Lesson 3: Build Your Case

UNIT: Rock Camp

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi, writers. It's Margaret.

I love taking walks outside in nature. One time, I was hiking on a trail near my house. I came around a bend and saw this. At first, I thought it must be using glue, strings or something to hold the rocks up. But it didn't have any of those.

It was simply rocks perfectly balanced so that it didn't fall over. I made sure that I didn't touch it or knock it over so others could enjoy it, too.

A little further down the trail, I saw a man crouching down next to the stream. Here's what I saw.

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: What do you notice about how this man balances the rocks?

HOOK 2

I don't know what you said, but I noticed that he was very careful in how he placed one rock on top of another. He didn't rush or force anything. He worked slowly and carefully, making lots of different adjustments until everything felt just right. And that's when he'd remove his hands.

Wow, that's amazing!

He told me that he had been balancing rocks for a long time. That it all starts with choosing the rocks and then little by little making small adjustments. It doesn't always go right the first time, and that's okay. Because if you have patience, take your time and stick with it, everything will come together and the rocks will stand on their own.

Writers do the same thing—they choose which words to use, make adjustments as they go, and keep writing until every part works together to make the writing stronger and more convincing.

You've been working on a really important letter to Max's best friend, Hailey. Max wants Hailey to go back to Rock Camp with him next summer.

So far, you've taken notes and planned your writing. In today's lesson, you'll use your plan to draft your letter to Hailey. You'll choose your words carefully, using them to connect all of your ideas together. Then later, you'll revise and edit your draft to create your final letter.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 1

Get your supplies.

STEP 2

Get your desk ready to draft. Place your Idea Bank, Planning Worksheet, and lined paper in front of you.

Place your other worksheets in a neat pile nearby.

Get a sharp pencil and anything else you need to get started on your writing.

STEP 3

When writers make a draft, they know that they might make changes to it along the way or later on. To make room for changes, you can write on every other line of your lined paper. That way, you have space to add or change sentences later on.

On your lined paper, draw a small "x" at the start of every other line to remind yourself to skip those lines for now.

STEP 4

Your Idea Bank shows how your introduction, reason paragraphs, and conclusion all fit together to form your letter to Hailey.

Each section includes an example of how you might begin your paragraph. It also has words and phrases that you can use as you draft to make your writing as clear and convincing as possible.

Silently read your Idea Bank worksheet. When you're done, show a silent thumbs up.

STEP 5

Today, you'll use your plan to write your draft. Your draft will have four parts: an introduction, two body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

You'll find the information that you need on your plan and then use that information to write your letter. You may not have time to draft your entire letter today, and that's okay.

A letter always starts with a greeting—something like "Dear Hailey," or "Hi, Hailey."

Get your lined paper. Write your greeting. Remember: don't write on the lines that you marked with an "x."

STEP 6

You now need to draft your introduction and let Hailey know your opinion.

Last lesson, you wrote your opinion on your Planning worksheet. Following your greeting, and on a new line, copy your opinion from your plan onto your draft.

Remember to indent—writers indent or leave space for new paragraphs to make their writing easier to read.

STEP 7

To complete your introduction, you now need to let Hailey know why you think she should go to camp with Max. What are the reasons for your opinion? Remember: your reasons are the two activities on your plan that you chose to write about.

Continue writing where you left off. Using full sentences, write the reasons you think Hailey should go to camp. Use your Idea Bank if you need more ideas.

STEP 8

Read your greeting and introduction silently to yourself. If you want, you can make changes.

STEP 9

It's now time to draft the rest of your letter. Continue using your plan to write one paragraph for each reason and your conclusion.

Remember to indent the first sentence of each new paragraph.

If you want, you can also go back to your notes and sources to find more information.

Remember: your Idea Bank has words and phrases that you can use in your writing and shows each section that you need to write.

Continue writing where you left off. Draft as much of your letter to Hailey as you have time for today.

WRAP UP

Rock on, writers! You chose your words carefully, used your plan to connect your ideas together, and made adjustments along the way. You now have a complete draft of your letter to Haley. And just like a perfectly balanced rock stack, every part of your letter is working together to make it stronger and more convincing.

Right now, you're here in the writing process. In the next lesson, you'll revise your letter to make it exactly how you want it to be.

Your hard work is making it easy for Hailey to see all of the reasons why she should go to Rock Camp with Max next summer.

Be sure to put your V.I.P.s somewhere safe and I'll see you next time.