

GRADE 8 English Language Arts Writing: Lesson 5

Read aloud to the students the material that is printed in **boldface type** inside the boxes. Information in regular type inside the boxes and all information outside the boxes should **not** be read to students. Possible student responses are included in parentheses after the questions.

Any directions that ask you to do something, such as to turn to a page or to hand out materials to students, will have an arrow symbol (\implies) by them.

Purpose of Lesson 5:

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- practice organizing a composition,
- practice sequencing,
- examine clues in the writing prompt, and
- write a composition based on the writing prompt.

Equipment/Materials Needed:

- Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 5 – 1
- Pencils
- Notebook paper

LESSON 5: Writing

After your introductory remarks to students, say:

Today we will work on writing a composition that tells a story about something that has happened. It might help if you think about this composition as if it were a TV show: there are a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Always read the writing prompt very carefully. Usually there will be several clues to let you know what to write. Before you do your brainstorming, think about what you want to tell in your story. You might begin by writing down as many details as you can.

Later you may need to rearrange these details and put them in chronological order, the order in which they occurred; however, it always helps to have a lot of ideas on paper.

Today we will practice several ways to help you write a narrative

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 5 - 1 and pencils.

Then say:

Look at the box at the top of your worksheet. In the box at the top of the page, the test makers give you an idea, a problem, or a situation to write about on the test. Your teacher may call this information the writing prompt.

Follow along while I read the prompt aloud.

“Your teacher has decided that your class will participate in a pen pal program. You are to write a letter to your pen pal who lives in another country. You should *tell* about yourself, your school, and your community. Give *specific details* so that your pen pal will understand who you are and what your life is like.”

Notice the clues that were given to guide you in your writing. Circle the clues that you think might help you in planning and writing your composition.

Pause to allow students to mark their worksheets.
(Responses should include *tell* and *specific details*.
Students might also circle *letter*, *yourself*, *school*, and *community*.)

Then say:

This writing prompt helps you know what to write and how to organize your letter. Notice that the writing prompt says “Tell about yourself, your school, and your community.” That information is a clue that you might have three paragraphs: one about you, one about your school, and one about the community.

Before you write the letter, what should you do?

Pause to allow students time to respond.

(Responses might include prewriting, brainstorming, clustering, listing, or coming up with ideas.)

It is important for you to brainstorm lots of ideas about yourself, your school, and your community. You could make three lists. You might want to do three clusters. You might make a chart. Do whatever works for you, but don’t skip this part.

Allow time for students to do the brainstorming.

If a student is struggling, you might give some hints.

For the brainstorming about himself/herself: favorite sport, favorite food, family, friends, pets.

For the brainstorming about the school: size, class schedule, lunch, start and stop time, school mascot.

For the brainstorming about the community: size, location, major industries, fun things to do.

Let’s share a few details you put down about yourself.

Allow time for sharing.

Let’s share a few ideas about the school. Remember that you should add to your brainstorming so that you have plenty of ideas.

Allow time for sharing.

What about the community? Let's hear some of your details about the community. Allow time for sharing

Then say:

Before you begin writing your rough draft, look at the writing prompt again and read it to yourself.

Pause to allow time for reading.

You want to be sure that you are clear on what to write about. To have a clear idea about what to write is why it is a good idea to read that writing prompt more than once!

Remember that earlier we said there should be three paragraphs. So what goes in the first paragraph? Look for the clue in the writing prompt.

Pause. (Response: all the information about me)

Yes, put all the details about yourself in the first paragraph of your letter. What is the second paragraph going to be about? Don't forget the clue in the writing prompt.

Pause. (Response: all the information about the school)

What is the third paragraph about?

Pause. (Response: all the information about our community)

Great! You have done the thinking and planning that are necessary before you begin writing. Because you have used the clues in the writing prompt, you are now ready to write the rough draft of your letter.

⇒ Distribute lined paper.

Say:

Now you will write a rough draft. Your rough draft is the writing piece in which you take your ideas and put them on paper. We are going to practice writing a rough draft now.

It might be a good idea for you to read the writing prompt one more time, just so you will be sure to include everything that the test makers want in this composition.

We will use the remaining time for you to write your letter.
Allow students time to write.

Students will not have time to complete the writing process. However, they will experience the continuation of the process by writing a rough draft.

Say:

You should spend a lot of time thinking and planning for your composition just as we did today. Then you will write a rough draft. All that thinking and planning make the writing easier!

The next step is to revise your rough draft and then to do your final draft. It is hard work, but you will write an acceptable composition!

Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 5 – 1

NAME _____

Your teacher has decided that your class will participate in a pen pal program.

You are to write a **letter** to your pen pal who lives in another country. You should **tell** about yourself, your school, and your community. Give **specific details** so that your pen pal will understand who you are and what your life is like.