

Important Concepts . . .

Preview Review



Language Arts

Grade 8

W2 - Lesson 3: Narrative Paragraphs

Important Concepts of Grade 8 Language Arts

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Materials Required

Textbooks:

1. *ResourceLines 7/8*
2. *SightLines 8*

Language Arts Grade 8
Version 5
Preview/Review W2 - Lesson 3

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Preview/Review Concepts for Grade Eight Language Arts



*W2 - Lesson 3:
Narrative Paragraphs*

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, you should

- reduce the use of choppy sentences
- understand good paragraph structure, including topic sentence, body sentences, and concluding sentence
- re-write paragraphs from different points of view
- understand the purpose of narrative paragraphs and write one of your own
- understand what transitional words are and where they can be used

GLOSSARY

body sentences - support the topic or main idea of the paragraph.

coherence and unity - cause a paragraph to flow smoothly from one sentence to the next

concluding sentence - completes the ideas expressed in the paragraph

narrative paragraph - tells a story about something, usually relating information in sequence including a plot, setting, and characters

point of view - indicates who is telling the *story* in the paragraph

topic sentence - tells what the paragraph is about

transitional words - provide links between ideas in a paragraph and between paragraphs, creating coherence

W2 - Lesson 3: Narrative Paragraphs

Choppy Sentences

Sometimes sentences are long and seem to go on forever, expressing a single thought and clarifying meaning as the sentence continues. Sometimes sentences are short. Skillful writers and communicators use an assortment of sentence structures and sentence starters. Their choices are influenced by the needs of their audience.

- Sentences that start with “and”, “but”, and “so” can be grammatically correct. However, if used too much, they create an annoying, choppy style.
- Using the same word over and over makes writing seem repetitious.
- Separating each fact into its own sentence also creates a choppy and seemingly immature style of writing.

Transitional Words

Transition words can help provide connections or *bridges* among the sentences in your paragraphs. They can also give your readers clues of the order you are using. This helps the reader to follow your ideas better.

You may use transition words such as these:

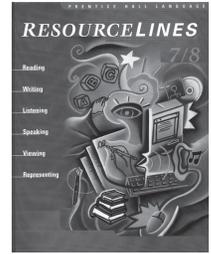
first, consequently, instead, but, although, because, furthermore, moreover, however, therefore, for example, nevertheless, thus

Some transition words give the reader clues about the **order of events**. These words include *suddenly*, *then*, and *now*. Other transition words that are useful when writing in chronological or time order are in the chart below.

after a few days	eventually	next
after a while	finally	now
afterward	first, second, third	so far
again	in the future	soon
at last	in the meantime	still
at that time	in the past	suddenly
at the same time	last	then
before	later	thereafter
earlier	meanwhile	when

Transition words help your readers follow your ideas more easily. They are like signs that help readers find their way through a piece of writing.

(More information about using transition words to create coherence is available in *ResourceLines 7/8* on page 86.)



Your writing style reflects the maturity of your thoughts and skills.

Example:

A big dog was chasing me. And it looked mean. And I couldn't find a place where to hide.

This could be expressed another way:

A big, mean-looking dog was chasing me. I couldn't find a place to hide.

After you combine sentences and delete repetitious words, your writing will have a more mature sound. You will sound more credible.

Activity 1

Read the following groups of choppy sentences. Proofread, edit, and revise the sentences so they are smoother. Be sure not to change the meaning of the messages.

1. I couldn't find anything to eat in the fridge. So I went out for a snack.

2. I like to watch dramas. But I don't like to watch animal shows. But I do like to watch mysteries on TV.

3. I worked hard today. I was too busy to watch TV. I cleaned my room. I took out the garbage. I walked the dog. And then I finished my homework.

Paragraphs

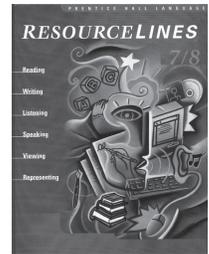
A skill that must be practiced in Language Arts is recognizing differences among paragraphs. When writing, you need to decide which particular type of paragraph is best suited for the message you are trying to communicate or the audience you need to address. This lesson considers the narrative paragraph, one that tells a story about something, usually relating information in sequence including a plot, setting, and characters

Narrative Paragraphs

A narrative paragraph is usually part of a larger story or event. A narrative has a person who is telling the story. This person is called the narrator, who can be a character in the story and be part of the action (first person point of view). Also, he or she can be simply an observer (third person point of view).

The purpose of a narrative is to explain an event to the audience. The story is told in such a manner that the audience is able to experience what the narrator is sharing.

Turn to page 87 of *ResourceLines 7/8* and read the section “Narrative Paragraphs”, the example that follows, and the “Bright Ideas for Writing Narrative Paragraphs” on page 88.



Paragraph Structure

A paragraph consists of three parts: the topic sentence, the body, and the closing sentence.

The **topic sentence** tells what the paragraph is about. It usually, but not always, occurs at the beginning of the paragraph. Sometimes the topic is implied (not stated outright). In a narrative paragraph, the topic sentence will likely identify characters and/or setting.

The **body sentences** support the topic or main idea of the paragraph. These sentences give more information, such as details, examples, instructions, or arguments. They are organized by time, sequence, location, importance, etc., depending on the type and purpose of the paragraph.

The **closing** or **concluding sentence** completes the ideas expressed in the paragraph. It may restate the topic sentence. In a narrative paragraph, the closing sentence may conclude the action.

Activity 2

Read the following narratives, and answer the questions that follow.

Paragraph 1

There was no kindergarten in those days. When I was age five and my cousin and daily playmate Doug turned six, I walked him to his first day of school. When we arrived, I sat cross-legged in the middle of the floor and told the teacher, Miss Rolanson, that I wouldn't get up until she agreed to let me stay. So it turned out to be my first day of school as well.

From "Things Past" by Dora Forstrom in *Sightlines 8*.

Paragraph 2

Pushing the handle of the big, wooden churn made her arms ache, and as the butter started to form, the foot pedal got harder and harder to press. As she worked, she thought of the First of July picnic in Millford that afternoon, wondering if there'd be chocolates. Someone had brought some to last year's picnic - the first Nellie had tasted - and she made hers last as long as she could, enjoying the unbelievable sweetness.

From "Higher Ground" by Beverly Brenna in *Sightlines 8*.

1. Who is narrating or telling the story in the first paragraph?

2. Is the narrator of Paragraph 1 part of the story or a character in the story?

3. Who is narrating or telling the story in Pparagraph 2?

4. Is the narrator of Paragraph 2 part of the story or a character in the story?

5. Write the topic sentence from Paragraph 1.

6. Write the concluding sentence from Paragraph 2.

Activity 3

Rewrite Paragraph 1 so the narrator is **not** part of the story.

Writing a Narrative Paragraph

Whether fictional or true, a narrative paragraph tells a story. When you write a narrative paragraph, you will probably use chronological (time) order. In other words, you will tell about the events in the order in which they occurred. Start with the event that happened first. Then, tell what happened next. Continue in this manner, and finish with the event that occurred last.



Select the image you wish to write about.

I will write a narrative paragraph about photo # _____

Learning Log

Take time to reflect on and record your learning process for this lesson.

1. What have I learned about transitional words?

2. What do I know about narrative paragraphs?

3. What do I need to keep working on to make my narrative paragraphs better?



