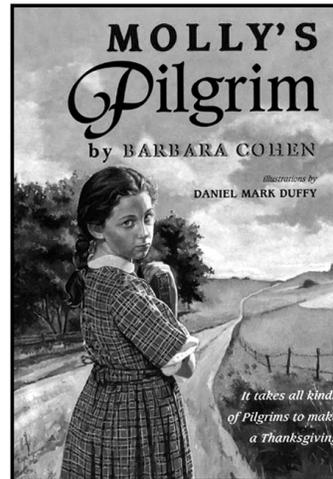


Molly's Pilgrim

By Barbara Cohen
Illustrated by Daniel Mark Duffy
HarperTrophy; Revised Edition
New York, NY: 1998
ISBN: 0688162800

**Read Aloud**

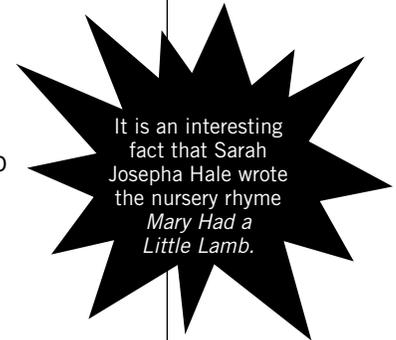
Thanksgiving, observed in the United States on the fourth Thursday of November of each year, had its origins in the state of Massachusetts. The surviving Pilgrims and over 90 members of the Eastern Woodland Tribes (Wampanoag and Patuxet Tribes) celebrated together after the severe winter of 1621. Through the generosity of these Native Americans, the Pilgrims were able to reap a bountiful harvest. They taught the Pilgrims how to plant maize (corn) and to use fish known as alewives for fertilizer. This first Thanksgiving was decreed by then Massachusetts Gov. William Bradford. After this celebration, there were many attempts to formalize the celebration with a specific date.

In the 1800s a woman by the name of Sarah Josepha Hale, then editor of the *Boston Ladies' Magazine*, convinced President Abraham Lincoln to designate a day for thanks on the last Thursday of each November.

In 1941 the holiday was officially designated as a national holiday by the U.S. Congress.

Although about the Thanksgiving holiday, the true event in this picture book is the *immigrant journey* from the “other side,” or as my very own Nana noted, “the old country.”

This picture book depicts a special day from a special perspective. Thanksgiving is the special day and the point of view is that of immigrants to the United States of America. Molly's mother is from Russia.



It is an interesting fact that Sarah Josepha Hale wrote the nursery rhyme *Mary Had a Little Lamb*.

Themes

The immigrant journey
(Coming to a new country as well as coming to a new school.)
Belonging and trust
Prejudice and mistrust

Narrative

Episodic Structure

The Narrative stage of Molly's Pilgrim is Interactive. A story is at the Interactive stage if there are at least two episodes, an obstacle for the main character and a character who influences change. There are several episodes in this story and some are embedded within others. The teacher changes the behavior and attitudes of the students in the class, making this story Interactive in nature.

Some kick-offs are "universal," because they have been encountered by waves of immigrants to this and other countries over the ages. Immigrants' families, homes, and memories of "the other side" or "the old country" help them, as "first generation" to adjust and fit in to the new land. The feelings and mental states brought about by the Kick-Offs below were common to most of our families as they came to the United States as immigrants.

There are several "universal" Kick-Offs in this picture book:

1. Molly is having trouble with the girls in her new school making fun of her, her looks, and her way of talking. (Immigrant children are often different in their dress, customs and speech.)
2. The new story about Thanksgiving. (Background information on the "American Holiday," Thanksgiving, is missing on the part of Molly.)
3. The teacher assigns a project to make a Pilgrim for a project to be made at home.

Her mother makes a Russian Pilgrim Doll out of a clothespin for Molly but it doesn't look like the one in the book at school. (Language and customs often differ with those of the mainstream culture and text books.)

4. Molly presents her Pilgrim at school. Molly, the girls and the teacher all react to Molly's Pilgrim. (Teachers often recognize opportunities to empathize with some students as well as teach lessons of life to others.)

Molly experiences several feelings throughout the book. The initiating events (Kick-Offs) are the reasons for the changes of feelings from beginning to end. Many state level tests ask the question:

"How do _____'s feelings change from the beginning to the end of the story?"

In this picture book it is important to look at Molly's body language on almost every page.

Episode #1: Abbreviated Episode



Character: Molly (and her classmates)



Setting: Winter Hill

She has to attend school to attain an education, a concept foreign for girls in Russia.



Kick-Off: The girls are making fun of the way she looks and speaks.

“Jolly Molly,
Your eyes are awf’ly small.
Jolly Molly,
Your nose is awf’ly tall.”



Internal Response: She feels very upset. We can find sentences showing her feelings: “When I got to our apartment, I burst into tears. It was all right. I could cry in front of my mother.”

“In this third grade, there aren’t any other Jewish children. I don’t talk like the other girls. They make fun of me. I hate going to school.”

Mental States: She **knows** her mother does not look like the other mothers and hardly talks English at all. When her mother told her she would speak to the teacher about Molly’s problems, Molly said “It’ll be all right.” She **knew** it wouldn’t be all right, but was concerned about how her mother might appear to the teacher if she went to see her. (inference)



Plan: Molly wants the girls to stop but there is no way at present to make that happen. (Inferred from mental state discussion above.)



Direct Consequence: As a result, she continues to go to school each day.

SGM® Abbreviated Episode Map



Summary: _____

Name

Molly (and her classmates)

Winter Hill, a suburb outside of New York City. She has to attend school, a concept foreign to girls from Russia.

The girls are making fun of the way she looks and speaks.

She feels very upset. “When I got to our apartment, I burst into tears. It was all right. I could cry in front of my mother.”

Is there a beginning of a plan?

Plan: Molly wants the girls to stop but there is no way at present to make that happen.

As a result, she continues to go to school each day.

Episode #2: Abbreviated Episode



Character: Molly and her classmates and teacher



Setting: The third grade classroom in November.



Kick-Off: Molly's turn to read aloud results in her coming across a word that she does not know. The teacher asks for help and Elizabeth provides the word "Thanksgiving," adding "I thought everyone knew that." She snorted: "You don't even know about Thanksgiving? I guess you people don't celebrate American Holidays."



Internal Response: Embarrassment and building resentment toward Elizabeth (These comments are examples of how things were not "all right" reflected in Molly's thought communicated by the inferred mental states in following sentences: "I dragged myself back to that school day after day (I knew I had to go to school. Schooling was not available to girls in the old country.) Nothing changed, but I didn't say another word about it to Mama." (I realized Mama did not understand the ways of the American School.)



Direct Consequence: As a result, Molly continues to read until another student is called upon.

Episode #3: Abbreviated Episode



Character: Molly and her mother



Setting: At home. As usual, Mama asks Molly if she has any homework.

Molly communicates the facts about the Pilgrim project to be done at home Mama asks Molly to do her homework and offers to make the doll for her later that evening.

Homework is a routine occurrence and would be considered part of the setting in this instance.



Kick-Off: Molly sees the Pilgrim in the morning. It is a girl, as requested, but the Pilgrim looks like her mother did when she was a girl, not as the Plymouth Rock Pilgrims.

A
colleague of Maryellen's is
a Counseling Psychologist who uses
the Critical Thinking Triangle of the Story
Grammar Marker® in her sessions with chil-
dren who are anxious. They often cannot identify
the Initiating Event or label it with a feeling. They
can, however, tell how their body feels when they
experience the anxiety. Molly's comment about
her face feeling "as hot as
fire" is indicative
of such description.



Internal Response: Molly is shocked and rather dismayed (inferred). Molly managed to compliment her mother’s work. The word “managed” communicated much here. What is Molly **thinking** when she says this? What is Mama **thinking** when she says:

“A Pilgrim is someone who came here from the other side to find freedom. That’s me, Molly. I’m a Pilgrim.”?



Plan: To make the best of the situation: “All I could do was take the only one I had to school with me.” (What is Molly **thinking** and **realizing** here?)

Direct Consequence: As a result, Molly went to school with the Pilgrim Mama made.



This Direct Consequence, with an addition, becomes the Initiating Event for the next episode, making this an *embedded episode*. It would not have occurred if the previous episode had not occurred.

The Initiating Event is both the act of taking the Pilgrim to school and also the response of classmates as the teacher inspects each student’s doll: “Elizabeth taunted,” “Elizabeth giggled again,” etc.



Internal Response: “My face felt as hot as fire.” This sentence, in response to the girl classmates initial reaction to the doll. It communicates a physical feeling resulting in a label of embarrassment, resentment, anger, etc.

The expression on Molly’s face in the classroom scene where the teacher is looking at the dolls is indicative of sadness and dejection. (What is Molly **thinking** here?)

Plan: Molly wants to explain the origin of her Pilgrim to the teacher and the class.



This plan shows that Molly has courage.



Attempt: She looked up at the teacher and said “This doll is dressed like Mama. Mama came to America for religious freedom, too. Mama said she’s a Pilgrim.

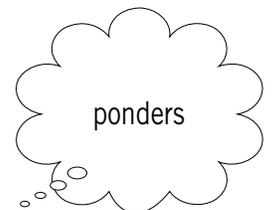
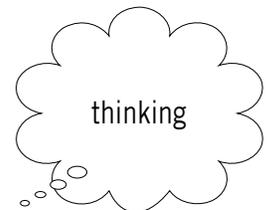
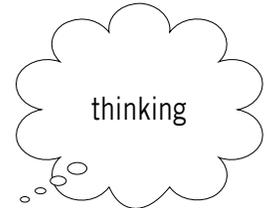
This Attempt to explain results in a reaction from the students. This reaction is stated in the following sentence:

“Elizabeth hooted. She wasn’t the only one.”

Direct Consequence: Molly’s explanation is the reason for more ridicule.



Notice the teacher’s face as she **ponders** the classmate response to Molly’s plight.



Episode #5



Character: The teacher (Teacher's Perspective).



Setting: The classroom where the teacher is observing the intolerance of Molly's classmates. Such intolerance is what the Pilgrims sought to avoid in coming to America.

The teacher's face is indicative of such an observation. Ask the students to contrast the teacher's face, Molly's face and those of the classmates.



Kick-Off: The behavior of the classmates and Molly's distress.



Internal Response: Miss Stickley communicates her feelings by...

∑ "marching" up to the front of the room

∑ her body language (crossed arms, in front of the classroom)

∑ her loud voice

∑ her salutation to the class: "Listen to me, Elizabeth." "Listen to me all of you."

She is distressed about the classmates' attitude and feels empathy toward Molly.



Plan: There is a need to make the classmates understand the true meaning of a Pilgrim.

Her plan is to teach the children a lesson in the true meaning of Thanksgiving and Pilgrims. (What is the teacher thinking?)



Attempts: Molly's mother **is** a modern Pilgrim.

Explains how the Plymouth Pilgrims got the idea for Thanksgiving. It came from the Bible passage about the Jewish harvest holiday.

Asks Molly to allow her to put Molly's Pilgrim on her (the teacher's) desk for all to admire.

Miss Stickley asks Molly to invite her mother to come to school to meet her. This demonstrates to the students that the teacher values Molly's mother as a person.



Direct Consequence: As a result of her intervention, Miss Stickley accomplishes her plan to help the class understand Molly's plight and the true meaning of "Pilgrims." Also, Molly begins to see things change. A classmate, Emma, sits near Molly and admires her Pilgrim.

Summary:

Often, the task in third grade is to summarize a story of many episodes. A summary can be shown by presenting the Beginning and the End of an episode. However, the Middle (Attempts) has to be represented by a sentence or two discussing the details as a whole.

Thus:

Molly, daughter of immigrants to America, is taunted by her classmates because she is different in looks, speech and in the type of Pilgrim Doll she brought to school. Molly is devastated but knows she is required to go to school.

The teacher, Miss Stickley, noticed the plight of Molly while observing reactions of the students to Molly's different Pilgrim *and through a series of actions*, helped the class understand the true meaning of the word Pilgrim and was able to help Molly become socially accepted.

Lesson Learned: "It takes all kinds of Pilgrims to make a Thanksgiving."



Story Sparkle

(Literate Language Style)

Story Sparkle is very important to developing good comprehension. These features of Story Sparkle are the words that link the stories, the characters and their feelings together.

Conjunctions: but, when, so
When I got to our apartment...

if, then, where
Where? I'm going to put this beautiful doll on my desk,
where everyone can see it all the time.

Mental State Verbs:

As noted in the Episode Analysis above, there are many scenarios where mental state verbs would have to be inferred. The situation is given, but the "thinking process" needs to be identified in discussion.

For example:

Internal Response: Molly is shocked and rather dismayed (inferred). Molly managed to compliment her mother's work. The word "managed" communicated much here. What is Molly thinking when she says this. What is Mama thinking when she says:

"A Pilgrim is someone who came here from the other side to find freedom.. That's me, Molly. I'm a Pilgrim."

Plan: To make the best of the situation: "All I could do was take the only one I had to school with me." (What is Molly thinking and realizing here?)

One day, who **knows**, they would have burned us.
I had **known** right along we couldn't go back to Russia.
I **thought** everyone **knew** that.

(continued)

You don't even **know** about Thanksgiving?
I **guess** you people don't celebrate American Holidays.
I **think** she's the best so far.
Perhaps Molly just didn't **understand**.
Miss Stickley **ignored** Elizabeth.
I **searched** for the words to explain.
Do you **know** where the Pilgrims got the idea for
Thanksgiving?
I **knew** that holiday.
It will **remind** us all that Pilgrims are still coming to
America.
I **know**.

Many times, planning words are considered mental state verbs:

I **decided** if Miss Stickley actually invited her, it was alright for Mama to come to school.
I **decided** something else, too. I **decided** it takes all kinds of Pilgrims to make a Thanksgiving.

Elaborated Noun Phrases:

All her friends, big soft cushion, this third grade, other Jewish children, poor tenement house, this nice apartment, our old house, another word about it, long black corkscrew curls, the sand table at the back of the room, ten arithmetic problems, dark brown yarn, long, full red skirt, tiny black felt boots, bright yellow high necked blouse, yellow kerchief embroidered with red flowers, the Pilgrim woman in the picture in my reading book, little paper bag, people who don't do their homework, my desk top, a person like that, doll dressed like Mama, her own way, Jewish harvest holiday of Tabernacles, this beautiful doll, most beautiful doll of all

So many feathers, a magnificent headdress.
She felt like a big, soft cushion.
They have to grow up ignorant like donkeys.
My face felt hot as fire.
May they grow like onions with their heads in the ground.

Linguistic Verbs: said, singing, asked, suggested, snapped, interrupted, repeated, snorted, sounded excited, frowned, explain, asked, replied, added, muttered, taunted, sighed, allowed, cried, explained

Adverbs: quickly, slowly

Word Level

One Syllable Words

aren't	arms	asked	bell	best	bet	blouse
books	boots	boys	bright	brown	burned	burst
called	can't	changed	chest	church	class	closed
course	cried	curls	desks	dolls	don't	dragged
dressed	dumb	eyes	faced	far	Fay	felt
friends	front	frowned	full	fun	girls	God
grade	gray	hair	hands	hates	heads	I'd
I'll	I'm	it's	Jews	job	kinds	knew
known	knows	last	late	laugh	leaned	lets
liked	looked	loud	low	marched	meet	mine
miss	most	mouth	moved	need	nose	Oi
our	page	peace	please	poor	pulled	pushed
raised	rang	red	rich	row	rung	sand
sat	searched	seats	seemed	seen	set	shared
she'd	she'll	she's	shook	show	sighed	silk
since	sing	skirt	small	smile	snapped	soft
song	speak	stare	sticks	still	such	sure
takes	talked	tall	tears	that's	they're	third
true	turned	voice	we'll	were	what's	word
works	yarn	York	you'd	yours		

Two Syllable Words

added	ago	ahead	aisle	allowed	announced	answer
any	Arthur	awf'ly	began	begin	Bible	bother
Brodsky	cardboard	carried	city	clothespins	coming	corkscrew
Cossacks	couldn't	covered	cushion	daughters	didn't	different
doesn't	donkeys	during	either	Emma	empty	English
explain	feathers	flowers	followed	freedom	giggled	going
goodness	gorgeous	hadn't	halfway	handed	harvest	haven't
headdress	Hilda	homework	hooted	houses	idea	ignored
it'll	Jewish	jolly	kerchief	Kitty	later	lovely
Mama	managed	matter	Michael	model	modern	Molly
mothers	Mr.	murmur	muttered	myself	nodded	onions
opened	papa	people	perfect	perhaps	person	Pilgrims
Plymouth	pointed	Polish	problems	pumpkin	purpose	reading
recess	remind	replied	Russia	Russian	Sally	saying
schoolyard	several	Shaynkeit	shoulder	slowly	snorted	sounded
started	Stickley	stumble	Sukkos	taken	taunted	teacher
teasing	tiny	title	tonight	tossing	turkeys	village
walking	wasn't	without	worship	yellow	Yiddish	

Three Syllable Words

admired	anyone	apartment	beautiful	celebrate
decided	embroidered	excited	factory	Goraduk
holiday	ignorant	Indians	invited	Malkeleh
November	peppermint	photograph	religions	repeated
satisfied	sentences	September	suggested	Synagogue
tenement	terrible	Thanksgiving	thirty-two	tomorrow
understand	whispering			

Four Syllable Words

Actually	America	American	arithmetic	celebrating
decorating	Elizabeth	especially	exercises	interesting
interrupted	naturally	magnificent	Massachusetts	Paskudnyaks
Tabernacles				

Sentence Level

Repeating Sentences:

All the sentences chosen require the student to use different tones of voice.

Some are taunting, others are soothing, still others require a lamenting tone.

The narrative is told in the first person making the following sentences very personal. For some you may want to incorporate the use of body language appropriate to the sentence as well as tone of voice and word repetition. In order to use the appropriate tone of voice and body language, previous sentences (in italics) should be read to set the mood.

"I didn't like the school in Winter Hill. In Winter Hill, they laughed at me."

"Elizabeth laughed most of all." (5 words)

(The word "laughed" gives a clue.)

"I don't talk like the other girls. They make fun of me."

"I hate going to school." (5 words)

(A comment made in the safety of her mother's embrace.)

"It'll be all right," I said. "I'll talk to Miss Stickley myself."

But of course I didn't. (5 words)

(This is one of Molly's thoughts concerning a talk with the teacher.)

"Thanksgiving?" I repeated. "Thanksgiving? What's Thanksgiving?"

Elizabeth snorted. "You don't even know about Thanksgiving? (6 words)

(The linguistic verb "snorted" gives a clue. Also, the character saying the comment gives a clue as to the tone.)

"This doll is dressed like Mama," I explained slowly."

"Mama came to America for religious freedom, too." (8 words)

(The linguistic verb and adverb "explained slowly" give clues.)

*“I’m going to put this beautiful doll on my desk,” Miss Stickley announced,
“where everyone can see it all the time.”*

“It will remind us all that Pilgrims are still coming to America.” (12 words)

(Since the teacher makes this comment, a “teacher tone” should be used.)

Word Level

Use the bolded sentences above and ask the students to count the number of words using a strip of graph paper and a pencil. Each word of a particular sentence would get a sequential check in a box along one horizontal line on the grid.

Allow enough lines to skip one between the sentences. Be sure that there are at least 12 boxes per line to accommodate the longest sentence.

Word Parts (Morphology) Activity

Read the words, one at a time, from the One Syllable list. Tell the students that the focus will be verbs in the list with the past tense morphological marker /ed/.

Provide an example: *called*. Call is a verb and /ed/ makes it past tense.

Ask the students to write the /ed/ on a small card. Each time they hear a word with the /ed/ at the end, they hold up their cards. Record the verbs on the board or chart paper.

As an extension, you may want to ask the students to look at the written words on the board or chart paper. Ask them to work in pairs and say the words to determine whether the /ed/ makes a /t/ or a /d/ sound at the end of the word. They may connect speech to print by folding a paper in half lengthwise and writing /d/ and /t/ at the top of each column and writing their responses in the appropriate column. Drawing attention to phonological changes such as these, sharpens students’ phonemic awareness.

The concept of voicing could be heightened through this activity by having the students feel the sound as they articulate the word, having their hands atop their larynx:

/d/

burned	called	changed	closed	dragged	frowned	leaned
moved	pulled	raised	seemed	shared	sighed	

/t/

asked	dressed	faced	looked	marched	pushed	searched
-------	---------	-------	--------	---------	--------	----------

Expository Text Features

Phoneme Level

Ask the students to listen to the present tense of the verbs from the lists on the previous page from which you separated the onset from the rime.

Say: /c/ all (with a pause between the onset and rime)

Then ask the students to say the word the fast way:

b urn	c all	ch ange	cl ose	dr ag
dr ess	f ace	fr own	l ean	l ook
m arch	m ove	p ull	p ush	r aise
s earch	s eem	s igh	sh are	

If you wish, you could ask the students to identify the final sound in each word.

For instance, in the word “raise,” the final sound is /z/ (a voiced consonant). In the word “push,” the final sound is /sh/ (a voiceless consonant...also known as a diagraph!)

See map on page 96.

List: Types of building

apartment
tenement
synagogue
house

Cause/Effect:

Kick-Off: behaviors of third grade girls in Winter Hill
Effect: Molly didn't feel that she “fit in”

List: Behaviors

name calling
criticism of school work
singing of derogatory song

Problem/Solution:

Character: Molly and her mother and family

Setting: United States of America.

Kick-Off: Molly's family could not worship as they wished in Russia.

Internal Response: They felt distressed but hopeful.

Plan: So they decided to come to America for freedom of religion and a better life.

Attempt: First they came to New York City.

Attempt: Then they moved to better living conditions in Winter Hill.

(*Molly's Pilgrim* takes place at this point of the family's immigrant journey to America)

Rare Words

Total number of words in the book: 1838

Total number of different words: 308

Rare words (not on the Wepman/Hass list): 249

Percent of rare words: 80%

List of rare words: actually, added, admired, ago, ahead, aisle, America, American, announced, answer, any, anyone, apartment, aren't, arithmetic, Arthur, awf'ly, beautiful, began, begin, bell, best, bet, Bible, blouse, boots, bother, bright, Brodsky, brown, burst, can't, cardboard, celebrate, celebrating, changed, chest, church, city, class, clothespins, corkscrew, Cossacks, course, covered, curls, cushion, daughters, decorating, desks, didn't, different, doesn't, don't, donkeys, dragged, dressed, dumb, during, either, Elizabeth, embroidered, Emma, empty, English, especially, excited, exercises, explain, factory, far, Fay, feathers, flowers, followed, freedom, front, frowned, full, fun, giggled, God, goodness, Goraduk, gorgeous, grade, hadn't, hair, halfway, harvest, hates, haven't, headdress, Hilda, holiday, homework, hooted, idea, ignorant, ignored, Indians, interesting, interrupted, invited, Jewish, Jews, job, jolly, kerchief, Kitty, last, late, Later, loud, low, magnificent, Malkeh, Mama, managed, marched, Massachusetts, matter, meet, Michael, mine, miss, model, modern, Molly, most, mothers, mouth, Mr., murmur, muttered, myself, naturally, need, nodded, nose, November, Nu, Oi, onions, page, papa, Paskudnyaks, peace, people, peppermint, perfect, perhaps, person, photograph, Pilgrims, please, Plymouth, pointed, Polish, poor, problems, pumpkin, purpose, pushed, raised, rang, recess, red, religions, remind, repeated, replied, rich, row, rung, Russia, Russian, Sally, sand, satisfied, schoolyard, searched, seats, seemed, sentences, September, set, several, shared, Shaynkeit, shook, shoulder, show, sighed, silk, since, sing, skirt, slowly, small, smile, snapped, snorted, soft, song, sounded, speak, stare, Stickle, still, stumble, such, suggested, Sukkos, sure, Synagogue, Tabernacles, tall, taunted, teacher, tears, teasing, tenement, terrible, Thanksgiving, that's, they're, third, thirty-two, tiny, title, tomorrow, tonight, tossing, true, turkeys, understand, village, voice, wasn't, were, whispering, word, works, worship, yarn, yellow, Yiddish, York

The *immigrant journey* is so much a part of the cultural histories of all ethnic groups in the United States. We are a nation of immigrants coming to America in search of freedoms, religious and otherwise. Historically, the immigrants, as well as the children of immigrant parents, face many adversities as they make their way in American society.

This book has an intergenerational connection. While reading it, connections between the text as well as the current lives and memories of those reading it can be made. The role of the teacher in *Molly's Pilgrim* underscores the importance of creating community, understanding and empathy within our schools. The teacher's facial expressions and comments throughout the book give clues to her growing desire to teach valuable life lessons.

Cultural Aspects

Classroom Conference Sheet — **Expository**

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

DESCRIPTIVE

 _____

 **OR** 

YOUR PLAN  Describe a topic. Focus on the character or the setting.

LIST

 **Types of Buildings**

apartment
 tenement
 synagogue
 house
 school

YOUR PLAN  List things related to topic.

SEQUENCE

 _____

1 First
 2 Then
 3 Next
 4 Finally

YOUR PLAN  Tell the order of steps.

CAUSE/EFFECT

 **Molly's Feelings**

behaviors of third-grade girls in Winter Hill **caused** Molly to feel that she didn't "fit in"

YOUR PLAN  Explain the reason why something happened.

PROBLEM/SOLUTION

 **Molly's Family**

They could not worship as they wished in Russia...
 So they decided to come to America.
 First, they came to NYC, Then, they moved to better living conditions in Winter Hill.

YOUR PLAN  State a problem and offer a plan to solve it.

PERSUADE

 _____

 Issue
 Your Opinion
 Another's Opinion
 Your Plan to Convince

YOUR PLAN  Persuade or negotiate with others.

COMPARE and CONTRAST

 _____ **Same** _____ 

_____ **Different** _____

YOUR PLAN  Show how two or more components, or ideas, are the same and/or different.