.
   B. After the admiral died, the sailors held his wake at sea.
   C. A small boat can be swamped in the wake of a larger ship.
   D. Some of the passengers on the cruise ship did not wake up until noon.

3. Which sentence uses *bow* as it is used in line 11 of the excerpt from *The Voyage of the Frog*?
   “He tied the tiller off, leaned over the side, and looked toward the front where the bow cut a wave that curled over.”
   A. The pianist took a bow after her performance.
   B. He wrapped a big blue bow across the boat.
   C. It is hard to catch fish with a bow and arrow.
   D. I saw the sunrise from the bow of the ship.

4. Which sentence uses *fold* as it is used in line 15 of the excerpt from *The Voyage of the Frog*?
   “The bow wave was a rolling curve of blue light, sparkled with bits of green that seemed to want to crawl up the side of the boat and then fold back and over. . . .”
   A. You can fold the newspaper so it will fit into your backpack.
   B. The owner had to fold his company because he was leaving the city.
   C. The farmer kept his sheep in a large fold behind the barn.
   D. The grandparents welcomed the new baby into the fold.

DIRECTIONS  Use context clues and your knowledge of similes to help you determine the meaning of each boldfaced word.

5. The microscopic organisms *phosphoresced* in the water like lightning bugs illuminating a dark night.
   A. crawled  C. glowed
   B. splashed  D. danced

6. The boat was as *marooned* as a car without wheels.
   A. quiet  C. abandoned
   B. lifeless  D. old

7. The *commotion* around the boat was like rush hour traffic.
   A. noisy activity  C. speedy pursuit
   B. peaceful calm  D. crashing and churning
Writing & Grammar
DIRECTIONS  Read this passage and answer the questions that follow.

(1) Dolphins live in water. (2) Many people think of them as fish. (3) They are actually mammals. (4) The following are different types of dolphins the bottle-nosed dolphin, the common dolphin, and the white-sided dolphin. (5) All dolphins share the following characteristics smooth skin, flippers, and a blowhole. (6) Dolphins have no sense of smell. (7) They have a keen sense of hearing. (8) They can detect sounds that humans cannot. (9) Dolphins have been trained to perform in amusement parks, zoos, and aquariums, to retrieve objects, and to guard military ships.

1. Choose the correct way to combine sentences 1, 2, and 3 into one compound-complex sentence.
   A Dolphins live in water, so many people think of them as fish, but they are actually mammals.
   B Dolphins live in water, and many people think of them as fish, but they are actually mammals.
   C Because dolphins live in water, many people think of them as fish, but they are actually mammals.
   D Dolphins are actually mammals living in water, although many people think of them as fish.

2. In sentence 4, a colon should be placed after which word?
   A following
   B are
   C of
   D dolphins

3. In sentence 5, a colon should be placed after which word?
   A share
   B following
   C characteristics
   D skin

4. Choose the correct way to combine sentences 6, 7, and 8 into one compound-complex sentence.
   A Though dolphins have no sense of smell, they have a keen sense of hearing, and they can detect sounds that humans cannot.
   B Having no sense of smell but a keen sense of hearing, dolphins can detect sounds that humans cannot.
   C Dolphins have no sense of smell but a keen sense of hearing, enabling them to detect sounds that humans cannot.
   D Despite having no sense of smell, dolphins have a keen sense of hearing, detecting sounds that humans cannot.

5. In sentence 9, a semicolon should be placed after which words?
   A to, aquariums, objects
   B parks, zoos, aquariums, objects
   C perform, retrieve, guard
   D aquariums, objects
Ideas for Independent Reading

Which questions from Unit 7 made an impression on you? Continue exploring them with these books.

Where do we get our values?

**Betsy and the Emperor**  
*by Staton Rabin*  
After years at boarding school, 14-year-old Betsy is back home on St. Helena. Her family is hosting a special “guest”: Napoleon, the former emperor of France, is a prisoner at Betsy’s house. What can an ex-emperor and a rebellious teenager have in common?

**Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy**  
*by Gary D. Schmidt*  
People in Phippsburg, Maine, don’t like it when Turner befriends Lizzie Bright, who lives in a nearby African-American settlement. When the town evicts Lizzie’s community, Turner helps fight back.

**Part of Me**  
*by Kimberly Willis Holt*  
Raised in Louisiana during the Great Depression, Rose never gets to college, but she tries to pass on her love of books to her children and grandchildren. Although not all of them follow in her footsteps, the family stories help each generation stay strong.

What can you learn from a job?

**Code Talker**  
*by Joseph Bruchac*  
World War II is raging, and Ned wants to help. He joins the Marines and becomes a secret Navajo code talker. He helps create a code that can’t be cracked, and then uses it to send and receive messages in the midst of battle. Will Ned survive the fighting?

**Gathering Blue**  
*by Lois Lowry*  
In the future, when society is in ruins from disasters, a crippled orphan like Kira is often destined to die. But Kira’s weaving skills are discovered, and suddenly she’s important. If only her new job didn’t bring with it serious problems.

**Ghost Boy**  
*Iain Lawrence*  
Harold is an albino, and in his small town he’s an outcast. When the circus comes to town, Harold leaves with it, immediately accepted by members of the sideshow. He soon finds out that even in the circus, he and his friends are considered strange.

How can we fight injustice?

**Stop The Train!**  
*by Geraldine McCaughrean*  
In 1893, people came to Florence, Oklahoma, searching for a stake in a new prairie town. Now the Red Rock Railroad Company refuses to stop in Florence. The new town is sure to die unless the settlers can find a way to get the train to stop.

**The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place**  
*by E.L. Konigsburg*  
Margaret Rose is happy to be rescued from Camp Talequa by her uncles. But they seem to accept that the town wants to destroy the three beautiful towers they built in the backyard. Someone has to save these works of art.

**Warriors Don’t Cry**  
*by Melba Pattillo Beals*  
Melba Pattillo Beals was one of the nine African-American teenagers who integrated the Little Rock Central High School in 1957. In this memoir, she describes both the violent protesters she faced as well as the people and ideals that gave her courage and hope.