

WeeklyWriter<sup>SM</sup>  
**5th Grade**  
Week 1

Teacher's Edition

**Let's Write!**

What is Descriptive Writing"?

Page 2

**Conventions**

Kinds of Sentences

Page 8

**Application**

Let's Create a Character!

Page 12

**RIP & Write**

"September Birthday"

Page 16

**Source Writing**

"The Approaching Storm" / "Clouds, Storms, and Rain"

Page 20

All content in this publication is property of Virtual Village Classroom, Inc.  
The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, U.S. Code) governs the making of  
photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material;  
the person using this equipment is liable for any infringement.

# Let's Write!

## Worksheet



### Understanding:

Think about a toy you play with now or one you played with as a younger child. Describe the toy so the reader using your senses and how you feel about the toy.

### Brainstorming:

## **Planning:**

## **Writing Instructions:**

Write a descriptive paragraph using your brainstorming and your planning to guide you. Refer to the modeled piece of writing Mr. Butler wrote in the video.

## **Revising & Editing:**

When you have finished your draft, revise your writing for content. Is it descriptive? Do the words paint pictures in the mind of the reader? Can you add descriptive language to make the writing more descriptive. After you revise the content, edit your work for grammar and punctuation. Be sure to begin each sentence with a capital letter and end each sentence with the correct punctuation.

# Let's Write!



## What is Descriptive Writing?

Descriptive can be found in every type of writing. Narrative, explanatory, argumentative, and poetry are just a few places a reader will find descriptive language. In fact, there are even descriptive essays!

If you are asked to write in the descriptive mode, you will see the word describe in the prompt or instructions. This is called a keyword. The keyword directs you to what kind of writing you are supposed to do.

Describing is like painting pictures with words in the mind of the reader. When we describe, we let the reader experience something. It may be a thing, a place, a person, or something that happens.

To describe, we start by **brainstorming**. Let's use our senses to ask great questions.

1. What do you see?
2. What do you hear?
3. What do you smell?
4. What do you taste?
5. How does it feel to touch?
6. How does it make you feel inside?

This last question pulls on your emotions. Writing about how you feel gives great voice and expression to your writing.

Once you have finished brainstorming, you will make a **plan**. From the plan, you will **write**. After you have a paragraph, you will **revise** and **edit**.

In the **video**, Mr. Butler will walk you through the writing process of **brainstorming**, **planning**, **writing**, and **revising and editing**.

# Let's Write!

## Teacher's Guide

Your students have been asked to write a descriptive paragraph about a toy. An effective approach to the modeling video is to watch it in pieces and interact with your students along the way. Watch the introduction and the brainstorming; pause the video; and model with your students. The writing process - brainstorming, planning, writing, and revising and editing - must become habit. To accomplish that, you will need to constantly model the process with them until it becomes natural.

### ***ASSESSMENT***

What should you expect of your students? The prompt asks for a descriptive paragraph. To assess this activity, you need to assess the writing process as well.

- Did they brainstorm?
- Did they make a bullet plan?
- Did they write at least five sentences using the plan and the brainstorming? Do the sentences reflect descriptive writing? Is there evidence of juicy words - adjectives, action verbs, figurative language, etc.? Do the sentences utilize senses and emotions?
- Did they capitalize the first word of each sentence?
- Is there end punctuation?
- Does each sentence make sense?

Use the rubric to assess their writing. Although your students' writing may not look exactly like this, you will have a general idea of what is acceptable and what isn't.

# CLICK HERE TO VIEW THIS WEEK'S

## ► *Let's Write!* VIDEO

### Summary

In the video, you learned the keyword for descriptive writing is **describe**. When you see this word in directions, you will know you need to describe.

Mr. Butler helped you brainstorm ways to describe a toy. Mr. Butler made a plan for describing. He used bullets as a way to organize the plan. Sentence by sentence, Mr. Butler modeled complete sentences that described the toy. Finally, Mr. Butler revised and edited the paragraph.

### Your Turn!

Using the modeled piece of writing, you should write your own descriptive paragraph about a toy. The toy can be one from your younger years or a toy you play with currently. Be sure to follow the process of **brainstorming**, **planning**, **writing**, and **revising** and **editing** as Mr. Butler did during the lesson.

## What We Wrote Together

In the middle of my playroom, a bright red fire truck sits quietly waiting for me. When I place my hand on the shiny surface, my favorite toy comes to life. A long ladder stretches high into the air, and I pretend that the tiny toy fireman is climbing to rescue someone. I push a button, and the siren flashes and blasts.

## Summary

In the video, you learned the keyword for descriptive writing is **describe**. When you see this word in directions, you will know you need to describe.

Mr. Butler helped you brainstorm ways to describe a firetruck by using a web. Mr. Butler made a plan for describing. He used bullets as a way to organize the plan. Sentence by sentence, Mr. Butler modeled complete sentences that described the firetruck. Finally, Mr. Butler revised and edited the paragraph.

## Your Turn!

Using the modeled piece of writing, you should write your own descriptive paragraph about a toy. The toy can be one from your younger years or a toy you play with currently. Be sure to follow the process of **brainstorming**, **planning**, **writing**, and **revising** and **editing** as Mr. Butler did during the lesson.

# Let's Write!

## Teacher's Guide



### RUBRIC

#### **Exceeds Standards:**

A tattered bear rests peacefully on a shelf in my room. Old pictures sit beside him featuring the two of us when we were inseparable. Often, I reflect on those days when all I needed was Teddy to feel safe and secure. His warm smile and soft eyes still fill me with a level of comfort like nothing else.

#### **Meets Standards:**

An old teddy bear sits on a shelf in my bedroom. Next to him, old pictures of the two of us remind me of a time when he was like a safe, warm blanket. Even now, his beautiful smile and welcoming eyes make me feel like a million bucks.

#### **Below Standards:**

I have an old teddy bear in my room There are pictures of us two he has blak eyes and he smile and he makes me feel good

### CLICK

Understanding the skills are quite different from the application of skills. When understanding meets application, I call that a "click." It's like a puzzle piece finding its companion.

In this activity, the application of the writing process is the click. When your students apply the process viewed in the modeling video to their own writing, they will understand how following the process removes frustration from their writing.



# Conventions



## Kinds of Sentences

In *Let's Write*, you learned about descriptive writing. No matter which mode of writing you are working with, there are different kinds of sentences you can use. It is important to understand what kind of sentence you are writing. The craft and structure of your writing builds strong organization and control.

**Declarative** – This type of sentence tells you something, or it makes a statement. It ends with a period.

*Tomorrow is Friday.*  
*Green is my favorite color.*

**Interrogative** – This type of sentence asks a question. It ends in a question mark.

*Will you bring me a pencil?*  
*Do you want cheese on your burger?*

**Imperative** – This type of sentence tells what action needs to be performed, or it makes a command. It ends with a period or an exclamation point.

*Be at the school by 8:30.*  
*Bring me my shoes.*  
*Go!*  
*Sit down!*

**Exclamatory** – This type of sentence expresses excitement, or it exclaims something. It ends with an exclamation mark.

*I can't believe my dad's home!*  
*That music is too loud!*

# Conventions

## Teacher's Guide

### ASSESSMENT

Conventions covers punctuation, grammar, and spelling. It is one of the six traits of writing and commonly part of analytical assessment scoring.

In *Weekly Writer*, the instructional videos focus on holistic content writing first and editing for punctuation, grammar, and spelling at the end of the writing process. Students need to focus first on their content. If the content of the writing isn't sound, then there is little need to edit. By nature, language arts teachers want to edit first for conventions, but if the student has to go back and rewrite sentences for content, then they feel like they've wasted their efforts.

Therefore, it is important for you to focus on the content of their writing as a primary goal. When the content is firm, then ask the student to edit for punctuation, grammar, and spelling.

In *Conventions*, the goal is to make basic punctuation and grammar second nature to the young writer. Consider these basics:

- Capitalize the first word of a sentence
- Capitalize the word "I"
- Capitalize proper nouns
- Add end punctuation for a statement, a question, or exclamation

Next, focus on —

- Subject and verb agreement
- Is the sentence a complete thought?

This week the lesson focuses on different types of sentences including declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory. The Checking for Understanding activity gives you a great platform to discuss sentence variety in student writing.

# Checking for Understanding

Write **D** for Declarative, **Int** for Interrogative, **Imp** for Imperative, or **E** for Exclamatory. Then, add the correct punctuation for each sentence. This will help you understand the craft and structure of your sentences.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I'm so excited to go to camp this summer! E
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Today is pajama Day at school. D
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Can you please help me move the bed? Int
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Come over here! Imp
5. \_\_\_\_\_ That is my piece of pizza! E

Rewrite each sentence to change its structure. Use the example as a guide to make the change.

Example:

Today is Friday. (Declarative to Interrogative)

Is today Friday?

6. Bring me my camera. (Imperative to Interrogative)

Can you bring my camera?

---

7. I can't wait to go to the library! (Exclamatory to Declarative)

I can't wait to go to the library.

---

8. Will you be here tomorrow (Interrogative to Imperative)

Be here tomorrow!

---

# Conventions

## Teacher's Guide



### **CLICK**

For this Conventions lesson to click, you will have help connect the pieces. As described above, your constant modeling of pointing out different types of sentences is important.

How many times have you heard a teacher say, "They can't tell a statement from a question." To eradicate that statement, we have to make the purpose and usage of different types of sentences real to our students and never assume "they get it."

This concept will be a constant "click" each time you write. As you observe your students, be mindful of those who master this concept and those who need more attention.

Challenge your students to use a variety of different sentence types in their writing. If a book had all the same type of sentences it would be a very boring book. A writer wants the reader to "see" or experience something from what they write and to do this they have to make it interesting. The only way to get this across in written form is to add description, vary types of sentences, and to be expressive.

# Application



## Let's Create a Character!

Complete the following activities to start your library of characters. You will pull from these when writing narratives in the near future. It is important to have detailed information on each character you write about. Use your descriptive skills from *Let's Write* and your understanding of different types of sentences to write about each character.

### Activity #1

When you write stories, you need characters to write about. Fill out the character worksheet based on yourself. Use as much descriptive language as possible to paint pictures with words.

### Activity #2

Create another character you completely make up! Make them your age and someone you would like to be friends with.

### Activity #3

Write a descriptive paragraph about each of the characters you have created. Be sure to use your writing process to create these paragraphs. Brainstorm, plan, write, and revise and edit your descriptive writing.

Place your completed *Character Worksheets* in your *Writer's Workbook*. As new characters pop into your imagination, fill out a *Character Worksheet* for each of them. Soon, you will have a library of characters to work with all the time.

# Application

## Teacher's Guide

### ASSESSMENT

This is an ongoing activity for the student. Make multiple copies of *The Character Worksheet* and place them in an easily accessible spot in your classroom.

When a student has an idea for a character, they can fill out a *Character Worksheet* and add it to their *Writer's Workbook*. I like to see fifth graders develop the following types of characters:

- **Main Characters** - These are characters the student wants to use as the main focus of a story.
- **Allies** - These are friends of the main character
- **Opponents** - These are good and bad opponents. Good opponents are teachers, parents, and friends who have the best interest of the main character at heart. Bad opponents are bullies or other bad guys in their stories.
- **Ally-Opponent OR Opponent-Ally** - These are characters who begin as one type of character but develop into another due to the circumstances of the story.

I highly suggest developing some classroom characters for the entire class to write about in your modeling lessons. I have seen amazing examples of how teachers have used classroom characters to reinforce character education concepts through narratives they wrote in modeling activities. Make these classroom characters part of your classroom family.

There is an example included in the answer key of how a fifth grader might fill out the *Character Worksheet*. As you review their choices, encourage them to make their character their age and grade. There is nothing wrong with having a variety of ages as they develop additional characters, but for the time being, they should create about what they know in their world.

# Apply It!

Fill out the Character Worksheet below. Be sure to use descriptive language whenever possible.

## The Character Worksheet

Ellie

Character's Name \_\_\_\_\_

What type of character(s) could this be? Select one or more types.

☒ Main Character — The main focus of the story.

☐ Ally — A true friend of the main character.

☐ Opponent — Someone working against the main character.

Boy or Girl ☐ Girl ☐

Animal or Human ☐ Human ☐

Describe the character:

Ellie is an outgoing girl. She has long, blonde hair flowing down her back. Her bright blue eyes sparkle in the sunlight. Whenever there is a problem, Ellie takes the lead! She is a true friend that everyone can depend on.

What are your character's strengths?

Friendship, loyalty, smart, outgoing, trustworthy, leader

What are your character's weaknesses or fears?

deep water, heights, snakes

# Application

## Teacher's Guide



The question that pops into the minds of most teachers is, “Why are we doing a narrative activity while we’re working on descriptive?” Fair question. Although writing has been broken down into “modes” of writing, I firmly believe students must learn how to divide and conquer! They must be prepared to write in any mode or mix the modes at any time. Do we not describe in a narrative or possibly in a science or social studies question? Use this activity to build awareness and observational skills with your students. Allow this to transfer into other curricular areas as well.

In the descriptive sentences, make sure your students are not explaining details about the character. In other words, if they write — Everyone loves her because she smiles all the time. — point out that this is explaining “why” they like her. Notice how I reversed the same concept by letting the character have the action. She smiles all the time, and everyone loves her. I deleted the word “because” and used the action verbs “smile” and “loves” to show instead of tell or explain.

### CLICK

Allow this activity to click into multiple activities. Imagine your students filling out a *Character Worksheet* on another classmate, or a character from a novel they are reading, or a character from a story in your reading series.

As for their own work, students need to start building a collection of character worksheets for their narrative writing. Don’t let this one be the only one they do. Encourage your students to do several of these over a period of time.

Additionally, the *Character Worksheet* asks the students to be observant about what they see in their imaginations, and they have to describe as well. This is an excellent opportunity for you to drive home the message about descriptive not being just the sense of “seeing.” Describing must include all of the senses and emotions to be well-rounded.



# RIP & Write



*\*Remember, **RIP** stands for "Read, Interpret, Predict"*

*Reading to comprehend is a skill all to itself. Often, students skim and scan a passage and call that reading. Skimming and scanning is a wonderful skill to get an idea of what the passage is about, however, it never replaces close reading. When you close read a passage you will discover details and inferences in the words.*

*RIP is a reading strategy to help you close read a passage. As you read the math word problem, you will be guided through the RIP strategy.*

## September Birthday

### **Read**

*Read a short portion of the text. As you read, remember to stop at the periods. Picture what's happening in your imagination. Read with expression even if you are reading in your mind!*

September is the best month ever. The sun is out, the flowers have bloomed, and my birthday is on September 15th! My mother said I could have five friends over for a party. We will have chips, cupcakes, and pizza to eat.

### **Interpret**

*We're not finished reading the passage, but let's stop and interpret by asking some questions.*

- What is the passage about?
- What clues tell me this will be a math word problem?
- What information could be important to a math problem?

### **Predict**

- What kind of math could I have to do?
- Will the math problem ask me to find out how much pizza to order?

# ***RIP & Write***

## Teacher's Guide

The RIP strategy has been proven to build reading comprehension through close reading. As your students are learning the strategy, model it with them. Each element of the strategy is key to building reading comprehension. There is nothing wrong with skimming and scanning to get a general idea, but it should never replace close reading.

### ***GUIDE***

As you guide students through this lesson, point out that after reading these sentences, a red flag should pop up. This sounds and feels like a math lesson. Watch out! Which information is important? In your mind, convert the number words to digits and start predicting what math operation you will have to do.

Additionally, take notice of the descriptive language. Is it odd to find descriptive language in a math problem? Is descriptive language truly all around us? We need to be observant.

Now that we *know* it's a math problem, let's be on the lookout for additional information we may need to solve a potential problem. And, how will we recognize the instructions?

## Read

*Let's read the rest of the passage. Don't forget to stop at the periods, picture it in your mind, and use expression in your voice!*

My mother has put me in charge of figuring out how many pizzas to order. Each of my friends attending the party will eat two pieces of pizza, and each pizza has eight slices. I will eat two slices as well. How many pizzas do I need to order? Will I have any slices left over?

## Interpret

*We're finished reading the passage. Let's stop and interpret by asking some questions.*

- What information is important?
- How many children, including the author of the passage, will be attending?
- What math operations will I be doing to solve the problems?

## Predict

*Look at the last sentence. What do you think you will have to do for an activity?*

## Your turn!

1. Why does the author of the passage like the month of September? Use information from the passage and explain.

*The author likes September because it's sunny, the flowers are blooming, and it is her birthday.*

2. Using information from the passage, determine how many pizzas the author needs to order to feed the children attending the party. Write a math sentence to find the answer. Be sure to show your work. Explain the steps you took to find the answer.

$$5 + 1 = 6$$

$$6 \times 2 = 12$$

$$8 \times 2 = 16$$

*There will be six children at the party. I added the five guests plus the author for a sum of six. The passage stated that each child will eat two slices. I multiplied the six children by two slices each for a product of twelve. Since each pizza has eight slices, I know that two pizzas will have sixteen slices. The author needs to order two pizzas to have enough for everyone.*

3. How many slices will be left over? Write a math sentence to find the answer. Be sure to show your work. Explain the steps you took to find the answer.

*There will be four slices of pieces left over. Since each child will eat two slices, the author needs a total of twelve slices because six times two is twelve. Each pizza has eight slices, and I determined that the author needs two pizzas to have enough for everyone. Two pizzas will have sixteen slices because eight times two is sixteen. Finally, I subtracted twelve from sixteen, which gave me a difference of four.*

$$16 - 12 = 4$$

# *RIP & Write*

## Teacher's Guide

### **GUIDE**

Did you see it? There are questions in our instructions. Now, let's try to fully understand what the questions are asking us to do.

The instructions are very clear. The words "how many" tell us we will either need to use addition or multiplication to solve the problem.

How many children are there? There are five friends attending, but you have to count the birthday boy/girl. Also, we know that each pizza has eight slices. If each child eats two slices, I think I will need to multiply. I could use addition, but multiplication will be faster. Is it possible that I will have to do subtraction at some point? It seems clear that solving this math problem will take multiple steps.

As you guide your students through the *RIP & Write* lesson, you are clearly modeling the process step by step. You are not only building reading comprehension skills, but you are building logical thinking skills. Too often, we focus on "thinking out of the box," and forget that students need logical, common sense thinking skills as well. There is nothing difficult about this problem if you look at it from a logical perspective.

When you answer the open-ended questions, be sure to model how students should answer in a complete sentence.

### **CLICK**

During the week, we have talked about complete sentences. In math, it is important to answer open-ended questions with a complete sentence expressing the answer with details.

Use this opportunity to talk about the parallel of sentence variety in language arts to sentence variety in math.

Before they write their answers to the open-ended sentences, consider the purpose of each sentence. Will it be declaring details in a statement? Or, is there a need for another type of sentence?

# Source Writing



*Let's take what we've learned this week in Let's Write, Conventions, and RIP & Write to do some Source Writing!*

*Answering questions based on multiple sources can be difficult. Over the next few weeks, we will break down the process for you step by step. Our goal is to learn how to RIP the passages for close reading, find the details needed to answer the questions, and learn how to write the answers in our own words. It will also be necessary to **cite** where you found the answer. The word "cite" means to give credit to the source where you found the answer.*

## The Approaching Storm

Gray, gloomy clouds glide across a dark, dismal sky. Tall, pointy pines sway gently on the horizon, and I feel as though they are bowing to me. In the distance, a rumble of thunder echoes. A scared squirrel scampers across my front yard and dashes for his home in a large, oak tree. As I relax on my porch swing, the warm breeze brushes my cheek. I anxiously await the coming storm.

*Did you **RIP** the passage? What kind of questions did you ask? If the passage continued, what do you think would happen next?*

## Clouds, Storms, and Rain

*Wikipedia*

A cloud is a visible mass of liquid droplets made of water in the atmosphere. A storm is any disturbed state of an environment affecting its surface. It may be marked with strong wind, hail, thunder, lightning, and rain. Rain is liquid water in the form of droplets that have condensed from atmospheric water vapor and fallen to the earth's surface due to gravity.

*Did you **RIP** this passage? What kind of questions did you ask? If the passage continued, what do you think would happen next?*

# Source Writing

## Teacher's Guide

In your activity, students are asked to locate details from the passage and answer open-ended questions based on information and inference. If they did not RIP the passage, it is possible they only skimmed and scanned. The result will be frustrating to them; they will have no clue how to answer the questions.

The first question asks them to state their opinion about whether or not the author likes storms. The evidence to support the answer is there, but the student must understand the inference and description of feeling to draw this conclusion.

The second question asks the student to draw from the informational passage. Even though the passage only lists the effects a storm can have on the surface of our planet, the student must draw on known knowledge and logic to carry through with details of how wind, hail, and lightning can affect us.

Finally, students are asked to write two sentences about the swaying trees. Guide your students to utilize the writing process of brainstorming, planning, writing, and revising and editing to create these two sentences. If they are having trouble with this, you may have to model it for them in a group activity and then ask them to write two descriptive sentences on their own.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Source writing brings it all together. One passage is descriptive and one is explanatory. The questions following the passages ask the students to do a variety of tasks.

- They have to identify descriptive details in the passage.
- Students have to use information from the passage to draw conclusions based on knowledge and understanding.
- Students have to explain the personification by interpreting its meaning from the descriptive passage.

## Let's Source Write

*Step one in source writing is understanding. If you have read the two passages, you are aware of how different they are. One is a descriptive passage and one is an explanatory passage. How do you know that?*

*The Approaching Storm is written from the author's viewpoint and describes what the author sees, hears, and feels as a storm develops. Clouds, Storms, and Rain gives you information about the elements in a storm. Notice the credit to Wikipedia, an online free encyclopedia.*

*The next step is to answer the following questions in one or two sentences. This will help you determine if you RIP'ed the passages to clearly understand details, structure, and your own interpretation as it relates to you.*

### **Your turn!**

*Answer the following questions in one or two sentences. To the best of your ability, give credit to the passage where you found the information. Refer to the passage by its title.*

*For example — In The Approaching Storm, the squirrel was scared because of the thunder. When you use the title in your answer, you are giving credit to the passage.*

1. Do you think the author of "The Approaching Storm" likes or dislikes storms? Use information from the passage to support your opinion.

*I think the author enjoyed storms. He is sitting on his porch in a swing to watch the storm. If he was afraid of the storm or didn't like it, he wouldn't be sitting on the porch.*

2. How do you think a storm can affect the surface of our planet? Use information from the passage to explain the good and bad effects of a storm.

*In the passage, Clouds, Storms, and Rain, it states that strong wind, hail, thunder, and lightning are possible during a storm. Strong winds can damage houses because trees can fall on them. Hail can be large or small, but it is very hard. If hail falls on a car it can dent the car. If it hits the roof of a house, it can damage the roof. Thunder is only a noise, but it can rattle windows and scare everyone on the surface. Lightning can strike the ground, trees, and even people, which can lead to damage or death.*

3. Why do think the author of the descriptive passage stated that he/she felt the trees were bowing to them? Use information from the passage to draw a conclusion and explain your thoughts.

*In the passage, the author stated that the tall, pointy pines were swaying. If a tree is swaying, it could look like it was bowing because the tree is bending over.*

# Source Writing

## Teacher's Guide

### *CLICK*

In Source Writing, students have to utilize the skills they have learned during the week. They have to:

- Read to comprehend using the RIP strategy
- Use the writing process to answer open-ended questions
- Use comprehension skills to identify details and information as well as draw conclusions
- Write in complete sentences using a variety of sentences

Each step of the way, you are making “clicks” for your students. Help them to make these connections. It may seem obvious to you and to me, but our student writers need you to connect the dots. By doing this, they will begin to do this independently as they write on their own.