Lesson 2: Reveal the Secret

UNIT: Earth Explorers

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi, writers. It's Margaret. My friend Lucy has been learning all about the sailing stones so she can make a poster about them.

The rocks are mysterious because they look like they moved on their own, but that's not possible. At first, Lucy thought maybe people push these rocks or maybe animals push them. But after she started learning more, she found out how the sailing stones actually move.

She learned that in the wintertime, the desert actually looks like this—it's all wet. It can get so cold that the shallow water freezes into ice. When strong winds blow, the rocks slide along the thin ice. Then in the summertime, all of the water dries up. The rocks are left behind with the trails showing how far traveled.

While Lucy was learning how the sailing stones worked, she took notes. Here's what she wrote:

> "desert water and ice."
>
> "strong winds blow"
>
> "trails left when water is gone"

These notes are a great way for Lucy to remember what she learned about the sailing stones, but they're not quite ready to be a poster yet. If Lucy put these notes on her poster, it would look like this.

If someone read this poster, it would be pretty confusing.

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: What do you think Lucy could add to her writing so that it makes more sense?

HOOK 2

I don't know what you said, but so far, this doesn't mention the sailing stones at all. That seems pretty important.

Lucy needs to add more words and sentences to make her writing less confusing. In order for her poster to make sense, Lucy needs to turn each of her notes into sentences and put them together to make a paragraph.

This first paragraph will be about how the sailing stones work, so she needs to start with a sentence to tell her readers that. This is called a topic sentence.

Here's Lucy's topic sentence: "The sailing stones work in an interesting way." Now readers will know that this paragraph will be about the sailing stones and how they work.

Next, Lucy can write detailed sentences that explain how the sailing stones work. Her first note says, "Desert water and ice." She started explaining how the sailing stones work by turning this note into a sentence. She wrote, "First, the desert is covered in water and ice in the winter."

This is a great start, but there are more details that Lucy could use to explain how the sailing stones work.

DISCUSSION 2

Discuss: How would you explain how the sailing stones work? There are lots of ways to explain how they work. You can use Lucy's notes to help.

HOOK 3

Here's what Lucy wrote next: "Next, strong winds blow across the desert. The winds push the rocks over the slippery ice. Finally, the water dries up leaving trails where the rocks moved."

You may have explained this in a different way, and that's great.

Lucy's draft of her paragraph is complete. She included a topic sentence to let readers know what the paragraph is about, and she added lots of detail sentences to explain how the sailing stones work.

So far, Lucy has drafted one paragraph about the sailing stones. Later on, she'll write even more paragraphs to make a complete poster.

Right now, you're working on a poster for the visitor center in Lucy's town. Your poster is either about the incredible Firefall or the amazing Sky Mirror.

Today, you'll draft one paragraph for your poster that explains how your amazing place works.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 1

Get your supplies.

STEP 2

In today's lesson, you'll need someone to share ideas with. This could be a partner or someone you sit near. When everyone knows who their talk partner is, move on to the next step.

STEP 3

Get your Explorer Notes worksheet.

In the last lesson, you circled the location that you wanted to write about.

Fold your notes worksheet so the place you circled is face up on your desk.

STEP 4

The paragraph you'll write today is all about how the Firefall or the Sky Mirror works. Read the notes in your "How it works" section to yourself.

When you're done, give a silent thumbs up.

STEP 5

Let's review how the Firefall works. If you're writing about the Sky Mirror, just wait. We'll do that one next.

First, the Firefall looks like a tall waterfall. Second, the sun sets with an orange color. Third, the sunset shines on the waterfall, making it glow orange like fire.

You can add more information or details to your notes if you want.

STEP 6

Now let's review how the Sky Mirror works.

First, the Sky Mirror is a huge flat desert. Second, rain falls on the desert creating a shallow lake. Third, the shallow water creates amazing reflections of the sky.

You can add more information or details to your notes if you want.

STEP 7

Get your Paragraph 1 worksheet. This is the structure for your paragraph.

You'll write a topic sentence and three details that explain how your amazing place works. Your topic sentence needs to tell your reader that this paragraph will be about how it works.

When Lucy wrote her topic sentence, she wrote, "The sailing stones work in an interesting way." Notice how she included the topic of her writing, the sailing stones, and she let the reader know this paragraph will be about how they work.

Now you can create a topic sentence for your paragraph. You can use one of the example topic sentences on screen or come up with your own.

Write your topic sentence starting at the gear.

STEP 8

Take a look at number one in your "How it works" section.

Take turns explaining what happens first with your partner. Begin your sentence with the word "First."

STEP 9

Maybe you said, "First, the Firefall is a huge waterfall, or "First, the Sky Mirror is a huge flat desert." You may have said something else, and that's great.

Write your first detailed sentence beginning with the word "First." Continue writing where you left off.

STEP 10

Look at number two in your Notes. Write a sentence describing what happens next. Begin your sentence with the word "next."

STEP 11

Now you can finish your paragraph. Write a sentence describing what happens last, starting with the word "Finally."

If you want, you can add more sentences describing what the final effect looks like.

STEP 12

Take turns reading your paragraph out loud to your partner. If you want, you can make changes

WRAP UP

Amazing job, writers! You used your notes to draft one paragraph of your poster. You wrote a topic sentence and added details to help people at the visitor center understand how your amazing place works.

In the next lesson, you'll write another paragraph to include more cool facts about the place you chose.

When your poster is complete, you can display it as part of the Earth Explorer's exhibit and earn your Earth Explorer badge.

With your writing, these mysterious places won't have to stay mysteries for long.

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