

A CREATIVE APPROACH TO THE CLASSICAL PROGYMNASMATA

# Writing Rhetoric

BOOK 5: REFUTATION & CONFIRMATION

PAUL KORTEPETER



*Writing & Rhetoric Book 5: Refutation & Confirmation*  
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# Refutation & Confirmation

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# A Typical Teaching Week

These guidelines are intended to help bring some predictability to lesson planning. Although the elements of grammar are important aspects of this course, its primary focus is writing and rhetoric. We recommend that you teach a simple, but rich, grammar curriculum in parallel with the lessons in *Writing & Rhetoric: Refutation & Confirmation*. By simple, we mean to suggest that you avoid a grammar program with a writing component. Two different writing methods would most likely work against each other and cause an imbalance in the school day. Instead, look for a grammar program that focuses on grammatical concepts, that provides plenty of practice sentences, and that encourages diagramming.

Teachers, you may want to provide same-day grammar instruction several days a week, preferably separating Writing & Rhetoric from grammar study by several hours. Or, you may want to alternate weeks between a grammar program and Writing & Rhetoric. This requires some negotiation in your language arts program for the year. If you aim to do two Writing & Rhetoric books per school year, that would equal approximately twenty-five lessons. If you spend one week on each lesson, that leaves you with approximately ten weeks to focus on grammar. You will have to choose a grammar program based on the needs you observe in your students.

## Day One

1. The teacher models fluency by reading the text aloud while students follow along silently.
2. “Tell It Back” (Narration) and “Talk About It” should immediately follow the reading of the text, while the story is still fresh in the students’ minds. “Talk About It” is designed to help students analyze the meaning of texts and to see analogous situations, both in the world and in their own lives. Narration, the process of “telling back,” can be done in pairs or by selecting individuals to narrate to the entire class. Solo students can tell back the story into a recording device or to an instructor. The process of narration is intended to improve comprehension and long-term memory.

## Days Two and Three

1. Optional: The teacher can appoint a student to read the text again to the class or pair students to reread it independently.
2. Students work with the text through the “Go Deeper” and “Writing Time” exercises. “Go Deeper” is all about building vocabulary and understanding the nuances of the text better. “Writing Time” includes sentence play, copiousness, and the refutation or confirmation exercises themselves. You will probably want to take more than one day for this step.

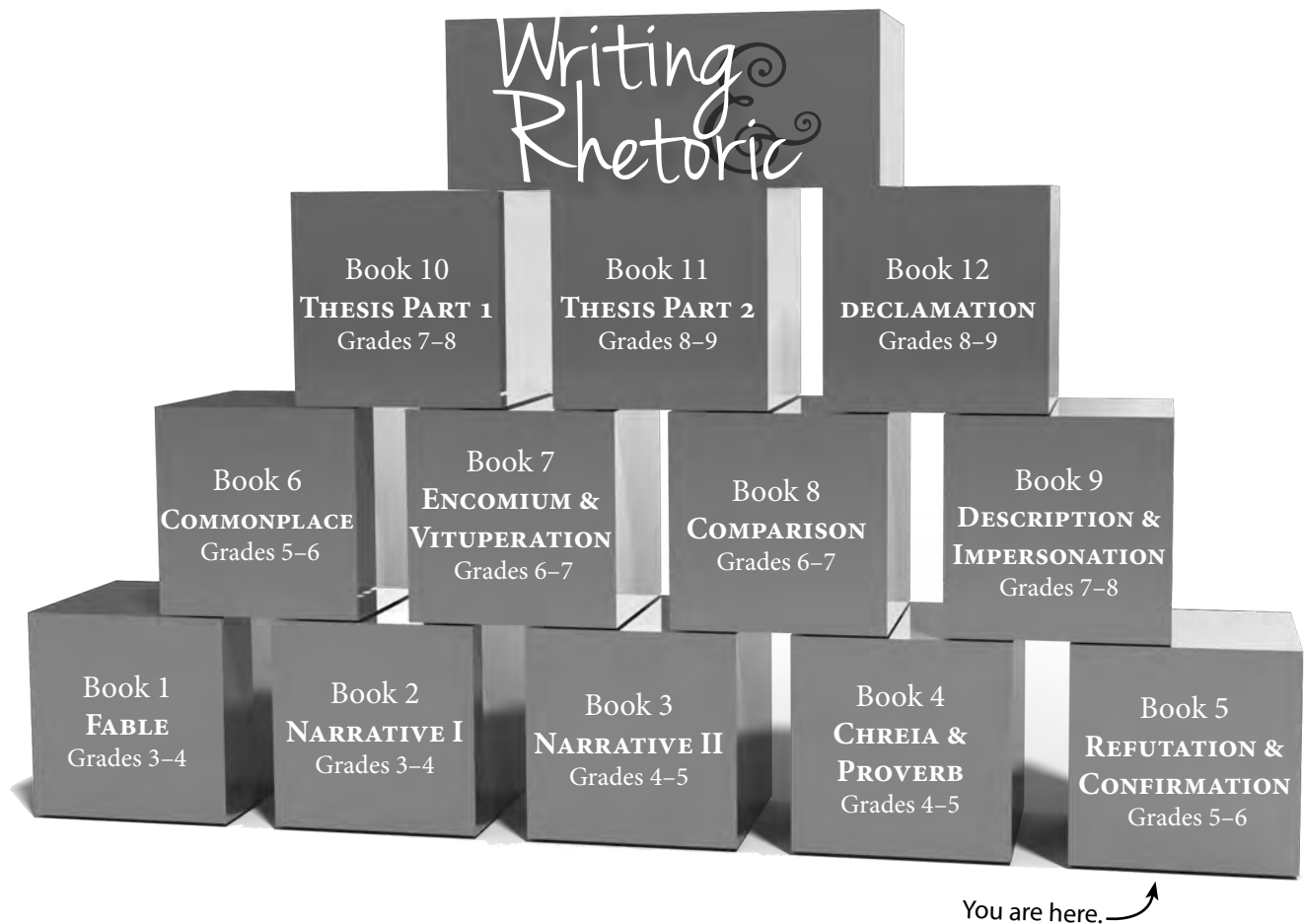
## Day Four

1. Rather than going directly to revision, we recommend that students take a breather from their essays for a day while they work on their speaking skills. Keeping a day between essay completion and revision helps students to look at their work with fresh eyes.
2. The “Speak It” section creates opportunities for students to memorize, recite, play word games, and playact. Please consider using a recording device whenever it suits the situation. When using electronics, the student should listen to his recording to get an idea of what

sounds right and what needs to be improved. Have students read the elocution instructions to help them work on skill in delivery.

## Day Five

At this level, students will take an important step toward revision. The first several lessons in this book provide basic exercises that introduce students to revision. Later in the book, the lessons provide a self-editing checklist that covers some of the most important aspects of improving an essay. Most students can do rudimentary self-editing at this age and provide some useful feedback to each other. However, teachers are still the best source for giving editorial feedback and requesting rewrites.



# Introduction to Students

## On the Road to Rhetoric

Have you ever heard the Willie Nelson tune “On the Road Again”? Don’t worry, I’m not going to sing it for you, but it goes like this:

On the road again,  
Just can’t wait to get on the road again . . .  
Goin’ places that I’ve never been,  
Seein’ things that I may never see again.  
And I just can’t wait to get on the road again.

Well, here you are, on the road again. You are on a long stretch of highway called Writing & Rhetoric, and you are most definitely going places where you’ve never been. You’ve already cruised through several fascinating places. Your first stop was Fable, which was all about short moral tales with talking animals. Your second stop was Narrative, which includes all forms of story, from history to mystery. And now you are leaving Chreia—which focused on short remembrances about useful sayings or deeds—in the rearview mirror as you motor on down the road.

Unlike the words of the song, you won’t see things and never see them again. The beauty of this program is that you never really leave behind the things you’ve learned. You will use, and reuse, each and every skill along the way. That’s because we want those skills to become powerful tools of communication for you, whether you’re writing or speaking.

Every road trip needs a destination, right? You’re not simply going for a Sunday drive and burning gas. The place you’re heading to is called Rhetoric. Do you remember the meaning of this important Greek word? Rhetoric is the art and practice of persuasive writing and speaking.

The Greek philosopher Plato called rhetoric “the art of winning souls through speech.” The Roman leader Cicero said that rhetoric was “speech aimed at persuasion.” The English philosopher John Locke saw rhetoric as a way “to make one man’s thoughts and ideas known to another.” This book is the first in the series in which you will actually try to win, to persuade, to make your ideas known to readers. You will be commenting on parts of the stories you read and trying to convince readers that your ideas are right. Do the stories contain parts that are worthy of praise? Or do they contain parts that are not so great? Perhaps your rhetoric will be so well done that your readers will agree with what you say. Hey, it’s worth a try.

So, let’s get a move on! The road sign says, “Rhetoric straight ahead!”

# Introduction

If you've picked up Writing & Rhetoric books and asked, somewhat mystified, "Where's the prewriting? Where's the outlining from scratch? Is there enough expository writing in this series?" I commend you for asking these good questions! They indicate that you are serious and thoughtful about finding a curriculum for your students that optimizes their chances for success.

Before I address these questions, it might help for you to know where I am coming from and where I want to take you. If you happened to be lost in a forest and you met a guy with twigs in his beard and bird droppings on his shoulders, you might well believe that he has spent quite a few years wandering the forest. But before you let him serve as your guide, you will still want to know how well he really knows the landscape and if he is going to lead you to the nearest road or off the nearest cliff. To show you how well I know the "landscape" and where I will lead you, please allow me to share with you a brief history of rhetoric and composition as it relates to the method in the Writing & Rhetoric books.

Two thousand-plus years ago, the Greeks developed a system of persuasive speaking known as rhetoric. The Romans fell in love with rhetoric because it was both practical for the real world and served the need of training orators in their growing republic. In order to prepare their students for oration, the Romans invented a complementary system of persuasive writing known as the *progymnasmata*: *pro*- meaning preliminary and *gymnas* meaning exercises. The *progymnasmata* were the primary method in Graeco-Roman schools used to teach young people the elements of rhetoric. This happened in a grammar school (called a *grammaticus*) sometime after a student reached the age of ten.

There are several ancient "progymns" still in existence. The most influential progymns were by Hermodorus of Tarsus, who lived in the second century, and by Aphthonius of Antioch, who lived during the fourth century just as the western Roman Empire was collapsing. Even after the great cities of Rome lay in ruins, the progym continued as the primary method for teaching writing during the Middle Ages and even into early modern times.

The Writing & Rhetoric series is based on the *progymnasmata* of ancient Rome. This method assumes that students learn best by reading excellent examples of literature and by growing their skills through imitation. It is incremental, meaning that it goes from simpler exercises to more complex exercises, and it moves from the concrete to the abstract. One of the beauties of the progym is that it grows with the student through the stages of childhood development termed the "trivium"<sup>1</sup> by modern classical education, effectively taking a young writer from the grammar phase through the logic phase and finally to the rhetoric phase.

I believe that the progym is every bit as valuable today as it was hundreds of years ago. Before I explain why this is so, it might be helpful to take a look back on the history of composition for the last 150 years. How we were trained to write as schoolchildren creates certain expectations as we evaluate any writing program. However, these expectations may or may not square with a course in classical composition that leads to rhetoric.

## Modern Composition

Depending on when you learned to write, you were most likely immersed in one of several pools of composition theory. If you learned to write before the 1970s, you learned the current-traditional com-

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1. In medieval times, the trivium was originally the lower division of the seven liberal arts. For the modern idea that these studies correspond to childhood development, please refer to Dorothy Sayers, *The Lost Tools of Learning*, available as an audio CD from [classicalacademicpress.com](http://classicalacademicpress.com).

position theory. We call it “traditional” because it is old—over 150 years old—and it is “current” because it continues to be taught. The primary method in Writing & Rhetoric, the *progymnasmata* of ancient Rome, gave birth to the current-traditional theory. The current-traditional method makes its rounds by means of the modes of discourse—exposition, description, narration, and argumentation. It is a bit bandaged up because it has been nicked and cut with a great deal of criticism in the last sixty-odd years.

The focus of the current-traditional method is proper English grammar and compositions that take a very specific and prescribed form (e.g., five-paragraph essays with an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion). Elegance of style rules over every other consideration. Proponents of the current-traditional method generally agree that the best style has clearness of expression, with a stamp of individuality on it, and is not falsely ornamented, but properly grammatical.

Now, many educators who desire to reclaim the classical tradition for modern students would embrace various aspects of the current-traditional method. We see good grammar as the basis of clear communication. We see stylish writing as a sign of careful attention and an appreciation of the beauty of language. We like prescribed forms because they are easy to teach and master. I suspect that many courses that purport to be classical writing are nothing more than the current-traditional method dressed up in fresh clothes. And yet there’s something missing in this type of writing, something so crucial and vital that it took the next wave of writing theory to point it out: Current-traditional method relies so heavily on form and style that substance is neglected.

If you learned to write in the 1970s and beyond, you have been heavily influenced by the process approach to writing, which cropped up in the 1960s as a way to give more freedom and autonomy to writers. The educational researchers who gave us “process” criticized the idea of a finished, polished product of writing (i.e., the five-paragraph essay) divorced from any passion or any authentic effort to communicate. They contended that students rarely consider their audience when writing traditional papers. Arguments are not tailored to persuade any particular group of people. Just as problematic, students don’t often have a desire to communicate significant ideas through the traditional forms, but rather complete their papers by rote. In other words, they write a paper because they had an assignment and not because they had a conviction about a book or subject. The process approach is a reaction against the stylish yet rote compositions done by the traditionalists. Process theorists emphasized, instead, self-discovery through language.

The process approach emphasizes the process of the writer as essential to the finished product of writing. The majority of time spent in process writing is devoted to “prewriting” or, in Professor Donald Murray’s words, “in everything that takes place before the first draft. . . . It includes the awareness of the world from which the subject is born. . . . In prewriting, the writer focuses on that subject, spots an audience, chooses a form which may carry his subject to his audience. Prewriting may include research and daydreaming, note-making and outlining, title-writing and lead-writing.”<sup>2</sup> The writing and rewriting stages are also important, but the innovation is in the prewriting stage of this method.

So, you see, the process approach to writing introduces, or I should say reintroduces, something very good and necessary to composition: the intention of the author, an awareness of the audience, and the understanding that we use writing as a form of thinking. Without this, writing degenerates into empty and terribly dull formulae. Writing & Rhetoric embraces the process of the author as well as traditional style, but in both cases, as you will see, it takes a different tack.

Beyond the process approach, we now also have post-process theories, which reject any generalized explanation of the writer’s process. These ideas take the perspective that the writer is “situated” in a certain context and that within this context knowledge is created. Knowledge is not some

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2. Donald M. Murray, “Teach Writing as a Process Not Product,” *The Leaflet*, November 1972.

objective reality waiting to be discovered by the writer. In essence, reality is built either individually or in a social setting. Post-process theorists would deny any sort of grand scheme to explain or teach writing, just as a postmodern theorist is wary of any generalized narratives of human existence. Though rich and abundant, even words are considered unreliable by post-process theorists, as they often carry different meanings for different people. As such, a structured writing program such as Writing & Rhetoric might be considered limited and unreasonably authoritative to a post-process teacher, who recognizes no hard-and-fast writing pedagogy.

## **Authentic Classical Writing—The Vitality of Rhetoric**

In my estimation, all of these ideas about writing are more or less inadequate. Each has an insight that the theory took too far and failed to balance with other insights. They all miss the mark of what we once had in classical writing. This is because composition has been cut off from its roots in rhetoric. In the classic world, composition served rhetoric, the art of persuasive speech, as a means to an end. The content of the composition was expected to have a purpose, rather than existing as a purposeless exercise in expression. The practice of skillful composition was designed to enhance persuasive public speaking. At the same time, rhetoric asserted that words have precise meanings and that ideas have universal, cross-cultural relevance rooted in our common existence as human beings.

In a democracy such as Athens or a republic such as Rome, rhetoric was a powerful way to enter into public conversations. In the words of Yale rhetorician Charles Sears Baldwin, “Rhetoric is conceived by Aristotle as the art of giving effectiveness to the truth.” He adds that “the true theory of rhetoric is the energizing of knowledge, the bringing of truth to bear upon men. . . .” Rhetoric thus had an intentional public purpose, that is, to persuade people to embrace truth and its corollaries: virtue and beauty. It is designed to enjoin right behavior by holding up to public scrutiny examples of goodness and wickedness. There is an urgency and a real purpose to rhetoric. It was never meant to be empty forms of speaking and composition. It was never meant to be only eloquence and skill of delivery.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, rhetoric was not meant to be full of purpose poorly delivered—a poor delivery would only undermine the effectiveness of the purpose.

So here we come to the heart of the matter. The reasoning of the author (process) adds strength and purpose to elegance of style and form (current-traditional) and occurs within a particular context (post-process). Rather than separate elements that fall short when used independently, the three are married together in rhetoric—form, substance, and context united. I believe that a return to rhetoric, to persuasive argument fired by a passion for virtue and in service to humanity, is progress in the best sense of the word. I believe that composition theory finds its highest expression in classical writing reinterpreted for the needs of the modern world.

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3. Charles Sears Baldwin goes on to note that a “sophistic tendency” was a perpetual problem in the history of rhetoric. In essence, the sophistic was the weed that grew up alongside rhetoric and tried to choke off the more nutritious plant. The history of sophistry in the ancient world is long and illustrious, but in modern parlance it has come to mean clever and deceptive reasoning. Baldwin says, “What has intervened to deviate rhetoric and frustrate its best use has again and again been the preoccupation with giving effectiveness not to the message, but to the speaker.” In other words, the speaker and delivery became more important than the urgency and significance of the content. In writing, the compositions can be overly prescribed and technical. Not even the *progymnasmata* have escaped this criticism. Baldwin criticized the “fixed topics” of the *progymnasmata* as “arid” and “impersonal as arithmetic.” (Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetry [to 1400]: Interpreted from Representative Works* [New York: Macmillan, 1928], n.p.)

In Writing & Rhetoric, we seek to overcome any tendency to be overly prescribed or technical by encouraging imitative self-expression and real moral purpose. We want for young people to clearly see a model, but then to attempt, as soon as possible, to put these ideas into practice by expressing their own ideas.

In this series I've sought to do just that. I aim not to be purely backward-looking, but to bring those excellent, time-tested practices into today's classroom. I have done so by drawing on the expertise of educators who have taught writing in a variety of settings from grade school through college. For the better part of fourteen years, I have taught writing to students at elementary and middle school levels and guided the writing curriculum at my school. These students live in an urban environment and come from both privileged and less privileged backgrounds; the Writing & Rhetoric approach has been effective in both cases.

The best preparation for rhetoric is still, as practiced by the ancients, the *progymnasmata*, the preliminary exercises. In the *progym*, every aspect of rhetoric is part of the training, from the three types of audience appeal to the five canons (or laws) of rhetoric. (This terminology will be explained in greater depth to students as the series progresses.)

The *progymnasmata* as applied by Writing & Rhetoric serve the development of rhetoric admirably. Writing & Rhetoric is a creative take on the *progym* designed to meet the needs of modern children. We have understood both the method as it was used for the Romans and the demands that contemporary students must meet.

- It teaches the four modes of discourse—narration, exposition, description, and argumentation—while at the same time blending them for maximum persuasive impact.
- It is incremental, moving from easier forms to harder forms. The level of challenge is appropriate for students as they mature with the program.
- It uses “living” stories, from ancient to modern, and is not stuck in any particular time period. Rather, it follows a timeline of history so that the stories can be integrated with history lessons.
- Its stories engage the imagination and also spark a desire in young people to imitate them. In this way, Writing & Rhetoric avoids the “blank-page syndrome” that can paralyze many nascent writers by giving students a model from which to write.
- It promotes virtue by lifting up clear-cut examples of good and bad character.
- It fosters the joy of learning by providing opportunities for creative play and self-expression as well as classroom fun.
- It uses speaking to enhance the development of persuasive composition.
- It provides opportunities for students to learn from other students' work and to present their own work.

## Questions about Apparent Omissions

So now, what about certain aspects of current-traditional and process approach writing? Does Writing & Rhetoric cover these? For example, what about prewriting? What about outlining? What about exposition?

Let's first examine prewriting, which is essentially another word for brainstorming and research. We can look at prewriting as a conversation that the writer has with herself. Although prewriting and graphic organizers can be useful, I believe that dialogue is the most effective means of thinking through the task at hand and of avoiding writer's block. In other words, conversations are a great way to prepare for the process of writing.

The Greek philosopher Plato is famous for a process of discussion and argumentation called dialectic. In these dialectical conversations, the teacher would ask questions about an opinion held by a student and would keep pressing in until deeper truths were revealed. Similarly, modern teachers can guide students toward thoughtful writing by asking probing questions and following up on an-

swers with other questions. The idea is not to ask leading questions, but instead to ask open-ended questions so that the student reaches her own conclusions. In *Writing & Rhetoric*, this conversation—verbal prewriting—is explicitly encouraged in our *Talk About It* sections, but dialectic can occur any time during the process, including during revision.

Revision is introduced for the first time in this book through the *Revise It* section. Why didn't we do it sooner? Quite often younger, grammar-age students are too concrete in their thinking to see the flaws in their own writing. It often takes a brain that has matured in the direction of abstract thinking, as well as in grammatical conventions, to evaluate writing and revise it appropriately. Just as writing is necessarily incremental, so is the process of revision. In this volume we introduce some specific pointers to aid in reviewing and changing writing. Please keep in mind, however, that revision takes critical thinking, and this type of higher-level thinking takes time and practice. Not every student matures at the same pace. You, the teacher, know your students and will be able to make comments and corrections that best support their needs.

Outlining from scratch, a tool associated with current-traditional and process approach writing, is also very useful in classical writing. However, it is important not to put the cart before the horse. The *progym* provides the outline for various types of compositions, from the *chreia* to the thesis paper, and encourages students to think resourcefully and flexibly within these prearranged forms. In this way, the *progym* encourages students in the grammar and logic phases of their development to be imitative of writing models. As with all things in education, we must be careful not to overload the cognitive function of young people. When the outline is provided, students have more freedom of expression within the form itself. As a student grows older, especially as a student enters the rhetoric phase of development, outlining from scratch becomes more tenable. In this book, we continue outlining as a subset of narration whereby stories are reconstructed in outline form. This method helps familiarize students with the structure of outlines without burdening them too soon to employ rhetorical thinking. And, even narration, orally “telling back,” is an elementary form of outlining that prepares students for the more complex process of laddering details in order of importance.

What about exposition? Expository writing is often called informational writing and is primarily used to “expose” or explain a topic. It can clarify a process, analyze an event, extend a definition, introduce a problem and propose a solution, or describe how to do something. “The Art of Building the Perfect Hamburger” and “Why the Unsinkable *Titanic* Sank” are sample titles that could be classified as expository. It's true that up to this point *Writing & Rhetoric* has emphasized narrative and descriptive writing. However, many aspects of expository writing are now in place and are being bolstered with every lesson. These include:

- introducing and concluding the main topic
- informing and explaining the basis of an opinion
- summary
- use of narrative to capture interest
- developing paragraphs
- extending description

In fact, expository papers rely on a firm grasp of narrative and description to properly explain and inform.

## **Onward!**

As educators, I think we need to admit that teaching writing is difficult. This is because writing makes big demands on cognitive function and, for many beginning writers, can easily become overwhelming. Our brains need to simultaneously do the following:



- utilize motor skills
- process vocabulary
- sequence and organize ideas
- employ grammatical concepts
- draw upon a reservoir of good writing—hopefully the reservoir exists—as a template for new writing

That’s a tall order. Also, writing contains a subjective element. It’s not as clear-cut as math. And when you add argumentation to the mix, you have a very complex process indeed. To be properly educated, every person needs to be able to make and understand arguments.

It is from this list of complexities that a desire for a relatively easy-to-implement curriculum was born. My hope is that this introduction has clarified why this series follows the classical method of composition and how it naturally integrates helpful elements from other writing methods. While the task of teaching writing is difficult, it is my sincere belief that reconnecting the tree of modern composition to its classical roots in rhetoric will refresh the entire process. Regardless of your personal writing history, I trust that these books will provide a happy and rewarding experience for your students.



## **The *Progym* and the Practice of Modern Writing**

Although the *progym* are an ancient method of approaching writing, they are extraordinarily relevant today. This is because modern composition developed from the *progym*. Modern writing borrows heavily from many of the *progym*’s various exercises. For example, modern stories are essentially unchanged from the ancient fable and narrative forms. Modern expository essays contain elements from the ancient chreia, the refutation/confirmation, and other *progym* exercises. Persuasive essays of today are basically the same as the ancient commonplace and thesis exercises. In this series, you can expect your students to grow in all forms of modern composition—narrative, expository, descriptive, and persuasive—while at the same time developing unique rhetorical muscle.

The *progym* cover many elements of a standard English and language arts curriculum. In *Refutation & Confirmation* these include:<sup>4</sup>

- experiencing both the reading of a story (sight) and listening to it (hearing)
- analyzing text that is organized in sequential or chronological order
- demonstrating an understanding of texts by creating outlines, summarizing, and paraphrasing in ways that maintain meaning and logical order within a text
- comparing and contrasting two or more characters, settings, or events in a story, drawing on specific details in the text
- determining a theme from details in the text, including how characters in a story respond to challenges

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4. This list was derived from the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part II, Chapter 110: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for English Language Arts and Reading (<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/index.html>), the Core Knowledge Foundation’s Core Knowledge Sequence: Content and Skill Guidelines for Grades K-8 ([http://www.coreknowledge.org/mimik/mimik\\_uploads/documents/480/CKFSequence\\_Rev.pdf](http://www.coreknowledge.org/mimik/mimik_uploads/documents/480/CKFSequence_Rev.pdf)), the English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/elacontentstnds.pdf>), and the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>).

- determining the meaning of words (in some cases by using word origins) and phrases, including figurative language, as they are used in a text
- articulating an understanding of several ideas or images communicated by the literary work
- critiquing the credibility of characterization and the degree to which a plot is contrived or realistic
- drawing evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research
- participating civilly and productively in group discussions
- writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly
- introducing a topic or text clearly, stating an opinion, and creating an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped into coherent paragraphs to support the writer's purpose
- introducing claims and supporting them with clear and logically organized reasons that are supported by facts and details
- developing the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples
- providing a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented
- using precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic
- establishing and maintaining a formal style
- producing clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience
- with some guidance and support from peers and adults, developing and strengthening writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach
- using technology as an aid to revision and oration

While these standards are certainly worthwhile and are addressed in this curriculum, the *progym* derive their real strength from the incremental and thorough development of each form of writing. The Writing & Rhetoric series does not skip from form to form and leave the others behind, but rather builds a solid foundation of mastery by blending the forms. For example, no expository essay can truly be effective without description. No persuasive essay can be convincing without narrative. All good narrative writing requires description, and all good persuasive writing requires expository elements. Not only do the *progym* demand strong organization and implement many of the elements of modern language arts, but they also retain all of the power of classical rhetoric.

### **Here Is How the *Progym* Develop Each Stage of Modern Composition:**

1. Fable—Narrative
2. Narrative—Narrative with descriptive elements
3. Chreia & Proverb—Expository essay with narrative, descriptive, and persuasive elements
4. Refutation & Confirmation—Persuasive essay with narrative, descriptive, and expository elements
5. Commonplace—Persuasive essay with narrative, descriptive, and expository elements
6. Encomium & Vituperation—Persuasive essay with narrative, descriptive, and expository elements
7. Comparison—Comparative essay with narrative, descriptive, and expository elements
8. Description & Impersonation—Descriptive essays with narrative, expository, persuasive, and comparative elements

9. Thesis Part 1—Persuasive essay with narrative, descriptive, expository, and comparative elements
10. Thesis Part 2—Persuasive speech with narrative, descriptive, expository, and comparative elements, as well as the three rhetorical appeals
11. Declamation—Persuasive essay or speech that marshals all the elements of the *progym* and brings them to bear upon judicial matters

As you can see, the *progym* move quickly to establish the importance of one form to another.

## **Objectives for Refutation & Confirmation**

The following are some of the major objectives for the exercises found in each section of this book:

1. Expose students to various forms of narrative writing as well as culturally important stories from the early American period.
2. Model fluent reading for students and give them practice reading short texts.
3. Facilitate student interaction with well-written texts through discussions and exercises in evaluation and critical thinking.
4. Review the concepts of narrative, plot, character, fable, parable, fairy tale, history, myth, and ballad, with an additional focus on legend and the introduction of biography.
5. Introduce the concepts of argument versus quarrel and refutation versus confirmation. Refutation and confirmation correspond to persuasive (or argumentative) essays in modern writing theory. They were extracted from two parts of classic oration by the same name.
6. Give students opportunities to creatively assess and critique narratives by weighing believability/unbelievability, probability/improbability, clarity/lack of clarity, and propriety/impropriety.
7. Reinforce the ability to summarize and paraphrase for greater rhetorical flexibility.
8. Strengthen working memory through recitation, thus improving storage of information. Memory is essential to any oration delivered with rhetorical power.
9. Increase understanding of the flexibility and copiousness of language through sentence manipulation.
10. Continue to make use of the persuasive essay using a four-step outline. The predetermined outline helps students to organize their thinking into patterns of ideas.
11. Introduce students to the concepts of revision, proofreading, and joint critiquing.





## Lesson 1 .....

# Believe It or Not

“Psssst. Hey, kid! You. Yeah, you! Listen, I have a great deal for you, but don’t tell anyone, OK? I’m the owner of the Brooklyn Bridge, and I’d like to sell it to you for only twenty bucks. Twenty bucks for this magnificent architectural wonder! I could easily sell it for fifty dollars, but because you look like a decent kid, you can have it for a measly twenty. Do we have ourselves a deal, kid?”

Believe it or not, there was a New Yorker named George C. Parker who convinced foolish people to buy the Brooklyn Bridge from him even though he didn’t own it. He also sold people other famous landmarks he didn’t own: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Grant’s Tomb, and the Statue of Liberty. If he could have convinced people to buy the sun and the moon, he probably would have sold those as well. Nowadays when people say, “If you believe that story, I have a bridge to sell you,” they are referring to George C. Parker selling the Brooklyn Bridge to **gullible** buyers.

Do you believe everything you hear? I hope you answer without hesitation, “Certainly not! Mama and Daddy didn’t raise a fool!” This world of ours is full of liars,

boasters, and stretchers of the truth, and we might as well admit that it's no use believing everyone and everything.

On the other hand, some stories are meant to be believed for the sake of enjoying a good story. Consider the well-known book *Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie. In this story we have a boy who never grows up, a shadow that gets away from its owner, children who fly, a fairy who rings like a tinkling bell, and a crocodile that ticks like a clock. The following is one of my favorite scenes, when the Darling children discover they can fly:

"I say, Peter, can you really fly?" asked John.

Instead of troubling to answer him Peter flew around the room, taking the mantelpiece on the way.

"How topping!" said John and Michael.

"How sweet!" cried Wendy.

"Yes, I'm sweet, oh, I am sweet!" said Peter, forgetting his manners again.

It looked delightfully easy, and they tried it first from the floor and then from the beds, but they always went down instead of up.

"I say, how do you do it?" asked John, rubbing his knee. He was quite a practical boy.

"You just think lovely wonderful thoughts," Peter explained, "and they lift you up in the air."

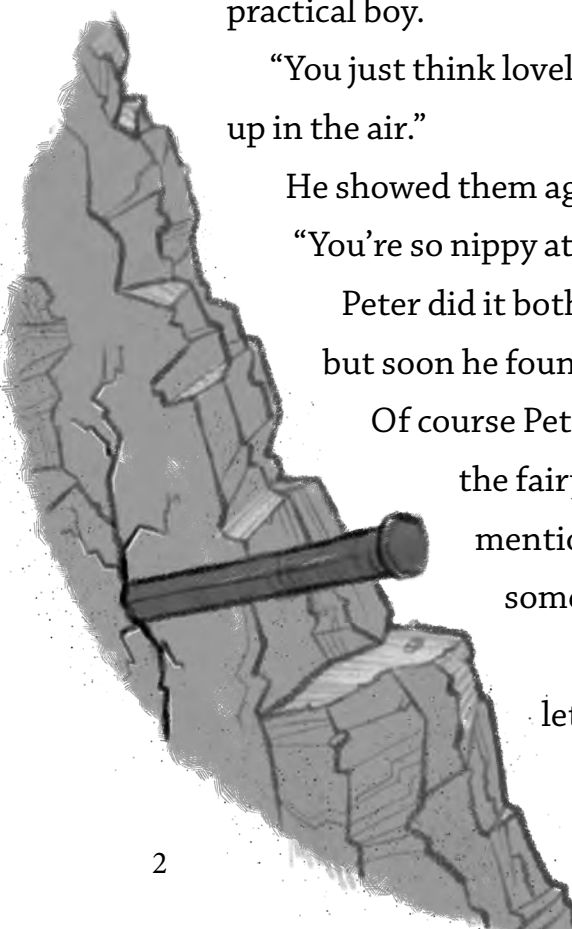
He showed them again.

"You're so nippy at it," John said, "couldn't you do it very slowly once?"

Peter did it both slowly and quickly. "I've got it now, Wendy!" cried John, but soon he found he had not. Not one of them could fly an inch. . . .

Of course Peter had been trifling with them, for no one can fly unless the fairy dust has been blown on him. Fortunately, as we have mentioned, one of his hands was messy with it, and he blew some on each of them, with the most superb results.

"Now just wiggle your shoulders this way," he said, "and let go."



They were all on their beds, and gallant Michael let go first. He did not quite mean to let go, but he did it, and immediately he was borne across the room.

“I flew!” he screamed while still in mid-air.

John let go and met Wendy near the bathroom.

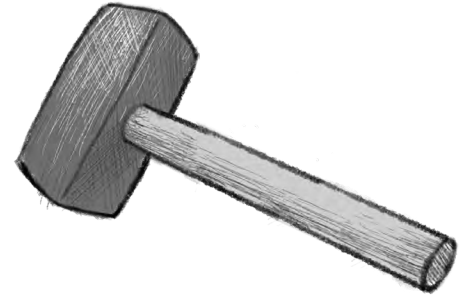
“Oh, lovely!”

“Oh, ripping!”

“Look at me!”

“Look at me!”

“Look at me!”



They were not nearly so elegant as Peter, they could not help kicking a little, but their heads were bobbing against the ceiling, and there is almost nothing so delicious as that. . . .

Up and down they went, and round and round. Heavenly was Wendy’s word.

After the story about George C. Parker and the Brooklyn Bridge, you may be thinking that all of this stuff about Peter Pan is unbelievable and nonsense. There’s no way people can fly with lovely thoughts and fairy dust alone, and, after all, you don’t want to be gullible. Yet, here’s what I have to say about that: If you think of J.M. Barrie and *Peter Pan* the same way you think of George C. Parker and the Brooklyn Bridge, that would be a great pity. That would take all the magic out of reading!

You see, there’s a big difference between the Brooklyn Bridge story and *Peter Pan*. The first intends to harm us by stealing our money, and the second is meant to fill us with delight. The first is a real-life scam, and the second is a fictional fantasy. As a matter of fact, J.M. Barrie created such a convincing magical world that I am completely captured by it. When I read *Peter Pan*, I’m flying along with Peter, Wendy, John, and Michael, and I most certainly do believe in fairy dust. While I’m reading about Neverland, I believe pretty much everything that happens because J.M. Barrie is a master storyteller. While you certainly don’t want to believe everything you hear, the whole point of reading a story such as *Peter Pan* is to get swept along to Neverland, a world of enchantment.

It is possible, however, that even when you believe and enjoy a story you're reading, you still might find that some *parts* of it are difficult to believe. If I had to argue with anything in *Peter Pan*, if I had to say that something is unbelievable in that story, it would be that Peter refused to be adopted by Mrs. Darling in the end. All of Peter's companions, all of the lost boys, happily agreed to be adopted, but not Peter. Peter flew off by himself because he refused to grow up. I find it hard to believe that Peter Pan, who wanted to have a mother in Neverland, refused to join the Darling family. I am willing to make an argument about Peter passing up the wonderful chance to have a real mother.

We find many different elements in a story, don't we? Things may happen in the story that we believe, and there may be some things we find hard to believe. Things may happen that seem probable, or likely, and sometimes things happen that don't seem probable at all. In nearly all narratives we see characters who are trustworthy and good examples of virtue, as well as other characters who are pretty repulsive. We see characters' actions that are proper and improper, and everything in-between. Sometimes part of a narrative itself can be very clear and understandable, and other times it can be unclear and hard to understand.

So what do we do when we see parts of a narrative that are unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper to us? We refute them. That means we criticize those parts and explain why we are doing so. (We will explain these four terms thoroughly in lesson 6.) When we see parts of a narrative that are believable, probable, clear, or proper, we confirm them. That means we explain why we think those parts are praiseworthy. In some ways you could see refutation as an attack and confirmation as a defense.

**Refutation**—a short essay that attacks certain parts of a narrative

**Confirmation**—a short essay that defends certain parts of a narrative

Refutation and confirmation—these are the two main types of written exercises you will practice in this book. Your job in this type of writing is to persuade your readers that your opinion is right.

Now, you may be tempted to ask, "Why on earth would I want to spend my time picking apart narratives? Doesn't that take some of the magic out of them?"



Let me assure you that this exercise is not about taking the magic out of stories. On the contrary, this exercise is designed to make you love truly good stories even more because you think about them more deeply. When you slow down and think carefully about what you read, you discover so much more to the story and are able to savor it, just as you would enjoy a meal better by slowing down to taste its different flavors and spices.

Refutation and confirmation are also wonderful ways for you to become a discerning, clear-thinking reader. You have all sorts of messages coming to you through the magical narratives of movies, television, plays, video games, and books, and it is wise for you to grow in your understanding of what your mind and heart are absorbing.

Recently I came across this popular joke:

A lady gets on a bus with her baby in her arms. The bus driver says, “Yowza! That is the ugliest baby I have ever seen!”

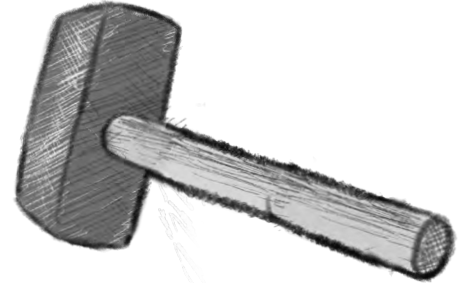
The lady goes to the rear of the bus with an angry look on her face. She sits down and says to another passenger, “The bus driver just insulted me!”

The passenger says, “How rude! You go up there and give the driver a piece of your mind. And I’ll hold your monkey for you.”

After I got over my chuckles, I thought more deeply about this joke. I wondered if it might cause some new parents to feel badly about their babies. One way to refute this joke would be to argue, “There’s no such thing as an ugly baby. All babies are beautiful.” Or, even better, I might argue that it’s improper to insult someone’s baby, a child who is dear to its parents and loved by them. On the other hand, there’s something very trustworthy about this joke, something worth confirming: The joke demonstrates that there are plenty of rude people in this world—and that’s worth knowing. As you can see, looking at the joke from different angles helped me to think more deeply about the joke itself.



Remember to keep the big picture in mind. You are marching down the road toward rhetoric. Rhetoric is the art of writing and speaking persuasively, and the more fully you understand stories, the better your own stories will be when you are called on to tell them. Stories are very persuasive—as much now as at any time in history—and that is why we dwell on them. You must also learn how to argue for what you agree with and against what you don't agree with. What better way to learn to do this than with stories?



Now that you understand the ideas of refutation and confirmation, take a look at one story in particular and start considering how you might refute or confirm parts of it. It is the story of John Henry, the amazing steel driver of the C&O Railway. (A steel driver hammers holes in rock for the placement of explosives.) Henry may have been a real person who was an ex-slave from Mississippi and worked on the expansion of railroads after the Civil War.

The legendary contest in John Henry's story takes place during the construction of the Big Bend Tunnel in West Virginia during the 1870s. As you read it through, think about how parts of the story can be either refuted or confirmed. In other words, think about what parts of this narrative are worthy of praise or criticism.

## The Legend of John Henry

—adapted from *John Henry: A Folk-Lore Study* by Louis W. Chappell

John Henry was the best steel driver on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. He was the only man who could drive steel with two hammers, one in each hand. People came from miles around to watch him drive steel with his two twenty-pound hammers.

Two different railroad companies were working toward each other from opposite directions and planned to meet in a place called Big Bend Tunnel. One company had a steam drill, while the other used manpower to drill. When the two companies met, everyone **asserted** that the steam drill was the greatest invention ever, but John

Henry claimed, “I can sink more steel than any steam drill ever could.” A contest was arranged along with a monetary prize. John Henry could win \$100 for beating the steam drill.

John Henry had his foreman buy him two new twenty-pound hammers for the race. They were to drill for thirty-five minutes. When the contest was over, John Henry had drilled two holes seven feet deep, which was a total of fourteen feet. The steam drill had only drilled one hole nine feet deep, so the prize was given to John Henry.

When the race was over, John Henry went home and told his wife that he had a queer feeling in his head. She prepared his supper, and immediately after eating, he went to bed. The next morning, when his wife awoke and told him it was time to get up, she received no answer, and she immediately realized that he had died sometime during the night. His body was examined by two doctors from Baltimore, who discovered that his death was caused by a burst blood vessel in his head.

## Tell It Back—**Narration**

- Without looking at the text, retell *The Legend of John Henry* as best as you
- remember it using your own words. Try not to leave out any important details.

• Here is the beginning of the narrative to help you get started:

- John Henry was the best steel driver on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway.
- He was the only man who could drive steel with two hammers, one in each hand.
- People came from miles around to watch him drive steel with his two twenty-
- pound hammers.

## Talk About It—

- 1. What parts of this story could you attack or refute? There is no right or wrong
- answer, but you should be able to support your opinion.
- 2. What parts of this story could you defend or confirm?

- 3. In 1996, world chess champion Garry Kasparov played against the computer
- Deep Blue and beat it four games to two. In a rematch in 1997, however, the
- computer ultimately beat Kasparov because the chess player’s nervousness
- caused his performance to weaken. Compare and contrast this story from real
- life with John Henry’s legend. How is it similar or not similar?
- 

## Go Deeper—

- 1. As you already know, a legend is a story that gets exaggerated by
- storytellers over time. Which particular details of the John Henry story
- seem somewhat exaggerated?

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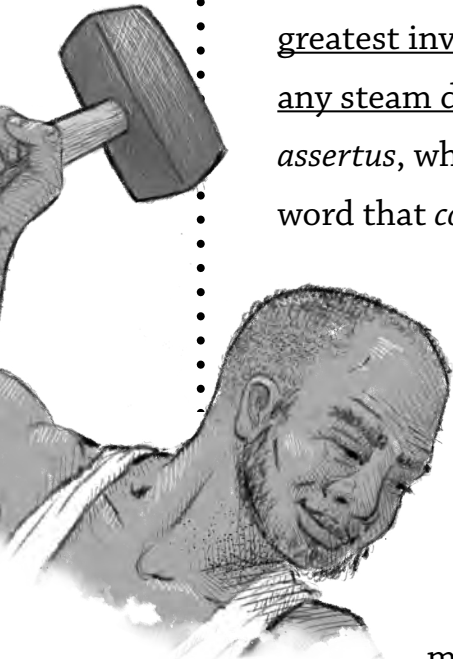
- 2. When the companies met, everyone asserted that the steam drill was the
- greatest invention ever, but John Henry claimed, “I can sink more steel than
- any steam drill ever could.” The word “assert” comes from the Latin word
- *assertus*, which means “claim” or “declare.” In the following list, circle the
- word that *could not* be used in place of “assert.”

- a. announce
- b. insist
- c. cry
- d. proclaim
- e. taunt

Now use the word “assert” in your own sentence. Make sure that the meaning of the word is clear by the way you use it in the sentence.

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- 3. What legendary quality is John Henry best known for?
- a. quiet humility
- b. amazing intelligence
- c. superhuman strength
- d. caring thoughtfulness

## Writing Time—

- 1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—What happens when glass hits a concrete pavement?
- You guessed it! It breaks into lots of tiny pieces, or fragments. Sentences are like glass. They can also be broken into many tiny pieces.
- In writing, a **fragment** is a sentence that is incomplete. Fragments lack at least one essential part of a sentence. For example, “I jumped excitedly on the trampoline” is a complete sentence. “I jumped excitedly on” is a fragment. (Using grammatical lingo, this is because the preposition “on” is missing a direct object.) “Jumped excitedly on the trampoline” is also a fragment because it lacks a subject.
- Be a fragment magician! Use your word magic to fix the following fragments by turning them into complete sentences.

Example:

Fragment: John Henry was the best steel driver. On the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway.

Complete: John Henry was the best steel driver on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway.

Note that the period improperly divides the sentence. The fragment begins with the preposition “on.”

Fragment: John Henry the best steel driver on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway.

Complete: John Henry was the best steel driver on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway.

Notice that the fragment in this case is missing the verb “was.”





A. Fragment: I'll hammer myself to death. Before I let this steam drill beat me.

Complete: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Fragment: John Henry had to go to bed. Because he got sick.

Complete: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. Fragment: John Henry had a little.

Complete: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. Fragment: John Henry up on the mountain.

Complete: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. Fragment: John Henry drove his fourteen feet. And the steam drill only made nine.

Complete: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. **COPIOUSNESS**—As you’ll recall, an adjective is a word that describes a noun.

A. Examine the statue of John Henry by Charles Cooper.

List five adjectives that describe John Henry as depicted by the sculptor.

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▲ Statue of John Henry by Charles Cooper

B. Adjectives can be strung together and separated by commas. For example:

“The bright, sparkling, beautiful stars twinkled in the night sky.”

The following sentence would be more interesting with adjectives:

The person of John Henry is captured by this statue.

Rewrite the sentence, stringing together three adjectives to describe the person of John Henry. Keep in mind that the noun you are describing is “person.”

The \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ person of John Henry is captured by  
this statue.

C. The following sentences are taken from folklore studies of John Henry.

Rewrite the sentences by adding one or two adjectives to describe each of the underlined nouns.

Example: Now, John Henry was a hero, but he’s long dead.

Change to: Now, John Henry was a towering, famous hero, but he’s long dead.

a. John Henry often said his strength was brought from Africa.

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b. The crowd that remained through the race at the tunnel was estimated at 2,500 people.

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c. John Henry met a black bear and didn't do nothin' but shoot him with his bow and arrow.

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D. Adjectives can lose their charm when too many are used. Although sometimes appropriate, three adjectives together are more than likely too many! In addition, not every noun in a sentence should have an adjective. You should only use an adjective when you want to emphasize one or two nouns in particular.

In the following sentences, label all of the adjectives with "ADJ." Then subtract some adjectives from these sentences and rewrite them, leaving only two behind in each sentence.

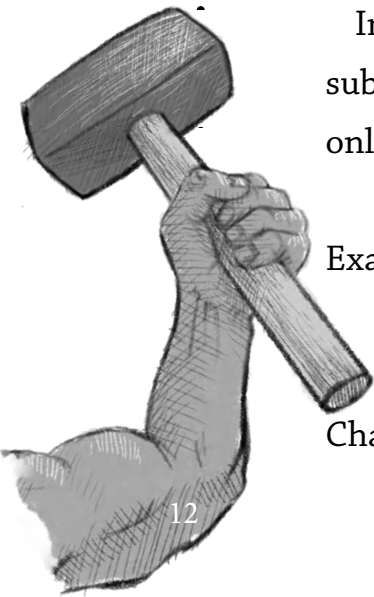
ADJ ADJ ADJ

Example: The extraordinary, fascinating tale of the brawny John Henry is

ADJ ADJ

enthraling and legendary. (5 adjectives)

Change to: The extraordinary tale of John Henry is enthraling.





a. Just like magnificent, powerful Samson, John Henry could have killed a scary, toothy, bloodthirsty lion with his bare hands. (6 adjectives)

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b. Because of nice, generous Johnny Appleseed, children in Ohio enjoyed crunchy, juicy, tangy apples every beautiful, crisp fall. (7 adjectives)

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c. You could recognize dear old Johnny Appleseed by his holey, threadbare, beat-up shoes. (5 adjectives)

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3. **AMPLIFICATION**—The story of John Henry is very short, and many details could be added to make it more interesting. Adding details to narratives or any form of writing is called **amplification**. Amplify the legend in the following ways.

A. Dialogue—As you learned in *Writing & Rhetoric: Narrative I*, dialogue is one of the best ways to extend or amplify a story because it helps the reader to know what the characters are thinking.

When you write dialogue, don't forget to use quotation marks to properly punctuate your writing. Quotation marks are like a fence, enclosing what is being said.



There are several places within a sentence that you can identify the speaker: beginning, middle, and end.

- Beginning: John Henry said, “Captain, bet yo’ last red cent on me, for I’ll beat it to the bottom or I’ll die.”
- Middle: “Captain,” John Henry said, “bet yo’ last red cent on me, for I’ll beat it to the bottom or I’ll die.”
- End: “Captain, bet yo’ last red cent on me, for I’ll beat it to the bottom or I’ll die,” John Henry said.

Create a dialogue between two people who are watching the race between man and machine. The first person thinks the steam drill will win, but the second person is rooting for John Henry.

John Henry was the best steel driver on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. He was the only man who could drive steel with two hammers, one in each hand. People came from miles around to watch him drive steel with his two twenty-pound hammers.

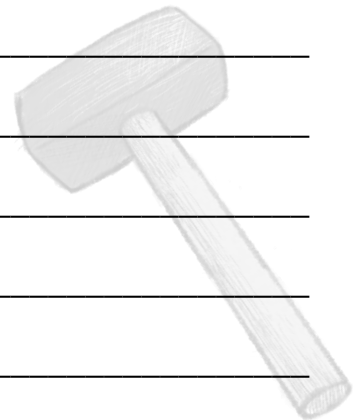
Two different railroad companies were meeting in a place called Big Bend Tunnel. One company had a steam drill, while the other used manpower to drill. When the two companies met, everyone asserted that the steam drill was the greatest invention ever, but John Henry claimed, “I can sink more steel than any steam drill ever could.” A contest was arranged along with a monetary prize. John Henry could win \$100 for beating the steam drill.

One observer said, “ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.”

A second observer said, “ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.”

B. Description of a person—As you learned in *Writing & Rhetoric: Narrative I*, description is another great way to extend or amplify a story. How would you describe John Henry if you saw him standing in your classroom? Be sure to give lots of specific details.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



C. Detailed action—They were to drill for thirty-five minutes. When the contest was over, John Henry had drilled two holes seven feet deep, which was a total of fourteen feet. I don't know about you, but I'm a little disappointed by this narrative. The contest is the most exciting part of the story, and yet the details of it are left out by the storyteller. Anton Chekov said, “Don't tell me the moon is shining, show me the glint of light on broken glass.” In other words, show the scene. Don't merely tell about it. Use your senses—sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing—where appropriate to capture the action.

Pretend you are the next storyteller to tell the tale of John Henry. What details would you add to make the contest come alive and seem even more legendary and exaggerated? Picture a man with two sledgehammers driv-





# Revise It—

Welcome to the all-new Revise It section of Writing & Rhetoric. Did you know that the best writing is almost always rewritten? It's true. Author Ernest Hemingway said that he rewrote the ending to his novel *A Farewell to Arms* thirty-nine times before he was satisfied. Thirty-nine! Truly good writing comes from rewriting.

If you skip the revision stage of writing, you skip the most satisfying part. I'm certainly not saying that rewriting is easy. It can be hard work at times, but you will also experience the thrill of doing a better job, a more exciting, compelling job.

By the end of this book I anticipate that you will see your writing differently. I hope that you will see your first writing as only a first step rather than the final composition. As you revise your work, there are plenty of questions you can and should ask yourself. Does this make sense? Is this in the best sequence possible? Does every paragraph have a strong topic sentence? Are my nouns, verbs, and adjectives vivid? Do all of my subjects and verbs agree? Revision is not simply proofreading for spelling and punctuation errors. It is reading for all aspects of good writing.

To get started you're going to work on somebody else's writing instead of your own. You'll get to your own work in the not-so-distant future.

1. **SEQUENCE**—One of the most important aspects of good writing is sequence. Proper sequence means that the parts of a story, an essay, or a speech are all placed in an order that makes sense. This is true for the sentences within a paragraph as well as the paragraphs within a story. Before we can persuade people, we need to be clearly understood. If people don't understand our writing, they will certainly not be convinced that what we have to say has any soundness.

The following paragraphs from *The Legend of John Henry* are all jumbled up. Use numbers 1 through 4 to put the story in its proper sequence.

..... Two different railroad companies were meeting in a place called Big Bend Tunnel. One company had a steam drill, while the other used manpower to drill. When the two companies met, everyone asserted that the steam drill was the greatest invention ever, but John Henry claimed, “I can sink more steel than any steam drill ever could.” A contest was arranged along with a monetary prize. John Henry could win \$100 for beating the steam drill.

..... John Henry had his foreman buy him two new twenty-pound hammers for the race. They were to drill for thirty-five minutes. When the contest was over, John Henry had drilled two holes seven feet deep, which was a total of fourteen feet. The steam drill had only drilled one hole nine feet deep, so the prize was given to John Henry.

..... John Henry was the best driver on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. He was the only man who could drive steel with two hammers, one in each hand. People came from miles around to watch him drive steel with his two twenty-pound hammers.

..... When the race was over, John Henry went home and told his wife that he had a queer feeling in his head. She prepared his supper, and immediately after eating, he went to bed. The next morning, when his wife awoke and told him it was time to get up, she received no answer, and she immediately realized that he had died sometime during the night. His body was examined by two doctors from Baltimore, who discovered that his death was caused by a burst blood vessel in his head.

2. **PROOFREADING**—Most people need to put their writing down, get away from it, and then see it later with “fresh eyes.” That’s always very helpful for catching mistakes, both small and large. Checking your writing for mistakes is called **proofreading**.

Please note: Looking for mistakes—proofreading—is a good final step in revising your work, but keep in mind that it is not the first step! You need to take care of bigger issues such as sequence before you take care of smaller issues such as improper punctuation.

There are many types of proofreading marks, but the four that follow are some of the most common.



This symbol means you should capitalize the letter—change it from lowercase to uppercase.



This mark is called a caret. It means “insert something here.” You might be missing a word or proper punctuation.



This mark means “please delete.” Think of it as an X through the word or words.



When you find a word circled and this symbol in the margin, the word has been misspelled.

Now practice putting these symbols to use by marking up the following paragraph, which contains eight errors.

Johnny Appleseed became his right name if men are rightly named from their works. Wherever he went he carried a store of appel seeds with him, and when he came to a good clear spot on the bank of a stream, he planted his seeds seeds. He soon had hundreds of these little nurseries throughout ohio, which he returned year after year to watch and tend. When the trees were large enough he sold them the farmirs for a trifle. He went barefoot in the warm weather, and in winter he wore cast-off shoes; when he could get none, and the ways were very rough, he protected his feet with rude sandals of his own making. He dwelt close to the heart of of nature, whose dumb children he would not wound or kill, even poisonous snakes or noxious insects. The indians knew him and loved him for the goodness of his life.





## Lesson 2 .....

# Narrative Review

**B**efore you move along to refutations and confirmations, you need to get cozy with narratives again. I wish that meant you could have a nice warm cup of narrative tea and a soft, fuzzy narrative blanket, but that’s not how it works. By getting cozy with narratives, I mean that you need to be very familiar with how narratives work.

Telling your own narratives, as well as being familiar with the great narratives of civilization, is a vital part of rhetoric. Both can serve as illustrations in your writing and speeches. You’ve learned a lot about narratives over the time that you have studied writing and rhetoric, and in this lesson you will review what you have learned.

Do you remember what a narrative is? In *Writing & Rhetoric: Narrative II* you learned that “narrative” is a fancy word for “story.” “To narrate” means “to tell” and comes from the Latin word *narrare*, which also means “to tell.” So if you’re telling a story, you’re also narrating a narrative.

There are a lot of stories to be heard and read, but not all of them are great stories. Not so long ago, a famous teen singer was in the news after being arrested for recklessly racing his car on a city street. Of course, this drag race could have accidentally killed anyone trying to cross to the other side of the street. As if that wasn't bad enough, this young singer had apparently been drinking alcohol before climbing behind the wheel. Now, there's probably a decent fable in this story if we were to make the teen a reckless, conceited talking toad such as Mr. Toad from the *The Wind in the Willows*. However, most of the stories you read in this series aren't about the latest news headlines. They are stories that have been with us for generations and have stood the test of time. Singers and movie stars come and go, but the great stories are here to stay.

There are two major types of narratives: fiction and nonfiction. Imaginative stories, not usually based on **fact**, are generally called **fiction**. Factual stories, not usually based on the storyteller's imagination, are called **nonfiction**. For example, an imagined story about a horse, such as *Black Beauty* or *Misty of Chincoteague*, would be considered fiction. A history of a real horse, such as the story of Man o' War or Secretariat, would be nonfiction.

So what makes a story a story? Do you remember what every story has in common? Every story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. In other words, narratives contain an order of events like a timeline.

Here's a delicious way you could illustrate a story timeline: Think about baking a gooey, mouthwatering chocolate cake. The beginning of your chocolate cake story is when you make the batter. You must crack eggs, add milk, whisk in flour, melt the chocolate, and so on. The batter goes into greased pans, the pans go in the oven, and you set the timer. Now you're ready for the middle of the story, right?

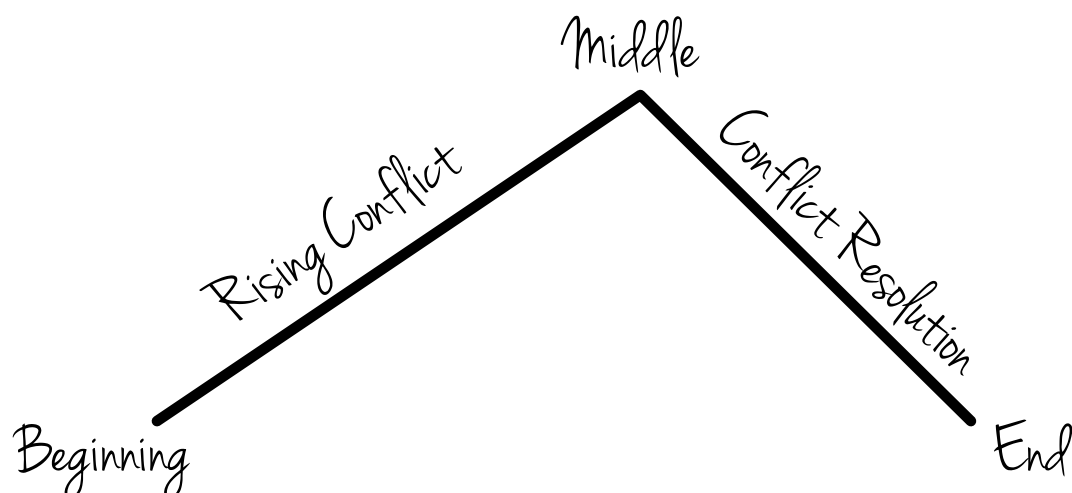
Right! You could sit by the oven and watch the cake bake for thirty minutes—that could be the middle of your story. However, story middles are most interesting with conflict. **Conflict** is a clash between people or ideas. When we don't easily get what we want, when our goals are thwarted time and time again, we call this

conflict. So say that, while you're sitting in the kitchen and watching your cake bake, a motorcycle gang comes along and demands to know the cake recipe. Of course, the recipe is an old family secret and you refuse to tell. The motorcycle gang grabs you and drives you into the desert toward their hideout, where they plan to hold you for ransom for Grandma's cake recipe. Luckily, you escape in a low-flying helicopter that happened to have a rope ladder dangling from its cockpit. Just when you think you're safe, the chopper plunges into the ocean and you're forced to swim to shore with a pack of sharks at your tail.

Now that's a story middle! Did you notice how the series of events built toward the peak of the action of the story? That's what we would call **rising conflict**—things just get worse and worse for you. Of course, you don't want to simply go from one conflict to another without an ending. You want to get back home and pull the chocolate cake out of the oven, remember? So in your story middle you must also resolve your conflicts. That is, you must settle your problems somehow. I think it would be a great resolution to the problem of the motorcycle gang if the sharks ate all of the bikers.

So now you are ready for the ending. Tired, worn-out, cut, and bruised, you slog back into your kitchen. Lo and behold, you find the cake already frosted and ready to eat! You thank your mother for finishing the cake, take one bite of it, and fall asleep on the kitchen floor.

Together these three parts of a story—beginning, middle, and end—create what we call the **plot**, or plan, of the story. The plot creates a sense of order, of starting in one place and ending at a different place.



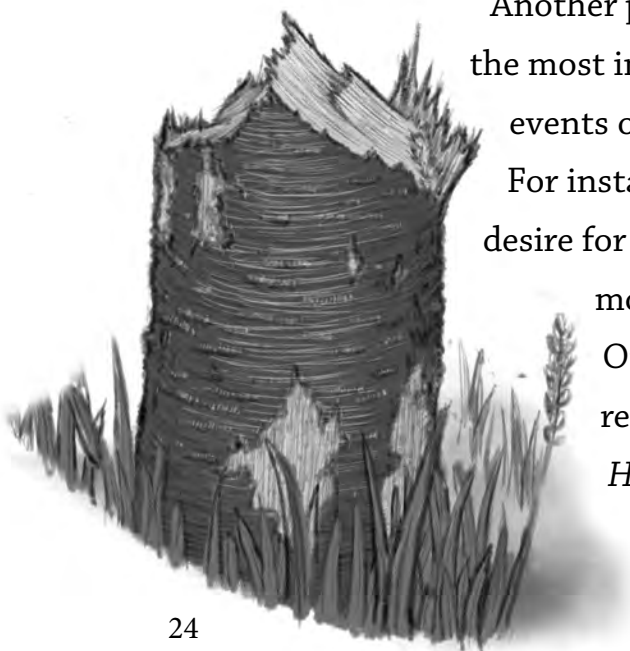
You also learned that every story has characters. You probably have some favorite characters that mean so much to you that they seem like friends—or at least you wish they were friends! The characters we love have been created so well that they seem like us, like people we know or with whom we have lived and worked. That is why characters are able to teach us about ourselves and about life—because many of them are taken from life.

Think of any story and you will immediately think of the persons in the story. King Arthur, Queen Guinevere, and Sir Lancelot are some of the main characters of the legends of Camelot. Aladdin, the princess, the African magician, and the genie are all important characters in *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*. As you can see in the case of the genie, a character need not be a human being.

The characters of a story make the story interesting. How interesting would *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* be without Charlie? Or Willy Wonka? How interesting would *Anne of Green Gables* be without Anne Shirley? The persons of a story—the characters—make a story fun to read.

- ▶ Name some of the characters in *Treasure Island* or another story you know well.
- ▶ Name some of the characters in the story of Joseph in Egypt from the Hebrew Scriptures or another book you know well.
- ▶ Can you think of a story without characters?

Another part of a narrative is its **main idea**. The main idea is the most important thought or message in the story. All the events of the story add up to create or support a main idea. For instance, in the novel *The Hobbit*, a character who has no desire for change and adventure is forced to go on a quest across mountains and forests to defeat a fire-breathing dragon. One of the main ideas of this story is that there is a reward to taking appropriate risks. In the case of *The Hobbit*, the hero of the story wins a huge stash of gold. More importantly, he gains a broader sense of the big



world and realizes that he doesn't have to be afraid of it. All of the challenges that he faced throughout the book were leading him toward those rewards. We love the fact that stories have meaning and that everything that happens in them contributes to their meaning.

So now you've reviewed what you learned before, that all narratives must have a plot and that they must also contain persons or characters, and you've learned that stories have meaning and a main idea.

- ▶ The following stories tell two versions of the same incident. One is a narrative and the other is not. Can you tell the difference?

## George Washington and His Hatchet

—from *Fifty Famous Stories Retold* by James Baldwin

### Version 1

When George Washington was quite a little boy, his father gave him a hatchet. It was bright and new, and George took great delight in going about and chopping things with it. He ran into the garden, and there he saw a tree which seemed to say to him, "Come and cut me down!"

George had often seen his father's men chop down the great trees in the forest, and he thought that it would be fine sport to see this tree fall with a crash to the ground. So he set to work with his little hatchet, and, as the tree was a very small one, it did not take long to lay it low.

Soon after that, his father came home.

"Who has been cutting my fine young cherry tree?" he cried. "It was the only tree of its kind in this country, and it cost me a great deal of money."

He was very angry when he came into the house.

"If I only knew who killed that cherry tree," he cried, "I would—yes, I would—"

"Father!" cried little George. "I will tell you the truth about it. I chopped the tree down with my hatchet."

His father forgot his anger.

“George,” he said, and he took the little fellow in his arms, “George, I am glad that you told me about it. I would rather lose a dozen cherry trees than that you should tell one falsehood.”

## Version 2

In the colony of Virginia, “George” was a common name. The name “George Washington” belonged to a boy in the Potomac River region near the town of Alexandria.

Cherry trees are very useful trees. They produce sweet, red fruit in season, and their wood is lovely for making furniture. In the days of colonial America, cherry trees were rare and highly prized. Sadly, sometimes cherry trees are accidentally chopped down by little boys, and it is possible that George Washington cut one down.

## Tell It Back—Narration

- Without looking at the text, retell *George Washington and His Hatchet* as best as you remember it using your own words. Try not to leave out any important details.

• Here is the beginning of the narrative to help you get started:

- When George Washington was quite a little boy, his father gave him a hatchet. It was bright and new, and George took great delight in going about chopping things with it.

## Talk About It—

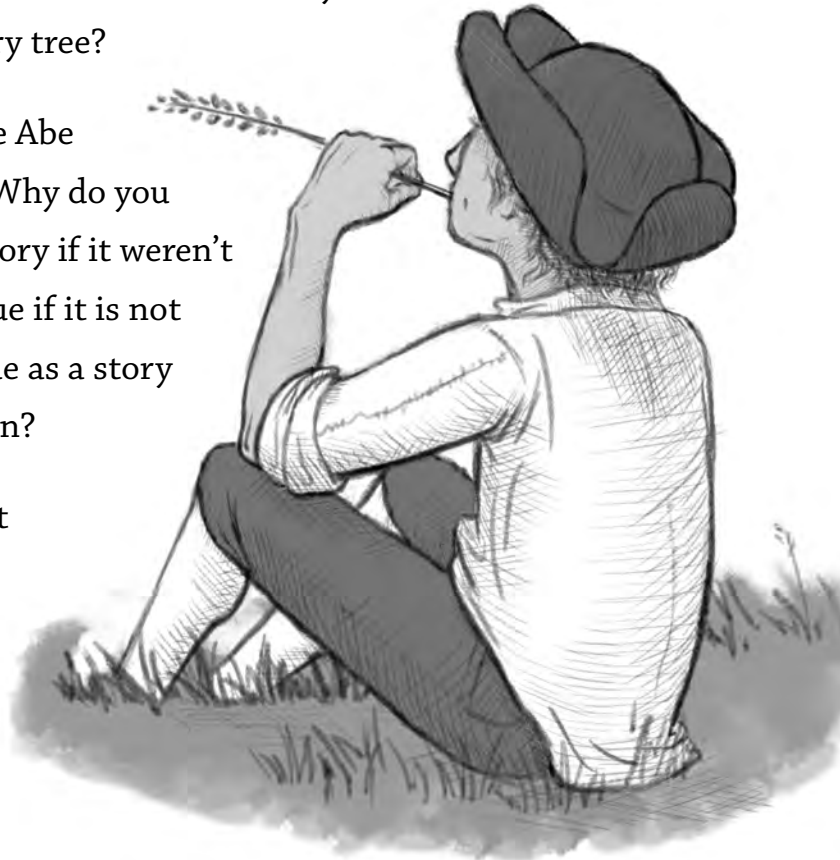
- 1. What do you think about the character of George Washington in this story? What might be considered untrustworthy about his actions? What might be trustworthy about his response to his father?

2. What is the main idea of the story? Do you agree with it? Have you ever learned from an event in your own life that taught you the same lesson?
3. Americans seem to love stories about honesty. Another cherished story, this time about Abe Lincoln, our sixteenth president, has been passed down from generation to generation. The following is the story in a nutshell:

One day a woman bought a bill of goods in Offutt's store amounting to something over two dollars. She paid Abe the money and went away satisfied. That night, on going over the sales of the day, Abe found that he had charged the woman six and one-fourth cents too much. After closing the store, though it was late, he could not go home to supper or to bed till he had restored that sixpence to its proper owner. She lived more than two miles away, but that did not matter to Abe Lincoln. When he had returned the money to the astonished woman he walked back to the village with a long step and a light heart, content with doing his duty.

How is this story similar to and different from the story about George Washington and the cherry tree?

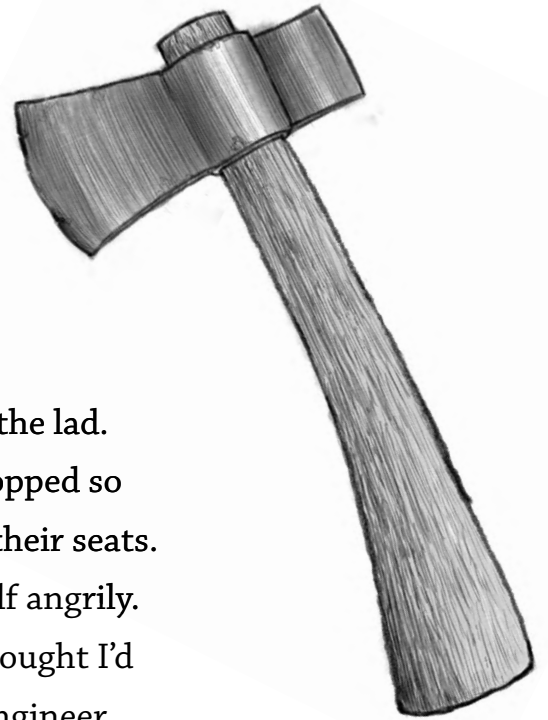
4. We don't know whether or not the Abe Lincoln story is true or made up. Why do you think Americans would tell this story if it weren't true? Does the story have any value if it is not true? In other words, does its value as a story change if it did not actually happen?
5. Why is honesty such an important quality in a leader? Why do you suppose Americans want to have honest presidents?







1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Without stopping to think, the boy pulled off his coat and ran swiftly along the tracks to meet the train. He swung his coat wildly above his head and shouted with all his might. But who could hear his voice above the rumble and roar of the great express? The engineer saw the lad. He threw on the emergency brakes. The train stopped so quickly that the passengers were thrown out of their seats. “What’s the matter, boy?” cried the engineer, half angrily. “Wash—out—down there. Track—caved in—thought I’d tell you,” gasped the boy, all out of breath. The engineer leaped from the cab, and running forward a few paces was horrified to see the danger his train had escaped.



2. \_\_\_\_\_  
When Israel was in Egypt’s land  
Let my people go;  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,  
Let my people go.  
The Lord told Moses what to do  
Let my people go;  
To lead the children of Israel through,  
Let my people go.  
“Thus spoke the Lord” bold Moses said,  
Let my people go;  
If not I’ll smite your firstborn dead,  
Let my people go.  
They journeyed on at his command,  
Let my people go;  
And came at length to Canaan’s land,  
Let my people go.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Rock-a my soul in the bosom of Abraham.

Rock-a my soul in the bosom of Abraham.

Rock-a my soul in the bosom of Abraham.

Oh, rock-a my soul.

His love is so high you can't get over it,

So low you can't get under it,

So wide you can't get around it.

You must go in at the door.

4. \_\_\_\_\_

A wounded animal itself is less dangerous than chasing the animal on horseback. The prairie does not always present a smooth, level, and uniform surface. The most formidable obstructions are the burrows of wild animals.

In the blindness of the chase the hunter rushes over it unconscious of danger; his horse, at full career, thrusts his leg deep into one of the burrows; the bone snaps, the rider is hurled forward to the ground and probably killed.

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Listen my children and you shall hear

Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,

On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;

Hardly a man is now alive

Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march

By land or sea from the town to-night,

Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch

Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—

One if by land, and two if by sea;

And I on the opposite shore will be,

Ready to ride and spread the alarm

Through every Middlesex village and farm,

For the country folk to be up and to arm.

6. \_\_\_\_\_

An emerald is as green as grass,  
A ruby red as blood;  
A sapphire shines as blue as heaven;  
A flint lies in the mud.  
A diamond is a brilliant stone,  
To catch the world's desire;  
An opal holds a fiery spark;  
But a flint holds fire.

7. \_\_\_\_\_

Soon as the sun forsook the eastern main  
The pealing thunder shook the heav'nly plain;  
Majestic grandeur! From the zephyr's wing,  
Exhales the incense of the blooming spring.  
Soft purl the streams, the birds renew their notes,  
And through the air their mingled music floats.  
Through all the heav'ns what beauteous dies are spread!  
But the west glories in the deepest red:  
So may our breasts with ev'ry virtue glow,  
The living temples of our God below!  
Fill'd with the praise of him who gives the light,  
And draws the sable curtains of the night,  
Let placid slumbers sooth each weary mind,  
At morn to wake more heav'nly, more refin'd;  
So shall the labours of the day begin  
More pure, more guarded from the snares of sin.  
Night's leaden sceptre seals my drowsy eyes,  
Then cease, my song, till fair Aurora rise.



8. \_\_\_\_\_

Next day Amy was rather late at school, but could not resist the temptation of displaying, with pardonable pride, a moist brown-paper parcel, before she consigned it to the inmost recesses of her desk. During the next few minutes the rumor that Amy March had got twenty-four delicious limes (she ate one on the way) and was going to treat her friends circulated through the class.

9. \_\_\_\_\_

It is generally agreed by travelers, that the flesh of the Bison is little inferior to the beef of our domestic oxen. The tongue is considered a delicacy, and the hump is much esteemed. A kind of potted-beef, called *pemmican*, is made of the flesh of the Bison.

10. \_\_\_\_\_

Tom and Becky rose up and wandered along, hand in hand and hopeless. They tried to estimate how long they had been in the cave, but all they knew was that it seemed days and weeks, and yet it was plain that this could not be, for their candles were not gone yet. A long time after this—they could not tell how long—Tom said they must go softly and listen for dripping water. Both were cruelly tired, yet Becky said she thought she could go a little farther.

11. \_\_\_\_\_

There was a man, who had a goat  
He loved that goat, just like a kid.  
One day that goat got frisk and fine  
Ate three red shirts right off the line.  
The man he grabbed him by the back  
And tied him to the railroad track  
And when the train came into sight  
That goat grew pale and green with fright.  
He heaved a sigh, as if in pain,  
Coughed up those red shirts and flagged the train.



12. \_\_\_\_\_

The beaver is found chiefly in North America. It is about three and a half feet long, including the flat, paddle-shaped tail, which is a foot in length. The long, shining hair on the back is chestnut-colored, while the fine, soft fur that lies next the skin is grayish brown. Beavers build themselves most curious huts to live in, and quite frequently a great number of these huts are placed close together, like the buildings in a town.

## Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—Can you spot the fragments? Some fragments are sentences that are missing essential parts, such as subjects or verbs. Some fragments have punctuation, such as a period, incorrectly placed in the middle of the sentence. In the following exercises, circle any fragments that you see and then correct them by rewriting the sentences in the spaces provided. If the sentence is not a fragment, leave it alone.

Examples:

Fragment: At the early age of seventeen, George Washington a surveyor.

Complete: At the early age of seventeen, George Washington became a surveyor.

In this example, the subject “George Washington” lacks a verb.

Fragment: At the early age of seventeen. George Washington became a surveyor.

Complete: At the early age of seventeen, George Washington became a surveyor.

In this example, the sentence is improperly divided by a period. Replace the period with a comma.

A. George Washington’s father was glad. Because his son told the truth.

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B. George Washington cut down the cherry tree. Which is why he was grounded for a month.

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C. One of Washington's best qualities was his honesty.

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D. During the French and Indian War, George Washington in the Battle of Monongahela.

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E. At Valley Forge, George Washington's troops nearly froze to death.

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F. In 1759, George Washington married Martha Custis.

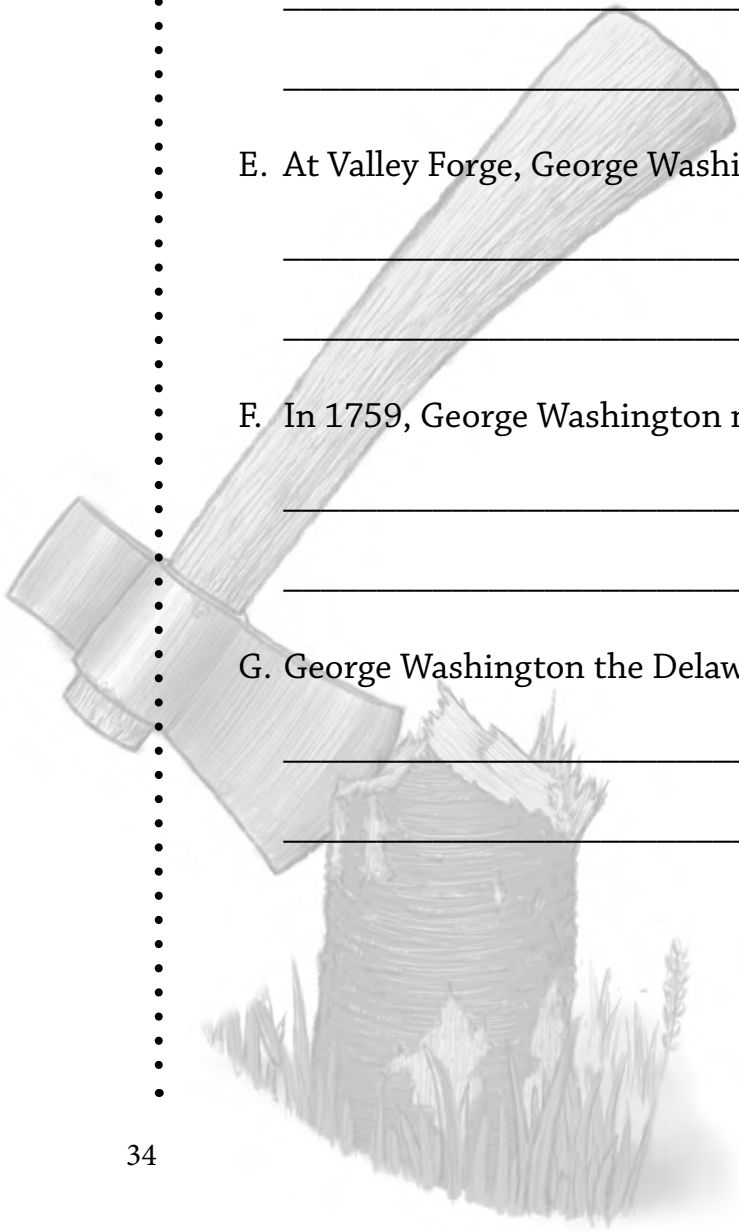
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G. George Washington the Delaware River on Christmas day in 1776.

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• 2. **COPIOUSNESS**—Sentences become stronger, more vigorous and intense,  
• when specific words are used. This is true whether the word is a noun, an  
• adjective, or a verb. Always search your mind, and sometimes a thesaurus, for  
• the very best word to use.

• A. Underline the adjectives in the following sentences and then rewrite the  
• sentences to make the adjectives more specific. The adjective does not  
• need to be a synonym.

• Example: Deceiving your father is bad.

• Change to: Deceiving your father is wicked.

• a. Cherry trees make a nice addition to a nature-lover's backyard.

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• b. Of all trees, cherry trees are the most pretty.

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• c. George Washington was a good boy for telling the truth.

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• d. A hatchet can be a fine tool but should not be used for bad purposes.

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B. In the following sentences, underline the common nouns—the ordinary names of persons, places, things, and ideas—and replace them with more specific nouns. Do not change the proper nouns, which name a specific person, place, thing, or idea. (For example, a common noun is “girl”; a proper noun is “Stella.”)

Example: George Washington lived at home.

Change to: George Washington lived at Mount Vernon.

a. Cutting down his father’s plant was an issue.

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b. George Washington grew up to become America’s first leader.

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c. Juicy fruits can be baked into tasty food.

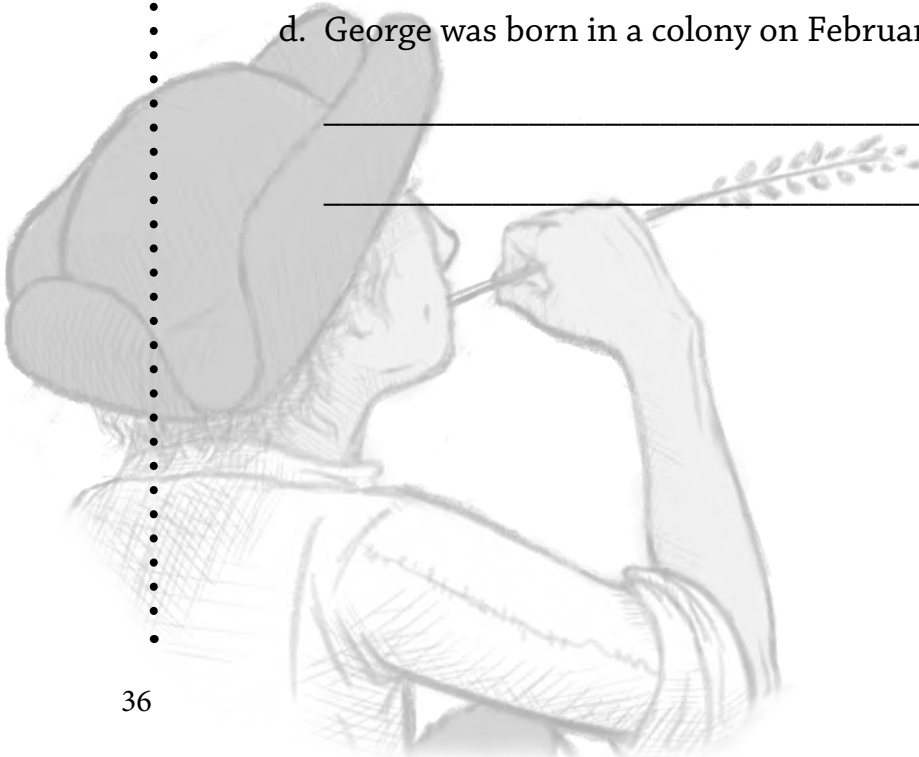
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d. George was born in a colony on February 22, 1732.

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C. Underline the **state-of-being verbs** in the following sentences and replace them with action verbs. (State-of-being verbs are forms of the verb “to be”: is, are, was, were, be, been, and so on.) Change the sentence as needed so that it makes sense.

Example: George is in his father’s orchard.

Change to: George wanders in his father’s orchard.

In this example, the verb “is” tells us nothing about what George Washington is doing in his father’s orchard. Is he walking, skipping, playing, hiding, or something else? An action verb such as “wanders” gives the reader a much more vivid picture.

a. Cherries are delicious with whipped cream.

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b. George is truly remorseful as he explains his actions to his father.

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c. George Washington was in Virginia for most of his life.

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d. Martha Washington is afraid that epiglottitis will kill George.

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D. Replace the dull nouns, adjectives, and verbs that are underlined in the following sentence to create several new and exciting sentences. The new sentences don't have to have the same meaning as the original.

The sad, sorry boy started to do nicer things after he learned stuff.

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3. **SUMMARY**—After reading the story of George Washington and the cherry tree again, **summarize** the tale in two or three sentences using your own words. Do you remember how you did this in previous books? First, determine the main idea of the story and then note the important details and words that support it. Often dialogue and description can be cut from a summary. It can be helpful to cross out these extra details.

When George Washington was quite a little boy, his father gave him a hatchet. It was bright and new, and George took great delight in going about and chopping things with it. He ran into the garden, and there he saw a tree which seemed to say to him, "Come and cut me down!"

George had often seen his father's men chop down the great trees in the forest, and he thought that it would be fine sport to see this tree fall with a crash to the ground. So he set to work with his little hatchet, and, as the tree was a very small one, it did not take long to lay it low.

Soon after that, his father came home.

"Who has been cutting my fine young cherry tree?" he cried. "It was the only tree of its kind in this country, and it cost me a great deal of money."

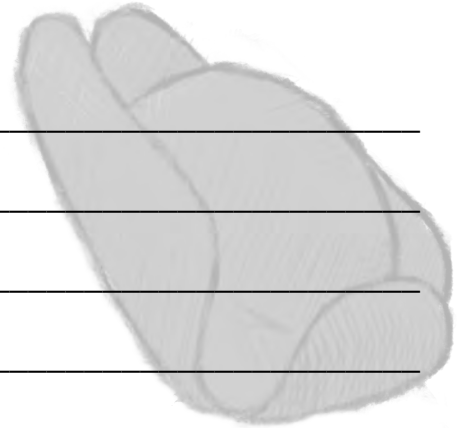
He was very angry when he came into the house.

“If I only knew who killed that cherry tree,” he cried, “I would—yes, I would—”

“Father!” cried little George. “I will tell you the truth about it. I chopped the tree down with my hatchet.”

His father forgot his anger.

“George,” he said, and he took the little fellow in his arms, “George, I am glad that you told me about it. I would rather lose a dozen cherry trees than that you should tell one falsehood.”



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4. **AMPLIFICATION**—The story *George Washington and His Hatchet* is told in the **third-person** point of view, using the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it,” and “they.” Retell the story in the **first-person** point of view, first from George’s father Augustine’s point of view, and then from George’s. Feel free to add thoughts and feelings, as well as description and dialogue. As you learned in previous Writing & Rhetoric books, these are some of the best ways to amplify narratives.

When George Washington was quite a little boy, his father gave him a hatchet. It was bright and new, and George took great delight in going about and chopping things with it. He ran into the garden, and there he saw a tree which seemed to say to him, “Come and cut me down!”





How does the change in point of view affect the story?

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## Speak It—

An **impromptu speech** is a speech given “off the top of one’s head,” or on the spot. Impromptu speaking is good practice for thinking creatively and speaking without much preparation.

To practice impromptu speaking, reenact the story of George Washington and the cherry tree alone or with a partner. One person can be George and one can be his father. You will do this on the spot, without preparing ahead of time.

1. For the first impromptu speech, do a dramatic acting out of the actual story.
2. During the second impromptu speech, have George accept blame for chopping down the tree and apologize. Then have George make up weak excuses for chopping down the tree. His father can grow progressively more frustrated as he refutes George’s excuses. What punishment does he give George?
3. During the third impromptu speech, George can try shifting the blame for chopping down the tree. He can blame his older brother for not watching him better, he can blame his father for giving him the hatchet in the first place, he can blame the ax for being so sharp, etc. He can even blame the cherry tree for being so tempting. In each case, his father should explain why the blame-shifting is pure foolishness. In the end, George’s father should explain why telling the truth is important and dole out a punishment much worse than it would have been if George had been honest.

# Revise It—

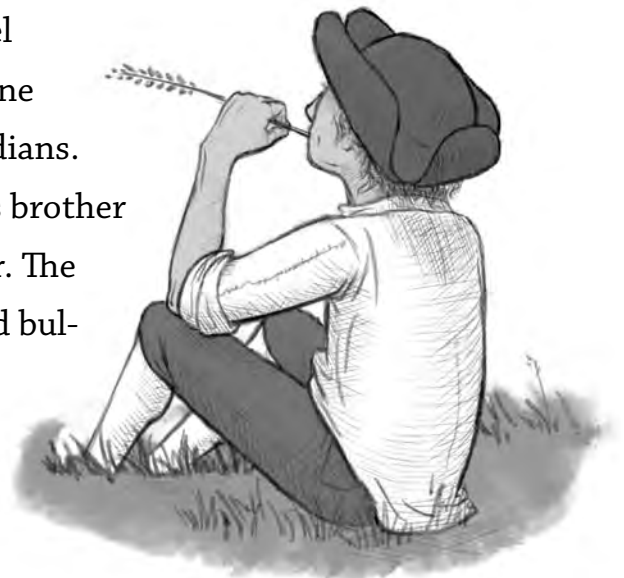
1. **SEQUENCE**—Think for a moment of a dog with its head where its tail should go, its tail where its head should go, and its hind legs and front legs turned in opposite directions. That would not be a dog. That would be a disaster! In the same way, a story that is out of order can be difficult to understand, and if your reader doesn't understand what you are saying, it's hard to make a lasting impact on her. Readers can understand a story best when it is told in chronological fashion, that is, with the beginning first, the middle next, and the end last.

The sentences in the following paragraphs are all jumbled up. Find the best order for the sentences so that they make the most sense, and then rewrite the paragraphs in that order. *Hint:* In the paragraphs in this exercise, the lead sentence names the main character so that the reader doesn't have to guess who the paragraph is about.

Example:

Jumbled Paragraph: He looked through the trees. The other horse was loaded with powder and bullets and clothes, and other things that Boone needed. One evening Daniel Boone sat by his cabin. He saw his brother riding on one horse and leading another. He thought that it might be Indians. He heard someone coming.

Properly Sequenced: One evening Daniel Boone sat by his cabin. He heard someone coming. He thought that it might be Indians. He looked through the trees. He saw his brother riding on one horse and leading another. The other horse was loaded with powder and bullets and clothes, and other things that Boone needed.



A. They took with them such things as were curious and valuable. Then they went home to North Carolina. These were the skins of animals they had killed, and no doubt some of the heads and tails. Daniel Boone and his brother picked out a good place in Kentucky to settle.

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B. The great swing carried him far out as it swung. He now thought of a way to break his tracks. Then he took hold of it. He fell to the ground, and then he ran away in a different direction from that in which he had been going. Boone had swung on grapevines when he was a boy. Then he let go. He cut the wild grapevine off near the root. He sprang out into the air with all his might.

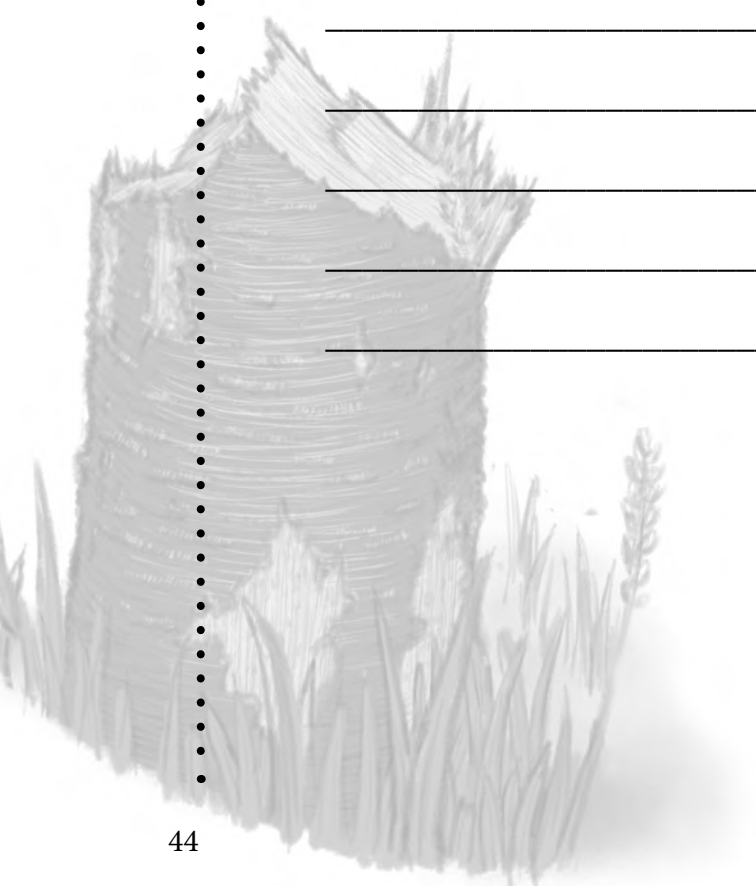
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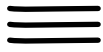
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2. **PROOFREADING**—The following story is a tale about another honest American leader, Abraham Lincoln. Do you remember the proofreading marks from the last lesson?



This symbol means you should capitalize the letter—change it from lowercase to uppercase.



This mark is called a caret. It means “insert something here.” You might be missing a word or proper punctuation.



This mark means “please delete.” Think of it as an X through the word or words.



When you find a word circled and this symbol in the margin, the word has been misspelled.

Use the symbols to correct the following story, which has eight mistakes. Keep an eye out for capitalization, spelling, and punctuation mistakes as well as incomplete sentences.

In managing the country store, as in everything that he undertook for others, lincoln did his very best. On one okasion, when he counted over his cash, Lincoln found that he had taken a few cents from a customer more than was due. He closed the store and walked a long distance to to restore her money. at another time, dicovering on the scales in the morning a weight with which he had weighed out a package of tea for a woman the night before, he saw that he had given her too little for her money He weighed out what what was due, and carried it her, much to the surprise of the woman, who had not known that she was short in the amount of her purchase.



## Lesson 3 .....

# A Review of Narrative Types, Plus a New One!

In the previous lesson you reviewed that stories, or narratives, have two elements.

- ▶ Can you remember what they are?

During your study of the Writing & Rhetoric series, you've become familiar with some of the different shapes (called **genres**) that stories can take. For example, there are fables, which teach simple moral lessons, usually with talking animals. Many of our favorite sayings come from such fables as *The Fox and the Grapes* by Aesop. There are also parables, and they too teach a moral (or spiritual) lesson, but, unlike fables, parables are true to life.

- ▶ Do you remember some of the famous parables told by Jesus?

There are also fairy tales, fanciful stories for children, usually with magical people or creatures. *Cinderella* is a beloved fairy tale in many cultures, and later in this book you will read another version of this story.

- ▶ Can you name some other fairy tales?

Another genre or shape that narratives have taken is history, which is a narrative of actual events. In *Narrative II* and *Chreia & Proverb* you studied some historical events and people. Some readers find historical stories more exciting than fairy tales because they really did happen.

- ▶ What historical events do you think are interesting and exciting?

Another type of narrative, the myth, is an ancient story not based on actual events, with gods, goddesses, and heroes, that is used to explain life and nature. Myths remind us that people haven't changed all that much over the centuries. We still share many of the same emotions, desires, and fears as people from long ago.

- ▶ What are some myths you're familiar with?

A ballad is a song that tells a story, combining both plot and characters. Some ballads you might recognize are *Oh My Darling, Clementine*, *The Ballad of John Henry*, and *Waltzing Matilda*. Some of the most well-known contemporary musicians, such as Bob Dylan, have made their names by singing ballads.

Of course, you know by now that there are many more types of stories than the ones listed here. There are genres such as mystery, romance, science fiction, and westerns. There are animal tales, folk tales, tall tales, and legends. There are bragging stories, jokes, and tattling stories. There are science stories and math stories. There are as many types of stories in the world as are necessary to satisfy the human heart, which has a bottomless thirst for tales.

The following is a remarkable true story told from the first-person point of view. While you read the story, ask yourself if it fits any of the narrative types that you have just reviewed.

# Visitors in the Night

—adapted from *Indian Boyhood* by Charles A. Eastman

This story was told to Native American Charles A. Eastman by his uncle Mysterious Medicine. Eastman's Sioux name is Ohiyesa.

I had a somewhat peculiar experience, which I think I never related to you before. It was at the time of the fall hunt. One afternoon when I was alone, I discovered that I was too far away to reach the camp before dark, so I looked about for a good place to spend the night. This was on the upper Missouri, before any white people had settled there, and when we were in constant danger from wild beasts as well as from hostile Indian tribes. It was necessary to use every **caution** and the utmost **vigilance**.

I selected a spot that appeared to be well adapted to defense. I had killed two deer, and I hung up pieces of the meat at certain distances in various directions. That way, if a wolf stole one piece of meat, the others would be safe. The same if a grizzly bear came marauding, but I wasn't worried about a mountain lion or a panther. A fire would keep the big cats away. Therefore, I made a fire. There was a full moon that night, which was much in my favor.

Having cooked and eaten some of the venison, I rolled myself in my blanket and lay down by the fire, taking my rifle for a bedfellow. I hugged it very closely, for I felt that I should need it during the night. I had scarcely settled myself when I heard what seemed to be ten or twelve coyotes set up such a howling that I was quite sure of a visit from them. Immediately afterward I heard another sound, which was like the screaming of a small child. This was a porcupine, which had doubtless smelled the meat.

I watched until a coyote appeared upon a flat rock fifty yards away. He sniffed the air in every direction; then, sitting partly upon his haunches, he swung round in a circle with his hind legs sawing the air and howled and barked in many different keys. It was a great feat! I could not help wondering whether I should be able to imitate him. What had seemed to be the voices of many coyotes was in reality only one animal. His mate soon appeared and then they both seemed satisfied

and showed no signs of a wish to invite another to join them. Presently they both suddenly and quietly disappeared.

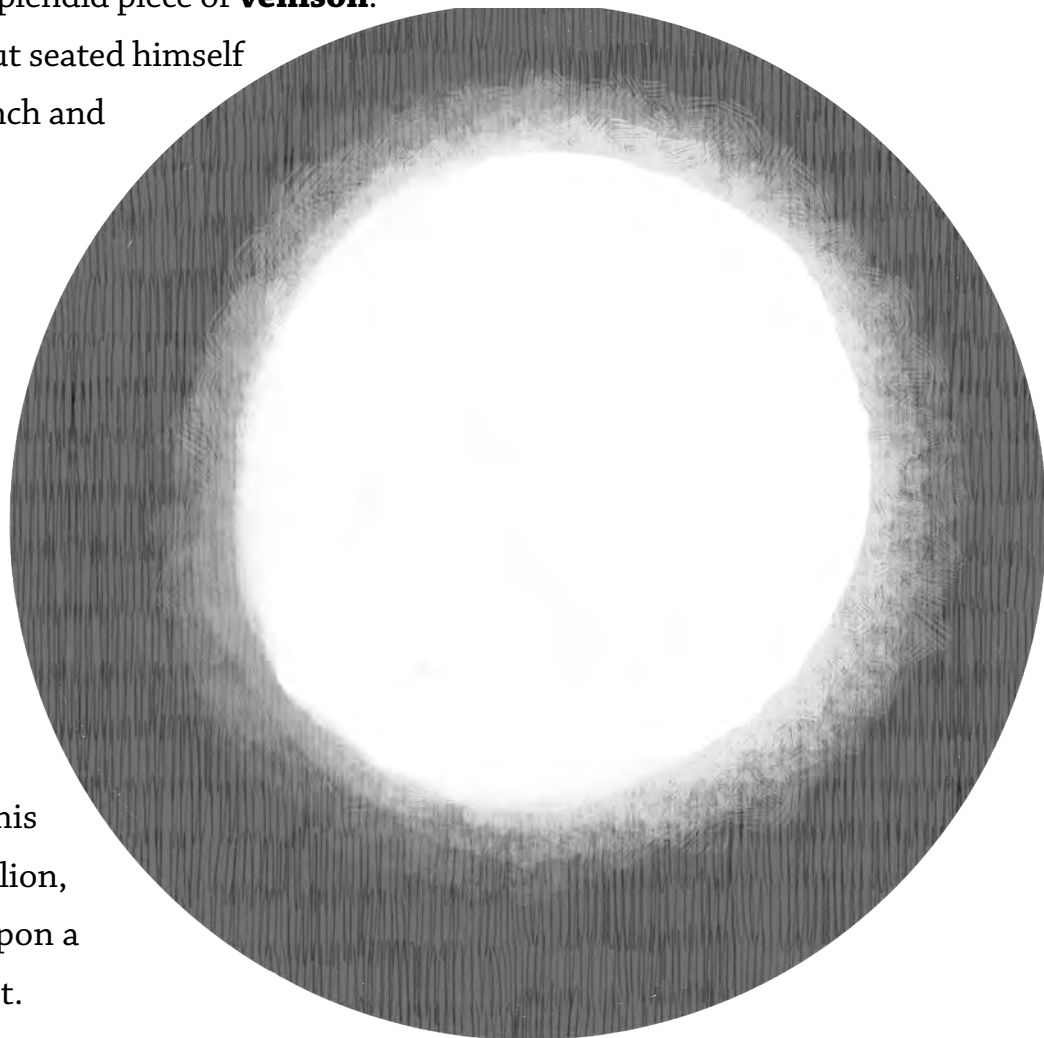
At this moment a slight noise attracted my attention, and I saw that the porcupine had arrived. He had climbed up to the piece of meat nearest me and was helping himself without any ceremony. I thought it was fortunate that he came, for he would make a good watchdog for me. Very soon, in fact, he interrupted his meal and caused all his quills to stand out in defiance. I glanced about me and saw the two coyotes slyly approaching my open camp from two different directions.

I took the part of the porcupine! I rose in a sitting posture and sent a swift arrow to each of my unwelcome visitors. They both ran away with howls of surprise and pain.

The porcupine saw the whole from his perch, but his meal was not at all disturbed, for he began eating again with apparent relish. Indeed, I was soon furnished with another of these unconscious protectors. This one came from the opposite direction to a point where I had hung a splendid piece of **venison**.

He cared to go no further, but seated himself at once on a convenient branch and began his supper.

The canyon above me was full of rocks and trees. From this direction came a startling noise, which caused me more concern than anything I had thus far heard. It sounded much like a huge animal stretching himself and giving a great yawn that ended in a scream. I knew this for the voice of a mountain lion, and it caused me to perch upon a limb for the rest of the night.



I got up and climbed into the nearest large tree, taking my weapons with me, but first I rolled a short log of wood in my blanket and laid it in my place by the fire.

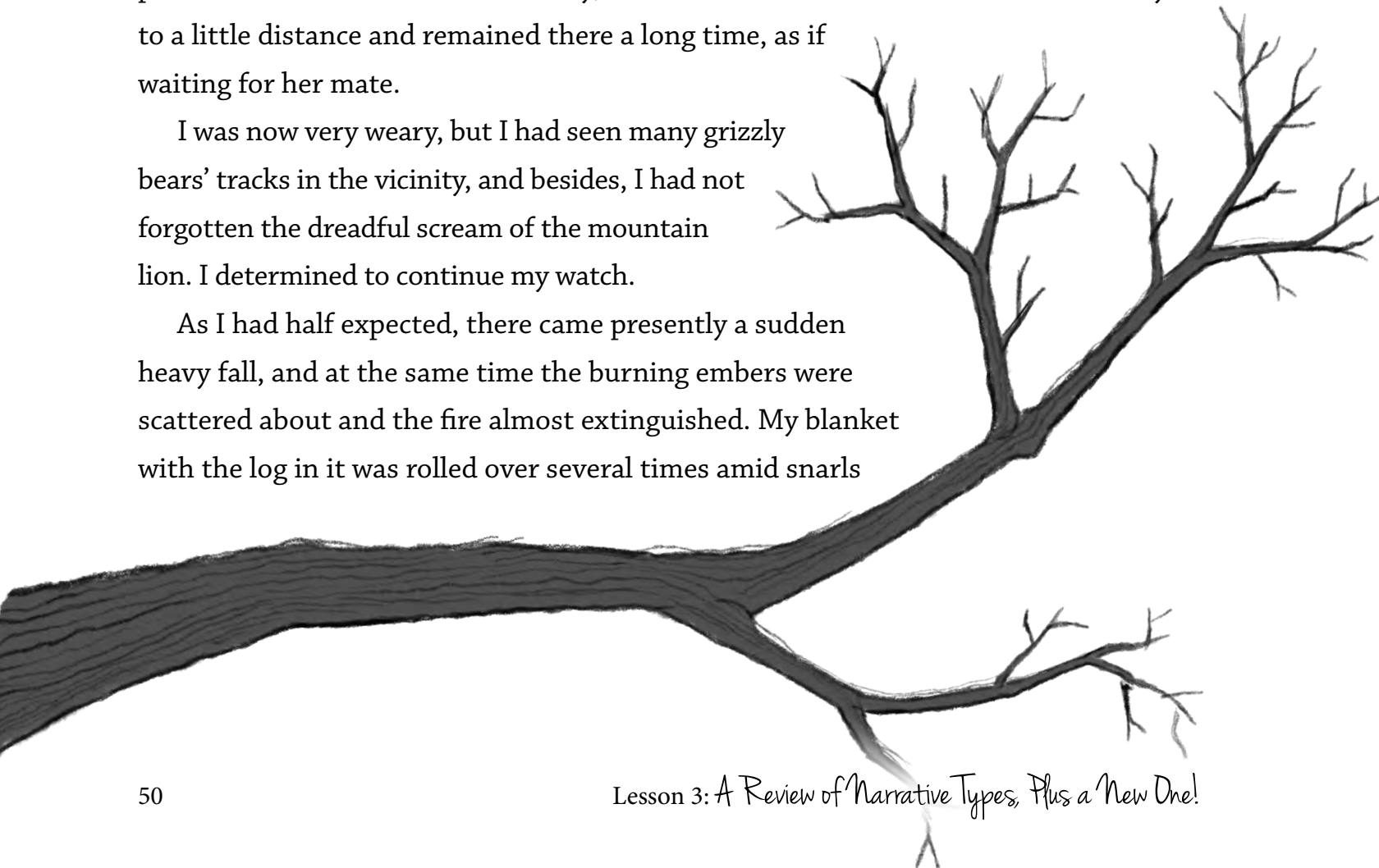
As I got up, the two porcupines began to descend, but I paid no attention to them, and they soon returned to their former positions. Very soon I heard a hissing sound from one of them and knew that an intruder was near. Two grey wolves appeared.

I had hung the hams by the hamstrings, and they were fully eight feet from the ground. At first the wolves came boldly forward, but the warning of the porcupines caused them to stop and hesitate to jump for the meat. However, they were hungry and began to leap savagely for the hams, although evidently they proved good targets for the quills of the prickly ones, for occasionally one of them would squeal and rub his nose desperately against the tree.

At last one of the wolves buried his teeth too deeply in a tough portion of the flesh and, having jumped to reach it, his own weight made it impossible for him to loosen his upper jaw. There the grey wolf dangled, kicking and yelping, until the tendon of the ham gave way and both fell heavily to the ground. From my hiding place I sent two arrows into his body, which ended his life. The other wolf ran away to a little distance and remained there a long time, as if waiting for her mate.

I was now very weary, but I had seen many grizzly bears' tracks in the vicinity, and besides, I had not forgotten the dreadful scream of the mountain lion. I determined to continue my watch.

As I had half expected, there came presently a sudden heavy fall, and at the same time the burning embers were scattered about and the fire almost extinguished. My blanket with the log in it was rolled over several times amid snarls



and growls. Then the assailant of my camp—a panther—leaped back into the thick underbrush, but not before my arrow had penetrated his side. He snarled and tried to bite off the shaft, but after a time he became exhausted and lay still.

I could now distinguish the grey dawn in the east. I was exceedingly drowsy, so I fastened myself by a rope of rawhide to the trunk of the tree against which I leaned. I was seated on a large limb and soon fell asleep.

I was rudely awakened by the report of a gun directly under me. At the same time, I thought someone was trying to shake me off the tree.

Instantly I reached for my gun. Alas! It was gone! At the first shake of the tree by my visitor, a grizzly bear, the gun had fallen, and as it was cocked, it went off.

The bear picked up the weapon and threw it violently away; then he again shook the tree with all his strength. I shouted, “I have still a bow and a quiver full of arrows; you had better let me alone.”

He replied to this with a rough growl. I sent an arrow into his side, and he groaned like a man as he tried hard to pull it out. I had to give him several more before he went a short distance away and died.

It was now daylight, so I came down from my perch. I was stiff and scarcely able to walk. I found that the bear had killed both of my little friends, the porcupines, and eaten most of the meat.

Perhaps you wonder, Ohiyesa, why I did not use my gun in the beginning; but I had learned that if I once missed my aim with it, I had no second chance. I have told of this particular adventure, because it was an unusual experience to see so many different animals in one night. I have often been in similar places and killed one or two. Once a common black bear stole a whole deer from me without waking me. But all this life is fast disappearing, and the world is becoming different.

## Tell It Back—Narration

1. Oral Narration: Without looking at the text, retell *Visitors in the Night* as best as you remember it using your own words. Try not to leave out any important details.

Here's the beginning of the story to help you get started:

I had a somewhat peculiar experience, which I think I never related to you before. It was at the time of the fall hunt. One afternoon when I was alone, I discovered that I was too far away to reach the camp before dark, so I looked about for a good place to spend the night.

2. Outline: Create an outline for the story *Visitors in the Night* using Roman numerals (*I, II, III*) for the most important events and capital letters (*A, B, C*) for less important events. Use standard numbers (*1, 2, 3*) for minor points.

## Talk About It—

1. What kind of narrative does *Visitors in the Night* seem to be? Consider some of the types you have learned about in this series: fable, parable, myth, legend, and history.
2. *Visitors in the Night* is actually a new type of narrative, a history of one person. Can you guess what this type of narrative is called?
3. If you didn't know that this story was true and told through the eyes of an experienced Native American hunter, what aspects would you find unbelievable?
4. Why do you think Mysterious Medicine said, "All this life is fast disappearing, and the world is becoming different"? What might he mean by this?





2. Which of the following is a caution used by Mysterious Medicine?

Circle your answer.

- a. taking his rifle to bed with him
- b. sleeping after the panther died
- c. dropping the rifle from the tree branch

3. Use the word “caution” in your own sentence. Make sure that the meaning of the word is clear by the way you use it in the sentence.

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4. Mysterious Medicine says, “It was necessary to use every caution and the utmost vigilance.” The word “vigilance” comes from the Latin word *vigilantia*, meaning “wakefulness.” In the context of this story about wild animals, what is “vigilance” most likely to mean? Circle your answer.

- a. fearfulness
- b. deadliness
- c. watchfulness
- d. boredom

5. Of the following suggestions, the best title for this story would be:

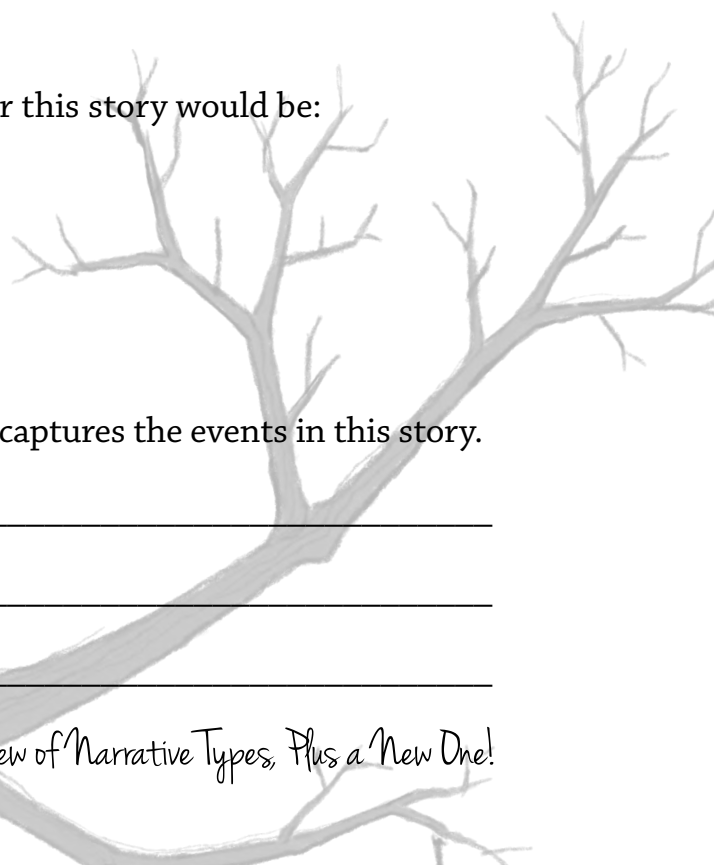
- a. A-Hunting We Will Go
- b. My Meal in the Woods
- c. Surrounded by Wild Beasts
- d. Sleeping with Wolves

On the following line, write another title that captures the events in this story.

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6. Biographies and autobiographies are the histories of a single person. An **autobiography** is a description of someone's life that is written in the first person by the subject himself. A biography is a description of someone's life that is written by someone else (usually in the third-person point of view) about another person, often someone famous. Look at the following passages and label them "biography" or "autobiography."

a. \_\_\_\_\_

I had, on the whole, abundant reason to be satisfied with my being established in Pennsylvania. There were, however, two things that I regretted, there being no provision for defense, nor for a complete education of youth; no militia, nor any college. I therefore, in 1743, drew up a proposal for establishing an academy and I let the scheme lie awhile dormant. I succeeded the next year, 1744, in proposing and establishing a Philosophical Society.

b. \_\_\_\_\_

Pocahontas, as Princess of the tribe, claimed her right, and would not yield up their victim. Then Powhatan, who ruled them all, raised his hand and stopped their clamor. For a moment he hesitated, and the fate of Captain John hung wavering in the balance. Then, to please his favorite daughter, whom he dearly loved, he decreed that she should have her will. "Let Pocahontas keep the stranger as her own, to make her toys," he said, for Captain John, during the idle days of weary captivity, had often whittled curious playthings for the little maid. And thus was Captain John Smith's life saved by the gentle Indian girl.

c. \_\_\_\_\_

Francis Scott Key was full of joy. He took an old letter from his pocket. The back of this letter had no writing on it. Here he wrote the song about the star-spangled banner. The British commander now let Key go ashore. When he got to Baltimore, he wrote out his song. He gave it to a friend. This friend took it to a printing office, but the printers had all turned soldiers. They had all gone to defend the city.

d. \_\_\_\_\_

During my captivity with the Indians, my wife, who despaired of ever seeing me again, expected that the Indians had put a period to my life. Oppressed with the distresses of the forest, and bereaved of me, she transported my family and goods, on horses, through the wilderness, amidst a multitude of dangers, to her father's house in North Carolina.

e. \_\_\_\_\_

Louisa Alcott was a wild little girl. When she was very little, she would run away from home. She liked to play with beggar children. One day she wandered so far away from her home, she could not find the way back again. It was growing dark. The little girl's feet were tired. She sat down on a doorstep. A big dog was lying on the step. He wagged his tail. That was his way of saying, "I am glad to see you." Little Louisa grew sleepy. She laid her head on the curly head of the big dog. Then she fell asleep.

7. Take some time to play story detective once more. Using the definitions of the different types of narrative, try to find clues that will help you to label the following short paragraphs. Label them as fable, parable, fairy tale, history, myth, or ballad.

Fable: a short story that teaches a simple moral lesson, usually with talking animals

Parable: a short story that teaches a moral, spiritual, or heavenly lesson and is always true to life

Fairy tale: a fanciful story for children, usually with magical people or creatures

History: a narrative of actual events

Myth: an ancient story not based on actual events, with gods, goddesses, and heroes, that is used to explain life and nature

Ballad: a song that tells a story, combining both plot and characters

a. \_\_\_\_\_

It was almost twilight. Since nine in the morning the battle had raged. To attack the English behind the firm line of shields was like making an assault upon a fortress. William ordered his archers to shoot straight up into the air. There fell upon the English a storm of the deadly steel, the most terrible event of the day. Men held their shields high up to protect their heads. This was the moment for the Norman lance and the Norman sword. But then King Harold fell, his eye pierced by an arrow.

b. \_\_\_\_\_

Sixteen prisoners in all had been sent from Nicæa to the great show at Ephesus. They were confined in cells, constructed under the seats of the amphitheatre, and indeed close to the cages of the wild beasts. That which was occupied by the two sisters, who, by special favor, were allowed to be together, was separated by nothing more than a wooden partition from the habitation of the lions. The heat, the darkness, and the stench were such as it would be impossible to describe. And if anything was wanted to aggravate the horror of the situation, the two prisoners heard day and night the restless pacing to and fro, and now and then the deep growling, of their ferocious neighbors.

c. \_\_\_\_\_

After these things came Memnon, a black warrior, who men said was the son of Morning. He slew Antilochus, son of Nestor, and was himself slain by Achilles. Not many days afterwards Achilles himself was slain near the Scaean Gates. It was by an arrow from the bow of Paris that he was killed, but the arrow was guided by the sun god Apollo.

d. \_\_\_\_\_

“Can you really love such an ugly creature as I am?” said the Beast faintly. “Ah! Beauty, you only came just in time. I was dying because I thought you had forgotten your promise. Beauty, will you marry me?” She answered softly: “Yes, dear Beast.”

As she spoke a blaze of light sprang up before the windows of the palace; fireworks crackled and guns banged, and across the avenue of orange trees, in letters all made of fire-flies, was written: "Long live the Prince and his Bride."

e. \_\_\_\_\_

A Bat blundered into the nest of a Weasel, who ran up to catch and eat him. The Bat begged for his life, but the Weasel would not listen. "You are a Mouse," he said, "and I am a sworn enemy of Mice." "But I am not a Mouse!" cried the Bat. "Look at my wings. Can Mice fly?"

f. \_\_\_\_\_

A young Hindu girl watched her mother pour buttermilk into fresh cow's milk. "This is the way to make butter," said the mother. "But where is the butter?" asked the girl. "It is in every drop of milk, but it is hidden," the mother replied. "I will show you in the morning." In the morning, the girl saw that the liquid had become solid overnight because the buttermilk had curdled the milk. The milk was changed into curd. In the same way God, who is hidden, can be found in life for those who pursue holiness.

g. \_\_\_\_\_

A Peacock, puffed up with vanity, met a Crane one day, and to impress him spread his gorgeous tail. "Look," he said. "What have you to compare with this? I am dressed in all the glory of the rainbow, while your feathers are gray as dust!"

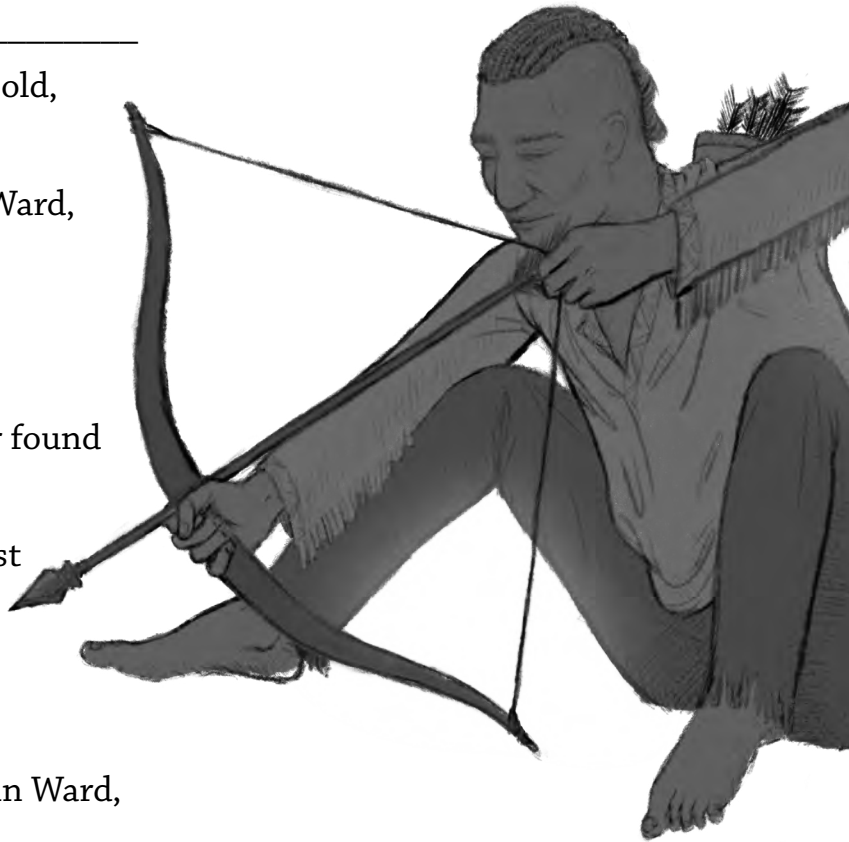
h. \_\_\_\_\_

The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. The owner's servants came to him and said, "Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?" "An enemy did this," he replied. The servants asked him, "Do you want us to go and pull them up?" "No," he answered, "because while

you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”

i. \_\_\_\_\_

Come all you gallant seamen bold,  
All you that march to drum,  
Let's go and look for Captain Ward,  
Far on the sea he roams.  
He is the biggest robber  
That ever you did hear,  
There's not been such a robber found  
For above this hundred year.  
A ship was sailing from the east  
And going to the west,  
Loaded with silks and satins  
And velvets of the best;  
But meeting there with Captain Ward,  
It was a bad meeting;  
He robbed them of all their wealth,  
And bid them tell their king.



j. \_\_\_\_\_

Rapunzel was the most beautiful child in the world. When she was twelve years old the witch shut her up in a tower in the midst of a wood, and it had neither steps nor door, only a small window above. When the witch wished to be let in, she would stand below and would cry, “Rapunzel, Rapunzel! Let down your golden hair!”

k. \_\_\_\_\_  
I'm lonesome since I crossed the hill,  
And o'er the moorland sedgy  
Such heavy thoughts my heart do fill,  
Since parting with my Betsey  
I seek for one as fair and gay,  
But find none to remind me  
How sweet the hours I passed away,  
With the girl I left behind me.



l. \_\_\_\_\_  
The apples of youth were so precious to the gods that Idun was well guarded by night and day. Sometimes, however, even the Asas were off their guard, and that was the opportunity for Loki. Strolling one day through the trees of Asgard, Loki found the beautiful maiden all alone in a sunny corner playing ball with her golden fruit.

## Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—A **run-on sentence** is a sentence that lacks proper punctuation and should really be divided into separate sentences. Instead of having punctuation or a connecting word such as “and,” “but,” or “or,” the sentence keeps going on.

For example:

Mysterious Medicine was a great hunter he was also a brilliant storyteller.

This sentence can be fixed in two ways. It could be divided into two sentences using punctuation:

Mysterious Medicine was a great hunter. He was also a brilliant storyteller.



Or it could have a connecting word between the sentences:

Mysterious Medicine was a great hunter, and he was also a brilliant storyteller.

These connecting words are called **conjunctions**.

Identify which of the following sentences are run-on and correct them. Not all sentences will need to be corrected.

Example: Mysterious Medicine was rudely awakened by the report of a gun directly under him at the same time, he thought someone was trying to shake him off the tree.

Change to: Mysterious Medicine was rudely awakened by the report of a gun directly under him. At the same time, he thought someone was trying to shake him off the tree.

- A. The forests of early America were filled with wild animals some of them were dangerous.

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- B. Mysterious Medicine was smart to light a fire, because it probably scared certain animals away.

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- C. Another famous Native American was Pocahontas, who saved Captain John Smith from execution.

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D. After Pocahontas grew up, she married a man named John Rolfe he was an English settler.

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E. No one knows exactly how Pocahontas died it may have been from small-pox or pneumonia.

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2. **COPIOUSNESS**—In *Writing & Rhetoric: Chreia & Proverb*, you played with the figurative language of a proverb. Figurative language is wording that suggests an imaginative meaning that goes beyond what the actual words say. Mysterious Medicine uses figurative language when he says, “All this life is fast disappearing.” Can life truly disappear, or vanish into thin air? No, not really. The hunter implies, rather, that the outdoor way of life, the ability to survive from hunting in the wilderness, is becoming more rare.

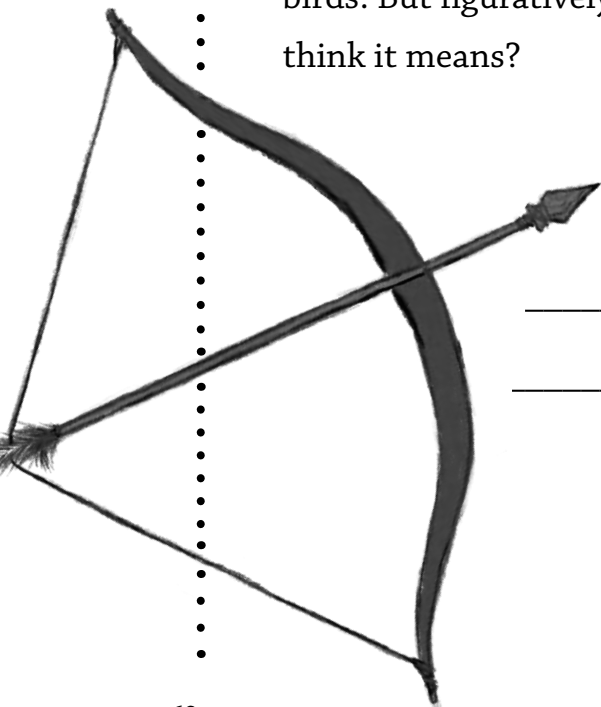
What about the sentence “Don’t let a fox guard a hen house”? As literal advice, it means don’t let a fox near a chicken shed or the fox will kill the birds. But figuratively, the sentence means something more. What do you think it means?

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A sentence can usually be rephrased in many different ways. Rewrite this proverb five different ways to express the same idea. Change the animal and what that animal is guarding.

Don't let a fox guard a hen house.

Sample sentence: Don't let a lion guard a cow pasture.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **SUMMARY**—A summary is a shortened version of a longer story. Summarize *Visitors in the Night* in exactly five sentences. The key is to cut out any unnecessary details. Your summary might not include all of the animals in the story, but it should include the big ideas and more general details (who, what, where, when). Change the first-person point of view to third person (he, she, it, they).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





his great paw and threw him down. Somehow, he did not retain his hold, but made another leap and again concealed himself in the snow. Evidently he was preparing to make a fresh attack.

I was partially stunned and greatly confused by the blow; therefore I should have been an easy prey for him at the moment. But when he left me, I came to my senses; and I had been thrown near my gun! He arose and aimed between the tips of his ears—all that was visible of him—and fired. I saw the fresh snow fly from the spot. The panther leaped about six feet straight up into the air and fell motionless. I gave two good war whoops, because he had conquered a very formidable enemy. I sat down on the dead body to rest, and his heart beat as if it would knock out all my ribs. I had not been expecting any danger, and that was why I was so taken by surprise.

2. When it comes to revising, the old proverb “Two heads are better than one” is often true. Receiving feedback about your writing from a partner is a way to help along the process of revision, because it may help you discover areas of weakness that you hadn’t noticed on your own.

Read your summary of *Visitors in the Night* to a partner, and then have your partner read his or her summary to you. Give each other your reactions and comments (also called feedback) by answering these questions: How are your summaries similar and how are they different? Does one or both of you use words from the original story? Do these words make the summary stronger or weaker? Which summary is the most like the original story?



## Lesson 4 .....

# The Making of a Legend

► **D**o you remember what a legend is?

In many respects, the forming of legends is like playing the game Telephone, in which one person whispers something in the next person's ear and the message goes from person to person around the group. Chances are, the sentence or phrase will change dramatically as it is whispered around the room. "The quick red fox jumped over the lazy brown dog" can easily become "The sick lead frog fixed a pump in the hazy brown fog." Legends are made when the details of a story change from storyteller to storyteller. They may be only slightly changed or they may be hugely exaggerated. Sometimes a person may intentionally exaggerate a story. (We call this intentional exaggeration **hyperbole**.) Most of the time, though, legends change because the story is told and retold, and sometimes because details are missing and the teller wants to fill in the details.

Legends are often made of the same stuff that forms the foundation of ghost stories. A dramatic story is heightened and enhanced by its retelling and by the audience's desire for a scare or a thrill. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving is no exception. Even so, there may be a kernel of truth to this well-loved ghost story. According to Irving, the body of a headless Hessian soldier lies in the burying ground of the Old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow, which has been around since the 1690s. It is true that Hessian soldiers arrived in America from Germany to help fight the Revolutionary War alongside the British redcoats. Not so far from the Dutch Church is the battlefield of White Plains, New York, where some Hessians lost their lives. So, possibly one of their horsemen lost his head to a cannonball and is indeed buried at that church. Ever since then, according to Irving's legend, the ghost of the soldier "rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head; and . . . the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the church-yard before daybreak."

As you read *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, keep in mind that there will be parts of the story that you find hard to believe as well parts of the story that you find easy to believe. It would be easy to immediately dismiss an entire legend as unbelievable because of its exaggerated or unrealistic parts. However, we enjoy a story more if we "suspend our disbelief," which is a way of saying that we pretend or act as if the story is true. So, while you may be considering certain parts of the story for the purpose of this lesson, you can also feel free to suspend your disbelief for the overall reading and enjoy every part of this great tale.





# The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

—adapted from the short story by Washington Irving

As you will see, this story is more of a tale about a practical joke than a ghost story. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* is similar to a **trickster tale**. A trickster tale is a story in which the **protagonist**, or main character, plays mean pranks on people, often with his magical powers. Loki is the typical trickster from Norse mythology, and Anansi the Spider is a trickster from West African myths. You will meet another trickster, Brer Rabbit, in lesson 7.

The little Dutch valley of Sleepy Hollow is in the great state of New York. The spirit that haunts this enchanted region is the apparition of a headless figure on horseback. The specter is known at all the country firesides by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

In this place, about thirty years ago, there lived a worthy man by the name of Ichabod Crane, who journeyed to Sleepy Hollow for the purpose of teaching the children of the town. He was a native of Connecticut. He was tall, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, and feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small and flat at top, with huge ears, large green, glassy eyes, and a long nose. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for a scarecrow escaped from a cornfield.

His schoolhouse was a low building, made of logs, with one large room, the windows partly patched with the **leaves** of old copybooks. Truth to say, he ever bore in mind the golden maxim, “Spare the rod and spoil the child.” Ichabod Crane’s scholars certainly were not spoiled.

In addition to his other **vocations**, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood and picked up many bright coins by instructing the young folks in singing.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance to the females of a rural neighborhood. Our Ichabod was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country women. He would stroll with a whole group of them along the banks of the pond, while the more bashful boys hung sheepishly back, envying his elegance. He was esteemed by the women as a man of great knowledge, for he had read several books quite through and was a perfect master of the *History of New England Witchcraft*, in which, by the way, he most firmly believed.

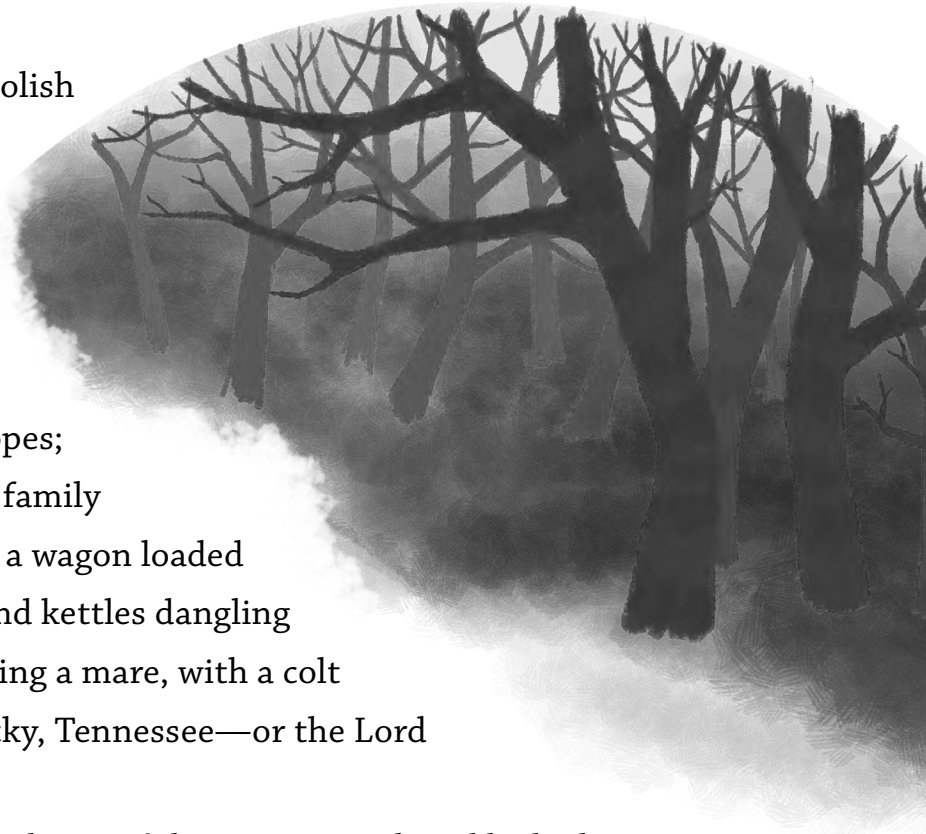
One of his sources of fearful pleasure was to pass long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvelous tales of ghosts and goblins and haunted fields and haunted brooks and haunted bridges and haunted houses and particularly of the Headless Horseman. He would delight them equally with his stories of witchcraft.

But the pleasure in all this, while they snuggled in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homeward. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path, amidst the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night! How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some being tramping close behind him! And how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Headless Horseman on one of his nightly rides!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind, and though he had seen many ghosts in his time, he would have passed a pleasant life of it if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together—and that was a woman.

Among the musical students who came, one evening a week, to receive his instructions in singing, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a Dutch farmer. She was a beautiful girl of fresh eighteen and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but for her large fortune.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart toward women, and it isn't surprising that such a girl appealed to him. His heart yearned after the girl who was to inherit so much wealth. His imagination already fulfilled his hopes; he imagined Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household goods, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself riding a mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee—or the Lord knows where!



Ichabod had to win his way to the heart of this country girl, and he had to encounter a host of fearful opponents of flesh and blood, her numerous other admirers, who kept a watchful and angry eye upon each other and were ready to fight any new competitor.

Among these, the most intimidating was a burly, roaring man called Brom Van Brunt. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and his face had a mingled look of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb he had received the nickname of Brom Bones, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship. He had three or four best friends, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he roamed the country, attending every scene of fighting or merriment for miles round. In cold weather he wore a fur cap with a flaunting fox's tail. The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and goodwill; and, when any prank or brawl occurred thereabouts, they always shook their heads and assumed Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This hero had for some time singled out the beautiful Katrina as the object of his love, and though his actions toward her were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage him.

Such was Ichabod's rival, and Brom took all opportunities of ridiculing him in front of Katrina.

It was toward evening one night that Ichabod arrived at the castle of Katrina's father for a party. Brom Bones was the hero of the guests, having come to the gathering on his favorite horse, Daredevil, a creature, like himself, full of mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. Brom preferred vicious animals, for he thought that a polite, well-mannered horse was unworthy of a spirited man like him.

That night, the partygoers told each other favorite neighborhood stories. Each storyteller dressed up his tale with a little fiction so as to make himself the hero of every exploit.

Brom Bones told the tale of old Brouwer, a disbeliever in ghosts, and how he met the Headless Horseman returning from Sleepy Hollow and got up behind him, how they galloped over bush and hill and swamp until they reached the bridge, when the Horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the treetops with a clap of thunder.

The tales, told in that drowsy voice with which men talk in the dark, the faces of the listeners only now and then gleaming over the light of a pipe, sank deep in the mind of Ichabod.

The party now gradually broke up.

Ichabod lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a chat with Katrina, fully convinced that he was now on the high road to winning her affections. What passed at this conversation I will not say, for in fact I do not know. Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly left, after a very short time, with an air quite desolate. It was at the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crestfallen, pursued his travels homeward, along the



sides of the lofty hills that rise above Tarry Town, and which he had travelled along so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as he. No signs of life occurred near him but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the sounds of a bullfrog from a neighboring marsh.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon now came crowding into his mind. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was approaching the very place where many of the ghost stories had taken place.

As he approached the stream, his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his courage, gave his horse a few kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the contrary old animal began to run along the fence.

Just then he saw an approaching shadow. The hair of the panicked teacher rose upon his head. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents, "Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer.

Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and with a scramble and a bound stood at once in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the shadow might now be seen. He appeared to be a horseman of large size and mounted on a black horse of powerful build. He kept to one side of the road, jogging along beside old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright.

Ichabod had no liking for this strange midnight companion and now quickened his steed in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind; the other did the same. Ichabod's heart began to sink within him.

On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow traveler in relief against the sky, gigantic in height and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck on realizing that the rider was headless! But his horror was still

more increased on observing that the head, which should have rested on the rider's shoulders, was carried before him on the front of his saddle! Ichabod's terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping by a sudden movement to escape his companion, but the ghost started full jump with him. Away, then, they dashed through thick and thin, stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air as he stretched his long, thin body over his horse's head in the eagerness of his flight.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. He saw the goblin rising in his stirrups and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible object, but too late. It smashed against his head with a tremendous crash, and he was tumbled headlong into the dust. Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, soberly chomping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast; dinner hour came, but no Ichabod. The boys assembled at the schoolhouse and strolled idly about the banks of the brook, but no schoolmaster. A search party set out on foot, and after thorough investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt. The tracks of horses' hooves deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod,



and close beside it a shattered pumpkin. The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered.

The mysterious event caused much curiosity at the church on the following Sunday. It is true that an old farmer, who had been down to New York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought home the information that Ichabod Crane was still alive.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away supernaturally; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire.

## Tell It Back—Narration

- 1. Oral Narration: Without looking at the text, retell *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* as best as you remember it using your own words. Try not to leave out any important details.

• Here is the beginning of the narrative to help you get started:

• The little Dutch valley of Sleepy Hollow is in the great state of New York. The spirit that haunts this enchanted region is the apparition of a headless figure on horseback. The specter is known at all the country firesides by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

• In this place, about thirty years ago, there lived a worthy man by the name of Ichabod Crane, who journeyed to Sleepy Hollow for the purpose of teaching the children of the town.

- 2. Written Narration: Without looking at the text, retell in writing *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* with as much detail as you can remember. Keep the story in sequential order—beginning, middle, and end—and use the names of these characters: Ichabod Crane, Brom Bones, and Katrina Van Tassel.

- 3. Outline: Create an outline for the story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* using Roman numerals (*I, II, III*) for the most important events and capital letters (*A, B, C*) for less important events. Use standard numbers (*1, 2, 3*) for minor points.



▲ *The Headless Horseman Pursuing Ichabod Crane* by John Quidor

## Talk About It—

1. Look at the painting of *The Headless Horseman Pursuing Ichabod Crane* by John Quidor. Does Quidor believe that Ichabod was “spirited away” by a real ghost? How can you tell?
2. Clearly, Ichabod Crane is the main character of the story. In what ways is he a likeable or sympathetic character? In what ways is he an unlikeable or unsympathetic character?
3. If *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* were a fable, what would one of its moral messages be?
4. What are some aspects of the story that you find hard to believe?
5. What are some aspects of the story that you find believable?



## Go Deeper—

1. The word “vocation” comes from the Latin word *vocationem*, which means “a calling.” The story says, “In addition to his other vocations, he [Ichabod] was the singing-master of the neighborhood.” In the context of this sentence, what do you think the word “vocations” means? Circle your answer.

- a. hobbies
- b. jobs
- c. vacations
- d. teachers
- e. songs

2. Ichabod Crane is a fascinating and silly character. Circle the following adjectives that describe him, based on how he is portrayed in the story.

- a. superstitious
- b. strict
- c. muscular
- d. money-loving
- e. wise
- f. foolish

3. According to the farmer and the old wives, Ichabod may be still alive, or he may have been “spirited away.” What do you think really happened to Ichabod? Support your idea with evidence (proof) from the text.

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# Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—In the previous lesson, you learned that run-on sentences are sentences that lack proper punctuation or conjunctions. You also learned how to correct a run-on sentence by using punctuation to divide the run-on into two separate sentences or by using a connecting word (a conjunction such as “and,” “or,” “but,” “because”) to join the sentences. The following are five run-on sentences for you to correct. Please make sure that each sentence is changed into only one or two complete sentences.

Example:

Run-on: Katrina Van Tassel was appealing for her beauty however she was more appealing for her money.

Correct: Katrina Van Tassel was appealing for her beauty. However, she was more appealing for her money.

A. Sleepy Hollow was a Dutch valley this means that its inhabitants were from the Netherlands.

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B. Both Ichabod and Brom Bones were arrogant because they were both considered intelligent by the ladies they also were rivals in love.

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C. The old wives of the town were just as superstitious as Ichabod himself they thought he disappeared into a spirit world.

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D. After the story ends, Katrina may have married Brom Bones she may have spurned him.

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E. Washington Irving recorded many other American stories one of them is about a man named Rip Van Winkle, who slept for a hundred years.

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**2. COPIOUSNESS—**

A. If you'll recall, a synonym is a word that has nearly the same meaning as another word. Using synonyms to replace the underlined nouns and adjective in the following sentence by Washington Irving, write two new sentences that are roughly synonymous. Use a thesaurus only if you get stuck.

The hair of the panicked teacher rose upon his head.

Example: The hair of the frightened schoolmaster rose upon his noggin.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

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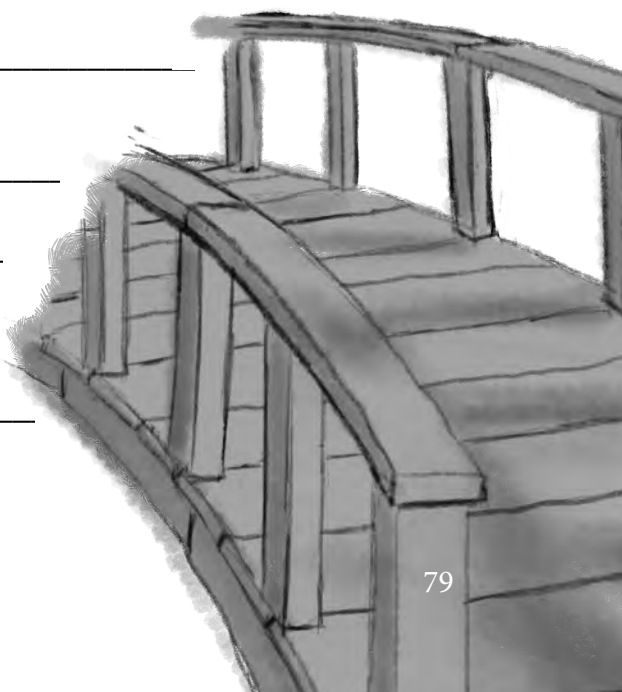
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b. \_\_\_\_\_

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- B. The hair of the panicked teacher rose upon his head. Add an adjective to describe the noun “hair” in this sentence. Replace the verb “rose” (past tense of “rise”) with a new verb (it doesn’t have to be a synonym), and use an adverb to describe the new verb. An adverb answers questions such as how, when, and where.

Example: The oily hair of the panicked teacher grayed instantly upon his head.

In this sample sentence, “instantly” is the adverb. It describes how the hair grayed.

Now it’s your turn:

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- C. Subjects and predicates—In order to write copiously, you need to know how to express yourself in many different ways. If you learn the basic parts of a sentence, you will know better how to replace one word for another or one phrase for another.

You have likely learned all about subjects and predicates in your study of grammar. Every complete sentence has these two main parts: subject and predicate. A subject tells us whom or what the sentence is about. The predicate tells us what the subject of a sentence does. For example: Ichabod sings. This is a very short, complete sentence. “Ichabod” is the subject—what the sentence is about. “Sings” is the predicate. It tells us what Ichabod does.

Using the following subjects and predicates, build a sentence that includes at least one adjective and one adverb. Remember that an adjective describes the noun and the adverb describes the verb. Label the parts of speech: *N* for noun, *ADJ* for adjective, *V* for verb, and *ADV* for adverb.

Example: Katrina danced.

ADJ N V ADV

Change to: Flirtatious Katrina danced twice with Ichabod.

a. Horseman rides.

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b. Frog jumps.

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c. Bell tolls.

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d. Horse leaps.

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e. Brook gurgles.

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## Speak It—Grab Bag

Practice impromptu speaking again, this time being mindful of inflection. As you'll recall, inflection is the change in the pitch and tone of your voice. In order to hold the audience's attention, you are going to need to use the highs and lows of your voice. Inflection tells the audience when it needs to be excited, or when it needs to laugh, or when it needs to get serious. Inflection is how you inject emotion into public speaking. We know when a person asks us a question his voice will get a little higher at the end of his sentence. We know when we're about to hear bad news because a person's voice goes lower. A good speaker will know how to use inflection to make his speech more powerful.

This game is called Grab Bag. Your teacher will place a number of objects in a bag or a pillowcase. The objects can be any random things, from an old sneaker to a can of peas, from a necklace to a cell phone.

To start the game, you will draw an object from the grab bag. Then your teacher will give you a prompt. Starting with the prompt, you must talk about the object for a full minute, using inflection as you speak. In each case, a second student can then tell the same story but make it more legendary through exaggeration.

Some sample prompts:

1. When I first fell in love, my beloved was wearing this [insert name of object]. Here's how it happened. (Your inflection should be ardent and adoring.)
2. I was being chased by a ghost, and I nearly died except that I was carrying this [insert name of object]. Here's how it saved my life. (Your inflection should sound somewhat scared.)
3. If it hadn't been for this [insert name of object], I might never be the billionaire you see here today. This is the way it happened. (Your inflection should sound proud and confident.)

## Revise It—

Without agreement between subject and verb, a sentence won't make much sense. If the subject of a sentence is singular, the verb must be singular. For

example: The mouse eats. If the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural. For example: The mice eat. When the subject and verb “match,” we say that they agree.

Each of the sentences in this paragraph has a subject and a verb that do not agree. Underline the incorrect verbs and, in the margin next to the mistake, rewrite each verb so that it agrees with its subject. Keep in mind that the overall tense in this paragraph is present tense.

Example: “It must be too early for blossoms,” say Mary Chilton.    *says*

Mary Chilton is one person, singular. The verb form “say” is plural, for more than one person. “Says” is singular (third-person singular) and agrees with the singular “Mary Chilton.”

One day, almost before the snow has melted from the ground, the three pilgrim girls looks for spring flowers near the edge of the forest. They brushes away the dry leaves to see if the violets or windflowers have started to grow. Sometimes they finds, pushing their way up through the earth, a group of tiny rough balls that will someday unroll into a beautiful fern. There are many pale little plants that lifts their first buds up through the earth and leaves, but not a flower on any of them.



## Lesson 5 .....



### Let's Have an Argument

**R**ecently I overheard an unpleasant conversation between two students in the lunchroom. It went like this:

“Your lunch looks nasty.”

“Better my lunch than your face.”

“And your lunch smells nasty, too.”

“What you’re smelling is your breath.”

I won’t sport with your intelligence by recording any more of these “delightful” sentiments, but you get the picture.

When you hear the word “argument,” what comes to mind? Is it a scene such as the one you just read? Do you picture bickering? Insults? Yelling? Actually, this behavior describes not an argument, but a quarrel. A **quarrel** is any sharp or angry disagreement. When people let their tongues loose, fists may be flying next.

# Quarrels

Like so many of our English words, “quarrel” comes from Latin, the language of the ancient Romans. The Latin word *querella* means “complaint.” Quarrels often start with a complaint, don’t they?

The famous **feud**, or long-standing quarrel, between the Hatfields and the McCoys, two Appalachian mountain families, started when a McCoy complained that a Hatfield was stealing his hogs. Pretty soon the two families were torching one another’s houses and shooting at each other in the woods of Kentucky and West Virginia. The feud lasted for thirty years and claimed more than a dozen lives.

Another quarrel led to the duel between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton, one a vice president and the other a secretary of the treasury, and it also involved a complaint. Burr told newspapers that Hamilton was expressing a “despicable opinion” of him, smearing his good name in the mud. Whatever Hamilton may have said about Burr in this instance is not known to history, but Burr challenged him to a duel. The two men met with pistols on the heights of Weehawken, New Jersey, on July 11, 1804. Never intending to harm Burr, Hamilton fired his shot at a tree. But Burr wanted revenge and sent a bullet into Hamilton’s chest. As he lay dying the next day, Hamilton said, “I have no ill will against Colonel Burr. I met him with a fixed resolution to do him no harm. I forgive all that happened.” Thus a quarrel brought to an end the life of one of America’s founding fathers and a signer of the Constitution.

Perhaps the most famous quarrel of all comes from Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, with the feud between the Montague and Capulet families. Tybalt, a Capulet, is angry at Romeo, a Montague, for coming to a family party without an invitation. We would call this “party crashing” today. Tybalt storms

all over the town of Verona looking for Romeo in order to stick him with his sword. When he finally catches up with Romeo, he instantly insults him: “Romeo, the love I bear thee can afford / No better term than this: thou art a villain.”



In Shakespeare's day, the word "villain" had several meanings. It meant a poor farmer, or someone with bad manners (such as a poor farmer), and it also meant an evil or wicked person. To call someone a villain was loaded with all sorts of meanings. It was like saying, "You dirty, rotten, rude, low-down, nasty, beggarly peasant." Ouch!

Romeo has recently fallen in love with Tybalt's cousin, Juliet, so he'd rather not get mixed up in a deadly quarrel. He loves everything about Juliet, and his fondness extends even to her family—even to the fiery Tybalt. He responds calmly and tries to talk Tybalt out of fighting, but Tybalt won't listen. He already knows that Romeo is not a villain—a crude farmer—when he insults him. Tybalt insulted Romeo to get him to draw his sword and start dueling. The situation goes from bad to worse when Romeo's friend Mercutio calls Tybalt a "rat-catcher." Swords quickly follow words and dead bodies quickly follow swords. So goes this famous quarrel.

As you can see from these well-known examples, quarrels are angry disagreements and can involve complaints, insults, and even violence.

## Arguments

What about arguments then? How are they different than quarrels? An argument, in the oldest sense of the word, is actually no quarrel at all. The word "argument" comes from the Latin word *arguere*, which means "to make clear or demonstrate." An **argument** is a clear line of thinking aimed at proving a point. When a person argues, she mustn't be loud, rude, and obnoxious. She must remain calm so that she can think of the very best reasons to support her point of view in a discussion with another person who has a differing point of view. Arguments are designed to persuade people by reason rather than by force or ridicule.

In the years before the American Revolution, a Quaker preacher by the name of John Woolman traveled through the backcountry of Maryland and Virginia arguing against slavery. In the following passage from his journal, Woolman gives his supporting reasons for his argument that slavery is evil. Take a look at what Woolman wrote and make note of the way that he calmly and clearly states his points.

# The Land Is Polluted with Blood

—adapted from *The Journal of John Woolman*

When three or four hundred slaves are put in the belly of a boat in a hot climate, their breathing soon affects the air. Were that number of free people to go as passengers with all the proper necessities for their voyage, inconveniences would arise from their number. But when slaves are taken by violence, they frequently try to kill the white people that they may return to their native land. Hence they are kept in some sort of chain or bondage, by means of which a smell rises up in the hold of a ship, and sickness often breaks out amongst them, of which many die. When these people are sold in America, and in the Caribbean islands, they are made to labor in a manner more **servile** and constant than that which they were used to at home, along with grief, with different diet from what has been common with them, and with hard labor. Some thousands die every year, in what is called the **seasoning**. Thus it should be obvious that great numbers of these people are brought every year to an untimely end.

When the innocent suffer under hard-hearted men, even unto death, and the channels of equality are so blocked that the cause of the sufferers is not judged in **righteousness**, *the land is polluted with blood* (see Numbers 35:33).

When blood hath been shed unrighteously, and remains unatoned for, the cry thereof is very piercing. Under the humbling generosity of God, this cry has deeply affected my heart, and I feel a concern to open everything that lies heavily on my mind. While this practice is continued, and under a great load of guilt there is more unrighteousness committed, the state of things is very moving!

Clearly, John Woolman feels deeply saddened by the cruelty he sees inflicted upon fellow human beings by American slaveholders.

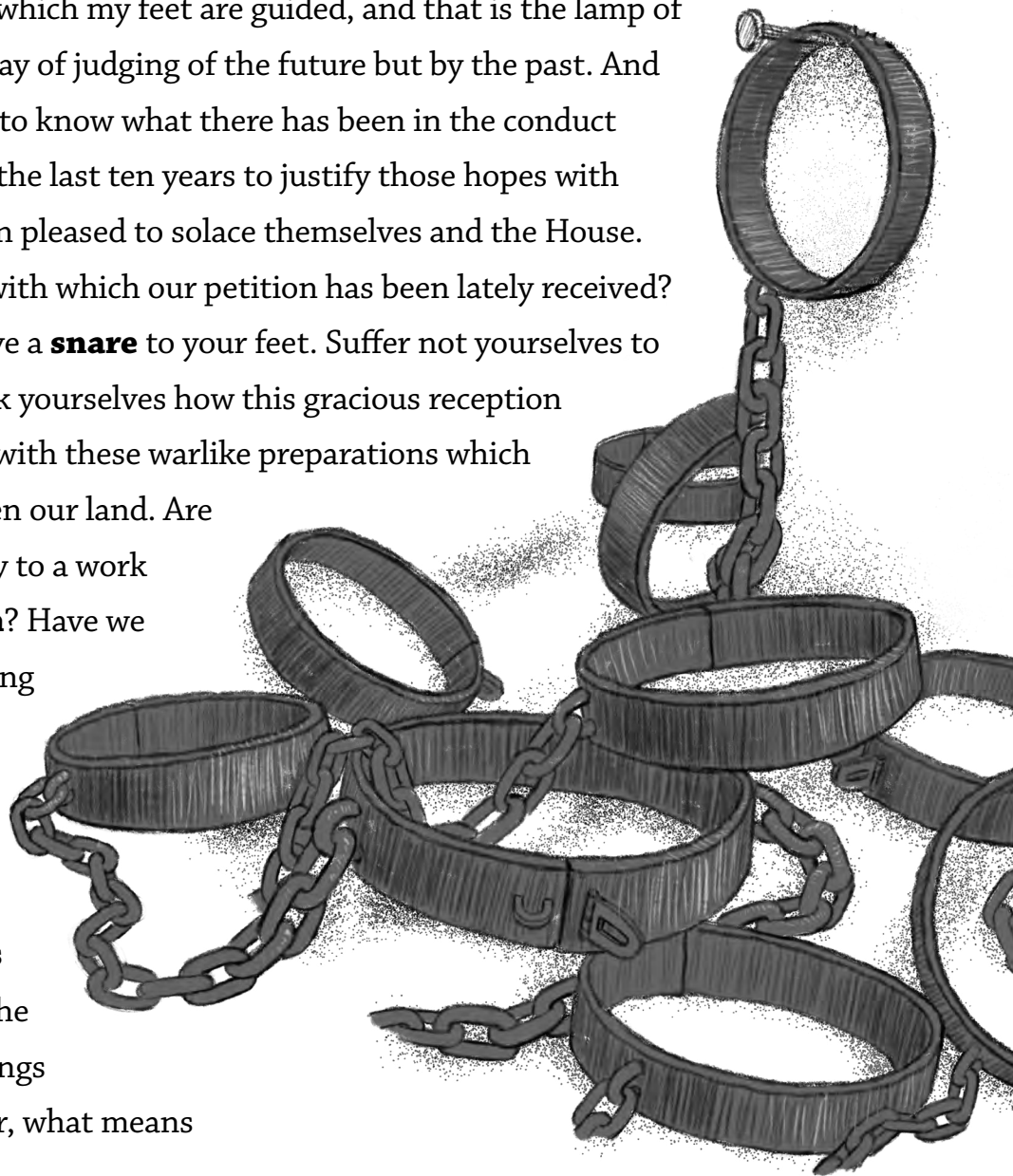
► What are some of the main points in his argument against slavery?

Another good argument can be found in Patrick Henry's most famous speech, "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death," in which he demonstrates his exasperation with the Virginia Convention. He wants to call his fellow Americans to arms against Great Britain, but he hears them talking wistfully about peace. While he scolds the convention for wishful thinking, he uses one solid reason for supporting his idea that America must go to war.

## Let Us Not Deceive Ourselves

—from "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" by Patrick Henry

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House. Is it that **insidious** smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a **snare** to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition **comports** with these warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and **reconciliation**? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the **implements** of war and **subjugation**; the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask, gentlemen, sir, what means







2. For one or two minutes, carefully examine *The Conversation* by American painter Mary Cassatt and *The Brawl* by French painter Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier. Then turn this book over and describe the two scenes with as much detail as you can remember. What is happening in each scene? Which scene seems to represent a quarrel and which seems to represent an argument? Explain your reasoning. Then, for each painting, give the people names and orally tell a story that would fit the action. Feel free to start your story with “Once upon a time . . .” if that would help.



◀ *The Conversation*  
by Mary Cassatt



*The Brawl* ▶  
by Jean-Louis-Ernest  
Meissonier

## Go Deeper—

Beside each selection write “quarrel” or “argument,” and then on the lines that follow the selection, explain the reason for your answer. Remember that a quarrel is a sharp or angry disagreement. An argument is the statement of a clear line of thinking to prove a point.

1. In this selection, Davy Crockett tells about his encounter with a raftsman on the Mississippi River.

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I thought I would spoil if I wasn't covered up in salt, for I hadn't had a fight in ten days. On the banks of the Mississippi River I came across a fellow floating downstream in the stern of his boat fast asleep.

Said I, “Hello, stranger! If you don't take care, your boat will run away with you.”

He looked up and said he, “I don't value you.” He looked up at me sideways, and I looked down upon him sideways, and he took out a chew of tobacco. Said he, “I don't value you one little spit.”

Said I, “Come ashore, I can whip you—I've been trying to get a fight all the morning.”

The varmint flapped his wings and crowed like a chicken. I rose up, shook my mane, and neighed like a horse.

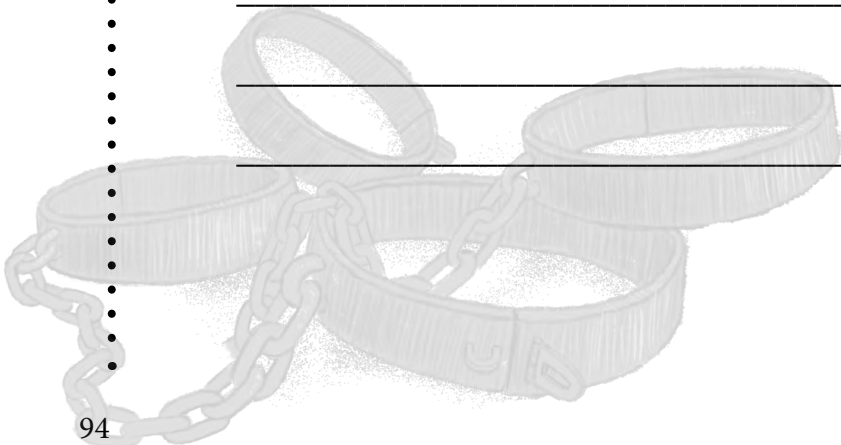
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2. During the Civil War, abolitionist Frederick Douglass was appalled that the Union army did not fight the South with black as well as white soldiers. He said:

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The national edifice is on fire. Every man who can carry a bucket of water, or remove a brick, is wanted. . . . Why does the Government reject the Negro? Is he not a man? Can he not wield a sword, fire a gun, march and countermarch, and obey orders like any other? Is there the least reason to believe that a regiment of well-drilled Negroes would deport themselves less soldier-like on the battlefield than the raw troops gathered up generally from the towns and cities of the State of New York? We do believe that such soldiers, if allowed to take up arms in defense of the Government, and made to feel that they are hereafter to be recognized as persons having rights, would set the highest example of order and general good behavior to their fellow soldiers, and in every way add to the national power.

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3. The following conversation between a woman and her neighbor is from a story that takes place in Russia.

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Then the girl went to her neighbor's, and the neighbor lady came out to meet her.

“What do you want, young woman?”

“Why, Granny, you see, my hen flew across this morning. Did she not lay an egg here?”

“We never saw anything of it. The Lord be thanked, our own hens started laying long ago. We collect our own eggs and have no need of other people's! And we don't go looking for eggs in other people's yards, lass!”

The young woman was offended and said more than she should have done. Her neighbor answered back with interest, and the women began abusing each other. “You’re this!” and “You’re that!” “You’re a thief!” and “You’re a pig!” and “You’re starving your old father-in-law to death!” and “You’re a good-for-nothing!” and so on. “And you’ve made a hole in the strainer I lent you, you jade! And it’s our yoke you’re carrying your pails on—you just give back our yoke!”

Then they caught hold of the yoke and spilt the water and snatched off one another’s shawls and began fighting.

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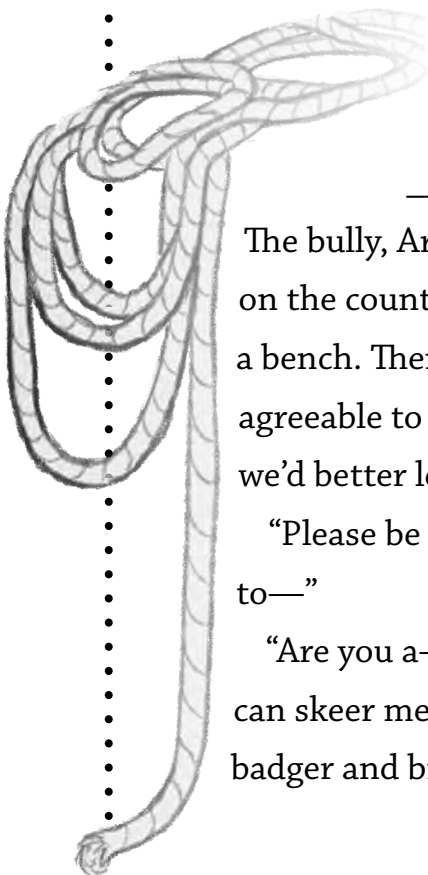
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4. Mark Twain traveled west by stagecoach in 1861. The following selection describes one incident that happened along the way.

The bully, Arkansas, played with his glass a moment, lolling on his elbows on the counter. He gave a sleeping dog a kick that sent him howling under a bench. Then he said to the meek innkeeper, “Lan’lord, ain’t this company agreeable to you? Ain’t it? If this company ain’t agreeable to you, perhaps we’d better leave. Is that your idea? Is that what you’re coming at?”

“Please be reasonable, Arkansas. Now you know that I ain’t the man to—”

“Are you a-threatenin’ me? Are you? By George, the man don’t live that can skeer me! Come out from behind that bar! I’ll learn you to bully and badger and browbeat a gentleman!”





“Please, Arkansas, please don’t shoot! If there’s got to be bloodshed—”

“Do you hear that, gentlemen? Do you hear him talk about bloodshed? So it’s blood you want, is it, you ravin’ desperado! You’d made up your mind to murder somebody this mornin’—I knowed it perfectly well. I’m the man, am I? It’s me you’re goin’ to murder, is it?”

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5. The following selection is a speech by Native American chief Powhatan to the Virginia colonists as recorded by Captain John Smith in 1609.

\_\_\_\_\_ Why will you take by force what you may obtain by love? Why will you destroy us who supply you with food? What can you get by war? . . . We are unarmed, and willing to give you what you ask, if you come in a friendly manner. . . .

I am not so simple as not to know it is better to eat good meat, sleep comfortably, live quietly with my women and children, laugh and be merry with the English, and being their friend, trade for their copper and hatchets, than to run away from them. . . .

Take away your guns and swords, the cause of all our jealousy, or you may die in the same manner.

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## Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—You’ve learned how to identify fragments and run-on sentences. Now it’s time to distinguish one from the other. Identify which of the following sentences from Mark Twain’s *Roughing It* are fragments and which are run-ons. Then on the lines that follow, rewrite them as complete sentences. Remember that fragments are sentences that are missing essential parts or that are improperly divided by a period. A run-on sentence is a sentence that lacks proper punctuation and should really be divided into separate sentences or joined with a conjunction.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Soon learned to recognize the sharp, vicious bark of the coyote.

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B. \_\_\_\_\_

Owens was drowsy and resumed his nap, but only for a minute or two presently he turned in his bed.

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C. \_\_\_\_\_

As Arkansas charged after him, the landlord’s wife suddenly appeared in the doorway and confronted the desperado with a pair of scissors her fury was magnificent.

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D. \_\_\_\_\_

I was afraid he had not killed anybody that morning. And he might be needing diversion.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

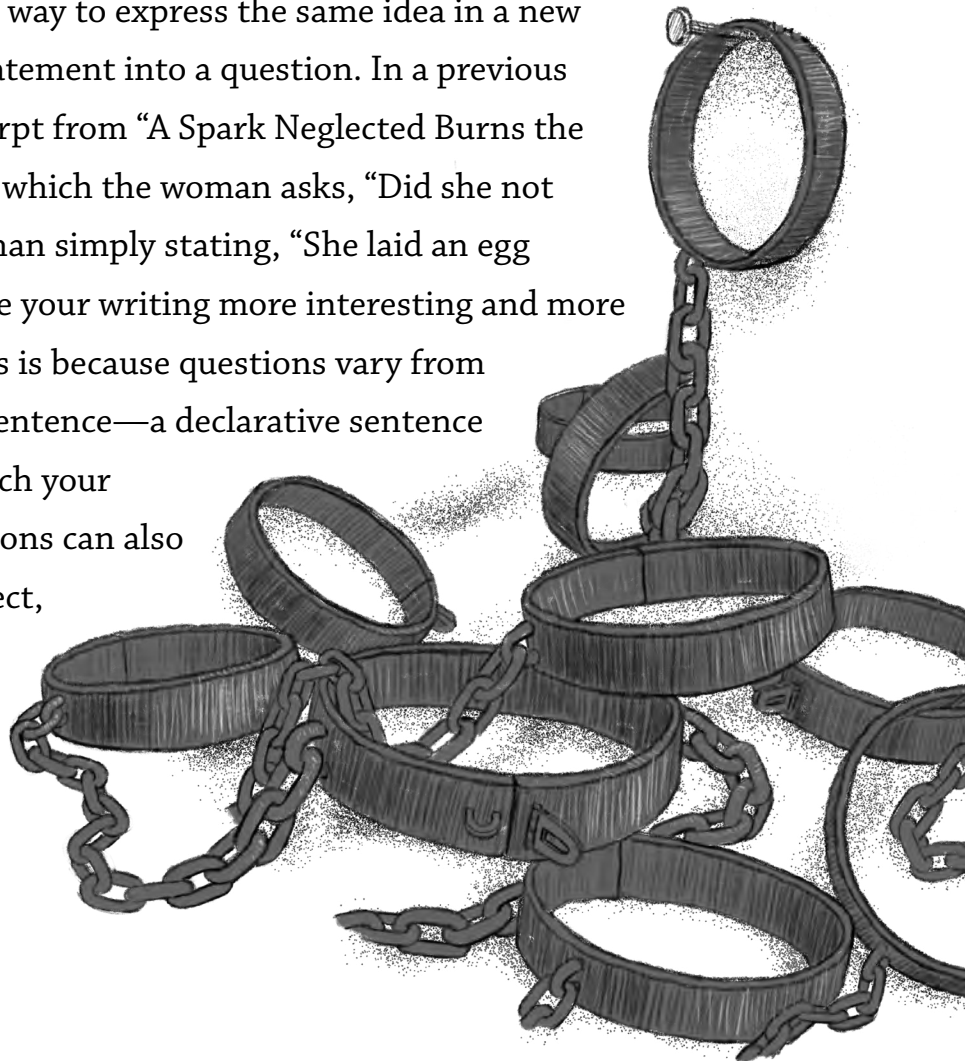
E. \_\_\_\_\_

When he is about to be hung, the true desperado will cry like a baby and plead like a child, that's how brave he is.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. **COPIOUSNESS**—You've learned that the same idea can be expressed in many different ways. One way to express the same idea in a new way is to turn a simple statement into a question. In a previous exercise, you read an excerpt from "A Spark Neglected Burns the House" by Leo Tolstoy, in which the woman asks, "Did she not lay an egg here?" rather than simply stating, "She laid an egg here." Questions can make your writing more interesting and more rhetorically powerful. This is because questions vary from the most typical type of sentence—a declarative sentence such as this one—and catch your readers' attention. Questions can also be taken as a sign of respect, because directing them to an audience shows an awareness of your readers.



The following sentences come from the quarrels and arguments you already looked at. On the lines provided, rewrite each statement as a question.

Examples:

Statement: It should be obvious that great numbers of these people are brought every year to an untimely end.

Question: Shouldn't it be obvious that great numbers of these people are brought every year to an untimely end?

Statement: It will prove a snare to your feet.

Question: Won't it prove a snare to your feet?

A. I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided.

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B. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone.

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C. Every man who can carry a bucket of water is wanted.

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D. Please be reasonable, Arkansas.

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**3. QUARREL VERSUS ARGUMENT**—Imagine that a neighbor boy has accused you of stealing his bike. Consider your three options. You can walk away from him and not answer the accusation at all. You can get angry and defensive and quarrel with your neighbor. Or you can reason with your neighbor by putting forth sound arguments.





A. In the space provided, write a four- or five-sentence reply to your neighbor that might spark a quarrel.

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B. In the space provided, write a four- or five-sentence argument that would help to prove your innocence to your neighbor.

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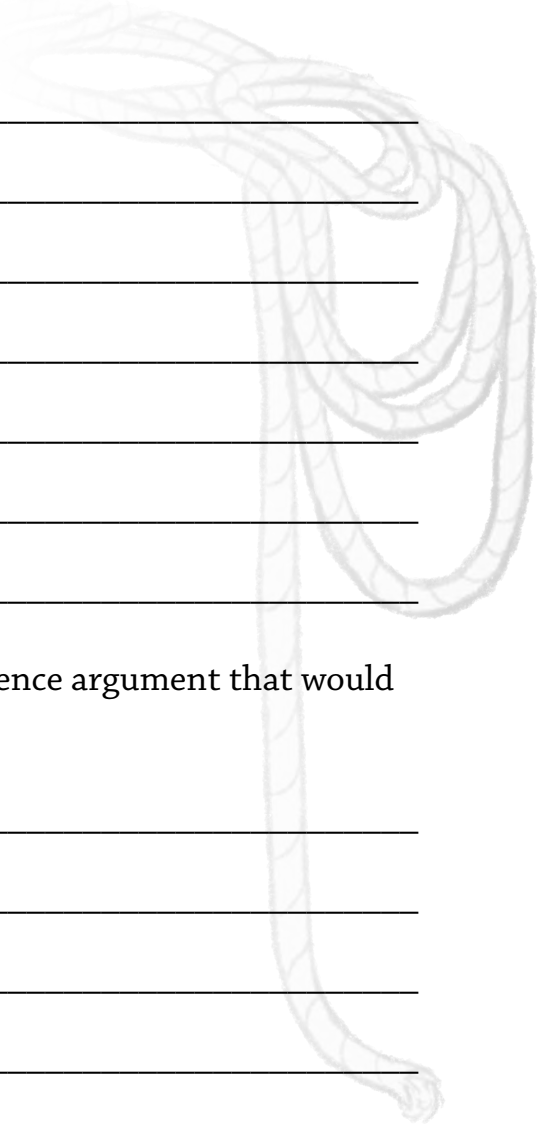
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When you look at your two responses to the neighbor boy, which response do you think would be most likely to convince him that you're not a thief? Put yourself in the shoes of the boy whose bike was taken. If someone were to give you the answer you provided for A, wouldn't your suspicion that your neighbor was a thief only grow stronger? You might ask, "Why is this person being so defensive?"







\_\_\_\_\_ “It was along in the winter of ’69 that I was out huntin’ buffalo,” said Criss, telling me the yarn one night, sitting by a campfire near El Paso, Texas.

\_\_\_\_\_ “We were up in the Panhandle, and many buffalo grazed around us.

\_\_\_\_\_ My friend and I killed nineteen between us. \_\_\_\_\_ We were skinnin’ them and were takin’ off the hides of four or five when the worst norther I ever remembered struck us. \_\_\_\_\_ We piled all the wood we could find on the fire, but we couldn’t begin to keep warm, and when night come on it got colder and colder and colder, till the coffee, boilin’ on the coffeepot on the fire, had a skim of ice on it that we had to break through before we could pour the coffee out.

\_\_\_\_\_ Well, a bright idea struck me, and I took one of the green buffalo hides and wrapped myself up in it, and in a minute I was as warm and comfortable as a man could wish to be anywhere. \_\_\_\_\_ You know there’s nothin’ warmer than a buffalo hide, and this one was extra thick. \_\_\_\_\_ Charley saw what I had done, and he went and got a hide too, and wrapped himself up in it. \_\_\_\_\_ We were not long in fallin’ asleep after that, and I was peacefully dreaming when, all of a sudden, I was woke up by the most awful howlin’ I ever heard. \_\_\_\_\_ I was sure the Indians were down on us, and I jumped up and grabbed my rifle in a hurry.

\_\_\_\_\_ Then I saw it was my friend Charley who was doing the yellin’. \_\_\_\_\_ I went over to where he lay wrapped up in the green buffalo hide, and I gave him a kick to wake him up, for I thought he was havin’ a nightmare. \_\_\_\_\_ “Help me out, help me out!” he yelled. \_\_\_\_\_ “What’s the matter with you?” I asked.

\_\_\_\_\_ “Don’t you see I’m froze up in this hide and can’t get out?” he howled.

\_\_\_\_\_ “The hide is frozen solid!”



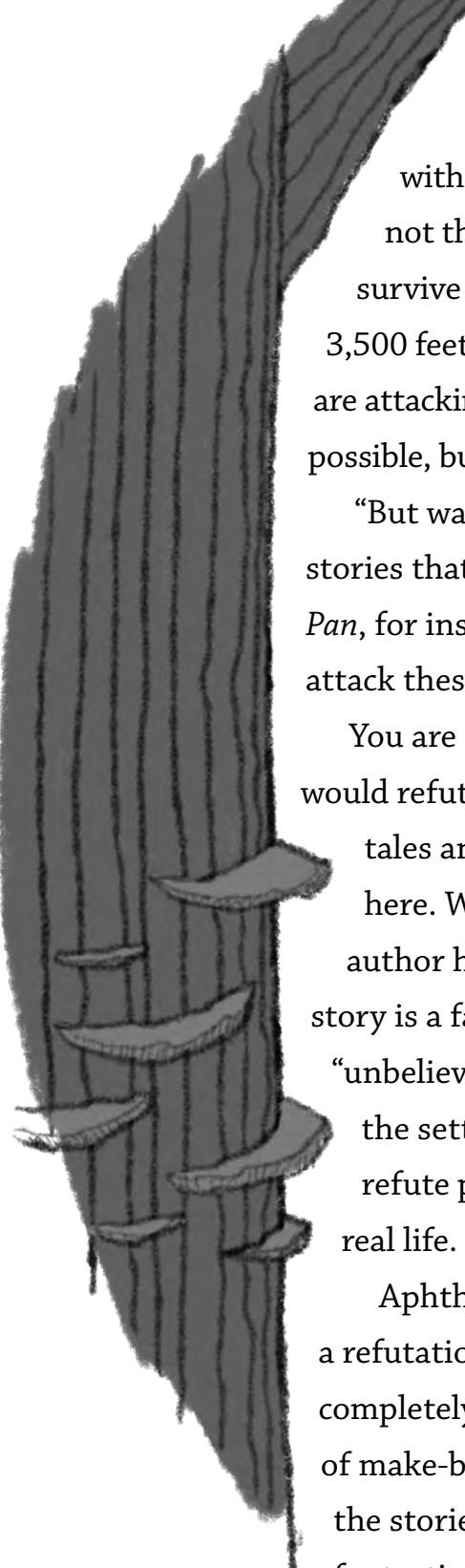
## Lesson 6 .....

Unbelievable, Improbable,  
Unclear, or Improper

**B**efore you can write a refutation, you will need to consider whether a part of a story is unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper. Each word is a powerful term for evaluating the parts of a story. However, you need to be sure you know what these words mean and how to use them.

### Unbelievable

So, what does it mean if something is unbelievable? Consider this story: Not long ago, a girl from Texas celebrated her birthday by jumping from an airplane. Unfortunately, her parachute didn't open and she fell down—*way* down—for 3,500 feet and landed in a cow pasture. Somehow, some way, she managed to survive the fall. After staying for a time in a hospital, she is now back on her feet and living like any ordinary teenager. You might be tempted to say, “Unbelievable!” and I would agree



with you. This story really is unbelievable. It's not that it's untrue; it's not that it's impossible; it's just that it's hard to believe anyone could survive such a long fall. It's easy enough to die falling 20 feet, let alone 3,500 feet. When you attack part of a story for being **unbelievable**, you are attacking something that is *hard to believe*. It may or may not actually be possible, but you are expressing your own *sense* of its possibility.

“But wait!” you might say. “There are many wonderful make-believe stories that are full of things that are unbelievable. Flying children in *Peter Pan*, for instance, or gigantic trolls in *The Lord of the Rings*. If I have to attack these things, there will be no magic left in the stories!”

You are absolutely right. Based on what's believable in real life, you would refute the best parts of many fine myths and legends, superhero tales and science fiction stories. But that is not what you are doing here. When a fictional, or imaginary, story is well written and the author has done a good job of creating a realistic world, even if the story is a fairy tale with fire-breathing dragons, we would not call it “unbelievable.” This is because we are able to believe what happens within the setting or context of the story itself. This means that when we refute parts of a make-believe story, we do not stack them up against real life.

Aphthonius, the original writer of the *progym* exercises, said that a refutation attacks ideas “in the middle ground,” not ideas that are completely impossible. What this means when you are considering parts of make-believe stories is that you shouldn't focus simply on the fact that the stories are fictional (make-believe) and therefore dismiss anything fantastic as not believable. Instead, you should weigh the characters, events, and ideas that you find *within* the world of the story. You should not refute the basic facts of the story, even if those facts may seem unbelievable in the real world. Instead, focus on the “middle ground” and refute the things—the characters' actions or the way things happen—that seem unbelievable based on what is true within the world of the story.

For example, if you were using a fable in your argument, you wouldn't attack something basic to a fable such as the presence of talking animals. In the fabulous world of fables, talking animals are just the way things go. They are just a fact of life. Instead, you might attack the fact that the fable has a peacock that acted with humility or a pig that showed fine manners. We often think of peacocks as proud birds, and therefore, you would say that it is unbelievable that a peacock would act with humility. We all know that pigs are sloppy eaters, and so you would say that it is unbelievable that a pig would eat with fine manners. In other words, in making your argument you wouldn't argue with a "fabulous" element such as peacocks and pigs that act like human beings. Rather, you would argue with the way these animals are depicted. So, in refuting parts of a make-believe story, rather than looking at them as you would the real world, you should think about what is believable within the story itself.

## Improbable

The word "improbable" also needs to be explained. If something is impossible, there is no chance of it occurring, no chance of it being true. If something is **improbable**, it is neither *likely* to occur nor *likely* to be true. However, there is still a chance that it *might* occur or be true. It might be a very small chance, but it can't be ruled out.

For example, is it probable that lightning will kill you? No! The odds of being struck by lightning are about 1 in 700,000. But even though it's improbable that you will die by a lightning strike, it is still possible. In the United States an average of seventy-three people are killed each year by lightning. You definitely don't want to be one of those seventy-three people!

Is it probable that you will win the lottery jackpot? Each year millions of people plunk down their hard-earned dollars for the chance to win the big prize. But your chances of winning the typical lottery jackpot are about 1 in 14 million! That means you could get struck by lightning twenty times for every time you win the lottery jackpot. Think of it in terms of time: If you were to buy one lottery ticket a week, 14

million weeks calculates out to more than 269,000 years. It would take over a quarter of a million years for you to win the lottery once! Clearly the lottery is a waste of money—and yet people keep buying lottery tickets. Why? They do it because although it is improbable that they will win the lottery, it is not quite impossible. It's almost impossible—but not quite.

Now you may be thinking, “Yikes! ‘Unbelievable’ and ‘improbable’ sound alike. Which category should I choose?” Keep in mind that “unbelievable” has to do with whether you believe that something could happen at all, and “improbable” has to do with how likely it is that a believable thing will actually happen. Using lightning to light the way, the following are some examples that might help:

- Unbelievable: One clear, sunny day, Tommy Tinker was struck by lightning.

Lightning happens when the weather is stormy, not on a clear, sunny day, so it is hard to believe that Tommy was struck on a sunny day. It does not seem to be possible.

- Believable: Tommy Tinker was struck by lightning on a stormy day.

Well, sure, some people get struck by lightning, especially during stormy weather, so this really could have happened. This statement is not hard to believe.

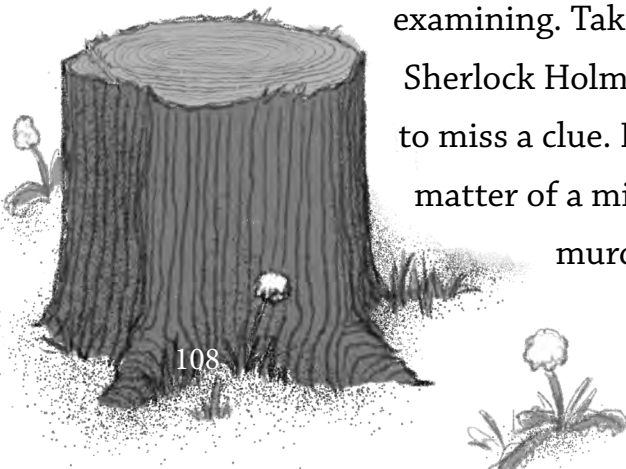
- Improbable: Tommy Tinker is struck by lightning again (a second time).

This guy has no luck! Some people do get struck by lightning more than once, but the odds are against it. So, although it is believable (it seems as if it could be possible) that Tommy could be struck again, it is not likely (probable).

- Probable: Having been struck by lightning once, Tommy Tinker sits in his car while the storm blows over. He is not struck by lightning again.

It is probable, or likely, that Tommy, already having been struck once, would not be struck a second time.

So how does the term “improbable” apply to fictional stories? Just as with the term “unbelievable,” you must begin by accepting the world of the story you are examining. Take, for example, the character of the great detective Sherlock Holmes. He is a man of vast intelligence. He never seems to miss a clue. He can survey the scene of a murder and, in the matter of a minute or two, he can tell you many things about a murderer. For instance, Holmes determines that one





murderer “is a tall man, left-handed, limps with the right leg, wears thick-soled shooting-boots and a grey cloak, smokes Indian cigars, uses a cigar-holder, and carries a blunt pen-knife in his pocket.”<sup>1</sup> Sherlock Holmes’s amazing intelligence is a reality of these detective stories, something basic to the world of the stories. So, if we believe that he can discover all these clues, how probable is it that he would fail to see a single poodle hair inside the pant leg on the dead body? Highly improbable! While it is still possible, it is not likely, so we would declare it improbable that Mr. Holmes would not see the poodle hair.

## Unclear

Another excellent attack word is “unclear.” If something is **unclear**, it is fuzzy and indistinct. It’s a little like trying to look at your reflection in a foggy bathroom mirror after a shower.

The only way you can see yourself clearly is to wipe the moisture away with a towel.

Sometimes parts of stories seem to be unclear because the reader has failed to pay careful enough attention to them. Sometimes a part of a story seems unclear because the author has chosen not to reveal the full explanation right away. Usually the author will reveal everything that seems unclear before the end of the story, and the story would be boring if the author explained everything all at once. However, sometimes parts of stories are unclear because the author has not developed the characters or plot enough, and the reader might be left scratching his head, wondering what’s going on. For example:

- Unclear: Tommy Tinker was sitting out a lightning storm in his car. Suddenly he was standing outside, just in time to be struck by lightning.

How did Tommy get from inside the car to outside and thus get struck by lightning? Did something happen, or was there something about his character that caused him to leave the car?

- Clear: Tommy Tinker, who loved being out in the rain, sat in his car during a storm. Unable to resist the feel of rain on his skin, he got outside of his car and was struck by lightning.



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1. This quote is from “The Boscombe Valley Mystery” in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Here, the reader does not have to wonder why Tommy got out of his car. The information provided makes sense of his action, so the story is clear.

If the author of a story prepares the reader well for changes in her characters or in her plot, then the reader can accept these changes. For example, in the fairy tale *Hansel and Gretel*, we don't have to wonder why the two children are wandering about a dark, dangerous forest on their own. The storyteller explains that there is a famine in the land and, rather than feed Hansel and Gretel, their wicked stepmother tries to lose them deep in the woods. We don't question why the witch doesn't gobble the children up immediately because we know that she wants to fatten them up first.

On the other hand, if things happen without a clear reason, or if characters change without any explanation or development, part of the story can become unclear. Take the famous fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood* as another example. Most of us are so familiar with this story that we can miss the many parts of it that are unclear, but

when I was a kid, I always wondered why Red Riding Hood's mother would send her daughter alone through a dark forest where wolves would most likely be lurking. We have too little information to know whether she is a foolish woman or simply too trusting, so we can only scratch our heads and wonder why she would send a little girl into danger.

In a fairy tale world, we don't really question that Red Riding Hood meets a talking wolf. However, it is unclear why the hungry wolf doesn't simply gobble down Red Riding Hood when he first meets her. It is also unclear how Red Riding Hood fails to recognize that a wolf has taken the place of her own dear grandmother in bed. The story's lack of information about the characters causes us to question why they behave the way they do. If we knew that the grandmother had a fuzzy face and a long nose to begin with, we wouldn't be so confused about why Red Riding Hood doesn't recognize the wolf in Granny's bed.

The more you look at *Little Red Riding Hood*, the fuzzier some parts of the story become. Because Red Riding Hood's mother, the girl herself, and the wolf all behave in baffling ways, a critical reader can call these parts of the story unclear.

Unclear parts of a narrative are confusing. They cause the reader to slow down and stop. “Wait,” she thinks. “What just happened? Huh? This doesn’t make sense. What’s going on here?” Unclear parts of a tale are like bumps on a smooth road. They jolt us out of the story and make it less effective.

The following are some good questions to ask when determining whether or not part of a narrative is unclear:

- Does a character behave in a way that seems out of character?
- Does a character do something that makes no sense?
- Does the plot take a sudden, unexplained turn?

## Improper



What does it mean for something to be improper? In terms of refuting part of a narrative, something is **improper** if it shows bad or rude behavior or if it tries to make this behavior seem good. Another reason to say that something is improper is if it teaches an immoral lesson or shows a character breaking a good law.

Look at Tommy Tinker again:

- Improper: Tommy Tinker went outside in every thunderstorm and held up a steel pole to prove to his friends that he was **invincible**.

Tommy’s behavior is improper because it lacks wisdom and because no human being is invincible, especially when it comes to surviving bolts of lightning. When people pretend to be invincible, they usually find themselves in trouble.

- Proper: Tommy Tinker took cover when he saw lightning strike nearby.

Tommy Tinker’s behavior is proper because he uses caution and makes the choice to stay safe in a dangerous situation.

We have only to look at a familiar fairy tale such as *Jack and the Beanstalk* to see a number of places in which a character’s behavior is improper. Jack and his mother are dreadfully poor, and yet Jack sells the family cow, which is worth lots of money, for a handful of dried beans. The beans turn out to be magic, and we won’t quibble with that, but that does not take away from the fact that Jack behaved foolishly in selling the cow. In addition, it’s true that the giant at the end of the beanstalk

is an evil fellow—he likes to eat English boys broiled on toast—but stealing is still improper. On three different occasions, Jack steals riches from the giant. He steals a bag of gold coins, a goose that lays golden eggs, and a golden harp that sings. We can certainly enjoy Jack’s pluck and daring and his adventures in the land of giants, but at the end of the day we can still conclude that he acted improperly.

Now that you understand the terms “unbelievable,” “improbable,” “unclear,” and “improper,” read *The Fort, and an Unexpected Meeting* and see if you can refute parts of the story using these ideas.

As we pick up this story, a hunter named Jasper rides his horse toward a small fort on the prairie. He has traveled many hundreds of miles with two companions to claim the hand of a young woman named Marie. Two years before this scene, Jasper became engaged to Marie, but he was not allowed to marry her until he established himself and was settled with a house in Canada.

## The Fort, and an Unexpected Meeting

—adapted from *Away in the Wilderness* by R.M. Ballantyne

We turn now to a very different scene. It is a small fort or trading post on the banks of a stream which flows through the prairie. There are four block-houses or bastions, one at each corner, from which the muzzles of a few heavy guns may be seen.

The trees and bushes have been cleared away from around this fort, and the strips of forest land that run along both sides of the river are not so thickly wooded as the country through which the hunter has been travelling. In front of the fort rolls the river. Immediately behind it lies the boundless prairie, which extends like a sea of grass, with scarcely a tree or bush upon it, as far as the eye can reach. This is Fort Erie.

You might ride for many days over that prairie without seeing anything of the forest, except a clump of trees and bushes here and there, and now and then a little pond. The whole region is extremely beautiful—one that might fill the hearts of men with admiration and love for the creation and Creator. But men in those regions, at the time I write of, thought little of the beauties of nature.

It was now a little after sunset. The day's work at the fort had been finished, and the men were amusing themselves by racing their horses, of which fine animals there were great numbers at Fort Erie.

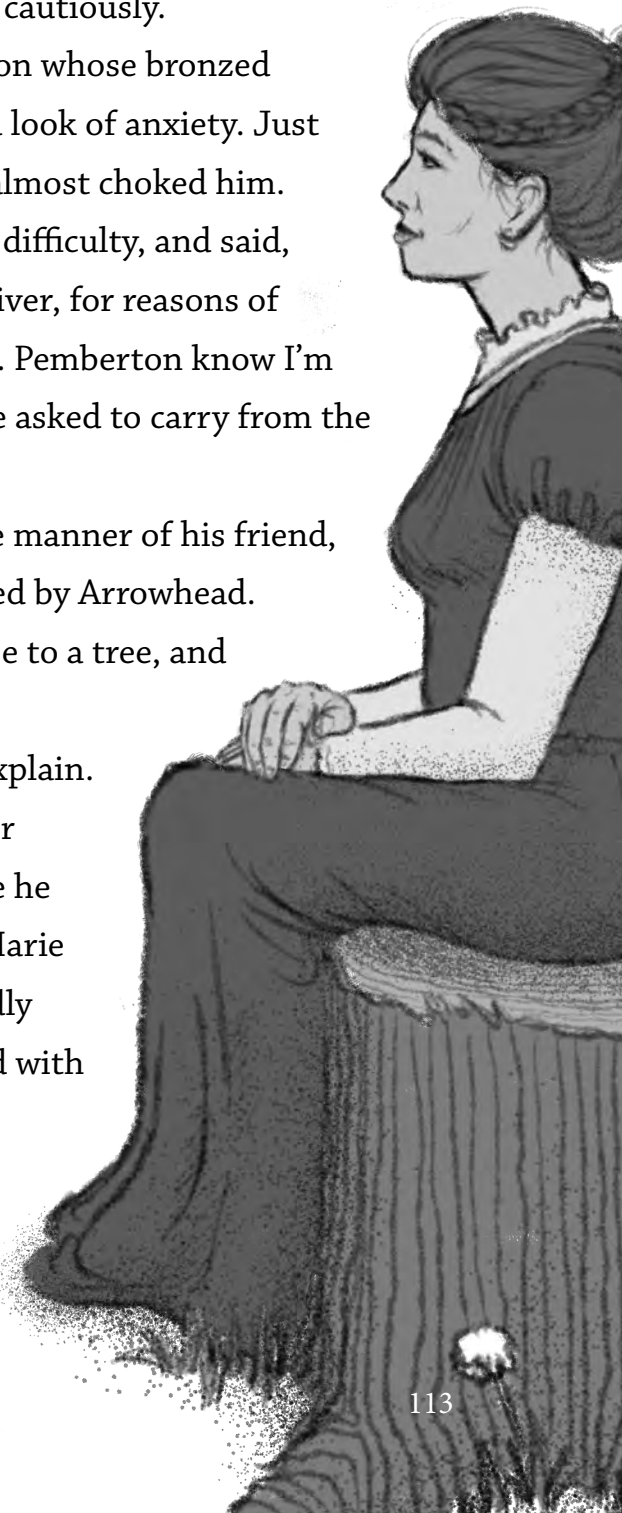
Just a little after the sun had gone down, three horsemen appeared on the distant prairie and came bounding at full gallop toward the fort. They were our friends Jasper, Heywood, and Arrowhead. These adventurous travelers had reached a fort farther down the river two days before and, having been supplied with horses, had pushed forward by way of the plains. On entering the belt of woods close to the fort, the horsemen reined in and rode among the trees more cautiously.

"Here's the end of our journey at last," cried Jasper, on whose bronzed countenance there was a deep flush of excitement and a look of anxiety. Just as he said this, Jasper's heart leapt into his throat and almost choked him. Pulling up suddenly, he swallowed his heart, with some difficulty, and said, "Hold on, lads. I'll ride round to the fort by way of the river, for reasons of my own. Push on, Heywood and Arrowhead, and let Mr. Pemberton know I'm coming. See, I will give you the packet of letters we were asked to carry from the fort below. Now, make haste."

Heywood, a little surprised at this speech, and at the manner of his friend, took the packet in silence and rode swiftly away, followed by Arrowhead. When they were gone, Jasper dismounted, tied his horse to a tree, and walked quickly into the woods in another direction.

Now, this mysterious proceeding is not difficult to explain. Jasper had caught sight of a female figure walking under the trees at a considerable distance from the spot where he had pulled up. He supposed that she must be his own Marie Laroche. Overjoyed at the opportunity thus unexpectedly afforded him of meeting her alone, he hastened forward with a wildly beating heart.

Marie was seated on the stump of a fallen tree when the hunter came up. She was a fair-haired, beautiful woman of about five and twenty, with an



air of modesty about her that attracted love yet repelled familiarity. Many a good-looking and well-doing young fellow had attempted to gain the heart of Marie during the last two years, but without success, for this good reason: that her heart had been gained already.

Marie was somewhat startled when a man appeared thus suddenly before her. Jasper stood in silence for a few moments, with his arms crossed upon his breast, and gazed earnestly into her face.

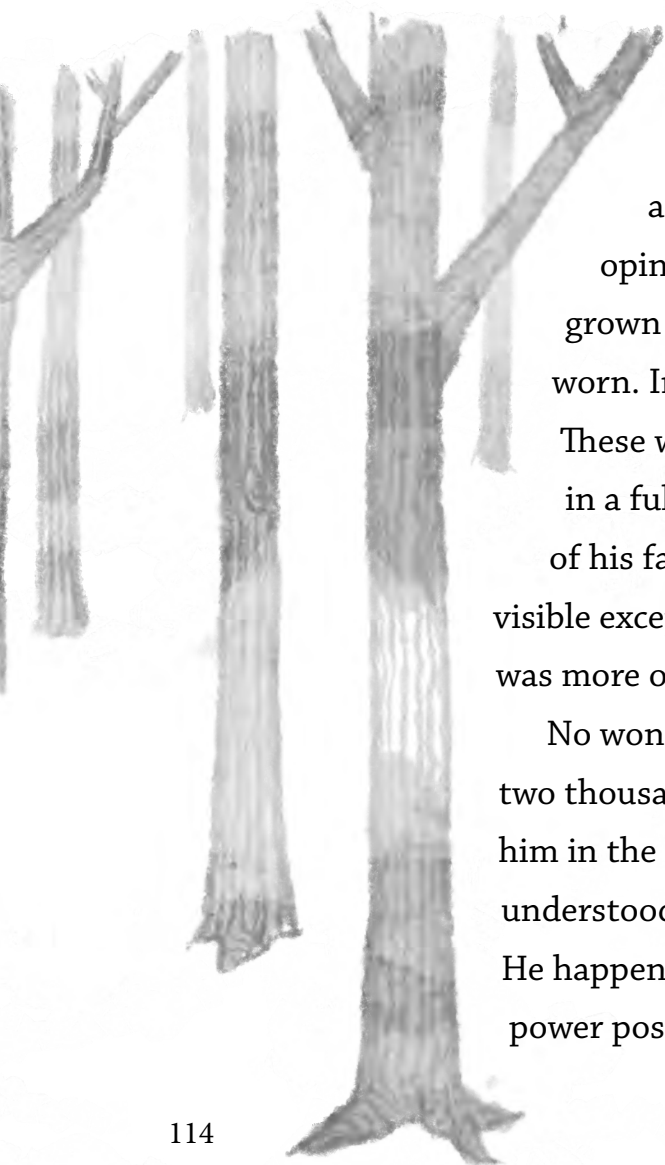
As he did not speak, she said, "You appear to be a stranger here. Have you arrived lately?"

Jasper was for a moment astonished that she did not at once recognize him, and yet he had no reason to be surprised. Besides the alteration that two years sometimes makes in a man, Jasper had made a considerable alteration on himself.

When Marie last saw him, he had been in the habit of practicing the foolish and unnatural custom of shaving, and he had carried it to such an extreme that he shaved off everything—whiskers, beard, and mustache. But within a year he had changed his opinion on this subject. He decided that since hair had grown on his cheeks, lips, and chin, it was intended to be worn. In other words, Jasper had let his whiskers grow.

These were now large and bushy, and his chin was covered in a full beard. Besides this, not having shaved any part of his face during the last three weeks, there was little of it visible except his eyes, forehead, and cheekbones. All the rest was more or less covered with black hair.

No wonder, then, that Marie, who believed him to be two thousand miles away at that moment, did not recognize him in the increasing darkness of evening. The lover at once understood this, and he resolved to play the part of a stranger. He happened to have the power of changing his voice—a power possessed by many people—and, trusting to the



increasing gloom to conceal him, and to the fact that he was the last person in the world whom Marie might expect to see there, he addressed her as follows: "I am indeed a stranger here; at least I have not been at the post for a very long time. I have just reached the end of a long voyage."

"Indeed," said the woman, interested by the stranger's grave manner. "May I ask where you have come from?"

"I have come all the way from Canada, young woman, and I count myself lucky in meeting with such a pleasant face at the end of my journey."

"From Canada!" exclaimed Marie, becoming still more interested in the stranger and blushing deeply as she asked, "You have friends there, no doubt?"

"Ay, a few," said Jasper.

"And what has brought you such a long way into this wild wilderness?" asked Marie, sighing as she thought of the hundreds of miles that lay between Fort Erie and Canada.

"I have come here to get me a wife," replied Jasper.

"That is strange," said the woman, smiling, "for there are few women here. A stout hunter like you might find one nearer home, I should think."

Here Marie paused, for she felt that on such a subject she ought not to converse with a stranger. Yet she could not help adding, "But perhaps, as you say, you have been in this part of the world before, and you may have someone in your mind?"

"I am engaged," said Jasper abruptly.

On hearing this Marie felt more at her ease, and, being of a very sympathetic nature, she at once courted the confidence of the stranger.

"May I venture to ask her name?" asked Marie with an arch smile.

"I may not tell," replied Jasper. "I have a comrade who is entitled to know this secret before anyone else. Perhaps you may have heard of him, for he was up in these parts two years ago. His name is Jasper Derry."

The blood rushed to Marie's temples on hearing the name, and she turned her face away to conceal her agitation, while, in a low voice, she said, "Is Jasper Derry, then, your intimate friend?"

"That is he—a very intimate friend indeed. But you appear to know him."

“Yes, I—I know him—I have seen him. I hope he is well,” said Marie, and she listened with a wildly beating heart for the answer, though she still turned her face away.

“Oh! He’s well enough,” said Jasper. “Sickness don’t often trouble *him*. He’s going to be married.”

Had a bullet struck the woman’s heart she could not have turned more deadly pale than she did on hearing this. She half rose from the tree stump and would have fallen to the ground **insensible** had not Jasper caught her in his arms.

“My own Marie,” said he fervently, “forgive me, dearest; forgive my folly, my wickedness, in deceiving you in this fashion. Oh, what a fool I am!” he added, as the poor woman still hung heavily in his grasp. “Speak to me Marie, my own darling.”

Whether it was the earnestness of his voice, or the kiss which he printed on her forehead, or the coolness of the evening air, I know not, but certain it is that Marie recovered in the course of a few minutes, and, on being convinced that Jasper really was her old lover, she resigned herself, wisely, to her fate, and held such an uncommonly long conversation with the bold hunter that the moon was up and the stars were out before they turned their steps toward the fort.

## Tell It Back—Narration

- 1. Oral Narration: Without looking at the text, retell *The Fort, and an Unexpected Meeting* as best as you remember it using your own words. Try not to leave out any important details.

• Here is a selection from the beginning of the story to get you started:

• Just a little after the sun had gone down, three horsemen appeared on the distant prairie and came bounding at full gallop toward the fort. They were our friends Jasper, Heywood, and Arrowhead. These adventurous travelers had reached a fort farther down the river two days before and, having been supplied with horses, had pushed forward by way of the plains.





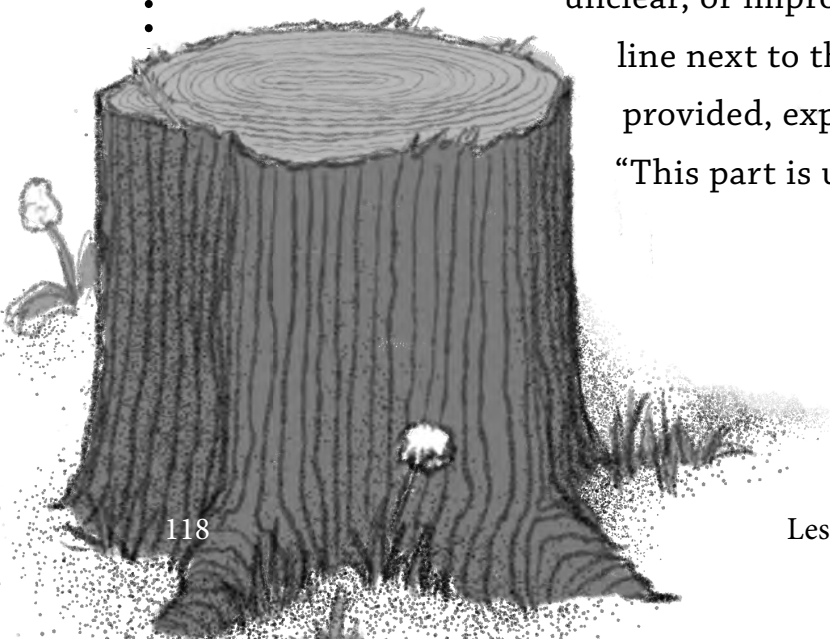
- 3. Outline: Create an outline for *The Fort, and an Unexpected Meeting* using Roman numerals (*I, II, III*) for the most important events and capital letters (*A, B, C*) for less important events. Use standard numbers (*1, 2, 3*) for minor points.

## Talk About It—

- 1. Think about the terms used for refutation that you learned about in this chapter. What parts of this story might be unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper? Keep in mind that a story may only have one or two refutable ideas.
- 2. If you were to illustrate this story, what moment would you choose to capture in a painting and why?
- 3. Do you remember the story of George Washington and the cherry tree from lesson 2? Just as honesty is an important quality for a leader to have, it is also important to a couple's relationship. In this story, Jasper was not honest with Marie. What were the consequences of this dishonesty? Why is honesty so important in a relationship?

## Go Deeper—

- 1. The following are some short selections from different types of narratives. Find a part of each selection that is unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper and write that word on the line next to the selection. Then, in the space provided, explain the label you used. Example: "This part is unclear because . . ."





a. \_\_\_\_\_

In one true story, a forest ranger by the name of Roy Sullivan was struck by lightning more than any other human being. He was struck seven times and survived each incident. One strike set his hair on fire, another strike scorched his shoulder, and still another strike burned off his eyebrows.

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b. \_\_\_\_\_

A burglar broke into a Florida home and roamed about the house looking for jewelry. Feeling sleepy, he lay down on a bed to take a nap, and that's where sheriff's deputies found him, sleeping soundly with the bag of jewels still in his hand. They even took pictures of the burglar while he snored.

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c. \_\_\_\_\_

There was a prize offered at school for the best literature paper. I did want a prize to take home. There was great excitement, and we all meant to try our best. The exam week began. Geology, arithmetic, Latin, French, German—we worked through them all without much enthusiasm. Then came the literature; you could hear the girls hold their breaths as the papers were given to them. I knew the answers to every one. Alice Thompson was



sitting next to me; she was one of the pretty dark girls and very idle. “What’s the date of *Paradise Lost*?” she whispered. I didn’t know what to do. I thought it would be mean of me not to tell her. After that she looked over my papers freely whenever the teacher wasn’t looking. The next day, Alice Thompson was awarded the literature prize. Her work was so very accurate, and her paper so well written.

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d. \_\_\_\_\_

Gilbert reached across the aisle, picked up the end of Anne’s long red braid, held it out at arm’s length and said in a piercing whisper: “Carrots! Carrots!”

Then Anne looked at him with a vengeance! She did more than look. She sprang to her feet. She flashed one indignant glance at Gilbert from eyes whose angry sparkle was swiftly quenched in equally angry tears. “You mean, hateful boy!” she exclaimed passionately. “How dare you!” And then—thwack! Anne had brought her slate down on Gilbert’s head and cracked it—slate not head—clear across.

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e. \_\_\_\_\_

A man in Switzerland wanted to have a picnic with a large European brown bear, so he jumped over the tall zoo fence. The bear immediately pounced on the man with his paws and bit him with his four-inch-long fangs. Zookeepers had to shoot the bear to keep it from killing the trespasser.

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f. \_\_\_\_\_

The salesman stood up at the back of the wagon and shouted, "Ladies and gentlemen, step right up and buy Abbey's Effervescent Salt! No one who suffers from a sluggish liver should ever be without it. This fabulous medicine is recommended to cure the flu, sleeplessness, spleen afflictions, loss of appetite, nervous appetite, nervous depression, indigestion, piles, heartburn, sick headache, seasickness, constipation, bloating and gassiness, fever, rheumatism, gout, and all your skin and kidney complaints. It purifies the blood and clears the complexion. And it's guaranteed to give you a longer life!"

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g. \_\_\_\_\_

After supper Pap took the jug and said he had enough whisky there for two drunks. I judged he would be blind drunk in about an hour, and then I would steal the key and escape. He drank and drank, and tumbled down on his blankets by and by, but luck didn't run my way. He didn't go sound asleep, but was uneasy. He groaned and moaned and thrashed around this way and that for a long time.

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2. Have you ever had a louse or a tick attach itself to your head? I can almost hear you thinking, "Yuck!" Well, many words in English have **prefixes** attached to their heads. These are very short words at the beginning of a word that change that word's meaning. For example, the meaning of the word "kind" is changed completely with the prefix *un-* attached to its head. I would much rather have a *kind* camp counselor than an *unkind* camp counselor, wouldn't you? The prefix *un-* comes to us from Old English as a way of saying "not." So "unkind" means "not kind." The same is often true for the Latin prefixes *in-* and *im-*. Both can mean "not."

a. In the space provided, jot down the meanings of the following changed words.

Example:

"Credible" changed to "incredible" means: not credible (or not believable)

"Possible" changed to "impossible" means: \_\_\_\_\_

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"Clear" changed to "unclear" means: \_\_\_\_\_

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“Proper” changed to “improper” means: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

“True” changed to “untrue” means: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

“Trustworthy” changed to “untrustworthy” means: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

“Believable” changed to “unbelievable” means: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. “She half rose from the tree stump and would have fallen to the ground insensible had not Jasper caught her in his arms.” Use the context of this sentence to define the adverb “insensible” on the lines provided. (Don’t simply write “not sensible.”) Then check a dictionary for a definition and write it down. Lastly, use the word in a sentence that helps to demonstrate its meaning.

Your definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Writing Time—

## 1. SENTENCE PLAY—

A. Sentences will change when circumstances change. Look at the following sentences from this lesson's story. They are each followed by a question that changes the story's circumstances. Based on those questions, rewrite the sentences on the lines provided.

Example:

Marie did not recognize him in the increasing darkness of evening.

Question: What if this scene took place in the early morning?

Change to: Marie began to suspect that the stranger was Jasper as the sun rose and revealed his features one by one.

a. On entering the belt of woods close to the fort, the horsemen reined in and rode among the trees more cautiously.

Question: What if this scene took place in a desert?

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b. On hearing this Marie felt more at her ease, and, being of a very sympathetic nature, she at once courted the confidence of the stranger.

Question: What if Marie had a suspicious nature?

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c. Overjoyed at the opportunity thus unexpectedly afforded him of meeting her alone, he hastened forward with a wildly beating heart.

Question: What if Jasper wasn't happy to see her?

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d. Had a bullet struck the woman's heart she could not have turned more deadly pale than she did on hearing this.

Question: What if the woman had just received happy news?



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e. Three horsemen appeared on the distant prairie and came bounding at full gallop toward the fort.

Question: What if the horses were extremely tired?

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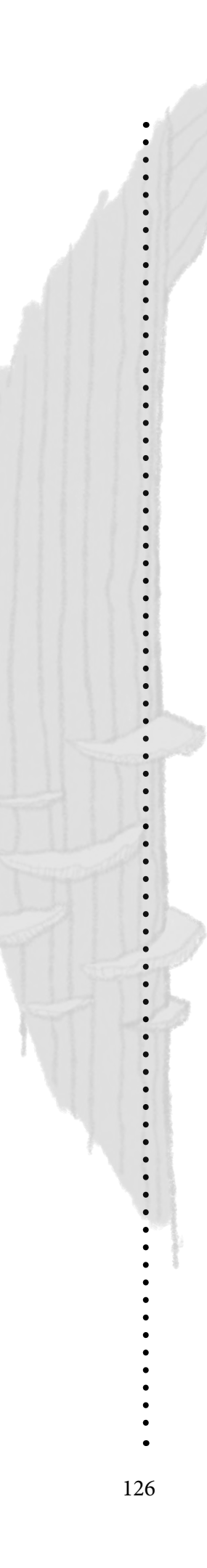
B. Sentences will change when the prefixes *in-*, *im-*, and *un-* are attached to certain words. After making the changes (by adding prefixes) that are listed after each of the following sentences, rewrite the sentences based on the new words.

Example:

We felt secure in our fort and slept soundly all night long.

Change "secure" to "insecure."

We felt insecure in our fort and tossed and turned all night long.

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- a. We thanked the polite pioneer for helping us to clean our log cabin.  
Change “polite” to “impolite.”

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- b. Marie was happy because her new husband seemed almost perfect.  
Change “perfect” to “imperfect.”

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- c. The horses were feeling easy about the nearness of the bison.  
Change “easy” to “uneasy.”

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- d. The correct way to whittle wood is to push the knife blade away from you.  
Change “correct” to “incorrect.”

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- e. The spoiled forest had many cut trees and many ponds of polluted water.  
Change “spoiled” to “unspoiled,” “cut” to “uncut,” and “polluted” to  
“unpolluted.”

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2. **COPIOUSNESS**—Adjectives are words that describe nouns. For example, “red” is the adjective used to describe “wagon” in the phrase “a red wagon.” Sometimes adjectives are overused, and this takes away from their effectiveness. Adjectives should be used sparingly and chosen carefully. Sometimes multiple adjectives can make for surprising, gripping writing (as in this sentence!), but you should not use them too frequently.

A. Look at the following paragraph and cross out all of the adjectives.

Marie was seated on the stump of a fallen tree when the man came up. She was a fair, beautiful woman of about five and twenty, with an air of modesty about her that attracted love yet repelled familiarity. Many a good-looking and well-doing young fellow had attempted to gain the heart of Marie during the last two years, but without success, for this good reason: that her heart had been gained already.

B. Now, rewrite the paragraph without the adjectives and make the underlined nouns more specific. For example, a more specific type of tree is a cedar tree. A person (man, woman, fellow) can be identified more specifically with an occupation (such as lumberjack or ballerina).

Marie was seated on the stump of a tree when the man came up. She was a woman of about five and twenty, with an air of modesty about her that attracted love yet repelled familiarity. Many a fellow had attempted to gain the heart of Marie during the last two years, but without success, for this reason: that her heart had been gained already.

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3. **ANALYSIS**—Mark Twain penned a famous criticism of his fellow writer James Fenimore Cooper, author of *The Deerslayer*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, and other novels of the American frontier. Twain believed that Cooper was a rotten writer with very little talent. As you read the following sample refutation, try to decide whether Twain is attacking Cooper’s writing as unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper. Twain uses quotes from Cooper’s book *The Pathfinder*, here in *italics*.

Cooper’s eye was splendidly inaccurate. Cooper seldom saw anything correctly. He saw nearly all things as through a glass eye, darkly. . . .

The reader will find some examples of Cooper’s high talent for inaccurate observation in the account of the shooting match in *The Pathfinder*.

*A common wrought nail was driven lightly into the target, its head having been first touched with paint.*

The color of the paint is not stated—an important **omission**, but Cooper deals freely in important omissions. No, after all, it was not an important omission; for this nailhead is *a hundred yards from* the marksmen, and could not be seen at that distance, no matter what its color might be. How far can the best eyes see a common housefly? A hundred yards? It is quite impossible. Very well; eyes that cannot see a housefly that is a hundred yards away cannot see an ordinary nailhead at that distance, for the size of the two objects is the same. It takes a keen eye to see a fly or a nailhead at fifty yards—one hundred and fifty feet. Can the reader do it?

The nail was lightly driven, its head painted, and game called. Then the Cooper miracles began. The bullet of the first marksman chipped an edge of the nailhead; the next man’s bullet drove the nail a little way into the target—and removed all the paint. Haven’t the miracles gone far enough now? Not to suit Cooper; for the purpose of this whole scheme is to show off his **prodigy**, Pathfinder, before the ladies.

*“Be all ready to clench it, boys!” cried out Pathfinder, stepping into his friend’s tracks the instant they were vacant. “Never mind a new nail; I can see that, though the paint is gone, and*

what I can see I can hit at a hundred yards, though it were only a mosquito's eye. Be ready to clench!" The rifle cracked, the bullet sped its way, and the head of the nail was buried in the wood, covered by the piece of flattened lead.

In the space provided, tell which term Mark Twain uses to refute a part of Cooper's story *The Pathfinder*. In your opinion, does he refute it for being unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper? Or does he refute it for being a mix of these? Be sure to back up your opinion with proof from the text.

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## Speak It—

Memorization—learning something by heart—is good for your brain because it promotes mental perseverance, especially by strengthening focus and attention. Storing knowledge in this way is a discipline and, just like a muscle, the habit requires use in order to grow. In addition, memorization and recitation are both ways to boost your speaking power. When a poem or a speech is memorized and recited, the speaker can work on elocution and improve the way the delivery sounds in new ways. This can make you a better speaker in any kind of situation.

The best way to memorize anything is to break it into smaller pieces. Poems are often already broken up into “bite-sized” stanzas. Once you have your material broken into smaller pieces, say them over and over to yourself and to your friends. You can even sing them!

Memorize one of the following lovely nature poems by Vachel Lindsay and Paul Laurence Dunbar. In the story about Jasper and Marie, the author included setting details, such as a description of the fort and the land around it, that help to establish the atmosphere of the story. In the same way, these two poems use vivid imagery to set the scene. Using proper elocution, recite your poem to the class.

## An Indian Summer Day on the Prairie

—by Vachel Lindsay

*(In the Beginning)*

The sun is a huntress young,  
The sun is a red, red joy,  
The sun is an Indian girl,  
Of the tribe of the Illinois.

*(Mid-morning)*

The sun is a smoldering fire,  
That creeps through the high gray plain,  
And leaves not a bush of cloud  
To blossom with flowers of rain.

*(Noon)*

The sun is a wounded deer,  
That treads pale grass in the skies,  
Shaking his golden horns,  
Flashing his baleful eyes.

*(Sunset)*

The sun is an eagle old,  
There in the windless west.  
Atop of the spirit-cliffs  
He builds him a crimson nest.

## On the River

—by Paul Laurence Dunbar

The sun is low,  
The waters flow,  
My boat is dancing to and fro.  
The eve is still,  
Yet from the hill  
The killdeer echoes loud and shrill.

The paddles splash,  
The wavelets dash,  
We see the summer lightning flash;  
While now and then,  
In marsh and fen  
Too muddy for the feet of men,

Where neither bird  
Nor beast has stirred,  
The spotted bullfrog's croak is heard.  
The wind is high,  
The grasses sigh,  
The sluggish stream goes sobbing by.



• And far away  
• The dying day  
• Has cast its last effulgent ray;  
• While on the land  
• The shadows stand  
• Proclaiming that the eve's at hand.

## Revise It—

1. In lesson 4 you practiced making subjects and verbs agree. If the subject of a sentence is singular, the verb must be singular. If the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural. When the subject and verb “match,” we say that they agree.

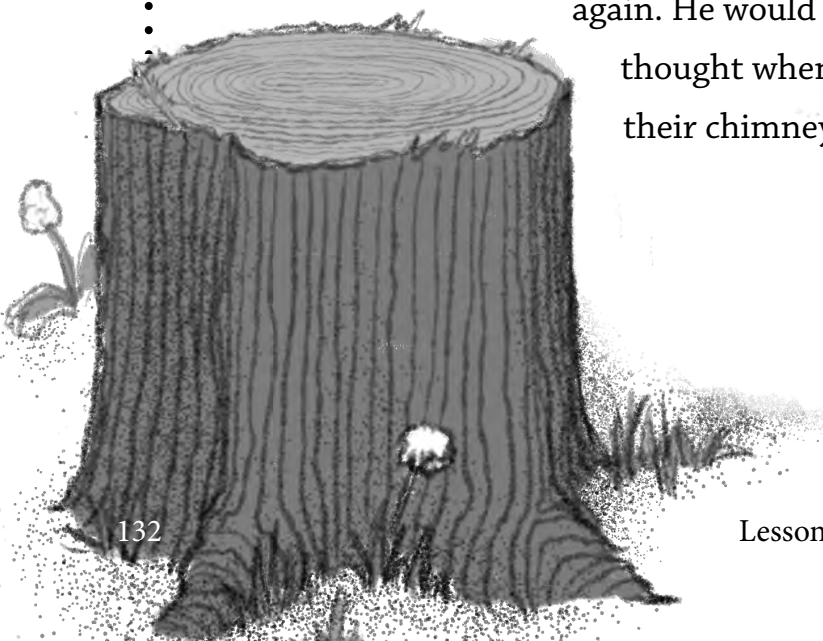
Each of the sentences in the following paragraph has a subject and a verb that do not agree, and some sentences may have multiple subject/verb agreement mistakes. It is important for these sentences to be fixed, because they make no sense without agreement. Underline each incorrect verb and, in the margin next to the mistake, rewrite each verb so that it agrees with its subject.

Example: Little Irving were a merry, playful boy.      was

Sometimes he would climbs out of a window to the roof of his father's house. From this he would goes to roofs of other houses.

Then the little rascal would dropped a pebble down a neighbor's chimney. Then he would hurried back and gets into the window

again. He would wondering what the people thought when the pebble came rattle down their chimney.





2. The following reading is about the hardships of the pilgrims in the Plymouth colony. What is the best order for the paragraphs? Use numbers 1 through 4 to put them in order.
- A. Which paragraph does the best job of introducing the hardships? Which seems to be first in chronological order? That paragraph should be numbered 1.
  - B. Which paragraph seems to follow the first paragraph and support it? That paragraph should be numbered 2.
  - C. Which paragraph follows the first two in chronological order? That paragraph should be numbered 3.
  - D. Which paragraph introduces a new hardship? That should be the last paragraph.
  - E. There is one paragraph that doesn't belong with the main idea of the other paragraphs. If the main idea of the narrative is the hardships of the pilgrims, cross out the paragraph that doesn't belong and provide a reason why it was a weak choice.

\_\_\_\_\_ With March came better weather, and for the first time the birds sang pleasantly in the woods and brought hope and gladness to the hearts of the struggling colonists. But, by that time, of the hundred or more who had landed three short months before, one-half had perished miserably. John Carver, the governor, died in April, and his wife quickly followed him to the grave. Bradford, by the votes of his brethren, was made governor for the first time in Carver's place. He had himself sustained a heavy loss, for, while he was away in the boat with the exploring party, Dorothy May, the wife he had married at Amsterdam, fell overboard and was drowned. Many men of the Mayflower also died that dreadful winter as the ship lay at anchor in the bay, including the boatswain, the gunner, the cook, three quartermasters, and several seamen.

\_\_\_\_\_ Winter was the beginning of the hardships, for it brought starvation and disease. Many of the pilgrims never lived to enjoy the provision of a bountiful Providence. Worn-out, weakened in health, poorly housed ashore,

they were a prey to sickness. Death reaped a rich harvest in their midst. Every second day a grave had to be dug for one or other of them in the frozen ground. Sometimes, during January and February, two or three died in a single day.

\_\_\_\_\_ To other troubles came something new—the menacing peril of the Indians. The Narragansett tribe sent the famous challenge of the bundle of arrows wrapped in a rattlesnake’s skin. Bradford replied to it with a serpent’s skin stuffed with gunpowder and bullets.

\_\_\_\_\_ So rapid was the dying that at last only a mere handful remained who were able to look after the sick. William Bradford was at this time prostrated. One house, the first finished, was set apart as a hospital. The hill above the beach was converted into a burial ground, and one is touched to the quick to read of the graves having to be levelled and grassed over for fear the Indians should discover how few and weak the strangers were becoming!

\_\_\_\_\_ In the early days of the Plymouth Plantation, an expedition was made in the Mayflower’s shallop, a big boat of about fourteen tons, to a point lower down on the coast. There the party made friends with the Shawmut Indians and found a fine place for shipping, and forty-seven beautiful islands, which they greatly admired as they sailed in and out amongst them. This was the future Boston Harbor.



## Lesson 7 .....

### First Refutation— *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*

- ▶ **D**o you remember what a quarrel is? How about an argument?

Now that you know the difference between a quarrel and an argument, you are prepared to write an argumentative essay. An **argumentative essay** is a short piece of writing that argues a point and proves that point with support and clear thinking. You already know two types of argumentative essay: refutation and confirmation.

**Refutation**—a short essay that attacks certain parts of a narrative as unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper

**Confirmation**—a short essay that defends certain parts of a narrative as believable, probable, clear, or proper

Perhaps because it is easier to tear something down than to build it up, you will start with the refutation of a part of a narrative and then move on to confirmation.

In this lesson you will use the terms you have learned and prove part of a narrative to be unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper.

You are going to start with the famous African American folktale *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*. The version found here is adapted from the book *Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings* by Joel Chandler Harris. Harris heard the trickster tales that are in this book from Africans who brought them to America. In these stories, there are many wonderful African animal tricksters, such as Hare, Tortoise, Monkey, and Anansi the Spider.

Now, there's no doubt that *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* is a wonderful story. It's a beloved folktale that has survived time and retelling through several cultures. The entire collection of Uncle Remus animal stories has inspired many other children's stories, including *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, and *The Jungle Book*. And yet an argumentative essay can be written in an attempt to show how a part of this folktale is unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper. Likewise, an argumentative essay can be undertaken to attempt to show the opposite, how a part of this narrative is believable, probable, clear, or proper. We will save the second set of arguments for a lesson on confirmation in the next chapter. For the time being, you will focus on refutation—attacking a part of the story.

## How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit

—adapted from *Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings*

by Joel Chandler Harris

**D**id You Know?  
“Brer” is a contraction of the word “brother.”

One hot summer day in the South, Brer Fox actually did catch Brer Rabbit. He got some tar and mixed it with some turpentine and shaped it into a figure about the size of a fat baby. Brer Fox took this Tar Baby and set him in the middle of the big road. Then he hid in the bushes to see what would happen.

Well, he didn't have to wait long. Down the road came Brer Rabbit—lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity—just as sassy as a jaybird. Brer Fox lay low. Brer Rabbit came prancing along until he spied the Tar Baby, just sitting there.

“Good morning!” said Brer Rabbit. “Nice weather this morning.”

The Tar Baby didn't say anything, and Brer Fox lay low.

“How are you doing today?” asked Brer Rabbit.

Brer Fox, he winked his eye slow, and lay low, and the Tar Baby didn't say a word.

“How you come on, then? Are you deaf?” demanded Brer Rabbit. “'Cause if you're deaf I can always holler louder. HOWDY, I SAY!”

The Tar Baby stayed still, and Brer Fox, he lay low.

“You're stuck up, that's what you are!” cried Brer Rabbit. “And I'm going to cure you, that's what I'm going to do!”

Brer Fox, he sort of chuckled in his stomach, but the Tar Baby didn't say anything.

“I'm going to teach you how to talk to respectable folks if it's my last act!” shouted Brer Rabbit. “If you don't take off that hat and tell me howdy, I'm gonna bust you wide open!”

Well, that Tar Baby stayed perfectly still, and Brer Fox lay low.

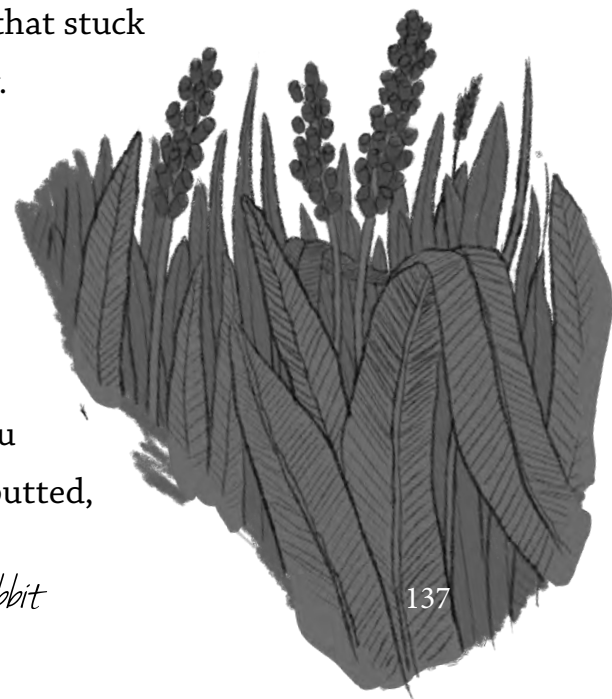
Brer Rabbit kept asking questions and the Tar Baby kept on saying nothing. Presently, Brer Rabbit drew back his fist and hit the Tar Baby up the side of its head.

Right there is where he got into trouble. His fist stuck and he couldn't pull loose. The tar held him fast. But the Tar Baby sat still and Brer Fox lay low.

“If you don't lemme loose, I'll knock you again!” cried Brer Rabbit. With that, he fetched the Baby another swipe with the other fist and that stuck too. The Tar Baby didn't say a word and Brer Fox lay low.

“Turn me loose! Turn me loose before I knock the stuffing out of you!” shouted Brer Rabbit, but the Tar Baby didn't say anything. It just held on while Brer Rabbit kicked. He lost the use of his feet this way. Brer Fox just lay low, chuckling to himself.

Then Brer Rabbit started squalling and saying, “If you don't turn me loose, I'll butt you with my head!” So he butted,



and his head got stuck too. Then Brer Fox sauntered forth, looking as innocent as one of your mother's mockingbirds.

"Howdy, Brer Rabbit," Brer Fox said. "You look sort of stuck up this morning." And then he rolled on the ground and laughed till he couldn't laugh any more. "I expect you'll take dinner with me this time, Brer Rabbit. I've laid in some calamus root, and I'm not gonna take any excuse."

Remember that the purpose of refutation is to attack the believability, probability, clarity, or properness of a narrative. Every refutation follows four basic steps:

*First*, introduce the story and its author. Next, introduce briefly why part of the story is unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper.

The following are some ways to criticize parts of *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* for being improper:

- The two main characters are bad examples for children. The prideful rabbit and the bullying fox both lack virtue.
- The Brer Rabbit character punches and kicks a baby. He doesn't realize that it is made of tar but thinks it is a real person, and this is a very ugly, heartless reaction.
- The lesson of the story encourages bullying. The bully, a fox, outsmarts his victim, a rabbit, with the aim of eating him for dinner.

How's this for a first paragraph?

*How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*, an African American story retold by Joel Chandler Harris, teaches a lesson that promotes bullying. A strong character, Brer Fox, attempts to capture the rabbit for dinner and succeeds! This sends a bad message to children that bullying is rewarded.

*Second*, give a short summary of the story in four or five sentences. Feel free to use your own words in your own style to compose the summary. For example, the following sample summary includes the essayist's personal opinions with the use of such words as "poor" and "silly."

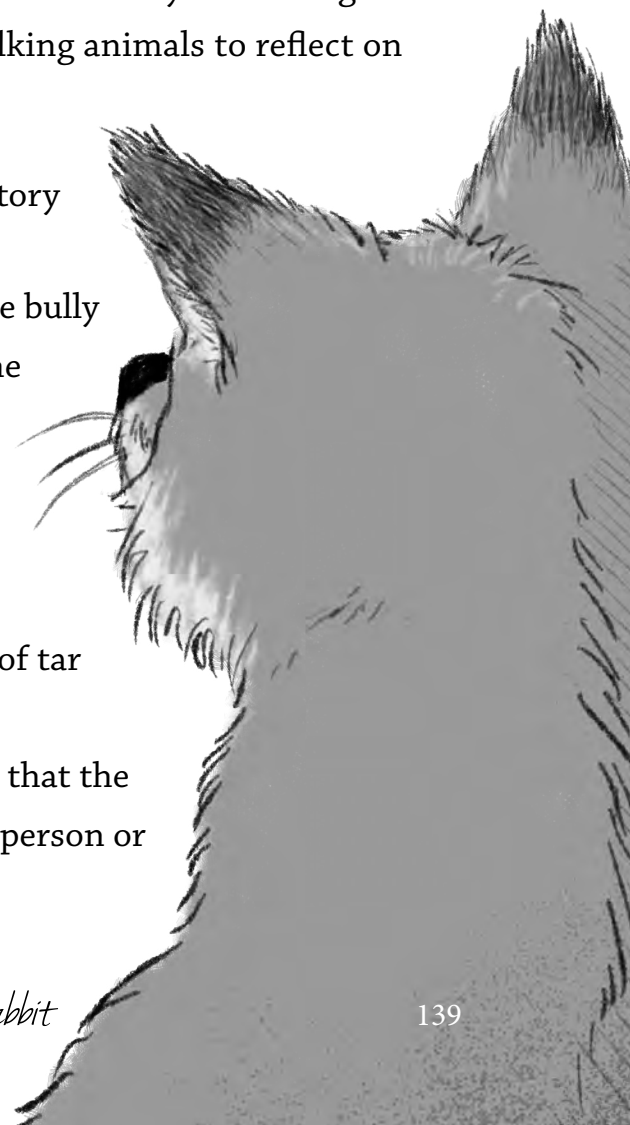
In this story, Brer Fox sets a trap to capture and eat Brer Rabbit. The rabbit comes hopping down the big road one morning, without a care in the world, and mistakes Brer Fox's Tar Baby for a real person. When the Tar Baby doesn't reply to Brer Rabbit's greetings, the silly rabbit punches and kicks it, but when he does he gets stuck in the tar. Brer Fox emerges from the bushes after Brer Rabbit is completely stuck. Brer Rabbit's predicament shows the problem with having a hot temper and not thinking before acting.

*Third*, attack and refute part of the story using sound arguments. How is this part unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper? Go into detail about your reasoning and use *one direct quote* from the story text to help support your argument.

Don't bother attacking the fabulous or fairy tale elements of the story. For example, we know that it is impossible for animals to talk. We know that foxes don't make tar babies. To make an argument against animals having human abilities would be weak because those abilities are part of the world of this sort of writing. The author doesn't expect us to believe there are really such things as talking animals, but rather to use the stories about talking animals to reflect on human nature and character.

The following are some ways to attack parts of the story using sound arguments:

- It is improper that the fox's cruelty is rewarded. The bully character, represented by the fox, triumphs over the "victim" character, represented by the rabbit.
- Brer Rabbit is careless and rude, and a bad example. When the Tar Baby doesn't answer Brer Rabbit, Brer Rabbit punches and kicks him.
- It is improbable that anyone would mistake a blob of tar for a person.
- It is improbable that Brer Rabbit, after discovering that the tar was sticky, would still think the Tar Baby was a person or would touch it a second (or third or fourth) time.



In the sample introductory paragraph in this lesson, the part of the story that is being attacked is the story's lesson, because it teaches that bullying triumphs in the end. In this third paragraph, this idea will be explained in more detail.

This lesson of this story is improper because it shows a strong fox triumphing over his victim, the rabbit. It proves the proverb "Might makes right." We're presented with a David and Goliath type of situation in which Goliath wins in the end. Wouldn't it be better if the victim character, by using his wits and courage, triumphed over the wicked character? Then readers would have some hope that cruel people can be defeated. Instead, readers are left feeling hopeless as Brer Fox gloats, "I expect you'll take dinner with me this time, Brer Rabbit."

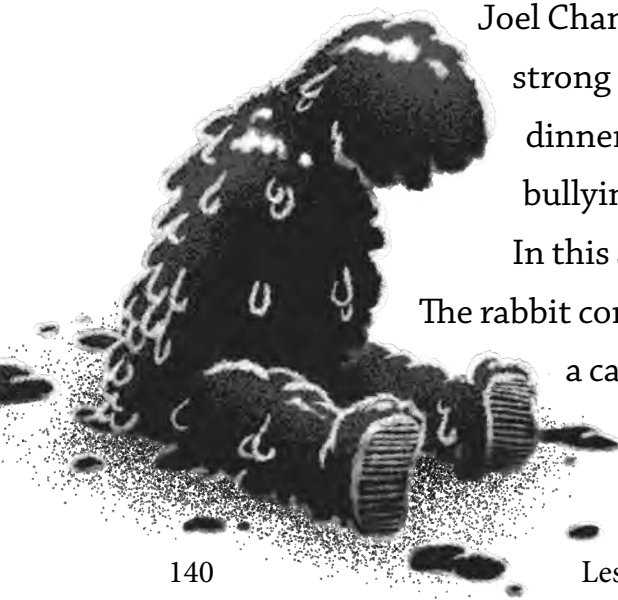
*Fourth*, wrap up your essay with a brief epilogue or conclusion. Remember, an epilogue is nothing more than a tidy ending for your essay. Either rephrase your argument or make a suggestion for how the author could change his story to solve the problem. For example:

The fact that we see a bully winning in the end is not enjoyable or proper. We don't want to see Goliath triumph over David. We don't want to see Brer Fox finish off Brer Rabbit, even though Brer Rabbit is rude and saucy. The lesson of the story is not encouraging, and it is wrong that the lesson of the story promotes bullying.

Now take a look at the whole refutation put together:

*How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*, an African American story retold by Joel Chandler Harris, teaches a lesson that promotes bullying. A strong character, Brer Fox, attempts to capture the rabbit for dinner and succeeds! This sends a bad message to children that bullying is rewarded.

In this story, Brer Fox sets a trap to capture and eat Brer Rabbit. The rabbit comes hopping down the big road one morning, without a care in the world, and mistakes Brer Fox's Tar Baby for a real person. When the Tar Baby doesn't reply to Brer Rabbit's greetings, the silly rabbit punches





and kicks it, but when he does he gets stuck in the tar. Brer Fox emerges from the bushes after Brer Rabbit is completely stuck. Brer Rabbit's predicament shows the problem with having a hot temper and not thinking before acting.

The lesson of this story is improper because it shows a strong fox triumphing over his victim, the rabbit. It proves the proverb "Might makes right." We're presented with a David and Goliath type of situation in which Goliath wins in the end. Wouldn't it be better if the victim character, by using his wits and courage, triumphed over the wicked character? Then readers would have some hope that cruel people can be defeated. Instead, readers are left feeling hopeless as Brer Fox gloats, "I expect you'll take dinner with me this time, Brer Rabbit."

The fact that we see a bully winning in the end is not enjoyable or proper. We don't want to see Goliath triumph over David. We don't want to see Brer Fox finish off Brer Rabbit, even though Brer Rabbit is rude and saucy. The lesson of the story is not encouraging, and it is wrong that the lesson of the story promotes bullying.

## Tell It Back—Narration

- 1. Oral Narration: Without looking at the text, retell *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* as best as you remember it using your own words. Try not to leave out any important details.

• Here is the beginning of the narrative to help you get started:

• One hot summer day in the South, Brer Fox actually did catch Brer Rabbit.  
• He got some tar and mixed it with some turpentine and shaped it into a figure about the size of a fat baby.

- 2. Outline: Create an outline for the story *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* using Roman numerals (*I, II, III*) for the most important events and capital letters (*A, B, C*) for less important events. Use standard numbers (*1, 2, 3*) for minor points.

## Talk About It—

1. Have you ever played a trick on someone? Did that person appreciate the trick? Why or why not? Conversely, has anybody ever played a trick on you, and did you appreciate it? What makes the difference between someone enjoying a trick and someone feeling hurt or resentful about it?
2. You learned in *Writing and Rhetoric: Fable* that anthropomorphism is a long word that means something really very simple. *Anthropos* in Greek means “man,” while *morph* means “to change form.” So put them together and the word roughly means “a human changing form.” Whenever a storybook animal acts like a human being, that’s anthropomorphism. Whenever an animal talks or wears clothes or smokes a pipe or eats with a fork, that’s anthropomorphism. How are Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox anthropomorphized in this story and in the following illustrations?

Illustrations of ►  
Brer Fox, Brer  
Rabbit, and the Tar  
Baby by A.B. Frost



3. In 2007, on April Fool’s Day, a British website posted photos of what seemed to be a mummified fairy. As a result, tens of thousands of people contacted the website, believing the fairy was real, while others expressed disbelief. When the owner of the website eventually admitted that the fairy was a fake, sculpted from leaves and other materials, some people continued to insist that it must be real. What are some similarities and differences between this real-life prank and Brer Fox’s prank?

# Go Deeper—

1. Now it's time to work to understand the story better. Use two sentences to answer each of the following questions. These are the questions a journalist always asks before writing a newspaper story—who, what, when, where, and why. The first sentence should mirror the question, and the second sentence should explain or add to the answer. The first question provides a sample answer.

a. *Who* are the main characters of the narrative?

Sample answer: The main characters of the narrative are Brer Rabbit, the protagonist, and Brer Fox, the **antagonist**, or opposing character. Brer Rabbit seems a foolish creature because he doesn't recognize the Tar Baby as a trap.

b. *What* is the main event or action of the narrative?

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c. *Where* does the narrative take place?

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d. *When* does the narrative take place?

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e. *Why* do you think the author has written this narrative? (What is his purpose in writing it?)

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2. In your own words, write a four- or five-sentence summary of the story *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*. Make sure you answer the questions who, what, when, where, and why. Remember that a summary is a retelling of the main points of the narrative.

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3. On informal occasions, people wear comfortable clothing such as jeans and T-shirts. On formal occasions, people wear dresses, suits, and tuxedos. People also have informal and formal ways of speaking.

Slang and words from local ways of speaking, called **dialects**, are mostly used informally.

“Brer” is an informal way to say “brother” that comes to us from nineteenth-century southern black English. Some other informal ways to say brother include “bro,” “bubba,” “buddy,” and “brah.” For each of the following words, write an informal or slang synonym.



Example:

Formal: rabbit

Informal: bunny

a. Formal: mother

Informal: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Formal: father

Informal: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Formal: sister

Informal: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Formal: dog

Informal: \_\_\_\_\_

e. Formal: cat

Informal: \_\_\_\_\_



## Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—A simple sentence is a complete sentence that contains a subject and a verb. A compound sentence is when two simple sentences are joined together by conjunctions, words such as “and,” “or,” and “but.” The following sentences, taken from other stories by Joel Chandler Harris, are simple sentences. Use a conjunction to join the simple sentences together to form a compound sentence.

Example:

Simple sentences:

Brer Rabbit would take the farmer’s greens. He’d leave his tracks behind.

Compound sentence:

Brer Rabbit would take the farmer’s greens, but he’d leave his tracks behind.

A. A heavy black cloud made its appearance in the west. It quickly obscured the sky.

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B. Brer Fox rolled his little eyes. He licked his chops.

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C. Did Brother Dust beat Brer Rabbit in the race? Did Cousin Dust?

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D. Brer Wolf made a dash at Brer Rabbit. When he got there, Brer Rabbit was gone.

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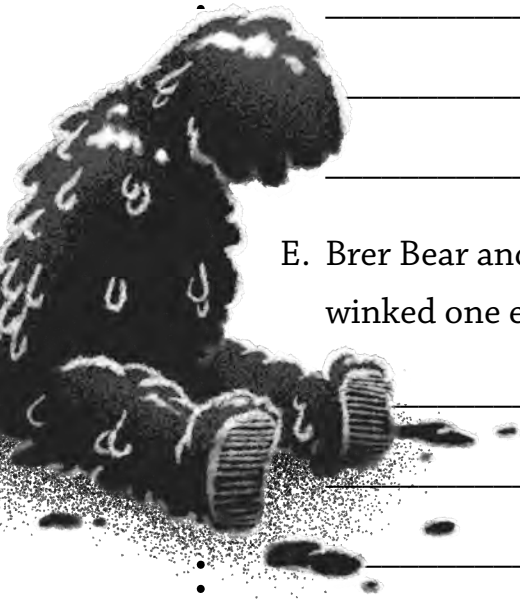
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E. Brer Bear and Brer Fox were both digging close by each other. Brer Rabbit winked one eye.

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2. **COPIOUSNESS**—You’ve learned that the same idea can be expressed in many different ways. In lesson 5 you explored how simple statements can be turned into questions to express the same idea in a new way. For example, in *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*, Brer Rabbit asks the Tar Baby, “Are you deaf?” rather than saying, “You must be deaf!” Questions can make your writing more interesting and more rhetorically powerful. They add variety in comparison to the typical type of sentence, which is a statement or declarative sentence, and they cause the reader to “wake up” and pay closer attention because questions often demand answers.

The following sentences come from *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*. Change each statement into a question that expresses the same meaning.

Example:

Statement: “Nice weather this morning.”

Question: “Isn’t it nice weather this morning?”

A. Statement: “Turn me loose before I knock the stuffing out of you!”

Question: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Statement: “You look sort of stuck up this morning.”

Question: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. Statement: “I expect you’ll take dinner with me this time, Brer Rabbit.”

Question: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. Statement: “I’m not gonna take any excuse.”

Question: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. Statement: “You’re stuck up, that’s what you are!”

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **REFUTATION**—Write your own refutation of *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* by following the steps listed.

**Paragraph 1**—Introduce the story and its author. Next, introduce briefly why part of the story is unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper.

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**Paragraph 2**—Give a short summary of the story in four or five sentences. Feel free to use your own words in your own style to compose the summary.

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## Speak It—

Reading dramatically is a wonderful way to practice elocution, especially volume and inflection. The following are two short plays adapted from other stories by Joel Chandler Harris.

In the first play, there are two characters, Brer Bear and Brer Polecat, and a narrator. (“Polecat” is another word for “skunk.”) In the second play, Brer Rabbit and Brer Wolf are the main characters, along with a narrator. Read the plays aloud with your class. If you decide to take more time to prepare this for a performance, be sure to practice using expression in your voice and face, as well as projecting your voice to an audience.

### Brer Bear and Brer Polecat

Parts:

Narrator

Brer Bear

Brer Polecat (Skunk)

**Narrator:** Of all the creatures, Brer Bear had the biggest and the warmest house. He had plenty of room for him and his family. He didn't have more than he needed, because all his family was fat. He had a son named Simmon, and a wife named Sue, not counting his old mother, and they all lived with one another day after day and night after night. When one of them went out, they'd be expected home by mealtime, and they washed their faces and hands in the same wash pan in the back porch like all happy families do. One day there came a knocking on Brer Bear's door.

*(knocking sound)*

**Brer Bear:** Who's knocking this time of year, even before the corn's planted?

*(knocking and banging sounds)*

**Brer Bear:** Don't tear down my house! Who are you, anyhow, and what do you want?

**Brer Polecat:** I'm one and not two. If you're more than one, who are you and what are you doing in there?

**Brer Bear:** I'm only one, which is close to two, but I'd thank you to tell me your full name.

**Brer Polecat:** I'm the knocker and the mover, and if I can't climb over I'll crawl under. Some call me Brer Polecat, and some a big word that it isn't worthwhile to remember, but I want to move in. It's mighty cold out here, and everyone I meet tells me it's mighty warm in there where you are.

**Brer Bear:** It's warm enough for those who stay in here, but not so warm for them on the outside. What do you really want?

**Brer Polecat:** I want a heap of things that I don't get. I'm a mighty good housekeeper, but I take notice that there are mighty few folks who want me to keep house for them.

**Brer Bear:** I don't have room for a housekeeper; we scarcely have room to go to bed as it is. If you can keep my house on the outside, you're mighty welcome.

**Brer Polecat:** You may think you don't have any room, but I bet you have as much room as anyone I know. If you let me in there one time, I bet you'll make all the room I want.

**Narrator:** Brer Bear finally opened the door and in strode Brer Polecat. Poor Brer Bear had such a bad breath that day that everyone had to get out of the house lickety-split. As for Brer Polecat, he stayed and stayed.



# Brer Wolf and the Gold Mine

Parts:

Narrator

Brer Rabbit

Brer Wolf

**Narrator:** One year all the crops burnt up. A drought had done the work, and if you'd struck a match anywhere in that settlement, the whole country would have blazed up. The creatures had a meeting place, where they could sit around and talk politics like folks do at the crossroads grocery. One day, while they were all sitting around chatting, Brer Rabbit decided to stir things up.

**Brer Rabbit:** Somebody told my great granddaddy that there was a mighty big and fat gold mine in these parts. I wouldn't be at all astonished if it wasn't somewhere close to Brer Bear's house.

**Brer Wolf:** That gold mine better not let me find it, because after I'm done with it, there won't be no gold mine there!

**Narrator:** From that time on, go where you might, you'd catch some of the critters digging and grabbing in the ground, some in the fields, some in the woods, and some in the big road. They were so weak and hungry that they could scarcely keep from falling down. One day, they all got together to discuss the situation. Brer Wolf had his eyes on Brer Rabbit. He had gotten wise and thought that if he didn't get gold, he could get a meal.

**Brer Wolf:** Well, we all agree that something has to be done! We'll all take one big hunt for the gold mine and then quit. Let's hunt in gangs, with the gangs not far from one another. Brer Rabbit, you're in my gang.

**Brer Rabbit:** *(to himself)* I'm in Brer Wolf's gang? I'd better keep my eyes wide open.

**Narrator:** All the creatures had to dig in different places, and though Brer Rabbit wasn't much of a grabber, he had a way of making the others

believe that he was the best of the lot. So he made a heap of motion like he was tearing up the earth.

**Brer Wolf:** Run here, Brer Rabbit! I done found it!

**Brer Rabbit:** I'm glad for your sake, Brer Wolf. Get your gold and enjoy yourself!

**Brer Wolf:** Come get some, Brer Rabbit! Come get some!

**Brer Rabbit:** I'll take the leavings, Brer Wolf. You take what you want, and then when you've got enough I'll get the little bit I want.

**Brer Wolf:** I want to show you something.

**Brer Rabbit:** My eyes aren't big enough to see.

**Brer Wolf:** I got a secret I want to tell you.

**Brer Rabbit:** My ears aren't long enough to hear. Just stand there and do your whispering, Brer Wolf, and I'll hear every word you say.

**Narrator:** Brer Wolf didn't say anything, but pretended he was digging, and then, all of a sudden, he made a dash at Brer Rabbit. But when he got to where Brer Rabbit was, Brer Rabbit wasn't there no more. He was gone. Weak and hungry as he was, Brer Wolf knew that he couldn't catch Brer Rabbit.

**Brer Wolf:** What's your hurry, Brer Rabbit? Where are you going?

**Brer Rabbit:** I'm going home for a bag to collect all the gold you're going to leave me! So long, Brer Wolf. I wish you mighty well!

**Narrator:** With that, Brer Rabbit ran all the way home.

## Revise It—

You've practiced revising other writers' work. Now it's time to revise your own work! Once you complete the first draft of your refutation, read through it and revise it. Use the following steps as you do your revision:

1. *Find your main point and underline it.* Is there one sentence or phrase that represents your main argument? Make sure your paper expresses that argument throughout.

2. *Find your purpose.* Think about the purpose of a refutation, which is to attack a part of a narrative for a lack of believability, probability, clarity, or properness. Do you think you've accomplished that purpose? If not, tweak your paper so that your purpose is achieved. Remember that each of your four paragraphs also has a special purpose according to the demands of the prompts. Each paragraph must get the job done.
3. *Find and fix grammar mistakes.* Make sure all your nouns and verbs agree and that your writing is clear. Fix any fragments or run-ons. In other words, make sure you are writing complete sentences.
4. *Strengthen phrasing.* Are your word choices specific instead of vague? Do you use strong nouns and verbs? Weed out passive voice and excess adjectives. Use compound sentences, adverb phrases, and questions to make your writing more interesting.
5. *Proofread.* Look for any punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors. Then fix them!
6. *Retype* the draft with the corrections you have made.

It often helps to catch mistakes by sharing your work with a classmate. Your teacher may form partnerships around the room and ask you to exchange papers. Read the essay you wrote aloud to your partner. (Reading aloud is often the best way to catch mistakes—grammar errors, as well as words that don't work well—because we use two senses—seeing and hearing—instead of one. If something sounds wrong, it probably is.) Be sure to listen for anything that doesn't sound correct, and ask your partner to interrupt you when she hears something that she has a question about. Then go through the previously listed steps with your partner and give feedback to each other.



## Lesson 8 .....

### First Confirmation— *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*

**R**ead the story *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* again. As you read through the story, think about which parts of it are believable, probable, clear, and proper.

Remember not to focus on the things that are basic to the story. For example, talking animals are typical for many fables and trickster tales, so you would not focus on them for your confirmation. Instead, ask yourself if there are characters or events that happen in the story that are believable or probable in the story world. Are there things that are clear? Are there good characters or proper things that happen? Does the story teach any moral lessons? Remember that the purpose of confirmation is to establish the believability, probability, clarity, or properness of a part of a narrative. Be specific!

# How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit

—adapted from *Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings*

by Joel Chandler Harris

**D**id You Know?

“Brer” is a contraction of the word “brother.”

One hot summer day in the South, Brer Fox actually did catch Brer Rabbit. He got some tar and mixed it with some turpentine and shaped it into a figure about the size of a fat baby. Brer Fox took this Tar Baby and set him in the middle of the big road. Then he hid in the bushes to see what would happen.

Well, he didn’t have to wait long. Down the road came Brer Rabbit—lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity—just as sassy as a jaybird. Brer Fox lay low. Brer Rabbit came prancing along until he spied the Tar Baby, just sitting there.

“Good morning!” said Brer Rabbit. “Nice weather this morning.”

The Tar Baby didn’t say anything, and Brer Fox lay low.

“How are you doing today?” asked Brer Rabbit.

Brer Fox, he winked his eye slow, and lay low, and the Tar Baby didn’t say a word.

“How you come on, then? Are you deaf?” demanded Brer Rabbit. “Cause if you’re deaf I can always holler louder. HOWDY, I SAY!”

The Tar Baby stayed still, and Brer Fox, he lay low.

“You’re stuck up, that’s what you are!” cried Brer Rabbit. “And I’m going to cure you, that’s what I’m going to do!”

Brer Fox, he sort of chuckled in his stomach, but the Tar Baby didn’t say anything.

“I’m going to teach you how to talk to respectable folks if it’s my last act!” shouted Brer Rabbit. “If you don’t take off that hat and tell me howdy, I’m gonna bust you wide open!”

Well, that Tar Baby stayed perfectly still, and Brer Fox lay low.

Brer Rabbit kept asking questions and the Tar Baby kept on saying nothing. Presently, Brer Rabbit drew back his fist and hit the Tar Baby up the side of its head.



Right there is where he got into trouble. His fist stuck and he couldn't pull loose. The tar held him fast. But the Tar Baby sat still and Brer Fox lay low.

"If you don't lemme loose, I'll knock you again!" cried Brer Rabbit. With that, he fetched the Baby another swipe with the other fist and that stuck too. The Tar Baby didn't say a word and Brer Fox lay low.

"Turn me loose! Turn me loose before I knock the stuffing out of you!" shouted Brer Rabbit, but the Tar Baby didn't say anything. It just held on while Brer Rabbit kicked. He lost the use of his feet this way. Brer Fox just lay low, chuckling to himself.

Then Brer Rabbit started squalling and saying, "If you don't turn me loose, I'll butt you with my head!" So he butted, and his head got stuck too. Then Brer Fox sauntered forth, looking as innocent as one of your mother's mockingbirds.

"Howdy, Brer Rabbit," Brer Fox said. "You look sort of stuck up this morning." And then he rolled on the ground and laughed till he couldn't laugh any more. "I expect you'll take dinner with me this time, Brer Rabbit. I've laid in some calamus root, and I'm not gonna take any excuse."

As with refutation, every confirmation follows four basic steps.

*First*, introduce the story and its author. Next, introduce briefly why part of the story is believable, probable, clear, or proper. The following is an example of a first paragraph:

The story *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* is told by Joel Chandler Harris, who retells exciting, clever stories borrowed from African American storytellers. In these stories, the storyteller often uses animals to represent certain human **character traits**—qualities that make a person unique—sometimes for the purpose of teaching a lesson. The lesson of *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* does a wonderful job of demonstrating the foolishness of being prideful.



*Second*, give a short summary of the story in four or five sentences. Feel free to use your own words in your own style to compose the summary. The following paragraph borrows the summary from the sample refutation essay in lesson 7.

In this story, Brer Fox sets a trap to capture and eat Brer Rabbit. The rabbit comes hopping down the big road one morning, without a care in the world, and mistakes Brer Fox's Tar Baby for a real person. When the Tar Baby doesn't reply to Brer Rabbit's greetings, the silly rabbit punches and kicks it, but when he does he gets stuck in the tar. Brer Fox emerges from the bushes after Brer Rabbit is completely stuck. Brer Rabbit's predicament shows the problem with having a hot temper and not thinking before acting.

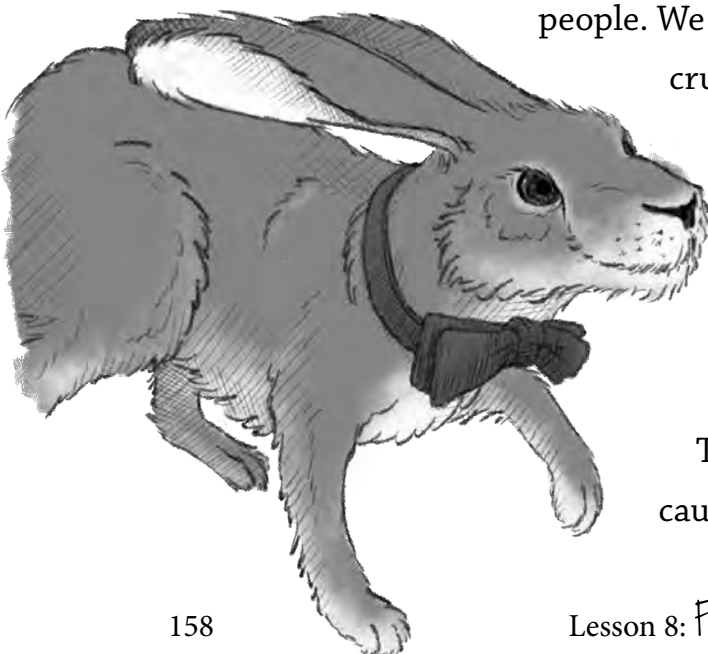
*Third*, defend and confirm part of the story using sound arguments. How is this part of the story believable, probable, clear, or proper? The following are some ways to confirm parts of the story using sound arguments:

- It is probable that Brer Rabbit gets captured because he thinks too highly of himself and is too quick to anger. Quite often foolish people get into trouble as a result of their vanity. Brer Rabbit obviously expects to be answered quickly and respectfully and, when he isn't, he throws his fists. He assumes that the Tar Baby is disrespecting him and punches and kicks the object without any thought.
- The story's lesson is proper because it teaches us to be careful with our tempers. It shows us what can happen if we lose our heads in anger.

- It is clear that the animal characters represent certain types of people. We can immediately recognize that some people are cruel, dangerous, and violent, like the fox. This type of person likes to attack people who are weak or foolish, like the rabbit.

Go into detail about your reasoning and use *one direct quote* from the story text to help support your argument. For example:

The lesson of this story is proper because it rightly cautions that pride can lead to a downfall. Brer



Rabbit gets angry and loses his temper because the Tar Baby doesn't speak to him. His pride is hurt and he feels insulted. Even when his hand is trapped by the sticky tar, Brer Rabbit boasts about how he can "knock the stuffing" out of the Tar Baby. He is too proud to simply ask politely for the Tar Baby to release him. He is too **vain** to walk away from the situation, but instead makes angry threats that get him into more trouble and more tar.

*Fourth*, wrap up your essay with a brief epilogue or conclusion. Remember, an epilogue is nothing more than a tidy ending for your essay. Either rephrase your argument or encourage your reader to learn from the story. For example:

Not only does Brer Fox's trick make for a hilarious story, it also cautions us to think before we punch. Harris uses the character of Brer Rabbit to show the consequences of having too much pride. The story reminds us that a person who is too prideful is often the one, in the end, who winds up in serious trouble.

Now take a look at the whole confirmation put together:

The story *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* is told by Joel Chandler Harris, who retells exciting, clever stories borrowed from African American storytellers. In these stories, the storyteller often uses animals to represent certain human character traits, sometimes for the purpose of teaching a lesson. The lesson of *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* does a wonderful job of demonstrating the foolishness of being prideful.

In this story, Brer Fox sets a trap to capture and eat Brer Rabbit. The rabbit comes hopping down the big road one morning, without a care in the world, and mistakes Brer Fox's Tar Baby for a real person. When the Tar Baby doesn't reply to Brer Rabbit's greetings, the silly rabbit punches and kicks it, but when he does he gets stuck in the tar. Brer Fox emerges from the bushes after Brer Rabbit is completely stuck. Brer Rabbit's predicament shows the problem with having a hot temper and not thinking before acting.

The lesson of this story is proper because it rightly cautions that pride can lead to a downfall. Brer Rabbit gets angry and loses his temper because the Tar Baby doesn't speak to him. His pride is hurt and he feels insulted. Even when his

hand is trapped by the sticky tar, Brer Rabbit boasts about how he can “knock the stuffing” out of the Tar Baby. He is too proud to simply ask politely for the Tar Baby to release him. He is too vain to walk away from the situation, but instead makes angry threats that get him into more trouble and more tar.

Not only does Brer Fox’s trick make for a hilarious story, it also cautions us to think before we punch. Harris uses the character of Brer Rabbit to show the consequences of having too much pride. The story reminds us that a person who is too prideful is often the one, in the end, who winds up in serious trouble.

## Tell It Back—

- 1. Story Details: It is often helpful to see a story from more than one angle. You  
• already narrated the story of *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* in the  
• previous lesson. In this lesson, you will “tell back” details about the story’s  
• conflict and characters.
  - a. Conflict is often a clash between people or ideas in a story. What are some  
• of the conflicts in *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*?
  - b. A protagonist is the main character of the story, often playing the role of  
• the hero. The antagonist is the opposing character, often playing the role  
• of a villain. Are there a clear protagonist and antagonist in this narrative?
- 2. Dramatic Retelling (optional): Without looking at the text, act out the story  
• of *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* with your classmates. This is your  
• chance to retell the narrative by performing it for the enjoyment of others.  
• Students can divide into groups to prepare and rehearse their retelling for  
• presentation to the other groups or to other students or parents.
  - Feel free to make use of sock puppets, paper dolls, costumes, or props. Also  
• feel free to add dialogue or description to create a longer narrative. Stick to  
• the story’s plot and characters, but develop and present them in a way that  
• brings those elements to life. Consider making a special event out of the  
• performances, inviting other students or parents to the presentations.

## Talk About It—

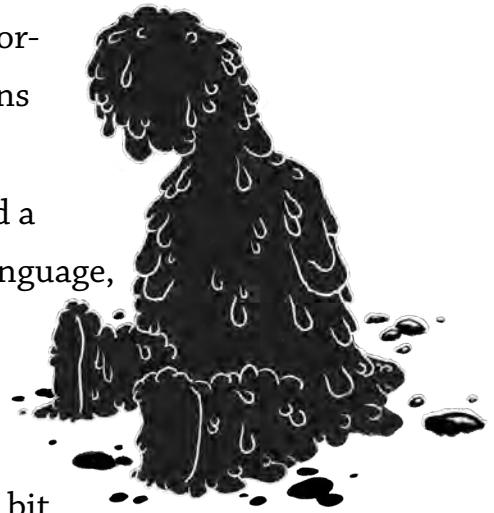
1. Brer Rabbit is a trickster with a bad temper who often doesn't consider the feelings of others. Do you think Brer Rabbit deserves the trick Brer Fox plays on him? Why or why not?
2. In an African folk tale, Anansi the Spider dug a deep hole in order to catch a leopard. When a leopard fell into the hole and asked for help getting out, Anansi offered to pull him out with his webs. Once the leopard reached the top, Anansi bound him and carried him away to eat him. How is this story similar to and different from the Brer Rabbit story?

## Go Deeper—

1. If this trickster tale were a fable, what would the moral be? Circle the correct answer.
  - a. Bad company corrupts good character.
  - b. Love is stronger than death.
  - c. A bad temper leads to trouble.
  - d. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
  - e. Better to have no friends than a foolish one.
2. What is the one title in the following list that would not work for this story? Circle the correct answer.
  - a. One Day on the Road
  - b. The Sticky Tar Baby
  - c. The Nastiest Trick Ever
  - d. The Triumph of Brer Fox
  - e. The Careful Rabbit
3. Do you remember the difference between formal and informal? Oftentimes, we use the words “formal” and “informal” to describe clothing. Formal clothes should be worn to a dinner party at the White House or a wedding. This would

include a tuxedo (or a suit and tie) for men and a long, floor-length dress for women. Informal clothes include blue jeans and sweaters.

Just as we enjoy the comfort of worn-out blue jeans and a fleecy sweater, so people enjoy the comfort of informal language, or “slang.” Slang is used in everyday life between friends, while formal language is used in the classroom or the courtroom or any number of places.



a. *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* contains quite a bit of informal language. Some examples are the words “holler” (to yell loudly) and “knock” (hit). In the following list, circle the words that are slang (informal language).

chew (to grind up your food)

boo-boo (a small injury)

earful (a long, angry talk)

poster (a printed decoration)

grubby (dirty)

hug (an embrace)

yummy (delicious)

b. Find a slang word in *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*. Find its definition in a dictionary and write it down. Then use the word in your own sentence.

Word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—Remember that a simple sentence is a complete sentence that contains a subject and a verb. A compound sentence is when two simple sentences are joined together by conjunctions, words such as “and,” “or,” and “but.” The following sentences, taken from other stories by Joel Chandler Harris, are simple sentences. Use a conjunction to join the simple sentences together to form a compound sentence.

A. The old man blew the ashes from a smoking yam. He proceeded to remove the peeling.

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B. What became of the Rabbit after he fooled the Buzzard? What became of him after he got out of the hollow tree?

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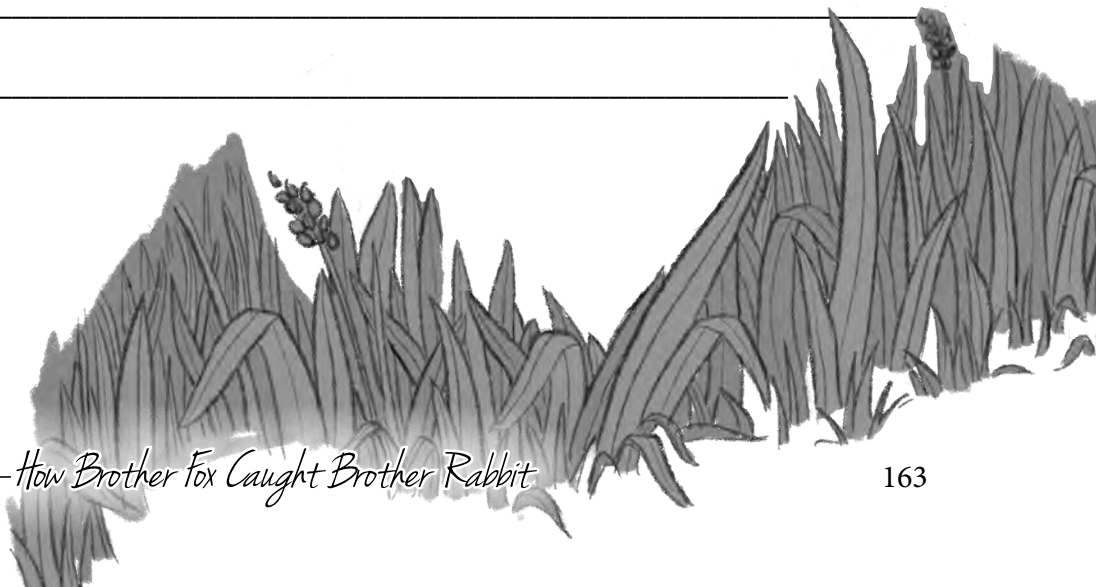
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C. The old man paused. He proceeded to demolish the pie.

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D. It looked like nobody was at home. Brer Wolf walked up and knocked on the door.

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E. Maybe once he sighed deeply. Maybe twice he sighed deeply.

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2. **COPIOUSNESS**—You’ve learned that the same idea can be expressed in many different ways. In the last lesson, you practiced turning simple statements into questions to express the same idea in a new way. For example, in *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit*, Brer Rabbit asks the Tar Baby, “Are you deaf?” rather than saying, “You must be deaf!” Questions can make your writing more interesting and more rhetorically powerful. They add variety in comparison to the typical type of sentence, which is a statement or declarative sentence, and they cause the reader to “wake up” and pay closer attention because questions often demand answers.

The following sentences are adapted from other stories retold by Joel Chandler Harris. Change each statement into a question that expresses the same meaning.

Example:

Statement: “Uncle Remus, I wonder who dug that hole in the ground.”

Question: “Who dug that hole in the ground, Uncle Remus?”

A. Statement: The Rabbit ran away when he got loose from the Tar Baby.

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

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B. Statement: Brer Fox couldn't help himself.

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. Statement: "I'll run to the house and bring you some tea-cakes."

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D. Statement: "You should wear your morning-gown, Brer Wolf."

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E. Statement: "Please save me, Brer Rabbit!"

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **CONFIRMATION**—Write your own confirmation of *How Brother Fox Caught Brother Rabbit* by following the steps listed.

**Paragraph 1**—Introduce the story and its author. Next, introduce briefly why part of the story is believable, probable, clear, or proper.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_







**Situation:** Brer Fox, Brer Rabbit, and Brer Bear decide to go fishing together one day. They walk to a nearby lake and cast their lines in. Each of them wants to catch the most and the biggest fish.

**Brer Bear:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Brer Rabbit:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Brer Fox:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Brer Rabbit:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Brer Fox:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Brer Bear:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





4. *Strengthen phrasing.* Are your word choices specific instead of vague? Do you use strong nouns and verbs? Weed out passive voice and excess adjectives. Use compound sentences, adverb phrases, and questions to make your writing more interesting.
5. *Proofread.* Look for and fix any punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors.
6. *Retype* the draft with the corrections you have made.

It often helps to catch mistakes by sharing your work with a classmate. Your teacher may form partnerships around the room and ask you to exchange papers. Read the essay you wrote aloud to your partner. (Reading aloud is often the best way to catch mistakes—grammar errors, as well as words that don't work well—because we use two senses—seeing and hearing—instead of one. If something sounds wrong, it probably is.) Be sure to listen for anything that doesn't sound correct, and ask your partner to interrupt you when she hears something that she has a question about. Then go through the previously listed steps with your partner and give feedback to each other.





## Lesson 9 .....

### Second Refutation— *Little Rough-Face, the Mi'kmaq Cinderella*

In this lesson you will read a story of the Mi'kmaq (or Micmac) people, a Native American people group originally found in Nova Scotia and northern Quebec. Many of the Mi'kmaqs still live there today. The story you are going to read closely resembles the more familiar story of *Cinderella*. You will use this narrative as the subject of your second refutation and second confirmation.

As you read through the story, think about which parts of it might be unbelievable, improbable, unclear, and improper. Remember not to focus on things that are basic to the story. For example, magic and imaginary things are part of every fairy tale. So, in evaluating a fairy tale, you will not refute magic as unbelievable or improbable. Instead, focus on parts of the story that create problems within the story world. Ask yourself if there are characters or events that are hard to believe, even in the world the story creates. Are there things that happen that are

improbable, or is there anything that is unclear? Does the story teach any improper lessons? Remember that the purpose of refutation is to attack the believability, probability, clarity, or properness of a part of a narrative. Be specific!

## Little Rough-Face, the Mi'kmaq Cinderella

—adapted from *The Red Indian Fairy Book*,  
as retold by Frances Jenkins Olcott

Once upon a time, in a large Mi'kmaq village on the border of a lake, there lived an old man who was a widower. He had three daughters. The eldest was jealous, cruel, and ugly; the second was vain; but the youngest of all was very gentle and lovely.

Now, when the father was out hunting in the forest, the cruel eldest daughter used to beat the youngest girl, and burn her face with hot coals. So the people called her “Little Rough-Face.”

When the father came home from hunting, he would ask why she was so scarred, and the eldest would answer quickly: “She is a good-for-nothing! She was forbidden to go near the fire, and she disobeyed and fell in.” Then the father would scold Little Rough-Face, and she would creep away, crying, to bed.

By the lake, at the end of the village, there was a beautiful wigwam, and in that wigwam lived a Great Chief and his sister. The Great Chief was invisible; no one but his sister had ever seen him. He brought her many deer and supplied her with good things to eat from the forest and the lake and with the finest blankets and garments. When visitors came, all they ever saw of the Chief were his moccasins, for when he took them off they became visible, and his sister hung them up.

Now, one spring, his sister made known that her brother, the Great Chief, would marry any girl who could see him. Then all the girls from the village—except for Little Rough-Face and her sisters—and all the girls for miles around hastened to the wigwam and walked along the shore of the lake with the Chief's sister.

The Chief's sister asked the girls, “Do you see my brother?”

Some of them said, “No,” but most of them answered, “Yes.”



Then his sister asked, “Of what is his shoulder strap made?”

“Of a strip of **rawhide**,” the girls said.

“And with what does he draw his sled?” asked his sister.

“With a green **withe**,” they replied.

Then the Chief’s sister knew that they had not seen him at all, and she said quietly, “Let us go to the wigwam.”

So to the wigwam they went, and when they entered, his sister told them not to take the seat next to the door, for that was where her brother sat.

Then they helped the Chief’s sister to cook supper, for they were very curious to see the Great Chief eat. When all was ready, the food disappeared, and the Chief took off his moccasins, and his sister hung them up. But they never saw the Chief, though many of them stayed all night.

One day Little Rough-Face’s two sisters put on their finest blankets and brightest strings of beads, plaited their hair beautifully, and slipped embroidered moccasins on their feet. Then they started out to see the Great Chief.

As soon as they were gone, Little Rough-Face made herself a dress of white birch bark, and a cap and leggings of the same. She threw off her ragged garments and dressed herself in her birch-bark clothes. She put her father’s moccasins on her bare feet; they were so big that they came up to her knees. Then she, too, started out to visit the beautiful wigwam at the end of the village.

Poor Little Rough-Face! She was a sorry sight! For her hair was singed off, and her little face was as full of burns and scars as a corncob is full of kernels, and she shuffled along in her birch-bark clothes and big moccasins. As she passed through the village the boys and girls hissed, yelled, and hooted.

When she reached the lake, her sisters saw her coming, and they tried to shame



her and told her to go home. But the Great Chief's sister received her kindly and bade her stay, for she saw how sweet and gentle Little Rough-Face really was.

Then as evening was coming on, the Great Chief's sister took all three girls walking beside the lake, and the sky grew dark, and they knew the Great Chief had come.

His sister asked the two elder girls, "Do you see my brother?"

They said, "Yes."

"Of what is his shoulder strap made?" asked his sister.

"Of a strip of rawhide," they replied.

"And with what does he draw his sled?" asked she.

"With a green withe," they said.

Then the Chief's sister turned to Little Rough-Face and asked, "Do you see him?"

"I do! I do!" said Little Rough-Face with awe. "And he is wonderful!"

"And of what is his sled string made?" asked his sister gently.

"It is a beautiful rainbow!" cried Little Rough-Face.

"But, my sister," said the other, "of what is his bowstring made?"

"His bowstring," replied Little Rough-Face, "is the Milky Way!"

Then the Great Chief's sister smiled with delight, and taking Little Rough-Face by the hand, she said, "Because you are gentle and good, you have surely seen him."

She led the girl to the wigwam and bathed her with dew until the burns and scars all disappeared from her body and face. Her skin became soft and lovely again. Her hair grew long and dark like the Blackbird's wing. Her eyes were like stars. Then the Chief's sister brought from her treasures a wedding garment, and she dressed Little Rough-Face in it. She was most beautiful to behold.

After all this was done, the Chief's sister led the girl to the seat next to the door, saying, "This is the Bride's seat," and made her sit down.

Then the Great Chief, no longer invisible, entered, terrible and beautiful. When he saw Little Rough-Face, he smiled and said gently, "So we have found each other!"

"Yes," she answered.

Then Little Rough-Face was married to the Great Chief, and the wedding feast lasted for days, and to it came all the people of the village. As for the two bad sisters, they went back to their wigwam in disgrace, weeping with shame.

## Tell It Back—Narration

1. Oral Narration: Without looking at the text, retell *Little Rough-Face* as best as you remember it using your own words. Try not to leave out any important details.

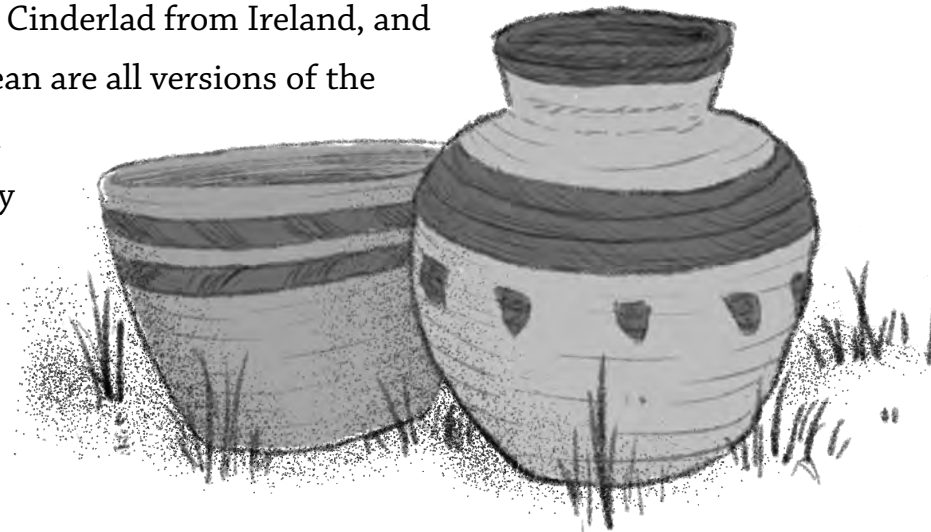
Here's the beginning of the story to help you get started:

Once upon a time, in a large Mi'kmaq village on the border of a lake, there lived an old man who was a widower. He had three daughters. The eldest was jealous, cruel, and ugly; the second was vain; but the youngest of all was very gentle and lovely.

2. Outline: Create an outline for the story *Little Rough-Face* using Roman numerals (*I, II, III*) for the most important events and capital letters (*A, B, C*) for less important events. Use standard numbers (*1, 2, 3*) for minor points.

## Talk About It—

1. What are some of the ways that the story of *Little Rough-Face* resembles *Cinderella*?
2. How is Little Rough-Face rewarded for her good character?
3. Many different cultures have retold the Cinderella story. Vasilisa from Russia, Nyasha from Africa, Cinderlad from Ireland, and Cendrillon from the Caribbean are all versions of the same character. Why do you think so many cultures enjoy the story of Cinderella?



# Go Deeper—

1. Use two sentences to answer each of the following questions. These are the questions a journalist always asks before writing a newspaper story—who, what, when, where, and why. The first sentence should mirror the question, and the second sentence should explain or add to the answer.

a. *Who* is the main character of the narrative?

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b. *What* is the main event or action of the narrative?

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c. *Where* does the narrative take place?

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d. *When* does the narrative take place?

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e. *Why* do you think the author has written this narrative? (What is his purpose in writing it?)

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b. In the book *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy asks Elizabeth Bennet to marry him. His love practically explodes from him, though he has fought it previously, when he says, “In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you.” Which of the following definitions most likely applies to the adverb phrase “in vain” in Mr. Darcy’s speech? Circle your answer.

uselessly

conceitedly

c. Use the word “vain” in two of your own sentences, one to describe someone as conceited and proud, and the other to show useless effort (using the words “in vain” or “vainly”).



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## Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—“His bowstring,” replied Little Rough-Face, “is the Milky Way!” Using the following suggestions, replace “bowstring” in this sentence. Then, using this sentence as a model, create new comparisons for the things that Little Rough-Face is describing. Use exaggerated comparisons, such as the Milky Way or a rainbow, as the storyteller did in the original sentence.

Example:

What would Little Rough-Face say about the feather in the Chief’s bonnet?

“His feather,” replied Little Rough-Face, “is a shaft of lightning!”

A. What would Little Rough-Face say about the Chief’s face paint?

“His face paint,” replied Little Rough-Face, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

B. What would Little Rough-Face say about the Chief's moccasins?

"His moccasins," replied Little Rough-Face, "\_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.

C. What would Little Rough-Face say about the Chief's tomahawk?

"His tomahawk," replied Little Rough-Face, "\_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.

D. What would Little Rough-Face say about the Chief's pipe?

"His pipe," replied Little Rough-Face, "\_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.

E. What would Little Rough-Face say about the beads on the Chief's garment?

"His beads," replied Little Rough-Face, "\_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## 2. COPIOUSNESS—

A. Adverbs tell us how, why, and when an action is taken. Adverb phrases describe verbs in the same way that adverbs do. When you say, "*With much regret*, I can't come to your party," you could say instead, "Regretfully, I can't come to your party." "Regretfully" tells *how* you can't come. In the following sentences, change the underlined adverb phrases into simple adverbs.

Example:

Little Rough-Face's sisters abused her in a terrible way.

Change to: Little Rough-Face's sisters abused her terribly.

a. When she saw the Great Chief, Little Rough-Face smiled in a joyful manner.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. The women waited in an impatient way for the Great Chief to appear.

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c. Little Rough-Face suffered her sisters' torment in silence.

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d. After Little Rough-Face's marriage, her sisters went home in disgrace.

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e. The Great Chief was dressed in many colors.

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B. How many ways can you rewrite the same sentence? Statements can be turned into questions, nouns and verbs can be replaced, and adjectives or adverbs can be added to spruce them up. Read the following sentences from the story and then rewrite each of them at least three times to express the same meaning.

a. Little Rough-Face said with awe, "And he is wonderful!"

Example: Little Rough-Face exclaimed with admiration, "And he is delightful!"

Note that "with awe" and "with admiration" are adverb phrases and can be changed into the simple adverbs "awfully" and "admiringly."

Version 1: \_\_\_\_\_

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Version 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Version 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. The two sisters wept with anger.

Example: The two sisters bawled furiously.

Note that “with anger” is an adverb phrase and can be rewritten with a simple adverb.

Version 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Version 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Version 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. **REFUTATION**—Write your own refutation of *Little Rough-Face* by following the steps listed.

**Paragraph 1**—Introduce the story and its author. Next, introduce briefly why part of the story is unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper.

\_\_\_\_\_

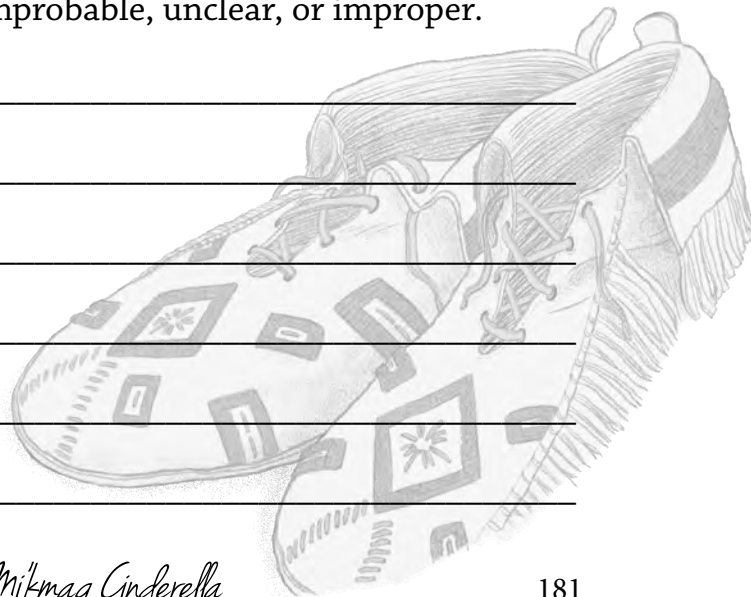
\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Paragraph 2**—Give a short summary of the story in four or five sentences. Feel free to use your own words in your own style to compose the summary.

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**Paragraph 3**—Attack and refute part of the story using sound arguments. How is this part unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper? Go into detail about your reasoning and use *one direct quote* from the story text to help support your argument.

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**Paragraph 4**—Wrap up your essay with a brief epilogue or conclusion. Remember, an epilogue is nothing more than a tidy ending for your essay. Either rephrase your argument or make a suggestion for how the author could change his story to solve the problem.

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# Revise It—

Always wait a day or so before you revise your own work. Writers need time and distance to see their writing clearly. Use the following steps as you do your revision:

1. *Find your main point and underline it.* Is there one sentence or phrase that represents your main argument? Make sure your paper expresses that argument throughout.
2. *Find your purpose.* Think about the purpose of a refutation, which is to attack a part of a narrative for a lack of believability, probability, clarity, or properness. Do you think you've accomplished that purpose? If not, tweak your paper so that your purpose is achieved. Remember that each of your four paragraphs also has a special purpose according to the demands of the prompts. Each paragraph must get the job done.
3. *Find and fix grammar mistakes.* Make sure all your nouns and verbs agree and that your writing is clear. Fix any fragments or run-ons. In other words, make sure you are writing complete sentences.
4. *Strengthen phrasing.* Are your word choices specific instead of vague? Do you use strong nouns and verbs? Weed out passive voice and excess adjectives. Use compound sentences, adverb phrases, and questions to make your writing more interesting.
5. *Proofread.* Look for and fix any punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors.
6. *Retype* the draft with the corrections you have made.

While you may have already read your essay to the class in the Speak It section, sharing your work one-on-one with a classmate may also help you catch mistakes. Your teacher may form partnerships around the room and ask you to exchange papers. Read the essay you wrote aloud to your partner. (Reading aloud is often the best way to catch mistakes—grammar errors, as well as words that don't work well—because we use two senses—seeing and hearing—instead of one. If something sounds wrong, it probably is.) Be sure to listen for anything that doesn't sound correct, and ask your partner to interrupt you when she hears something that she has a question about. Then go through the previously listed steps with your partner and give feedback to each other.



## Lesson 10 .....

### Second Confirmation— *Little Rough-Face, the Mi'kmaq Cinderella*

**R**ead the story *Little Rough-Face, the Mi'kmaq Cinderella* again. As you read through the story, think about which parts of the story are believable, probable, clear, and proper.

Remember not to focus on things that are basic to the story. For example, magic is part of every fairy tale, so you will not confirm magical things as believable or probable. Instead, ask yourself if there are characters or events that happen in the story that are believable or probable in the story world. Are there things that are clear? Are there good characters or proper things that happen? Does the story teach any moral lessons? Remember that the purpose of confirmation is to establish the believability, probability, clarity, or properness of a part of a narrative. Be specific!

# Little Rough-Face, the Mi'kmaq Cinderella

—adapted from *The Red Indian Fairy Book*,  
as retold by Frances Jenkins Olcott

Once upon a time, in a large Mi'kmaq village on the border of a lake, there lived an old man who was a widower. He had three daughters. The eldest was jealous, cruel, and ugly; the second was vain; but the youngest of all was very gentle and lovely.

Now, when the father was out hunting in the forest, the cruel eldest daughter used to beat the youngest girl, and burn her face with hot coals. So the people called her “Little Rough-Face.”

When the father came home from hunting, he would ask why she was so scarred, and the eldest would answer quickly: “She is a good-for-nothing! She was forbidden to go near the fire, and she disobeyed and fell in.” Then the father would scold Little Rough-Face, and she would creep away, crying, to bed.

By the lake, at the end of the village, there was a beautiful wigwam, and in that wigwam lived a Great Chief and his sister. The Great Chief was invisible; no one but his sister had ever seen him. He brought her many deer and supplied her with good things to eat from the forest and the lake and with the finest blankets and garments. When visitors came, all they ever saw of the Chief were his moccasins, for when he took them off they became visible, and his sister hung them up.

Now, one spring, his sister made known that her brother, the Great Chief, would marry any girl who could see him. Then all the girls from the village—except for Little Rough-Face and her sisters—and all the girls for miles around hastened to the wigwam and walked along the shore of the lake with the Chief's sister.

The Chief's sister asked the girls, “Do you see my brother?”

Some of them said, “No,” but most of them answered, “Yes.”

Then his sister asked, “Of what is his shoulder strap made?”

“Of a strip of rawhide,” the girls said.

“And with what does he draw his sled?” asked his sister.

“With a green withe,” they replied.



Then the Chief's sister knew that they had not seen him at all, and she said quietly, "Let us go to the wigwam."

So to the wigwam they went, and when they entered, his sister told them not to take the seat next to the door, for that was where her brother sat.

Then they helped the Chief's sister to cook supper, for they were very curious to see the Great Chief eat. When all was ready, the food disappeared, and the Chief took off his moccasins, and his sister hung them up. But they never saw the Chief, though many of them stayed all night.

One day Little Rough-Face's two sisters put on their finest blankets and brightest strings of beads, plaited their hair beautifully, and slipped embroidered moccasins on their feet. Then they started out to see the Great Chief.

As soon as they were gone, Little Rough-Face made herself a dress of white birch bark, and a cap and leggings of the same. She threw off her ragged garments and dressed herself in her birch-bark clothes. She put her father's moccasins on her bare feet; they were so big that they came up to her knees. Then she, too, started out to visit the beautiful wigwam at the end of the village.

Poor Little Rough-Face! She was a sorry sight! For her hair was singed off, and her little face was as full of burns and scars as a corn cob is full of kernels, and she



▲ Historic Eastern Native American Village

shuffled along in her birch-bark clothes and big moccasins. As she passed through the village the boys and girls hissed, yelled, and hooted.

When she reached the lake, her sisters saw her coming, and they tried to shame her and told her to go home. But the Great Chief's sister received her kindly and bade her stay, for she saw how sweet and gentle Little Rough-Face really was.

Then as evening was coming on, the Great Chief's sister took all three girls walking beside the lake, and the sky grew dark, and they knew the Great Chief had come.

His sister asked the two elder girls, "Do you see my brother?"

They said, "Yes."

"Of what is his shoulder strap made?" asked his sister.

"Of a strip of rawhide," they replied.

"And with what does he draw his sled?" asked she.

"With a green withe," they said.

Then the Chief's sister turned to Little Rough-Face and asked, "Do you see him?"

"I do! I do!" said Little Rough-Face with awe. "And he is wonderful!"

"And of what is his sled string made?" asked his sister gently.

"It is a beautiful rainbow!" cried Little Rough-Face.

"But, my sister," said the other, "of what is his bowstring made?"

"His bowstring," replied Little Rough-Face, "is the Milky Way!"

Then the Great Chief's sister smiled with delight, and taking Little Rough-Face by the hand, she said, "Because you are gentle and good, you have surely seen him."

She led the girl to the wigwam and bathed her with dew until the burns and scars all disappeared from her body and face. Her skin became soft and lovely again. Her hair grew long and dark like the Blackbird's wing. Her eyes were like stars. Then the Chief's sister brought from her treasures a wedding garment, and she dressed Little Rough-Face in it. She was most beautiful to behold.

After all this was done, the Chief's sister led the girl to the seat next to the door, saying, "This is the Bride's seat," and made her sit down.

Then the Great Chief, no longer invisible, entered, terrible and beautiful. When he saw Little Rough-Face, he smiled and said gently, "So we have found each other!"

"Yes," she answered.

Then Little Rough-Face was married to the Great Chief, and the wedding feast lasted for days, and to it came all the people of the village. As for the two bad sisters, they went back to their wigwam in disgrace, weeping with shame.



## Tell It Back—Narration

- 1. Story Details: You already narrated the story of *Little Rough-Face* in the  
• previous lesson. In this lesson, you will “tell back” details about the story’s  
• conflict and characters.
  - a. Almost all narratives catch the interest of readers because of conflict.  
• Conflict is often a clash between people or ideas in a story. What are  
• some of the conflicts in *Little Rough-Face*?
  - b. Remember that a protagonist is the main character of the story, often  
• playing the role of the hero. The antagonist is the opposing character,  
• often playing the role of a villain. Are there a clear protagonist and  
• antagonist in this narrative?
- 2. Dramatic Retelling (optional): Without looking at the text, act out the story  
• of *Little Rough-Face*, or just the scene in which she first sees the Great Chief.  
• Feel free to add your own descriptions of the Chief’s appearance. This is your  
• chance to retell the narrative by performing it for the enjoyment of others.  
• Students can divide into groups to prepare and rehearse their retelling for  
• presentation to the other groups or to other students or parents.
  - Feel free to make use of sock puppets, paper dolls, costumes, or props. Also  
• feel free to add dialogue or description to create a longer narrative. Stick to  
• the story’s plot and characters, but develop and present them in a way that  
• brings those elements to life. Consider making a special event out of the  
• performances, inviting other students or parents to the presentations.

## Talk About It—

- 1. Glenn Cunningham, born in 1909, was accidentally burned when he was  
• eight years old. Every morning, he and his brother Floyd started the logs  
• burning in the pot-bellied stove in the little schoolhouse two miles from  
• their home. They poured kerosene, a flammable fuel, onto the logs so that

they would light more easily. Tragically, one day someone had put gasoline in the kerosene container, and when the boys lit the fire, the gas exploded and burned them badly. Their sister, Letha, helped them to escape the flames, but Floyd died quickly afterward. Glenn was rushed to the hospital, where doctors predicted he would never be able to walk without a limp. However, through determination and dedication, Glenn Cunningham did learn to walk properly and eventually went on to become an Olympic distance runner.

How is this real-life story similar to and different from the story of *Little Rough-Face*?

2. A **stereotype** is a typical or overly simple way of looking at types of people. Stereotypes are often not very useful in helping us to understand real people. For example, when you think of a stereotype of a nun, you might wrongly think of a severe woman in a long, black robe ready to swat a kid with a ruler. In reality, many nuns are kind and gentle. Some of them care for the sick and poor with sacrificial love, as Mother Teresa did. She worked in the ghettos of Calcutta, India, loving some of the poorest people and living simply. As you can see, the stereotype of the severe, disapproving nun doesn't at all describe a real person such as Mother Teresa.

When you think of a stereotype of a Native American, what do you think of? What do you think influenced that stereotype? In other words, where did you get that idea of what a Native American is like?

## Go Deeper—

1. In *Writing & Rhetoric: Narrative I*, you observed that some characters in a story may change, while others may stay the same. We call characters who change in the course of a narrative **dynamic characters**. Characters who stay the same are **static characters**. Are the two wicked sisters dynamic or static characters? Do you think they changed at the end of the story, or do you think they stayed the same? Give a reason for your answer.



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2. A widow is a woman who has lost her husband to death. A widower is a man who has lost his wife. There is an interesting word in English, “**widow-maker**,” that can be used as a name for anything that is dangerous or deadly. For example, there is a famous gun known as the Widowmaker. Circle any items in the following list that might be a widow-maker.

- a. butterfly
- b. war
- c. rattlesnake
- d. apple
- e. toadstool (a poisonous mushroom)
- f. 100-foot cliff
- g. bed

3. The title *Little Rough-Face* emphasizes the abuse that the main character experiences at the hand of her wicked eldest sister. Can you think of a happier title for the story? Think of a title that emphasizes something different about the story or the good things that happen to Little Rough-Face and write it on the line provided.

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# Writing Time—

1. **SENTENCE PLAY**—Once upon a time, in a large Mi'kmaq village on the border of a lake, there lived an old man who was a widower. He had three daughters. The eldest was jealous, cruel, and ugly; the second was vain; but the youngest of all was very gentle and lovely. Using this paragraph as a model, and following the instructions given, change the basic facts to create a new paragraph. You do not need to mirror the original sentence exactly.

Example: Rewrite the paragraph for a farmer with three dogs.

Once upon a time, on a large farm in the middle of Oklahoma, there lived a stout farmer who sold potatoes by the barrel. He had three basset hounds. The oldest was loud and snappish and had sharp teeth; the second was lazy; but the smallest was very adorable and sweet.

A. Rewrite the paragraph for a queen in a castle with three horses.

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B. Rewrite the paragraph for a detective with three assistants.

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2. **COPIOUSNESS**—

A. Adverbs tell us how, why, and when an action is taken. Adverb phrases describe verbs in the same way that adverbs do. When you say, “I will come with happiness to your party,” you could say instead, “I will come happily to your party.” “Happily” tells *how* you will come. In the following sentences, change the underlined adverb phrases into simple adverbs.

Example:

The sisters spoke to their father in a deceitful manner.

Change to: The sisters spoke to their father deceitfully.



a. Little Rough Face’s sisters abused her in a cruel way.

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b. Little Rough-Face treated the Great Chief and his sister with respect.

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c. The Great Chief’s sister dressed Little Rough-Face in a beautiful way.

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d. The other girls answered the questions in an incorrect manner.

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e. Little Rough-Face celebrated her marriage with happiness.

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B. How many ways can you rewrite the same sentence? Statements can be turned into questions, nouns and verbs can be replaced, and adjectives or adverbs can be added to spruce them up. Read the following sentences from the story and then rewrite each of them at least three times to express the same meaning.

a. The Great Chief's sister smiled with delight.

Example: The Great Chief's sister smiled delightedly.

Note that "with delight" is an adverb phrase and can be changed into a simple adverb.

Version 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Version 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Version 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. The Great Chief's sister received her kindly.

Example: The Great Chief's sister let her in with kindness.

Note that "kindly" is an adverb that can be replaced with an adverb phrase.

Version 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Version 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Version 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



3. **DESCRIPTION**—The three sisters in this story are all described by adjectives. The eldest is described as “jealous, cruel, and ugly,” the second as “vain,” and the youngest as “gentle and lovely.” Perhaps the story could be improved if each of these characters were more fully described. For example, the author could have said, “The eldest sister cast sharp, jealous eyes on any girl better dressed than she was.” Or the author could have said, “The youngest sister gave food to the poor, and little birds would perch on her shoulders.” On the lines provided, write one sentence about each sister that more fully describes her based on the adjectives supplied.

A. The eldest sister \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. (cruel)

B. The second sister \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. (vain)

C. The youngest sister \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. (gentle)

4. **CONFIRMATION**—Write your own confirmation of *Little Rough-Face* by following the steps listed.

**Paragraph 1**—Introduce the story and its author. Next, introduce briefly why part of the story is believable, probable, clear, or proper.

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



• **Paragraph 2**—Give a short summary of the story in four or five sentences.  
• Feel free to use your own words in your own style to compose the summary.  
• You can also borrow your summary from the refutation essay you wrote in  
• lesson 9.

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**Paragraph 3**—Defend and confirm part of the story using sound arguments. How is this part believable, probable, clear, or proper? Go into detail about your reasoning and use *one direct quote* from the story text to help support your argument.

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• **Paragraph 4**—Wrap up your essay with a brief epilogue or conclusion.  
• Remember, an epilogue is nothing more than a tidy ending for your essay. Either  
• rephrase your argument or encourage your reader to learn from the story.

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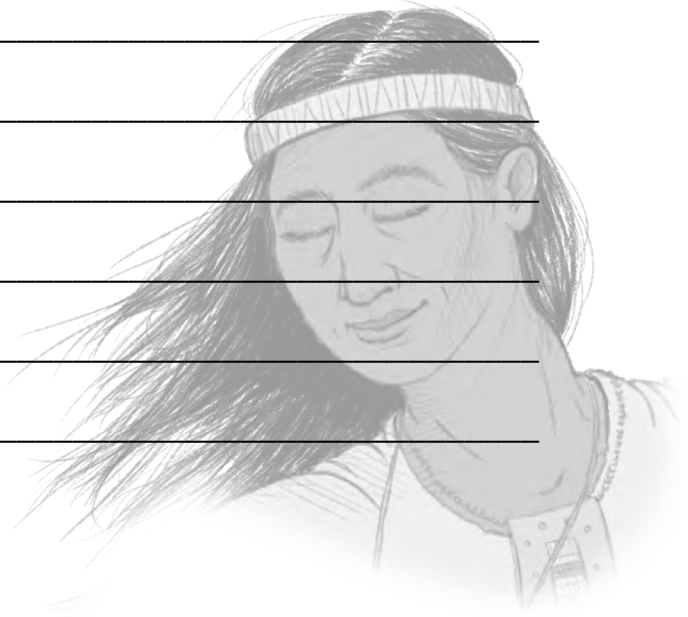
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## Speak It—Class Forum

• Take turns reading your confirmations to the class using proper elocution.  
• Your teacher will give you feedback about what is more or less effective, both  
• about your *logos* and your *lexis*, your words and your delivery. Your teacher may  
• also ask your fellow students to chime in with their feedback.

## Revise It—

• Take a hard look at your first draft and see how it stacks up against the  
• following list, which should be familiar to you now.

- 1. *Find your main point and underline it.* Is there one sentence or phrase that  
• represents your main argument? Make sure your paper expresses that  
• argument throughout.
- 2. *Find your purpose.* Think about the purpose of a confirmation, which is to  
• establish the believability, probability, clarity, or properness of a part of a  
• narrative. Do you think you've accomplished that purpose? If not, tweak  
• your paper so that your purpose is achieved. Remember that each of your  
• four paragraphs also has a special purpose according to the demands of the  
• prompts. Each paragraph must get the job done.

3. *Find and fix grammar mistakes.* Make sure all your nouns and verbs agree and that your writing is clear. Fix any fragments or run-ons. In other words, make sure you are writing complete sentences.
4. *Strengthen phrasing.* Are your word choices specific instead of vague? Do you use strong nouns and verbs? Weed out passive voice and excess adjectives. Use compound sentences, adverb phrases, and questions to make your writing more interesting.
5. *Proofread.* Look for and fix any punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors.
6. *Retype* the draft with the corrections you have made.

While you may have already read your essay to the class in the Speak It section, sharing your work one-on-one with a classmate may also help you catch mistakes. Your teacher may form partnerships around the room and ask you to exchange papers. Read the essay you wrote aloud to your partner. (Reading aloud is often the best way to catch mistakes—grammar errors, as well as words that don’t work well—because we use two senses—seeing and hearing—instead of one. If something sounds wrong, it probably is.) Be sure to listen for anything that doesn’t sound correct, and ask your partner to interrupt you when she hears something that she has a question about. Then go through the previously listed steps with your partner and give feedback to each other.