# **Put Your Best Foot Forward Assessment**

**Step 1:** **First Draft**

In a previous lesson, you planned your narrative using a graphic organizer. Use your completed graphic organizer to write the first draft of your narrative here.

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| The sun had barely crept over the horizon in the quiet Cuban village when Santiago and Manolin readied their little skiff. The old man’s hands were calloused, his face marked deep with lines from years of battling the sea’s moods. Manolin, eyes bright and loyal as ever, had ignored his parents’ wishes to be there, standing by Santiago for this trip—the eighty-fifth day without a catch.  They rowed out into the Gulf Stream, the salty air thick and heavy with something like hope. The skiff rocked gently beneath them, hiding the fact that the sea could turn cruel at any moment. Santiago stared out at the horizon, steady and quiet. Manolin, sitting beside him, mirrored that calm, wanting to prove himself.  Hours passed. Then more. They drifted farther from the shore than they’d planned. But patience paid off. Santiago felt the pull first—strong, unmistakable. A marlin. But not just any marlin. This one was massive, powerful enough to test both their limits. They fought it together. Santiago’s experience guiding Manolin’s younger strength. The battle stretched on, day into night, the skiff dragged deeper and deeper into the open water.  When they finally brought the marlin in, it was a beast—huge and beautiful. They tied it to the side of the skiff, exhausted but proud. But the ocean wasn’t done with them. The marlin’s blood had spread, drawing in sharks. Hungry, relentless. Santiago and Manolin fought them off as best they could, using whatever they had—knives, oars, fists. But the sea doesn’t care about pride or struggle.  By the time they were done, there wasn’t much left of the marlin. Just bones. A skeleton, bleached and bare.  Tired and beaten, they turned back toward the village. They didn’t speak much. The loss was heavy, but so was something else—something stronger.  When they got home, the villagers saw the marlin’s skeleton and finally understood. They saw Santiago for what he was—a man who didn’t give up. Manolin, even after all that, wasn’t shaken. He told Santiago he’d keep learning from him, ready to face the sea again, no matter what. |

**Step 2: Final Draft**

After revising and editing your story, paste your final draft. Keep in mind, your final draft should be at least 500 words. Highlight or bold the differences between this and your first draft.

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| The **first rays of sunlight** had barely crept over the horizon in the quiet Cuban village when Santiago and Manolin readied their little skiff. The old man’s hands were **rough and calloused**, his face marked deep with lines from years of battling the sea’s moods. Manolin, eyes bright and loyal as ever, had ignored his parents’ wishes to be there, standing by Santiago for this trip—the eighty-fifth day without a catch.  They rowed out into the Gulf Stream, the salty air thick and heavy with something like hope. The skiff rocked gently beneath them, hiding the fact that the sea could turn cruel at any moment. Santiago stared out at the horizon, steady and quiet. Manolin, sitting beside him, mirrored that calm, wanting to prove himself.  Hours passed. Then more. They drifted farther from the shore than they’d planned. But patience paid off. Santiago felt the pull first—strong, unmistakable. A marlin. But not just any marlin. This one was massive, powerful enough to test both their limits. They fought it together. Santiago’s experience guiding Manolin’s younger strength. The battle stretched on, day into night, the skiff dragged deeper and deeper into the open water.  When they finally brought the marlin in, it was a beast—huge and beautiful. They tied it to the side of the skiff, exhausted but proud. But the ocean wasn’t done with them. The marlin’s blood had spread, drawing in sharks. Hungry, relentless. Santiago and Manolin fought them off as best they could, using whatever they had—knives, oars, fists. But the sea doesn’t care about pride or struggle.  **The fight was brutal.** The sharks circled with cold, methodical hunger, tearing into the marlin with teeth like knives. Santiago’s arms ached from the effort, his muscles burning as he swung his oar at the dark shapes in the water. Manolin’s youthful energy began to wane, his determination the only thing keeping him moving. **They shouted to each other over the roar of the waves, their voices hoarse but steady.**  **The sun dipped below the horizon, casting the sea in deep shadows, but they fought on.** The relentless splashes and snarls of the sharks echoed in their ears, blending with the rhythmic slap of water against the skiff. Santiago’s mind wandered briefly to his youth, recalling battles fought and lost, but his grip never wavered. Manolin, though trembling from exhaustion, pressed on, fueled by the old man’s unwavering spirit.  By the time they were done, there wasn’t much left of the marlin. Just bones. A skeleton, bleached and bare.  Tired and beaten, they turned back toward the village. They didn’t speak much. The loss was heavy, but so was something else—something stronger. **A quiet understanding passed between them, a bond forged not just in triumph but in struggle.** **The journey back was slow, each stroke of the oars a reminder of their ordeal, but also of their resilience.**  When they got home, the villagers saw the marlin’s skeleton and finally understood. They saw Santiago for what he was—a man who didn’t give up. **Whispers of admiration spread through the village, the old man’s perseverance etched into their minds.** **Children gathered around the skiff, eyes wide with wonder, while the elders nodded in respect.** Manolin, even after all that, wasn’t shaken. He told Santiago he’d keep learning from him, ready to face the sea again, no matter what. |

**Step 3: Reflection**

Respond to each question in 2-3 complete sentences.

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| **Universal Theme** | *What is the universal theme of your fanfiction narrative? Explain one way in which you developed this universal theme.*  *The universal theme of my fanfiction narrative is that true success lies in the courage to face life’s challenges head-on and the strength found in companionship during adversity. I developed this theme by emphasizing the bond between Santiago and Manolin, showing how their shared struggles deepened their connection and resilience.* |
| **Narrative Techniques** | *Identify* ***two*** *narrative techniques used in your fanfiction narrative. Copy and paste examples of each from your final draft.*   1. ***Dialogue:*** *“‘We will catch something today, Santiago,’ Manolin said, his voice steady despite the vastness before them.”* 2. ***Imagery:*** *“The marlin’s blood painted a trail in the water, a siren call to the sharks that soon descended upon them.”* |
| **Revisions and Improvements** | *Identify* ***two*** *areas you improved upon from your first draft to your final draft. How did these revisions improve your narrative?*   1. *I enhanced the setting descriptions in the final draft to create a more vivid atmosphere, which helped immerse the reader in the story’s environment.* 2. *I added more emotional depth to the characters’ internal struggles, making their journey feel more personal and impactful. These revisions enriched the narrative’s emotional resonance and clarity.* |

# **Put Your Best Foot Forward Rubric**

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|  | **On Target** | **Almost There** | **Needs Improvement** |
| **First and Final Draft**  **(70 points)** | **70-56 points**   * There is a full plot structure with successful development in each category. * There are meaningful changes between the first and final draft which are highlighted or bolded. * At least two narrative techniques, including dialogue, are intentionally and successfully incorporated. | **55-42 points**   * There is a full plot structure with attempted development in each category. * There are some changes between the first and final draft which are highlighted or bolded. * At least one narrative technique is intentionally and successfully incorporated. | **41-0 points**   * There is a partial plot structure with attempted development in some categories. * There are minimal or no changes between the first and final draft, or changes are not highlighted or bolded. * Narrative techniques are not intentionally incorporated. |
| **Reflection**  **(35 points)** | **35-28 points**   * The student correctly identified their narrative's universal theme and explained its development in at least two sentences. * The student correctly identified and provided examples of two narrative techniques used in their narrative. * The student identified and explained two improvements made from their first to final draft. | **27-21 points**   * The student attempted to identify their narrative's universal theme and explained its development. * The student attempted to identify and provided examples of narrative techniques used in their narrative. * The student attempted to identify and explained improvements made from their first to final draft. | **20-0 points**   * The student did not identify their narrative's universal theme and explain its development in at least two sentences. * The student did not identify and provide examples of two narrative techniques used in their narrative. * The student did not identify and explain two improvements made from their first to final draft. |
| **Length, Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics**   1. **points)** | **10-8 points**   * The final draft is 500 words or longer. * Standard grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure rules are followed with minimal errors. | **7-6 points**   * The final draft is 500 words or longer. * Standard grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure rules are followed with some errors that do not impede readability. | **5-0 points**   * The final draft is less than 500 words. * Standard grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure rules are not followed, and this affects readability. |