Name ________________________________________________________________

Age (as of January 1 of the current year) __________________________________

Club name ____________________________________________________________

Club advisor __________________________________________________________

County _______________________________________________________________
Authors
Brittany Mendez, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension
Christy Millhouse, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Reviewers
Abigail DeWitt, Member, Ohio 4-H Teen Advisory Council and Youth Curriculum Committee, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension
Natalie Richards, Author and Ohio 4-H Volunteer
Janine Sandman-Stover, Member, Silver Spoons 4-H Club, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Production Team
Kerri McTigue, Designer, The Ohio State University
Maggie Takacs, Program Assistant, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension
Jane Wright, Curriculum Manager, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension
Susie Young, Technical Editor, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

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Unless otherwise noted, photos used in this book are from Thinkstockphotos.com.
Contents

Note to the Project Helper............................................................... 2
Member Project Guide................................................................. 3

PROJECT AREA: Writing for Self-Expression
  Activity 1: Literature Buffet .................................................... 8
  Activity 2: Finding Inspiration—Where to Find Ideas .................. 10
  Activity 3: Developing Your Ideas ............................................ 12
  Talking It Over ........................................................................... 14

PROJECT AREA: Elements of Creative Writing
  Activity 4: What’s It All About .................................................. 15
  Activity 5: That’s What I Call a Story ....................................... 19
  Activity 6: Who’s Telling the Story? ......................................... 21
  Activity 7: Such Interesting People ......................................... 24
  Talking It Over ........................................................................... 28

PROJECT AREA: Language
  Activity 8: The Power of Words ............................................... 29
  Activity 9: The Poet in You ....................................................... 32
  Activity 10: Dialogue Dinner ..................................................... 37
  Talking It Over ........................................................................... 39

PROJECT AREA: Sharing
  Activity 11: Your Writing Portfolio ........................................... 40

Glossary ......................................................................................... 42
Sources .......................................................................................... 44
Summary of Learning Outcomes ............................................... 45
Note to the Project Helper

Congratulations! A 4-H member has asked you to serve as a project helper. You may be a parent, relative, project leader, friend, club advisor, or another person important in the 4-H member’s life. Your duties begin with helping the youth create and carry out a project plan, as outlined in the Member Project Guide. This is followed by helping the youth focus on each activity, providing support and feedback, and determining what was done well, what could have been done differently, and where to go next.

As a project helper, it is up to you to encourage, guide, and assist the 4-H member. How you choose to be involved helps to shape the 4-H member’s life skills and knowledge of the importance of creative writing.

Your Role as Project Helper

Your contributions are critical to delivery of the 4-H program, which is committed to providing experiences that strengthen a young person’s sense of belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery. Your interactions should support positive youth development within the framework of the Eight Essential Elements (also known as the Eight Key Elements):

1. Positive relationship with a caring adult
2. An inclusive environment
3. A safe emotional and physical environment
4. Opportunity for mastery
5. Engagement in learning
6. Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future
7. Opportunity for self-determination
8. Opportunity to value and practice service to others

For more information on the Eight Essential Elements, please refer to the Ohio 4-H Volunteer Handbook available online at ohio4h.org. On a practical level, your role as a project helper means you will strive to do the following:

• Guide the youth and provide support in setting goals and completing this project.
• Encourage the youth to apply knowledge from this project book.
• Serve as a resource person.
• Encourage the youth to go beyond the scope of this 4-H project book to learn more about creative writing.

What You Should Know About Experiential Learning

The information and activities in this book are arranged in a unique, experiential fashion (see model). In this way, a youth is introduced to a particular practice, idea, or piece of information through an opening (1) experience. The results of the activity are recorded on the accompanying pages. The member then (2) shares what he or she did with the project helper and (3) processes the experience through a series of questions that allow him or her to (4) generalize and (5) apply the new knowledge and skill.

What You Can Do

• Review the Learning Outcomes (project skill, life skill, educational standard, and success indicator) for each activity to understand the learning taking place. See the inside back cover for the Summary of Learning Outcomes.
• Become familiar with each activity and the related background information. Stay ahead of the learner by trying out activities beforehand.
• Begin the project by helping the learner establish a plan. This is accomplished by reviewing the Member Project Guide.
• After each project area is completed, conduct a debriefing session that allows the learner to answer the review questions and share results. This important step improves understanding from an experiential learning perspective.
• Help the learner celebrate what was done well and to see what could be done differently. Allow the learner to become better at assessing his or her own work.
• In the Member Project Guide, date and initial the activities that have been completed.
Thank you for taking the creative writing project! Writers learn to write in all kinds of ways. This project can give you the motivation and practice you need to jump start your efforts.

Activities cover where to get ideas, theme, plot, point of view, character, word choice, imagery, and dialogue. Many of this project's topics apply to many kinds of writing, but this project is about creative writing, which typically includes poetry, fiction, and plays.

*The Writer in You* is designed for 4-H members of all ages with some previous experience in creative writing. Check your county’s project guidelines (if any) for completion requirements in addition to the ones below, especially if you plan to prepare an exhibit for the fair.

---

**PROJECT GUIDELINES**

**STEP 1:** Complete **all 11** activities and all of the Talking It Over questions. In Activity 11 you will be asked to create a writing portfolio.

**STEP 2:** Take part in **at least two** learning experiences.

**STEP 3:** Become involved in **at least two** leadership/citizenship activities.

**STEP 4:** Complete a project review.

---

This is my __________ (first, second, third, etc.) time taking this project.
Complete **all 11** activities, including creation of a writing portfolio, and all of the Talking It Over questions. The More Challenges activities are optional. As you finish activities, review your work with your project helper. Then ask your project helper to initial and date your accomplishment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>DATE COMPLETED</th>
<th>PROJECT HELPER INITIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: WRITING WITH A PURPOSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Literature Buffet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Finding Inspiration—Where to Find Ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Developing Your Ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking It Over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: ELEMENTS OF CREATIVE WRITING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What’s It All About</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. That’s What I Call a Story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Who’s Telling the Story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Such Interesting People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking It Over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: LANGUAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Power of Words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. The Poet in You</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Dialogue Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Talking It Over</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: SHARING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Your Writing Portfolio</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP 2: Learning Experiences

Learning experiences are meant to complement project activities, providing the opportunity for you to do more in subject areas that interest you. What are some learning experiences you could do to show the interesting things you are learning about? Here are some ideas:

- Attend a clinic, workshop, demonstration or speech related to creative writing.
- Help organize a club meeting based on this project.
- Go on a related field trip or tour.
- Attend a poetry slam or open mic night.
- Prepare your own demonstration, illustrated talk, or project exhibit.
- Participate in county judging.

Once you have a few ideas, record them here. Complete at least two learning experiences. Then, describe what you did in more detail. Ask your project helper to date and initial in the appropriate spaces below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAN TO DO</th>
<th>WHAT I DID</th>
<th>DATE COMPLETED</th>
<th>PROJECT HELPER INITIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Attended an author presentation at the library</td>
<td>5/5/YR</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choose **at least two** leadership/citizenship activities from the list below (or create your own) and write them in the table below. Record your progress by asking your project helper to initial next to the date each one is completed. You may add to or change these activities at any time. Here are some examples of leadership/citizenship activities:

- Teach someone about creative writing in general or about a specific aspect of creative writing.
- Plan an activity to celebrate National Poetry Month, which is in April each year.
- Help another member prepare for his or her project judging.
- Host a workshop to share tips about creative writing.
- Encourage someone to enroll in a creative arts project.
- Arrange for a writer to visit your club.
- Plan your own leadership/citizenship activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING/CITIZENSHIP ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>DATE COMPLETED</th>
<th>PROJECT HELPER INITIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organized a writing workshop for my club</td>
<td>6/12/YR</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

STEP 3: Leadership and Citizenship Activities
All finished? Congratulations! After you've completed the activities in this book you are ready for a project review. This process will help assess your personal growth and evaluate what you have learned.

Use this space to write a brief summary of your project experience. Be sure to include a statement about the skills you have learned and how they may be valuable to you in the future.

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Now...

Set up a project evaluation.
You can do this with your
project helper, club leader,
or another knowledgeable
adult. It can be part of a club
evaluation or it can be part of
your county’s project judging.
Reading is a way to feed your creativity and inspire you to write. Luckily, by going online or to the library, you are treated to a buffet of all kinds of reading materials! Just like with food, everyone has different tastes. What literary genre do you prefer? It could be a certain kind of fiction—like historical, fantasy, or mystery—or it could be poetry or memoirs. Even screenplays make good reading for some.

**WHAT TO DO**

List three novels, short stories, poems, or plays that you read and enjoyed in the last year. Identify one feature about each that you liked—a line, a character, something about the writing style, whatever it is that makes the piece stand out for you—and explain why you like it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM 1</th>
<th>ITEM 2</th>
<th>ITEM 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre:</td>
<td>Genre:</td>
<td>Genre:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature I Like:</td>
<td>Feature I Like:</td>
<td>Feature I Like:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why I Like It:</td>
<td>Why I Like It:</td>
<td>Why I Like It:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Words in bold throughout this book are defined in the glossary.
Imagine a cold and dreary day. You have no outside commitments, and all you want to do is curl up under the covers and read one of your favorite books. What book would you choose? Is it the same book you would pick if you were going to the beach for the day? Or on a road trip? Your mood and environment often determine the book you want to read. Just like food, literature offers plenty of variety and flavors, and we can like many different kinds of books.

Think about your likes and dislikes as you do these activities and try to figure out why you read what you do. Can what you read be inspiration for what you write?

More 📚 Challenges

Use what you have learned about your reading preferences to find five more books that are interesting to you. Now read them! Document and share your list.

RESOURCE

Want some help finding the kinds of books you like to read? The website goodreads.com/list has lots to offer, including ratings by readers like you.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Project skill: Responding to written works
Life skill: Communicating
Educational standard: CCELA-RL, 6-5: Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
Success indicator: Selects three pieces of writing and explains the personal significance of each

Did you know?

According to an article from the New Jersey Department of Education, exposure to different authors and genres gives “insight into other cultures, worldwide locations, and new vocabulary.”

From www.state.nj.us/education/parents/articles/life/books.htm.
The seed of any creative writing piece is the idea. It is the place from where the work grows. Where do writers get these ideas? Anywhere!

Many writers create idea files as places to collect and organize story ideas. They learn to watch for ideas in newspapers, magazines, and books. They pay attention to the world around them—the sights, sounds, and people. An old song, a new movie, or a trip to the art museum might pique their interest. Opportunities for inspiration are never-ending. Even YouTube videos, online blogs, and social media posts offer possibilities.

What inspires you? What are five ways in the last year you have been inspired?

Now begin your own idea file.

☐ Choose a way to keep your ideas organized. Suggestions include a three-ring binder with sheet protectors to slip clippings into, an accordion file labeled with general topic areas, or a small pocket-sized notebook that’s easy to keep handy. Rather keep your ideas on an electronic device? Check out the many apps available and try some out. This is about personal preference; select a method that is right for you.

More 📚 Challenges

Take the next step and establish a habit of writing every day in a journal, even if it is for just a short period of time. Before you know it, five minutes grow into 10 minutes that grow into 30. Don’t know what to write? Use your idea file or writing prompts.
Collect ideas. Cut out magazine and newspaper articles or pictures (with permission, of course). Add notebook paper to record words or events you might want to use later. Jot down memories of activities and events you might want to write about. Identify a way to remember online sources that interest you. Continue to contribute to your idea file throughout this project.

Select one item from your idea file and use it as inspiration for a story outline, a scene, a character sketch, or a poem. Attach the item to your writing.

Tim Wynne-Jones is an English-Canadian author who writes children’s literature. In an article about where ideas come from, he says, “As a writer, you have to be something of a Sherlock Holmes. You have to be on the lookout for clues all the time. You have to have your eyes and ears peeled. It’s not an enemy you’re looking for; it’s a story. And anything—anything you trip over accidentally—might be useful towards making that story work.” In other words, ideas for writing are all around us. We just need to look for them.

We use our five natural senses every day—sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch. These senses can help us find ideas too. Think about the velvety softness of a rose petal or the almost sweet taste of a garden fresh tomato. What sounds do you hear on a snowy evening? Let these things spur your imagination. How about what people say around you? Story ideas might be hidden in bits of conversation. Maybe you are eating in a restaurant and see an old man eating alone. Your story could be about the wife he lost or the love he never found. You are surrounded by inspiration all the time.

RESOURCES
For information about many writing topics: scholastic.com.
For some great suggestions for generating ideas, go to writingcenter.tamu.edu/Students/Writing-Speaking-Guides and click on Brainstorming.

BACKGROUND
Did you know?
Poet William Wordsworth said about writing, “Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart.”

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Project skill: Keeping track of writing ideas
Life skill: Keeping records
Educational standard: CCELA-W 6-10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Success indicator: Starts and adds to an idea file
Another very effective method for generating ideas is to keep a writing journal. If the ideas in your idea file aren’t speaking to you, you can try using a starter idea. This is called writing with a prompt, where an author is given a topic, a timeline, and the expectation to simply write!

**WHAT TO DO**

Pick one of the following prompts and write for 15 minutes on the topic. If you repeat this project, use a prompt you haven’t used before.

- An upcoming mission to Mars can take only five people. You just found out you’ve been selected along with…
- You always wanted to help create a haunted house, but once you and your friends put it together, something spooky happened…
- A tidal wave has hit the coast of the town you are staying in. You watch, helpless, out the window of your hotel, until…
- It is the day of the national finals of the dog show, and you and your dog have made it to the final round. You are grooming your hopeful champion for judging when…
- It is finally here! You look down at the envelope with your top college choice’s name on it, and tentatively you open the envelope to find…

Save what you write for your portfolio!

**More Challenges**

Select a single prompt from writersdigest.com/prompts and write multiple responses. Be purposeful about what you change—setting, plot, character, point of view, etc.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*Project skill:* Writing in response to a timed prompt

*Life skill:* Practicing creativity

*Educational standard:* CCELA-W 6-10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

*Success indicator:* Writes for 15 minutes in response to a prompt
Many authors suffer from something called writer’s block, a condition in which an author does not know what to write or how to continue. To overcome this problem, many authors use prompts, just as you did in the activity. Another way is to keep a journal in which you write down any ideas you have immediately when you have them. That way, when you are struggling with a story you can go back to ideas you’ve already had.

Did you know?

“Reading is a much better way to improve your vocabulary (and therefore your writing) than watching television. Books contain 50 percent more rare words than prime-time television.”

From Amazing Facts about Writing and the Brain at bestinfographics.co.

RESOURCES
Power of the Pen is an educational program devoted to developing excellence in creative writing among Ohio’s seventh and eighth graders. Learn more at powerofthepen.org.
Tips for overcoming writer’s block and other helpful resources are part of the Guide to Grammar and Writing at grammar.ccc.commnet.edu.
Search for writer’s block in the index.
SHARE  Which genres do you read most?
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

REFLECT  If you are serious about writing, do you need to keep an idea file and journal? Why or why not?
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

GENERALIZE  Look up the current top five young adult bestsellers. What genres seem to be some of the most popular?
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

APPLY  Name at least two other creative efforts that require discipline and practice. Does the need for practice help or hurt creativity? Explain.
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
The theme holds all the individual parts of a story together. It connects the story’s events, characters, and actions, and gives them meaning. A good theme is usually part of the explanation for why a story happens the way it does. It’s not as obvious as a lesson or a moral of the story, but with some analyzing, you’ll be able to find it. It’s the underlying idea the author uses to give meaning to a story or piece.

WHAT TO DO

Finding the theme is easiest if you take the time to understand character, understand conflict, find resolution, and then generalize. On the next page, read the story and review the questions and sample answers, which have been done for you. Then move on to the second story and write your own answers.

Common Themes in American Literature

- Man vs Man
- Man vs Nature
- Man vs Society
- Rags to Riches Stories
- Crime Doesn’t Pay
- Overcoming Adversity
- Hard Work Makes Dreams Come True
- Importance of Family

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Project skill:** Identifying theme in a written piece
- **Life skill:** Thinking critically
- **Educational standard:** CCELA-RL. 6-2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- **Success indicator:** Identifies theme
“Bobby Tyne was always poor. He was born and raised in the slums of a huge city, where he had to fight to merely exist. As a man, he was hired by a tire manufacturer to run a machine that shaped rubber tires. Day after day he labored, for 21 years, producing 18 or 19 tires each day. Bobby was paid according to the number of tires he turned out.

One day, by accident, Bobby discovered that he could adjust the counter on his machine. By using a screwdriver, he could move the counter ahead. Here was his chance to be rich, to get ahead in life, he thought to himself.

The next afternoon, at the end of the working day, the inspector came to check the counter on Bobby’s machine—it read 32. Never had the machine produced so many tires in one day. The suspicious inspector reported the incident to the foreman. Bobby soon discovered that a closed circuit television had recorded his actions—the scene of Bobby changing the counter was viewed by his superiors. With this evidence, Bobby Tyne, at the age of 49, was fired.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY CONCEPT</th>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand Character</td>
<td>Who is the character? What does he/she want?</td>
<td>Bobby Tyne is a man who has been stuck in the same town his whole life. He can’t get ahead. He has worked for a long time, and wants more money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand Conflict</td>
<td>What is the issue?</td>
<td>Bobby’s means for making more money are limited. Because he can’t make more tires than he is already making, he can’t increase the amount of money he earns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find Resolution</td>
<td>How does the character solve (or try to solve) the problem?</td>
<td>Bobby tries to solve this problem by lying. He increases the number on the tire counter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How is the problem solved? Is it solved?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Generalize           | What is the lesson here, in a way that can be applied to everyone?        | Passage on p. 10
Too Narrow: Don’t increase your tire counter.
Too Broad: Crime doesn’t pay.
Just Right: Blind ambition can lead to ruin.
ON YOUR OWN

Read this story and use the table to record your first thoughts. Then write out or type your answers on a separate page. If you repeat this project, write your own brief story and identify the same key concepts.

“Janice had dreamed of being an actress since she was a child. During her freshman year in college, a producer came to town to select several young women to cast in a movie being filmed locally. Janice was not chosen to play a role in the movie. She approached the director and asked if he could advise her how to improve her acting ability.

He told her she needed more self-confidence and advised her to continue studying theatrics at the university and perhaps do some modeling.

‘Contact me in two years and I’ll see what I can do for you,’ he said.

For two full years, Janice worked and studied. Then she telephoned the director. Her call was intercepted by the director’s secretary who requested Janice’s name. Janice told the woman the situation. In the end, the director did not remember Janice and refused to speak to her.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY CONCEPT</th>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand Character</td>
<td>Who is the character? What does he/she want?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand Conflict</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Find Resolution</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How is the problem solved? Is it solved?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalize</td>
<td>What is the lesson here, in a way that can be applied to everyone?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What if Janice became a top fashion model and fulfilled her dreams? What would the theme of the story be? Provide brief evidence.

Now notice how plot can affect theme. What if the plot were different, and Janice didn’t become a model or actress, leaving her dreams unfulfilled? How would this ending change the theme? What could the new theme be? Provide brief evidence.

**BACKGROUND**

The theme is the main idea in a piece of writing. It is often called a universal truth because it is a general statement that can be applied to many separate but similar situations. Universal truths hold true for people everywhere. Have you heard other stories about people like Bobby Tyne, who let their ambition get the best of them? It is a common theme.

Because themes are general, narrowing a theme down to just one defining component can be difficult. In the activity you needed to learn about the character, the conflict, and the resolution before you could form a general statement about the theme. Finding the theme usually means you have to see how all these components relate to one another. It is always helpful to read the whole piece.

The idea of a theme could come to you through a feeling you sense again and again throughout the work, like love or suspense. Or, it could be supported by an action or a situation the character encounters over and over. Once you learn how to look for it, identifying the theme is easier each time you read something.

**More Challenges**

Write your own short story with a specific theme in mind. After, see what evidence your story gives to support your choice of theme. If you have trouble finding specific evidence after the story is written, it may be a sign to include more detail in your work.

**Did you know?**

How you interpret a theme depends on your life experiences. For example, the theme of the American Dream might not mean as much to someone who has not been able to achieve his or her goals.
That’s What I Call a Story

A plot is basically what happens in a story. Plot moves the story forward. It is the action that unfolds in the writing piece. The structure of the plot is the order in which things happen. The plot also might be described as the cause and effect of the story—a series of linked events. The plot is made up of the problem, the main events, and the resolution.

WHAT TO DO

Another way you could think about plot is using the **SWBS method**.

**S**omebody—The main character

**W**anted—What did the main character want?

**B**ut—What problem gets in the way of the main character getting what he or she wants?

**S**o—How does the character solve the problem?

Find a version of the story *The Three Little Pigs*. You might enjoy the one online at [youtube.com/watch?v=c65157C56-M](https://youtube.com/watch?v=c65157C56-M). If it is no longer available, you can use any version.

Complete the chart below using the elements from the story. Use the first line for the main plot. The other lines are for any **subplots** you identify. Subplots connect to or support the main plot. For example, a subplot in *The Three Little Pigs* might concern how two of the pigs made fun of their more industrious brother.

If you repeat this project, use the SWBS method on another fairy tale or other short work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOMEBODY . . .</th>
<th>WANTED . . .</th>
<th>BUT . . .</th>
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The plot provides a story with a definite structure. A pyramid shape is a traditional way to describe the plot but it isn’t the only one.

Authors have been identifying the structure of a story as long ago as 350 B.C. The Greek philosopher Aristotle described the basic plot of a story as having three parts: the beginning, middle, and end. He said a story follows a path of cause and effect. Basically one thing leads to the next.

Gustav Freytag, a German writer in the 1800s, changed Aristotle’s structure a little. He used five parts to describe the structure of a plot: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. The exposition and rising action are the background and start of the story, with all the action leading to the climax. The climax is the turning point. After that is the falling action or all the action after the climax. In the end everything is tied together in the resolution. This pyramid has stayed mostly the same and is still used today to describe plot.

A fractured fairy tale retells a traditional fairy tale by changing the characters, setting, points of view, or plot. In The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, author John Scieszka changes the point of view. Write your own fractured fairy tale by changing something else about the Three Little Pigs or another well-known fairy tale. Document and share what you write.

Did you know?
The Three Little Pigs is not one of Grimm’s fairy tales, although the Grimm Brothers, who collected and wrote folk tales, have a similar story called “Wolf and Seven Kids.”

RESOURCES
This printable page about plot could be added to your portfolio as a resource: writingcenter.tamu.edu/Students/Writing-Speaking-Guides/Alphabetical-List-of-Guides/Creative-Writing/Plot-Development. Need help writing a fractured fairy tale? This lesson plan has a link to an interactive that will let you practice. readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/fractured-fairy-tales-30062.html. Check this site for more information about fractured fairy tales: teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/fractured_fairy.htm. Great writing tips can be found at creative-writing-now.com/how-to-write-a-story.html.
Who’s Telling the Story?

Point of view is the way we look at things. In writing, point of view is the perspective from which the author writes. Who is telling the story? A character with his or her own unique experience? Or a narrator who sees all, including the thoughts and feelings of the characters?

WHAT TO DO

1. Choose one of these pictures or a picture of your own, and write a short (two or three sentence) narrative using each of the different points of view. If you repeat this project, select a different picture each year.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Project skill: Writing from various points of view
Life skill: Practicing creativity
Educational standard: CCELA-W, 6-3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
Success indicator: Writes in first, second, and third person
In **first person**, the narrator is talking about himself or herself. Use the pronoun “I.”

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

In **second person**, the narrator speaks for the reader. This point of view is uncommon but effective in certain, usually short pieces, like poetry. Use the pronoun “you.”

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

**Third person** is the most commonly used point of view. The narrator speaks for one or several characters, using the pronouns “he,” “she,” and “they.”

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Now, choose one of the points of view and expand your narrative into a short story. Even though the picture you choose may only include one person, add a few more characters to your story.

---

**More Challenges**

*The third person point of view can be broken into three different categories—**omniscient**, **objective**, and **limited**.* Using your own research, explore the third person point of view and write a short narrative using it. If you used third person point of view to write your narrative for the activity above, pick a different form of third person.

---

**RESOURCES**

These websites have especially good discussions of point of view:

- [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/754/02](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/754/02)
- [the-writers-craft.com/omniscient-point-of-view.html](https://the-writers-craft.com/omniscient-point-of-view.html)
- [fictionwriting.about.com/od/glossary/g/omniscient.htm](https://fictionwriting.about.com/od/glossary/g/omniscient.htm)
- [ereadingworksheets.com/point-of-view](https://ereadingworksheets.com/point-of-view)
Imagine for a moment the rabbit show at a county fair. If someone were to write about that event, the story could be written from the point of view of an exhibitor, a parent, a 4-H advisor, a judge, a spectator who knows nothing about rabbits, or even, a rabbit itself. Each person or character would tell the story a little differently depending on his or her point of view. The story could be told by a narrator who knows how the exhibitor is feeling, what the parent is feeling, what the judge is thinking, and more. That is what is meant by point of view. When a writer writes, point of view is the perspective from which the story is told.

In first person, the writer might tell the story through the exhibitor’s eyes:

*I was really nervous when I took my rabbit to the judging table. I could feel the eyes of the crowd on me and I hoped my rabbit would behave. I stood nervously while the judge approached me and then, after a few minutes, it was all over.*

Using third person, it might sound like this:

*The exhibitor was really nervous when he took his rabbit to the judging table. He could feel the eyes of the crowd on him. He hoped his rabbit would behave. He stood nervously while the judge approached him and then, after a few minutes, it was all over.*

Choosing a point of view and using it consistently can be tricky. Each one—first person, second person, and third person—has its benefits and challenges. For example, in first person, the reader experiences the story just as the character does, with the same background and knowledge the character has. However, that limitation is a benefit when readers develop close connections to characters whose experiences they share. The action can seem more immediate and create tension in the story in first person.

Many writers find that writing in the third person is the most comfortable and versatile. It sometimes feels more natural and allows the writer to more fully describe the scene. In third person, the reader can see more than in the other viewpoints.

Most importantly, a writer should be very intentional about point of view, using it consistently except when making a dramatic shift.

**Did you know?**

*Suffering from writer’s block? Try rewriting a short piece from a different point of view. The change in perspective can be a big help.*
One of the most important elements of a story is the characters. A character is any person, animal, or figure represented in a literary work. Who are the characters in your favorite stories? What roles do they play? Cinderella, the Wicked Witch of the West, Harry Potter, Katniss Everdeen, the Big Bad Wolf—each of these main characters plays an important role in keeping the story moving. As a writer, character development is critical.

WHAT TO DO

Before you write, get to know your character. What is the character’s physical appearance? How would you describe his or her or its personality? How does the character think or act? Characters, like us, each have a backstory. Where did the character grow up? What school did he or she go to? What is his or her family like? In this activity, you are going to practice developing character with two short exercises.

1. Choose someone you know and write a short description of that person here. See if others can guess who you described. If you repeat this project, select someone new each year.

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Now, look through old magazines to find a picture of someone or something that could be a character in a story. Use the Character Interview page that follows to develop your character. If you repeat this project, select someone new each year.
Character Interview

Attach the image of your character to this page. Imagine you have the opportunity to conduct an interview with him or her (or it?). Fill in the answers below.

1. What is your name? Do you have a nickname?

2. What color is your hair? What color are your eyes?

3. How else would you describe your physical appearance?

4. Describe your family.

5. Tell me about your friends.

6. Where were you born? Where do you live now?

7. What makes you laugh?

8. What is your most treasured possession?

9. What is your greatest fear?

10. What do you remember from your childhood?

11. What else do you want me to know?

There are many other questions you can ask to get to know a character, and many tools you can use. To see the questions other authors ask, do a search online for “character interview.”
Authors use many types of characters to tell stories, all with different roles, purposes, and personalities. Character development could be described as all the things that bring a character to life. Sometimes character development is what happens to the character in the story. Either way, two things are important for writers.

First, you need to know your characters. As a writer, you are breathing life into them! Who are they? Are they giggly? Mopey? Resentful? Smart? What do they look like? Just like you can’t judge a book by its cover, you don’t know a person, or a character, until you know more than a physical description. Get to know a character like you would a member of your family or a good friend.

Second, know the different roles characters play. The protagonist is the main character. He or she typically has a conflict that needs to be solved. The antagonist is the character who is in the way of the protagonist overcoming the conflict.

Some characters are described based on the personality traits they have. A flat character could be described as stereotypical, meaning he or she has traits that are easy to recognize but also is not developed very fully. Round characters are more realistic, are presented more fully, and are likely to change and develop by the end of a story. Static characters do not change in a story but dynamic ones do.
How do authors create characters? Jenna Blum, an author and creative writing teacher, talks about three ways:

- A **magic character** comes into the author’s head and “lives there.” The magic character sometimes dictates the story to the author.
- A **borrowed character** is created when a writer takes a quality or trait from a real person and puts it into a fictional character.
- A **made-up character** is created from scratch or from the “ground up.”

### Writers can reveal characters in many ways, including:

- **Dialogue**
- **Clothing**
- **Actions**
- **Opinions**
- **Physical traits**
- **Personal history**

### RESOURCE

This website has a great explanation of different types of characters:


### Did you know?

*The character Winnie-the-Pooh is based on a real bear. In 1914, a Canadian soldier bought an orphaned black bear cub and named it Winnipeg after his hometown. When he was sent to France during World War I, he loaned Winnie to the London Zoo. Author A. A. Milne often took his son, Christopher, to the zoo, and Christopher named his teddy bear after Winnie.*
SHARE  How does a story idea usually start for you—with the theme, plot, character, or something else?
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

REFLECT  Is creativity something that can be learned, or are people born with it? Explain.
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

GENERALIZE  When you are doing something creative, do you prefer to plan the steps or just see where the project takes you? Explain.
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

APPLY  What literary character would you most like to spend time with? Why?
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
Painters create pictures with paint. Writers use words. A writer can create different pictures for the reader depending on the choice of words used. Words are powerful. Good word choice means using strong action verbs, specific nouns, and descriptive adjectives to create mental pictures for the reader. Good word choice helps a writer show not tell the reader.

**WHAT TO DO**

Below is an example of how using *synonyms* for the verb “walked” can change the writing. What do you picture in your mind when the writer instead says “skipped joyfully” or “strutted.” Using “strut” lets the reader know more. It says how the how the child was walking. Each variation of the word “walk” paints a slightly different picture in your mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The child</th>
<th>walked down the street.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject (identifies a person, place or thing)</td>
<td>Predicate (tells what the subject does, where it is or what is done to it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child</td>
<td>skipped joyfully down the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child</td>
<td>ambled down the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child</td>
<td>toddled up to his mother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child</td>
<td>strutted up to the stage to receive her award.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When choosing paint colors, paint chips are often used to find just the right shade. When choosing words, it is important to find just the right word. A synonym is a word with the same or almost the same meaning as another word. Use a thesaurus or dictionary to find synonyms for the words below. Use the example to help you.
Now that you have a few specific, descriptive words, choose three and write a sentence for each. Get creative by using phrases, adverbs, adjectives, and other ways to help your sentences be interesting. If you repeat this project, use three different words each year.

12. ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

13. ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

14. ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

Now, use one of the sentences you wrote above as inspiration for a short story. Practice using specific and accurate words as you write. Share your story with someone—a friend, teacher, or your project helper. Ask him or her to give you feedback about word choice.

More Challenges

Choose a short story. (These two websites offer the full text for many short stories: americanliterature.com/twenty-great-american-short-stories or storystar.com.) Read the story and pay particular attention to word choice. On a separate paper, record at least three good examples. Explain exactly why you think each is good.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Project skill: Writing description
Life skill: Practicing creativity
Educational standard: CCELA-L, 6-5: Demonstrate understandings of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
Success indicator: Writes descriptive narrative
How does an author find the right words to use? First, successful word choice comes from having a rich vocabulary. It comes from knowing words and how to use them. But how do you know? How do you develop a good vocabulary? Research shows that reading is one of the best ways to build your vocabulary bank. Seeing a new word in context helps you understand the subtlety of its meaning. As a writer, it is important for you to also be a reader.

As shown in the activity, words don’t have to be unusual or long to be good descriptors. As an example, here’s a sentence from O. Henry’s story *The Gift of the Magi*:

*There was clearly nothing left to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl.*

The character doesn’t just sit down, she *flops*. That word alone creates an entirely different image. Furthermore, she flops on a *shabby little couch* and proceeds to *howl*. Perhaps the main characters don’t have much money. Perhaps her grief is boundless at this point—she’s throwing her head back and just letting the sound go.

An important tool for word choice is a *thesaurus*. It is easy to look up alternative words, but you also have to be able to use words appropriately. Sometimes a word picked off a list is not the right one. A synonym for couch is settee, but settee would have been a poor choice in O’Henry’s sentence above.

Another handy tool, especially for poets and songwriters, is a *rhyming dictionary*. It lists possible rhymes for particular words.

---

**RESOURCES**

For another explanation of word choice, go to [writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/word-choice/](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/word-choice/).

---

**Did you know?**

New words that reflect cultural changes are regularly added to the English language. Here are a few that were added recently: hashtag, selfie, flash mob, emoji, cake pops, dappy, and jorts.
Poetry can be serious, fun, emotional, or silly. It can rhyme or not rhyme. It can be long or short. Some forms of poetry have specific rules, and some do not. Poetry can really be anything the poet needs it to be, to express his or her thoughts and feelings.

**WHAT TO DO**

Use the internet, library, or your own collection to find two poems you like. Answer the questions below. Use the website poetry4kids.com/blog/lessons/poetry-writing-lessons/ to help you determine the form or style. If you repeat this project, select new poems each year.

### Poem 1
- **Title:**
- **Form or style:**
- **What is the poem about? Give a brief explanation.**

### Poem 2
- **Title:**
- **Form or style:**
- **What is the poem about? Give a brief explanation.**

Now choose a form or style you would like to experiment with and write your own poem. Don’t worry about being perfect. Just give it a try!

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**
- **Project skill:** Writing poetry
- **Life skill:** Practicing creativity
- **Educational standard:** CCELA-W 6-10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- **Success indicator:** Writes a poem

**Save what you write for your portfolio!**
Kenn Nesbitt, a former Children’s Poet Laureate (2013-2015), gives an easy way to think about poetry styles and forms on his website Poetry4Kids.

He describes a **poetic form** as a set of rules for writing a certain type of poem. That might be the number of lines or syllables the poem should have, the way the poem rhymes, or how the poetry is created. A haiku is an example of a poetic form. By definition, a haiku has a set amount of syllables in each line.

**Poetic styles**, Nesbitt says, do not have firm rules about length, syllable count, or other elements, but instead include a particular feature. An **alliteration** poem is an example of a poetic style. In this type of poem, the author picks a consonant and uses words beginning with that letter in a poem.

When thinking about poetic forms and styles there are many terms to know. **Meter** is a common one. It refers to the measurement of rhythm as indicated by the syllables in each word that are stressed. Each unit of that measurement is called a **foot**. One common type of meter, and there are many, is **iambic pentameter**. It consists of five iambic feet or ten syllables. William Shakespeare used this type of meter. Here is an example from the play *Romeo and Juliet*:

> But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
> It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
> Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
> Who is already sick and pale with grief.

Here are those same lines with the feet separated and capital letters for the stressed syllables:

> but, SOFT! | what LIGHT | through YON | der WIN | dow BREAKS?
> it IS | the EAST; | and JU | liet IS | the SUN.
> aRISE, | fair SUN, | and KILL | the EN | vious MOON,
> who IS | alREAD | y SICK | and PALE | with GRIEF.
Another poetry term to know is **stanza**. A stanza is a group of lines whose form is repeated. Rhymed poetry can have different patterns at the ends of lines. A **couplet** has a pattern of 1 and 1.

When the trees take on ice plating, 1  
Do squirrels go twigure skating? 1

Here is an example of a 1-2-3-1 rhyming pattern:

**LEAVES OF LEARNING**

My first pole was of bamboo; 1  
My hook, a crooked pin; 2  
My teacher, my Aunt Lillian— 3  
But how I pulled ‘em in! 2

I caught some oak and maple 1  
Trapped by the trickling flow, 2  
And wouldn’t leave until I had 3  
A pocketful to show. 2

I’d toss the line out gently 1  
Then yank it with a swish. 2  
I laughed, and so did Auntie— 3  
What a day! I’d learned to fish. 2

*Reprinted from Buckeye Farm News, Columbus, Ohio.*

Some people prefer to write poems that do not rhyme. **Blank verse**, for instance, is verse with lines that do not rhyme but are written with a rhythmic pattern. Specifically, blank verse is iambic with five iambic feet to the line. Sound familiar? It’s iambic pentameter again. Most of Shakespeare’s writing is blank verse.
**Free verse** is even less restrictive than blank verse because it is unrhymed and is written with no standard metric pattern. The rhythm in free verse varies according to the poet’s sense of what is needed or what best serves the purpose. Following is an example of a free verse poem:

**SPRING**

Spring drifts into our days
like the fragrance of lilacs on an April evening.
It may come slowly or suddenly,
but soon it penetrates our whole senses.

Stark winter colors brighten to bluegrass greens,
forsythia yellow, tulip reds and apple blossom pinks.

New sounds liven our listening moments:
mellow notes of the bobolink,
laughter of kite-flying children,
chatting of neighbors across backyard fences,
cries of “Batter up” at the old ball park.

Fresh earth aroma surrounds gardeners and farmers
as they work the soil toward another planting, another harvest.
Leaves reclothe the dormant skeletons of trees and shrubs.
The sun erases night’s darkness a bit earlier each dawn.

Yes, spring stirs all our emotions, our restlessness, our hopes.
And today is the bright tomorrow we dreamed about all winter.
Like the fragrance of lilacs, spring springs into our realization—
sometimes slowly, sometimes suddenly, but always completely.
No calendar can foretell precisely when it will come, or how.
Yet, when spring comes, no one need tell us,
for spring is in the air—everywhere.

Poetry has as much variety as the poets who write it. Exploring all the different forms and styles and their characteristics can help a poet find what is best for what he or she wishes to express.
Metric Foot

A group of words or syllables has a rhythm to it determined by where the spoken accents fall. The rhythm a word creates in a poem is called a metric foot. Generally, there are four major types of metric feet:

1. **Iamb.** A word with an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one, such as the word delight. The second syllable is accented. **DE-LIGHT**

2. **Trochee.** A word with an accented syllable followed by an unaccented one, such as the word going. In this case the first syllable is accented. **GO-ing**

3. **Anapest.** Two unaccented syllables followed by an accented one, such as the word intervene. The emphasis is on the last syllable. **in-ter-VENE**

4. **Dactyl.** An accented syllable followed by two unaccented syllables, such as the word merrily. The first syllable is accented. **MER-ri-ly**

The number of feet per line varies depending on the poem’s form.

---

### RESOURCES

- Look for information and examples of poetry here: [poets.org](http://poets.org).
- In the Favorite Poem Project, everyday Americans recite their favorite poems: [favoritpoem.org](http://favoritpoem.org).
- Examples of poetry can be found here: [rpo.library.utoronto.ca/display](http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/display).
- Poetry4Kids offers more about poetic forms and styles here: [poetry4kids.com/blog/lessons/poetry-writing-lessons](http://poetry4kids.com/blog/lessons/poetry-writing-lessons).

---

### Did you know?

March 21 is World Poetry Day. This day is recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. UNESCO “recognizes the unique ability of poetry to capture the creative spirit of the human mind.”
Dialogue Dinner

Authors must be descriptive enough that readers feel as if they are actually seeing the action take place. Some of the best authors go into great detail, so the reader can picture each scene as it unfolds. Dialogue can make this effort easier, because characters can say what the author sometimes cannot. Dialogue is just as important as plot, setting, and word choice. It demonstrates the character’s purpose, personality, and motivation.

WHAT TO DO

“Dinner’s ready!” Those words, or words with similar meaning, are used all across the world. However, the scenes that follow are usually completely different. The appearance and aroma of the food, people, entertainment, and conversation make each dinner a different experience.

Write a dinner scene. Briefly set it up in a paragraph or two, and then let dialogue among the characters continue the plot. Include at least three characters conversing for no less than three pages, double spaced. There should be a clear beginning, middle, and end, and the goal is for the reader to be able to picture the scene and to get to know the characters. Before you begin, brainstorm three different possibilities, then pick one story line to write.

If you repeat this project, make some big changes and write a new scene each year.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SUMMARY OF PLOT</th>
<th>SETTING</th>
<th>CHARACTERS (AT LEAST 3)</th>
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Dialogue is conversation between two or more characters. It helps the reader get to know the characters better. It also aids in moving the plot forward. The secret to writing good, effective dialogue is to balance realistic conversation with conversation that serves the purpose of the story. Easy, right?

Beginning writers often say they wish they could record and use actual conversations between real people. If you were to do this, you would find many conversations to be rather pointless and boring. While some of this natural flow is necessary to create authenticity, it is important to move dialogue swiftly to its purpose.

Writing natural-sounding dialogue definitely takes practice. Here are some tips to get you started:

- Use narration to describe situations and events.
- Let your characters converse with each other instead of going into long, individual monologues.
- Read your dialogue aloud. Does it sound natural? If slang is needed, let a character use it, but be careful. It is easy to overdo this.
- Step into the background and let the characters take over. Let them speak as they normally would, but maintain focus on the heart of the dialogue.

With the right balance your dialogue will sound authentic and accomplish its purpose.

More Challenges

Compare something you’ve read to its movie version. Did the movie match your expectations? Which did you like better? Compare your responses to those of your friends and family.

RESOURCES

To learn more about how to read and write iambic pentameter, go to iambicpentameter.net. Games, facts, word puzzles, and more are available online at Shakespearean for Kids at folger.edu/shakespeare-kids.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Project skill: Writing dialogue
- Life skill: Practicing creativity
- Educational standard: CCELA-W, 6-3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Success indicator: Write the dialogue for a dinner scene

Did you know?

William Shakespeare was a master at writing dialogue. Often, pages of Shakespeare’s plays would include no setting, because the characters became narrators of the setting and plot. These plays are now often read as books.
SHARE  What is your favorite part of the writing process?

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

REFLECT  Which one of the language activities—The Power of Words, The Poet in You, or Dialogue Dinner—was the most useful for you? Why?

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

GENERALIZE  How might the difference between speaking and writing, make writing dialogue difficult?

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

APPLY  Give one example from your own life that shows the power of words. Include what you or someone else said and how saying it with slightly different words would have changed its meaning.

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
Presenting your writing professionally is an excellent way to demonstrate to yourself, fair judges, college admission offices, and others how much you have learned about creative writing.

WHAT TO DO

Use a binder or folder to gather your project work and any other writing samples from the current year you would like to include. Your project work should include these writing pieces:

☐ Activity 2: A story outline, scene, character sketch, or poem based on an idea from an idea file
☐ Activity 3: Fifteen minutes of writing in response to a prompt
☐ Activity 4: Brief answers about the theme of the sample story
☐ Activity 6: A short story demonstrating first, second, or third person point of view
☐ Activity 7: Picture and character interview
☐ Activity 8: Short story that emphasizes descriptive word choice
☐ Activity 9: A poem you write
☐ Activity 10: Dinner scene with dialogue among three characters

Select the best version of each piece. If necessary, create clean copies, or final drafts, that are neatly typed and double-spaced in a straightforward, 12-point font like Times New Roman or Arial. Each item should also be labeled with its title, your name, and date.

As you assemble items for your portfolio, keep in mind it should showcase the work you have done for this project and any creative writing you may have done on your own—narratives, plays, poems, etc. You are also free to include your written responses to any More Challenges activities and pieces of writing from your journal, if you are keeping one.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Project skill: Making a professional presentation of creative writing pieces
Life skill: Completing a project or task
Educational standard: CCELA-W 6-4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
Success indicator: Assembles a creative writing portfolio
Sometimes sharing what you write can be the hardest part, whether you are shy about your work or simply don’t know how to proceed. Don’t let your doubts keep you from writing. The benefits of writing, according to Pam Allyn in her blog Words Change Worlds, include these:

1. Writing builds your confidence. Through writing you learn who you are and what you want to say.
2. Writing helps you create and strengthen your special and unique characteristics and personality.
3. Writing helps you grow emotionally and gives you a way to deal with life’s ups and downs.
4. Writing helps you think logically and critically. It helps you understand and communicate complicated ideas.
5. Writing guarantees that you will improve in school!

You have great stories. Tell them! You will benefit and so will the people lucky enough to be in your audience.

More Challenges

Create your portfolio online with the help of one of these 5 Best Portfolio Sites for Writers at freelancersunion.org/blog/2014/02/26/5-best-portfolio-sites-writers. Once it’s created, share it on social media.

RESOURCES

Fun ways to get your writing out there and recognized are writing contests or being published in a print or digital magazine. Here are some good ones:

- Letters About Literature by the Library of Congress at read.gov/letters (grades 4-12)
- Scholastic Art and Writing Awards by the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers at artandwriting.org (grades 7-12)
- Stone Soup magazine at stonesoup.com/how-to-submit-writing-and-art-to-stone-soup/

Did you know?

Ira Glass, creator of the award-winning podcast This American Life, has advice for beginners on the creative process. Check out his words of wisdom in the short video called Ira Glass on the Creative Process on youtube.com.
alliteration. Repetition of the first consonant of closely related words or stressed syllables.
anapest. Two unaccented syllables followed by an accented one, for example, the word “intervene.”
antagonist. In literature, a character who is in the way of the protagonist overcoming the conflict.
backstory. Past events and experiences that inform a character’s personality and behavior.
blank verse. In poetry, lines with no rhyme written in iambic pentameter.
borrowed character. A created character who has qualities or traits from a real person the author knows.
character. Any person, animal, or figure represented in a literary work.
couplet. A pair of lines with the same meter.
creative writing. Writing for poetry, fiction, and plays.
dactyl. An accented syllable followed by two unaccented syllables, such as “merrily.” The first syllable is accented. These are the major types of metric feet. Line lengths may vary so long as the meter moves fluidly.
dialogue. The conversation said by the characters in a story, movie, play, etc.
dynamic character. A character who changes over the course of a story.
first person. A literary point of view in which the narrator talks from his or her own experience using the pronoun “I.”
flat character. A character with easily recognized traits but who also is not developed very fully.
foot. In poetry, a unit of rhythm made from accented and unaccented syllables that is repeated; poetic feet are the basis of standard meter.
free verse. In poetry, lines with no rhyme and no standard metric pattern.
genre. A particular kind of literature such as mystery or science fiction.
iamb. A word with an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one, such as “delight.” The second syllable is accented.
iambic pentameter. In poetry, a common metric line based on five sets of iambs, five sets of one unstressed syllable followed a stressed syllable.
limited. A third person point of view in which the narrator knows the thoughts of only one of the characters.
made-up character. A created character who comes from the author’s imagination.
magic character. A created character who comes into the author’s mind fully developed, as if he or she is telling the story through the writer.
main character. A character who has a great effect on the plot or who is the most affected by what happens in the story.
meter. In poetry, the measurement of a rhythm established by the syllables in each word that are stressed or unstressed.
monologue. A long speech made by one person.
moral. The lesson of a story or experience, usually one about what is right or wise.
objective. A third person point of view in which a narrator tells the story without knowing the thoughts and feelings of the characters.
omniscient. A third person point of view in which the narrator of the story knows the thoughts of more than one of the characters.
plot. The events of a story or other piece of creative writing.
poetic form. A set of rules for writing a certain type of poem, for example, haiku, sonnet, limerick, ballad, acrostic, etc.
**Glossary (continued)**

**poetic style.** Poetry with a particular feature but not necessarily with firm rules about length, syllable count, or other elements.

**point of view.** The perspective from which a story is told.

**prompt.** To cause further action.

**protagonist.** In literature, the main character who typically has a conflict that needs to be solved.

**rhyming dictionary.** A collection of words that rhyme with other words used as a resource by poets and others.

**round character.** In literature, a realistic character who is fully presented and who is likely to change and develop by the end of a story.

**second person.** A literary point of view in which the narrator speaks for the reader, using the pronoun “you.”

**short story.** A fictional narrative with a fully developed theme that is shorter and less complex than a novel and that usually involves fewer characters.

**stanza.** In poetry, a group of lines whose form is repeated (the form may or may not include regular meter or rhyme).

**static character.** In literature, a character who does not change and develop.

**subplot.** A secondary storyline that supports or connects to the main plot.

**SWBS method.** Somebody-Wanted-But-So; a method for identifying characters, their motivations, the central conflict, and resolution in a story.

**synonym.** A word with the same or almost the same meaning as another word.

**theme.** The underlying idea the author uses to give meaning to a story.

**thesaurus.** A tool for identifying synonyms or antonyms of words.

**third person.** A literary point of view in which the narrator speaks for one or several characters using the pronouns “he,” “she,” and “they”; third person can be omniscient, objective, or limited.

**trochee.** A word with an accented syllable followed by an unaccented one such as “going.” In this case the first syllable is accented.

**universal truth.** An idea that is widely accepted and believed by people everywhere.

**writer’s block.** A condition in which an author does not know what to write or how to continue.
Activity 1


Activity 3

Activity 4


Activity 5


Activity 6


Activity 7


Activity 8


Activity 9


Activity 11


## Summary of Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PROJECT SKILL</th>
<th>LIFE SKILL</th>
<th>EDUCATIONAL STANDARD*</th>
<th>SUCCESS INDICATOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: WRITING WITH A PURPOSE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Literature Buffet</td>
<td>Responding to written works</td>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>CCELA-RL, 6-5: Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.</td>
<td>Selects three pieces of writing and explains the significance of each</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Finding Inspiration—Where to Find Ideas</td>
<td>Keeping track of writing ideas</td>
<td>Keeping records</td>
<td>CCELA-W 6-10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
<td>Starts and adds to an idea file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Developing Your Ideas</td>
<td>Writing in response to a timed prompt</td>
<td>Practicing creativity</td>
<td>CCELA-W 6-10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
<td>Writes for 15 minutes in response to a prompt</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: ELEMENTS OF CREATIVE WRITING</strong></td>
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<td>4. What’s It All About</td>
<td>Identifying theme in a written piece</td>
<td>Thinking critically</td>
<td>CCELA-RL, 6-2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</td>
<td>Identifies theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. That’s What I Call a Story</td>
<td>Identifying literary plot</td>
<td>Thinking critically</td>
<td>CCELA-RL, 6-3: Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.</td>
<td>Identifies the plot of a simple fairy tale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Who’s Telling the Story?</td>
<td>Writing from various points of view</td>
<td>Practicing creativity</td>
<td>CCELA-W, 6-3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</td>
<td>Writes in first, second, and third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Such Interesting People</td>
<td>Developing literary characters</td>
<td>Practicing creativity</td>
<td>CCELA-W, 6-3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</td>
<td>Develops a literary character</td>
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<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: LANGUAGE</strong></td>
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<td>8. The Power of Words</td>
<td>Writing description</td>
<td>Practicing creativity</td>
<td>CCELA-L, 6-5: Demonstrate understandings of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
<td>Writes descriptive narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Poet in You</td>
<td>Writing poetry</td>
<td>Practicing creativity</td>
<td>CCELA-W 6-10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
<td>Writes a poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Dialogue Dinner</td>
<td>Writing dialogue</td>
<td>Practicing creativity</td>
<td>CCELA-W, 6-3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</td>
<td>Writes the dialogue for a dinner scene</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT AREA: SHARING</strong></td>
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<td>11. Your Writing Portfolio</td>
<td>Making a professional presentation of creative writing pieces</td>
<td>Completing a project or task</td>
<td>CCELA-W 6-4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
<td>Assembles a creative writing portfolio</td>
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* The educational standards cited here are from the Common Core State Standards Initiative, English Language Arts. They are available in their entirety at corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy.
I pledge
My head to clearer thinking,
My heart to greater loyalty,
My hands to larger service, and
My health to better living,
For my club, my community, my
country, and my world.

ohio4h.org

Additional copies of this book and other Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development publications are available through local OSU Extension offices and online at extensionpubs.osu.edu. Ohio residents get the best price when they order and pick up their purchases through local Extension offices.