

# No More Ants

By Jacob Kramer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Alex closed her eyes, took a deep breath, and stepped into Art class. Her heart was pounding as she took a seat at the scuffed old tables covered in paint. Everyone else was talking excitedly. They all loved art class. But for Alex, it was always stressful. She bowed her head and looked at the blobs of paint on the table. One of them looked like a ghost.

"Hey Alex! Mind if I sit here? Just kidding, I'm already sitting here. Can't believe you didn't smell me a mile off. What do you think of it?"

Alex took another deep breath (lemon, cinnamon, pine trees) and looked up to see her friend Marlon. He had just discovered deodorant.

"It's OK I guess? It's like if you were wearing a bunch of those car air fresheners as a necklace."

"Not a bad idea!" Marlon was always so enthusiastic. Sometimes his energy helped Alex get excited about things, but today she was too nervous.

Ms. Kazerian addressed the class, "Artists! Today we are going to begin our mural project. It's an opportunity to let your imaginations run wild. We'll start with sketches, then we'll paint them on the wall across from the gym."

The students rushed to gather paper and colored pencils and set to work. All around her, Alex's classmates were drawing unicorns, dragons, cities under the ocean, and spaceships orbiting strange planets.

Alex picked up a pencil and began to draw. She put her head down and hunched over the paper. Three black dots. Six little legs. Two antennae. Three more black dots. Six more legs. Two more antennae. She focused very hard on making everything perfectly neat.

"Whatcha got going on under there?" Marlon nudged her, "Can I get a sneak preview?"

Alex hunched even further over her paper.

"Just a little peek?" Without looking up, Alex slid her paper towards Marlon.

"Omigosh NO. Ants again? Alex! What is it always with the ants? You've been drawing ants since second grade! No more ants!"

"It's the only thing I'm good at drawing," mumbled Alex. It was true. She was pretty good at drawing ants. She had it down to a science. Three dots. Six legs. Two antennae. Her ants were perfect.

"But you heard Ms. Kazerian. We can draw anything! Look—" Marlon held out his paper. It was a giant deodorant stick freshening its armpits with...was that Marlon? Alex laughed. But secretly she thought, *It's funny, but it's messy. It's not perfect.*

Alex took back her paper. Slowly, deliberately, she pressed the pencil into the paper. Three dots. Six legs. Two antennae. The newest ant joined the line of its identical sisters. She looked around the room and saw her classmates squealing excitedly and showing each other their imaginative creations. She looked back at the ants. They looked back with dull, unseeing eyes. Even though the ants were perfect, something about them felt wrong.

"I just don't know how to draw anything else," said Alex.

"So? Who cares?" asked Marlon.

"I care."

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By Jacob Kramer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

"But do you really care about ants?" asked Marlon, "Do you even like them or find them interesting at all?"

"They, ummm are good at teamwork," said Alex, "That's cool."

"I think you draw ants because you think they're easy and you already know how to do it."

Alex felt herself get angry all of a sudden. "Why do you even care at all what I draw? It's none of your business anyhow. Besides, your drawing is so stupid and gross! They'll never let you put that in a mural."

"Maybe," Marlon shrugged, "I care because I don't want you to be boring. It's good to learn new things. Even if you're bad at first."

Alex could feel her cheeks getting flushed. Her eyes were welling with tears.

"Ohh, Alex, I'm sorry," said Marlon, "Maybe that was too much. Here. Umm. What can we draw? What's fun? What did you dream about last night?"

Alex thought back to her dream the night before. Something in her head had invented something wonderful, and Marlon's question gave her an idea.

Alex looked at Marlon, blurry through her tears.

"I dreamt," said Alex, "about a new kind of duck. The pineapple duck."

She wiped her eyes, and found some colored pencils.

Alex's first few attempts were terrible. They looked like they had been drawn by kindergarteners. *I'm so stupid, she thought, I'm terrible at this and I'll never be good enough.* But then she thought about what Marlon had said. She got another piece of paper, and started again.

Marlon found her a book of birds to use as a reference, and Ms. Kazerian brought over a plastic pineapple. On her fifth try, Alex started feeling better. Once she let go of trying to be perfect, new possibilities opened up. Drawing ants had felt safe, cramped, and boring. By contrast, this felt risky, free, and exciting.

By the end of class, Alex had drawn something that vaguely resembled her dream. Alex handed her final draft in to Ms. Kazerian, who said, "Very original! We'll definitely find him a place in the mural."

Before leaving class, she dug one of her crumpled pineapple ducks out of the recycling bin and smoothed it out. On it she wrote:

*Dear Marlon,*

*I'm sorry I got mad at you. Thanks for the good advice. It's good to learn new things, especially if you're bad at first.*

*Your friend,*

*The Pineapple Duck*

*p.s. NO MORE ANTS!*

She smiled as she slipped the note into Marlon's backpack.

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Opinion | Storyteller Con

# No More Ants

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

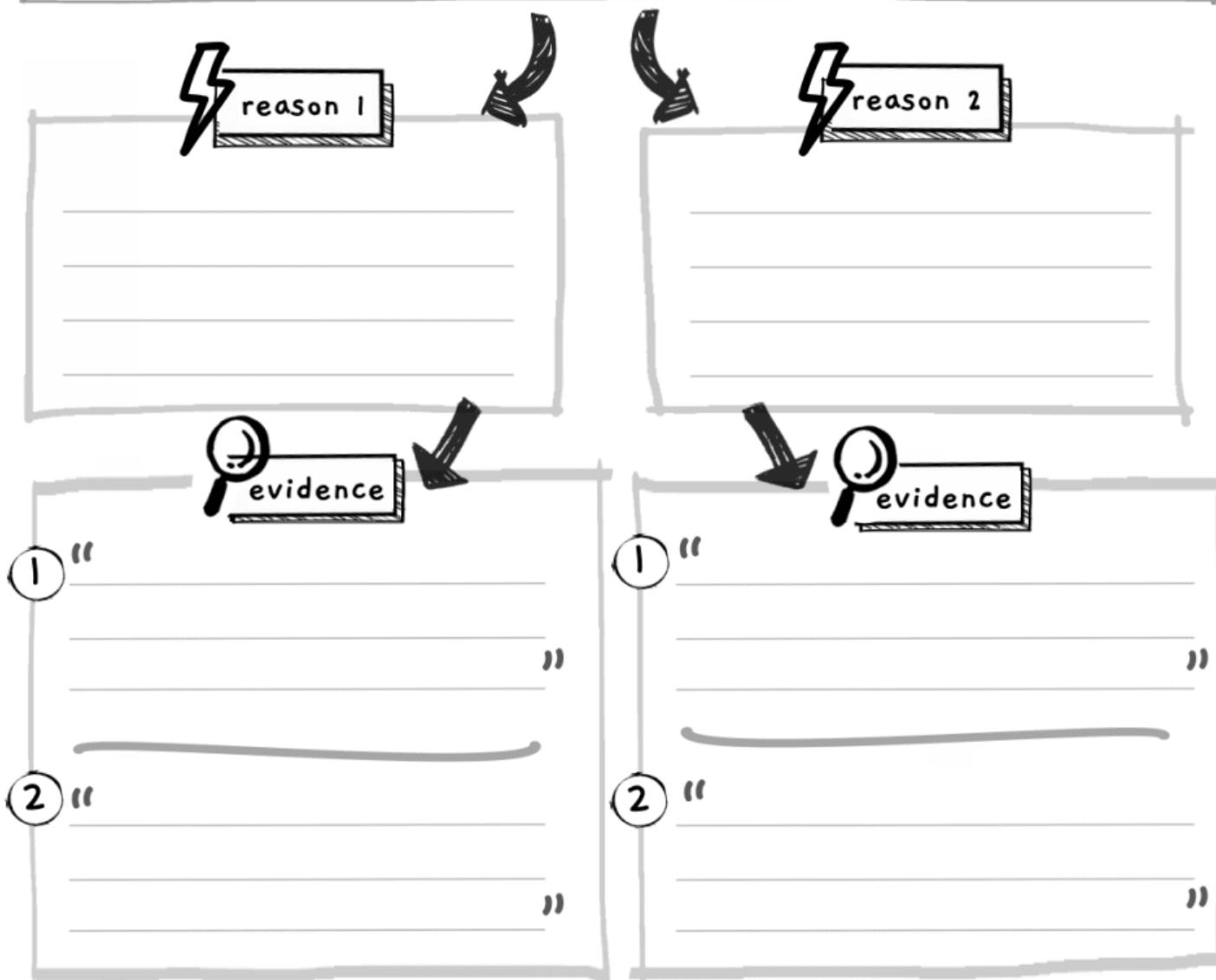
The Writefest website is looking for writers to share ideas about their recent story: No More Ants. Write a literary essay to share the theme you saw in the story.

## Directions:

- Read No More Ants by Jacob Kramer
- Think of a theme, or life lesson, that the story is teaching the reader.
- Use the organizer below to plan your literary essay.



The theme of the story is \_\_\_\_\_



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# No More Ants

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

**Directions:** Write a literary essay to explain the theme you saw in the story No More Ants.

In your writing, remember to:

- Write an introduction
- Organize your writing into paragraphs
- Include evidence from the story to support your thesis
- Write a conclusion
- Edit your writing

# No More Ants

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you need more space, continue on a piece of lined paper.

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# 5th Grade Opinion Writing Rubric

Literary Essay- Storyteller Con

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Standard	1	2	3	4	Feedback
<b>W.5.9.a, W.5.5, RL.5.1, RL.5.2</b>  Read a story and determine the theme Create a plan for a literary essay that includes a thesis, reasons, and evidence					
<b>W.5.1.a, W.5.4</b>  Write an introduction that includes a hook and a thesis statement					
<b>W.5.5</b>  Organize writing into paragraphs					
<b>W.5.1.b, W.5.1.c, RL.5.1</b>  Write body paragraphs that include reasons and evidence to support the thesis					
<b>W.5.1.d</b>  Write a conclusion that reviews the key points of the essay and includes the thesis					
<b>W.5.5, L.5.2</b>  Review work to revise and edit: capitalization, punctuation, and spelling					

1 = standard not met; 2 = standard partially met; 3 = standard met; 4 = exceeds expectations

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# My Opinion Writing Checklist

Literary Essay - Storyteller Con

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Process	Learning Goals	Not yet	Starting to...	Yes!
<b>Read to determine a theme</b>	I can read a short story to determine the theme.			
<b>Plan your essay</b>	I can use an organizer to plan my essay.			
<b>Write an introduction</b>	I can write an introduction that includes a hook and states my thesis.			
<b>Write body paragraphs with reasons and evidence</b>	I can draft body paragraphs that include reasons and evidence.			
<b>Write a conclusion</b>	I can write a conclusion that reviews key points and includes the thesis.			
<b>Fix capitals, spelling, and end marks</b>	I can edit my writing by checking for errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation.			

# Marco's Hat (Page 1 of 3)

By Helena Robinson

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Marco loved to play outside with his dad. Sometimes they would go hiking, to the park, or ride bikes around town. No matter where they went, Marco's dad always put on his hat before going outside. The hat was a pink cap that had a picture of a fish on it. The hat used to be purple, but it was so old and worn that it had faded to pink. Even though it was an old hat, Marco loved seeing his dad put on the hat because that meant they were going to play outside. Whenever the hat came out, fun was sure to follow.

The day Marco's dad left for a long trip, he gave Marco the hat.

"Take care of this for me while I'm away," Marco's dad said.

"I don't want you to go," Marco said, holding onto his dad's arm.

"I know it's hard to be away," his dad replied, "but every time you're missing me, you can wear my hat and it'll be like I'm right beside you. Just make sure you take good care of it."

"I will," Marco said, and he put on the hat. The hat was much too big on him, and it slid down over his eyes and ears. Marco's dad chuckled and gave Marco a big hug. Marco hugged him back and held on tight. As Marco's dad drove away, Marco held the hat tightly in his hands.

The next day at school, Marco proudly wore his dad's hat to school.

"What is that?" Marco's classmates said.

"A pink hat?"

"With a fish?"

Marco took the hat off his head and looked at it. Sure, it was an old pink hat with a fish on it, but Marco loved it just the same.

"Yeah, I don't know why I wore this," he lied, "It's pretty dumb." Marco's classmates laughed, and Marco tried to laugh with them. Holding the hat tightly, he walked over to his backpack. He put the hat inside his backpack and carefully zipped it up.

"It's OK, Dad," he thought, "I'll take care of it for you."

All day long he thought about the hat in his backpack. In math class, he was distracted as he ran his fingers through his hair. At recess, he didn't want to play any games because the sun felt extra hot on his head. During writing class, he asked to go to the bathroom so he could check his backpack to make sure the hat was still there.

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# Marco's Hat (Page 2 of 3)

By Helena Robinson

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

On the walk home from school, Marco was dragging his feet. He felt bad about what he said about the hat. He didn't think it was dumb at all. Checking to make sure no one was around, he got the hat out of his backpack. It was crumpled into a little ball at the bottom of his backpack. Marco did his best to smooth the wrinkles out of it. He put it on, and a big grin spread across his face. He skipped the rest of the way home.

The next morning, Marco hugged his mom goodbye. His dad wasn't there to hug, so he grabbed the hat instead and put it on. Filled with energy, Marco bounded out the door.

Marco walked a few blocks towards school. Up ahead, he could see other students at the crosswalk on their way to school. Marco paused. A chorus of mocking voices swirled in his memory. What is that? A pink hat? With a fish? He set his backpack down, took off the hat, and started to put it in his backpack.

"It's OK Dad," he thought, "I'll take care of it." Marco felt his heart heavy in his chest. He felt like he was zipping his family away in a backpack. He thought about what his dad would think of the hat being hidden all day. Standing over his open backpack, Marco suddenly felt determined. He grabbed the hat with both hands and pulled it out of his backpack. Jamming it onto his head, he marched to school with a plan.

At school, Marco's classmates pointed at his hat and whispered to each other. He ignored them and found his desk.

"It's your turn for show and tell, Marco," his teacher said, "did you bring anything today?"

"Yep!" Marco said, and walked to the front of the class. Nervous yet determined, he took the hat off his head and held it up for everyone to see. He heard some of his classmates whispering and giggling. His heart was pounding as he looked down at the hat. Immediately, he felt calmer. It was like his dad was standing right next to him.

"This is my dad's favorite hat." Marco began. The whispering and giggling continued. "He got it on a fishing trip with his friends. He doesn't like fishing, but he kept it to remember all the fun times he had with his friends. Now he wears it when we go outside together, and it reminds me of all the fun we have together, too." The more Marco spoke, the more confident he became. The whispering and the giggling stopped, as Marco's classmates listened to the story of the hat. "I know it doesn't fit me very well," he added, "but even if it's old and silly looking, it's really important to me. It keeps my dad close when he's away." At the end of show and tell, a few of his classmates raised their hands.

"This keychain reminds me of my cat at home," one of his classmates shared.

"My grandma gave me these socks!" another said.

"The sticker on my water bottle reminds me of my friend who moved away," another classmate shared. Marco beamed.

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# Marco's Hat (Page 3 of 3)

By Helena Robinson

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The next day, Marco wore the hat out of the house. He wore it down the street. He wore it at the crosswalk, and all the way to class.

“Cool hat,” Marco’s classmates said.

“Looks fun!”

“Love the fish!”

“Thanks,” Marco replied.

Other kids at school still giggled at the hat, or whispered when he walked by, but Marco held his head high. In math class, Marco set the hat on his desk and finished the pages in his workbook extra quickly. At recess, he played soccer and scored two goals while wearing the hat. During writing class, he placed the hat on the back of his chair and wrote an entire story about a fishing trip.

When Marco got home, his dad had returned from his trip. Marco gave him a huge hug.

“Here’s your hat, Dad.” Marco said, “I kept it safe for you.”

“Thank you!” Marco’s dad said, putting the hat on. Marco smiled, proud of himself for taking care of the hat as he promised. At the same time, he was going to miss having the hat at school.

“Uh, Dad?” Marco asked nervously.

“Yes?” His dad replied.

“Do you think I could keep bringing the hat to school? I really liked having it with me and sharing it with my class.”

“You know what?” his dad said, as he pulled out a small package from his suitcase. “I can do you one better.” And he handed Marco a small gift.

It was a purple hat with a fish on it. It fit just right.

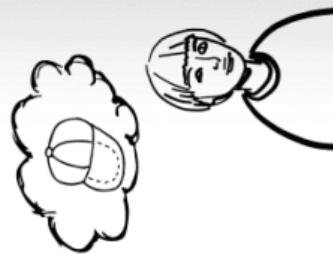
# Fanzine A

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

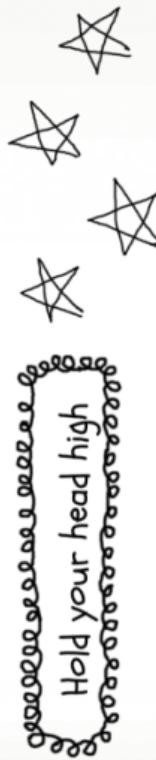


In the short story, Marco's Hat by Helena Robinson, Marco is given a hat by his father to remember him while he is away. The hat is too big and worn out, but Marco wears it to school only to get teased by his classmates. This hurts Marco and he has to figure out how to respond. The theme of this story is to stand up for what is really important.

In the first part of the story when Marco proudly wears the hat to school, Marco's classmates tease him. In the story, the classmates teased, "What is that? A pink hat? With a fish?" Even though Marco was proud to wear the hat, he found himself lying and going along with their negative remarks. Marco says, "Yeah, I don't know why I wore this...it's pretty dumb." Here the author shows us how Marco is not standing up for what is important to him. The story continues on to show how Marco thinks about his hat all day at recess and during writing class. Even on the way home, Marco heard the "chorus of mocking voices" in his mind. Marco felt bad that he didn't stand up and tell his classmates why his hat is important to him. It is hard to stand up for what is really important.



By the last part of the story, we see Marco beginning to stand up for what is important to him. Later, the text states, "Marco suddenly felt determined. He grabbed the hat with both hands and pulled it out of his backpack. Jamming it onto his head, he marched to school with a plan." We see a new focus for Marco, and the author shows that things will be different by using words like "determined and marched." At school, it is Marco's turn for show and tell and the text states that he is "nervous yet determined." He stood tall, and even though he heard "whispering and giggling" from some of his classmates, Marco finished strong. "But even if it is old and silly looking, it is really important to me." Some of the classmates did not give up trying to tease him, but now Marco didn't care. His hat gave him comfort, and in writing class he "wrote an entire story about a fishing trip." This shows how Marco has learned how to stand up for what is important.



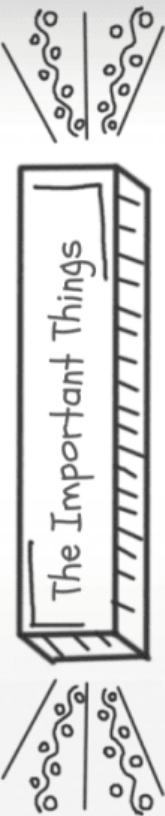
The theme of this story is to stand up for what is really important even if it isn't easy. Marco found out that there will always be people who try to tease. This can make you question yourself. In the end, standing up for what matters is what allows you to "wear [the hat] proudly" and hold your head high.

Theme  Evidence

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# Fanzine B

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



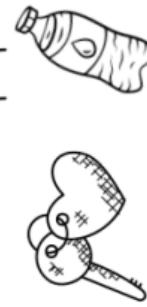
## The Important Things

The story, *Marco's Hat* by Helena Robinson is a story about a boy and the hat his dad gave him. The hat doesn't look like much since it is old and faded. However, the hat is very important to Marco. The theme of this story is that objects can hold a lot of importance to people.

This theme appears early on in the story when Marco first gets the hat from his dad. In the story it says, "Marco hugged him back and held on tight. As Marco's dad drove away, Marco held the hat tightly in his hands." As you can see, Marco is holding the hat tightly, just like how he held his dad. This shows that the theme of the story is objects can hold a lot of importance to people. Another place where we can see how important the hat is to Marco is when he feels like he has to hide the hat from his classmates. In the text it says, "He felt like he was zipping his family away in a backpack" As you can see, Marco sees the hat as a symbol for his dad. When he zips it away, he feels like he is hiding his dad away. This highlights the theme that objects can hold a lot of importance to people.



Later on in the story, this theme is shown when Marco presents his hat to the class. Marco says, "but even if it's old and silly looking, it's really important to me. It keeps my dad close when he's away." When Marco admits that the hat is "old and silly looking," it is because he understands that the reason why he loves it is not because it is a nice hat. Instead, he loves it because it makes him feel connected to his dad. This shows the theme that objects can be important to people even if they don't seem like much. Then, Marco's classmates respond to his presentation. They say things like, "This keychain reminds me of my cat at home" and "The sticker on my water bottle reminds me of my friend who moved away." Both of these statements describe the objects that are important. Lots of people have objects that are important to them.



What objects are important to you?

Throughout the story, *Marco's Hat* by Helena Robinson, the central theme is that objects can hold a lot of importance to people. The theme was shown at the beginning of the story when Marco first got the hat from his dad, and when Marco gave his presentation. Readers of this story may notice the objects in their life that remind them of the people they love. The objects don't need to be fancy or nice. They are important because the person they remind you of has a special place in your heart.

Theme

Evidence

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"Come on, Aiko!" I heard Sadie calling my name. She was already off and running towards the four square court painted on the school blacktop. I looked up from my half-eaten lunch, and quickly packed it up for later.

The four square game was already in progress when I arrived. The ball bounced back and forth between kids making that rubbery "bonk" sound every time it hit the ground.

"Come on, come on!" Sadie said, waving her hands to beckon me into the square painted on the blacktop. That's what I liked about Sadie. She always invited me to play even if I didn't talk much. In fact, on my very first day at school in America, Sadie came right up to me and invited me to play with her. Sadie liked to talk a lot, but that suited me just fine. I liked to listen to her. Even though sometimes she used words I didn't know, I liked her stories about her day... her favorite shows... her cat, Kiki.

As I walked over to the four square game, I saw that Sadie was standing with two of the other kids in our class: Maddy and Bryton. The two of them had been best friends since Kindergarten. As I got closer, I overheard Maddy say to Bryton, "Do we have to play with her?" My heart sunk in my chest and I could feel my cheeks getting hot.

Sadie replied quickly in a confident tone, "Yes. You do." She gave me a huge grin, and I felt my embarrassment evaporating. I could play as long as Sadie was there. We played a few rounds of four square, each of us getting out at different times. Every time I got out, Sadie would tell me, "It's OK, you got this!" or "Don't worry, you'll get it next time!" which always made me want to play again even if I didn't win.

In the final round, it was down to Sadie and Bryton. I could see the determination in Sadie's face as she whacked the ball. She really wanted to win. I don't mind if I win or lose, I just like to play.

The two of them were running back and forth in their squares, hitting the ball back to each other. Then Bryton hit the ball and it bounced right outside of Sadie's square. That means Sadie won! I smiled and clapped my hands for her. I knew she would be so excited to win the game.

"That was TOTALLY in the box!" shouted Bryton. "I win!"

"What?" Sadie called back, chasing after the ball. "No, that was definitely out."

"No it wasn't!"

"Yes it was!"

"No it wasn't!"

"Yes it was!" Suddenly, they both looked at me and Maddy. We were both standing to the side.

"Oh, uh... I wasn't watching," Maddy said, "but I believe Bryton - it was probably in. Sadie, you're just being a sore loser."

"No I'm not!" Sadie said, her frustration rising. "Come on, I saw it, the ball was totally out of the square!" I looked at Sadie, seeing how upset she was. She was right, after all. The ball had bounced *out* of the square. I didn't know what to do. I knew I should say something, but I couldn't really think of the right words.

Sadie, Bryton, and Maddy continued to argue, but it was rapidly becoming two on one. The more Sadie protested, the more Maddy seemed to side with Bryton.

"You didn't even see it!" Sadie said to Maddy.

"No, I think I saw it out of the corner of my eye, and it was in. Bryton wins. Sorry, but that's the truth." Maddy replied.

Sadie turned to look at me. There were tears starting to brim in her eyes. She gave me a pleading look. I knew she wanted me to say something. I had seen it after all, I knew that she won.

I looked at Maddy and Bryton. Maddy had her arms crossed and one eyebrow raised at me. Bryton was holding the ball and staring me down. I didn't know what to say. I didn't know *how* to say.

I shrugged.

Sadie stormed off, tears streaming down her face.

"Sore loser!" Maddy jeered after her.

"Whatever, we can play without her." Bryton said. He didn't invite me to play.

The next day at school I sat by myself on the bus. Maddy was talking loudly about how Sadie was a sore loser yesterday in four square. Sadie turned to look at me from her seat on the bus, but I slumped down in my seat so she couldn't see me. Then another girl in our class, Amanda, told Maddy loudly to "go away." I wish I had thought to say that.

In class, Mrs. Tennant asked everyone to get into partners. Sadie grabbed Amanda, when usually she picks me. I looked around, wanting to have a partner, but everyone else had already found one.

"Oh, Aiko," Mrs. Tennant said. "How about you pair up with Leo?" I didn't respond, but I went and sat next to Leo. Leo speaks even less English than me. We played a math game with dice until the end of math class.

At recess, I stood in the shade of a big tree. Maddy, Bryton, Sadie, and Amanda were all playing four square together. Sadie hadn't come to invite me to play. I thought about walking over and joining in, but I couldn't bring myself to do it.

My chest suddenly felt hot, and I felt a pressure behind my eyes. I pressed on them with my hands, but I could feel the tears squeezing out. I tried to hold back my sobs, but I ended up choking on them and they burst through anyway. I turned away from the play yard towards the tree. I didn't want anyone to see me crying. I wanted to turn invisible.

The bell rang to signal the end of recess and I quickly ran to the bathroom to blow my nose and try to look normal. I looked in the mirror and saw how red and puffy my eyes were from crying. There was nothing I could do about that now.



On the way back into the classroom, Mrs. Tennant asked me if everything was OK. I nodded and walked to my seat.

The next day wasn't much different. Sadie sat next to Amanda on the bus. During science, Sadie and Amanda made a pretty cool model of the Earth. The one Leo and I made was OK... but not that good. He shared our model with the class. Everyone laughed when he said "subset" instead of "sunset."

"Would you like to add anything, Aiko?" Mrs. Tennant asked. I shook my head. I didn't want everyone to laugh at me, too.

At recess I stood by the tree again. I watched the ball bounce back and forth. Maddy won first, then Sadie, then Bryton. Round and round they went. I saw Sadie hit the ball into Maddy's square and another argument broke out.

"That was out of bounds," Maddy said.

"It was definitely in the square," Sadie said, "You're out."

"No it wasn't," Maddy contradicted, and the bickering began again.

Once again, Sadie was right. The ball was inside the lines. I had seen it. I was watching from the tree. Bryton and Amanda hadn't really been watching, so they weren't sure. But I had. I had been watching. I had seen it.



Without really being aware I was moving, I started walking towards the four square court. It was like my legs were working all on their own. I was suddenly standing right next to Maddy and Sadie, not really sure how I had gotten there.

My heart was pounding in fear and embarrassment. I could feel myself sweating. It was like my throat was closing up, but I knew I had to force a sound through it.

"It was in," I said, in a squeaky little voice. "I saw it." Everyone looked at me. Amanda's eyebrows disappeared into her bangs. Bryton's mouth was hanging open. It felt like the entire play yard stopped and looked at me. I could feel my face burning with embarrassment.

"Ok whatever, fine... I'm out," Maddy said, and she walked to stand at the side of the court.

I stared at my shoes. I could feel how hot my face was and I was sure it was beet red. I wanted to disappear again. Before I ran off, I looked up at Sadie. She was looking right back at me with a big smile. Before I knew it, her body crashed into me, nearly knocking me off my feet as she gave me an enormous hug.

"Thank you," she whispered in my ear. She released me and jumped back into a square for the next round. Still stunned, I thought about going back under the tree. Standing in the court, I took a few deep breaths, trying to find my tiny voice again.

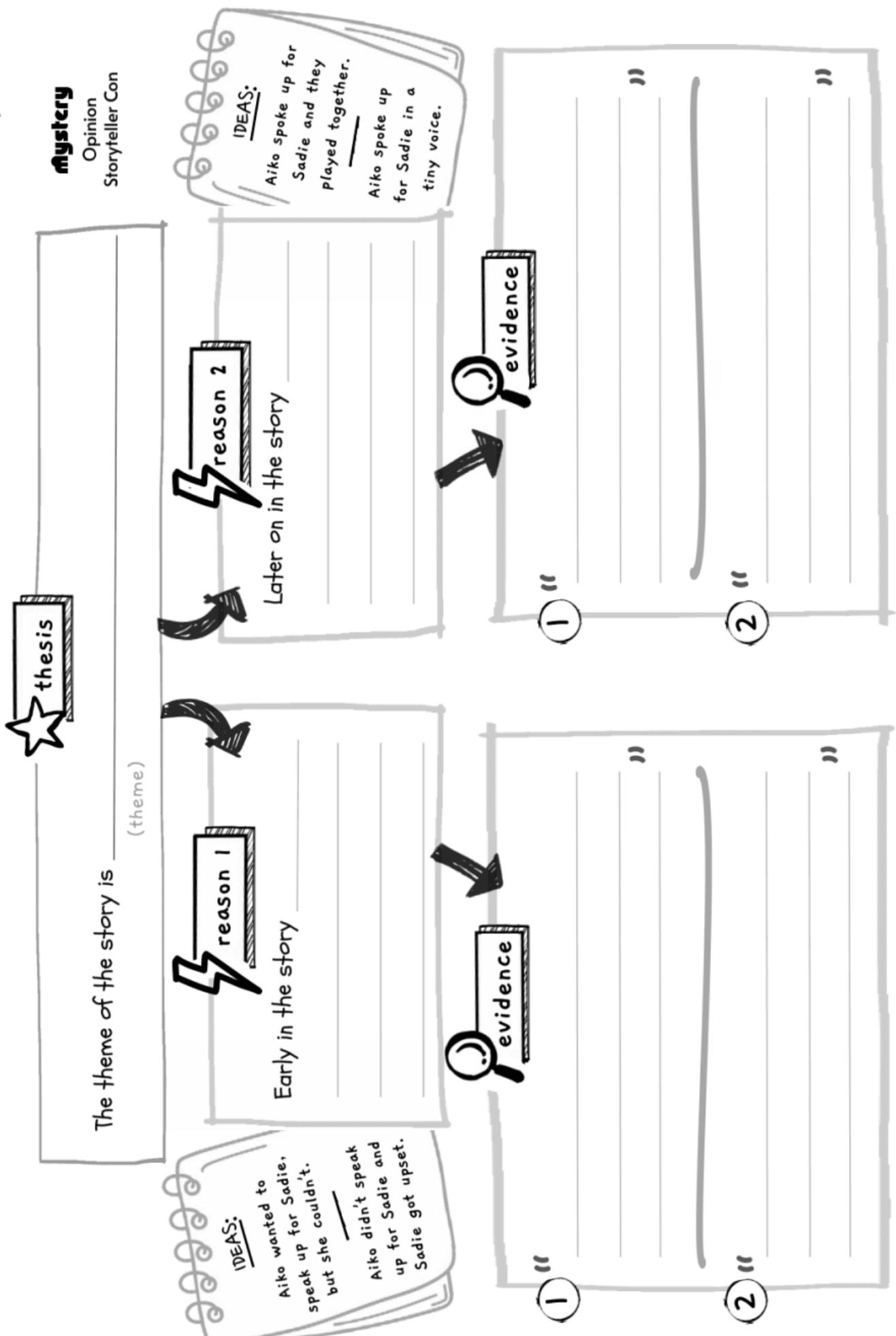
"Can I play too?" I finally said, staring at my shoes.

"Of course you can!" Sadie replied, beaming at me. "And you can start, here's the ball!" She bounced the ball to me, and I caught it. I looked at everyone standing in their squares, looking to me for the game to begin. A huge smile broke out across my face, and I tossed the ball into play.

# Fanzine Planning

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

V.I.P.

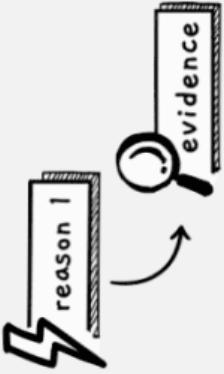


# Body 1 Draft

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

V.I.P.

## Body Paragraph Structure



• For example, the story states, \_\_\_\_\_

• For instance, \_\_\_\_\_ says, \_\_\_\_\_ character \_\_\_\_\_

• The author wrote, \_\_\_\_\_



• Another example is when the story states, \_\_\_\_\_

• Furthermore, the story says, \_\_\_\_\_



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# Body 2 Draft

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

V.I.P.



## Body Paragraph Structure



- For example, the story states, \_\_\_\_\_
- For instance, in the story it says, \_\_\_\_\_



- This shows \_\_\_\_\_
- This is important because \_\_\_\_\_
- As you can see, the theme is \_\_\_\_\_



- Another example is when the story states, \_\_\_\_\_
- Furthermore, the story says, \_\_\_\_\_



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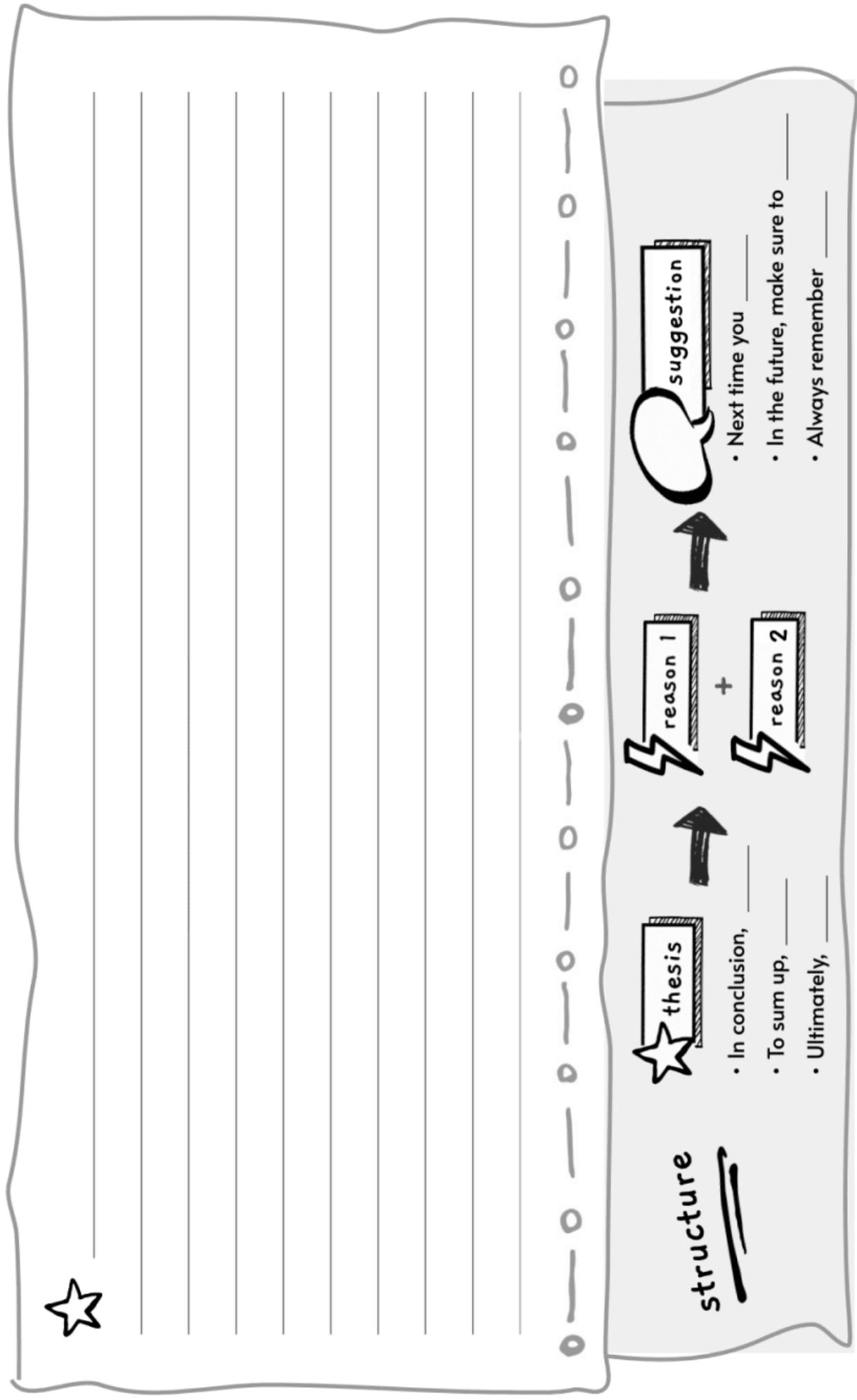
## Conclusion

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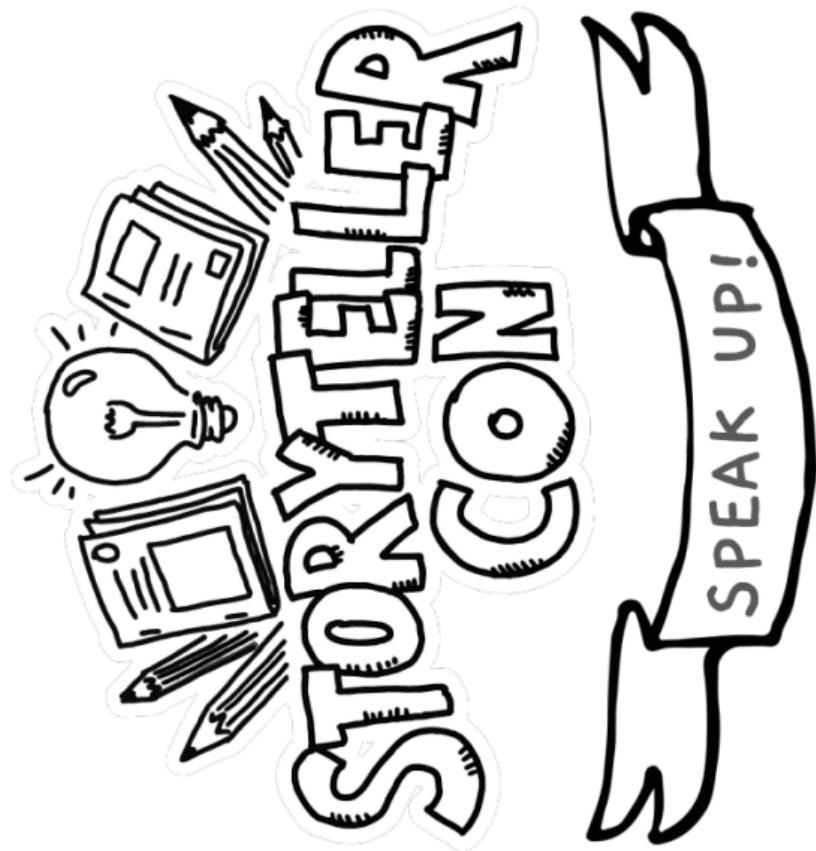
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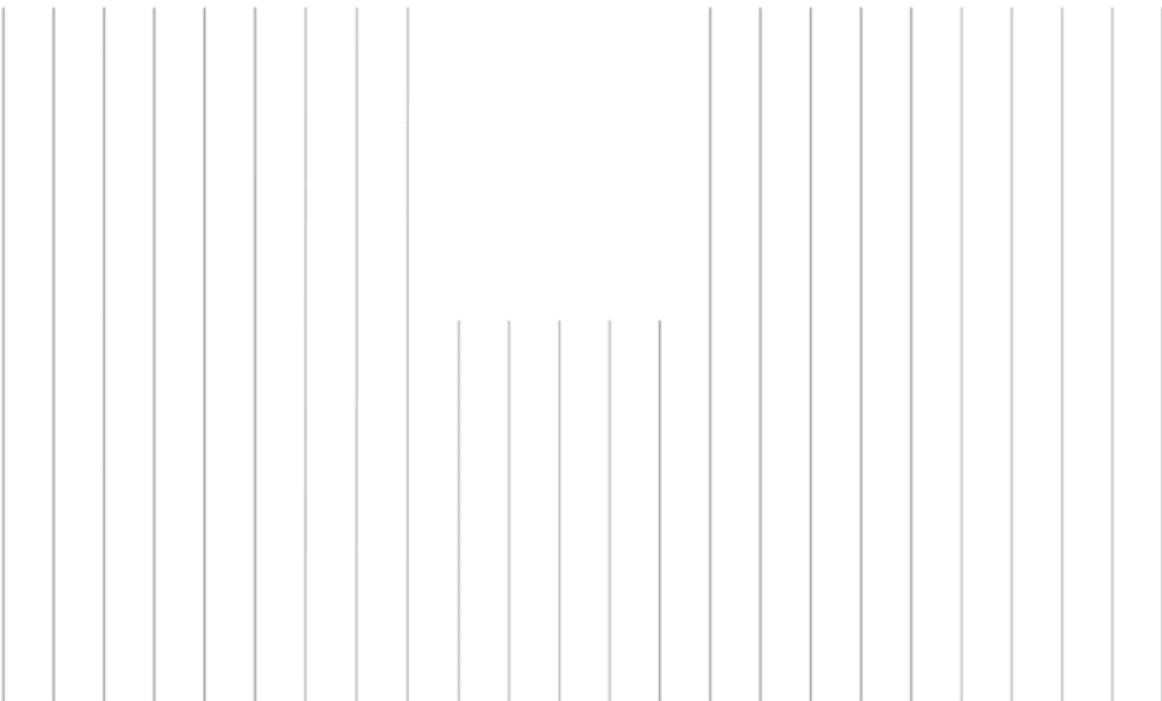
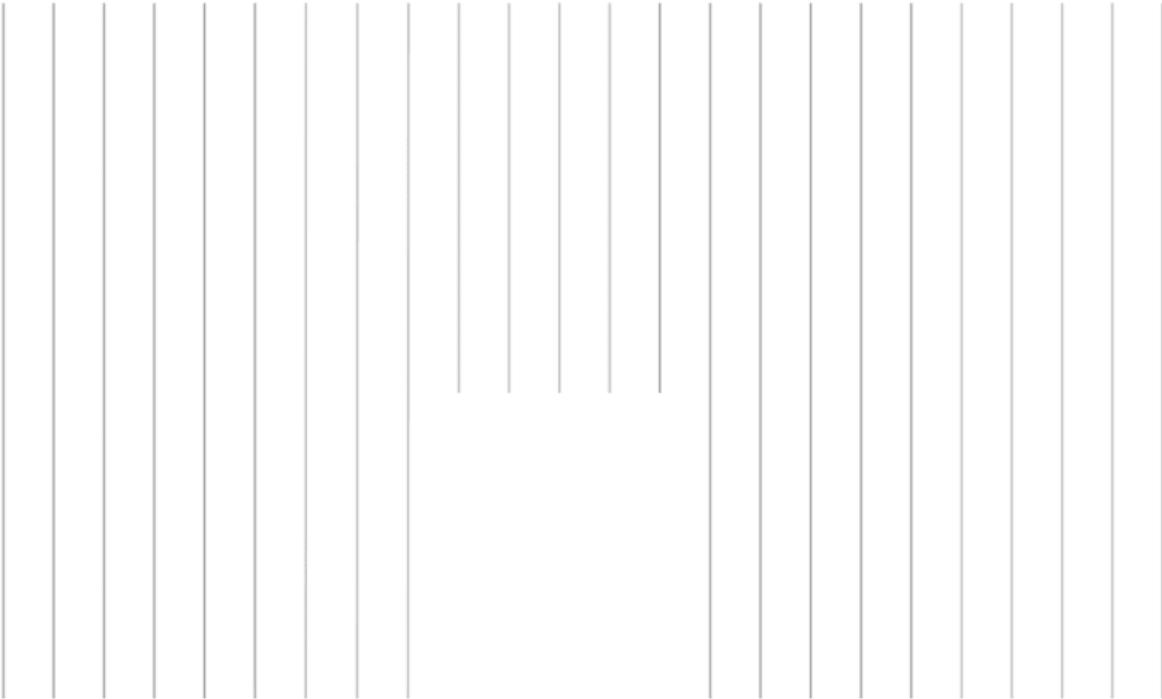
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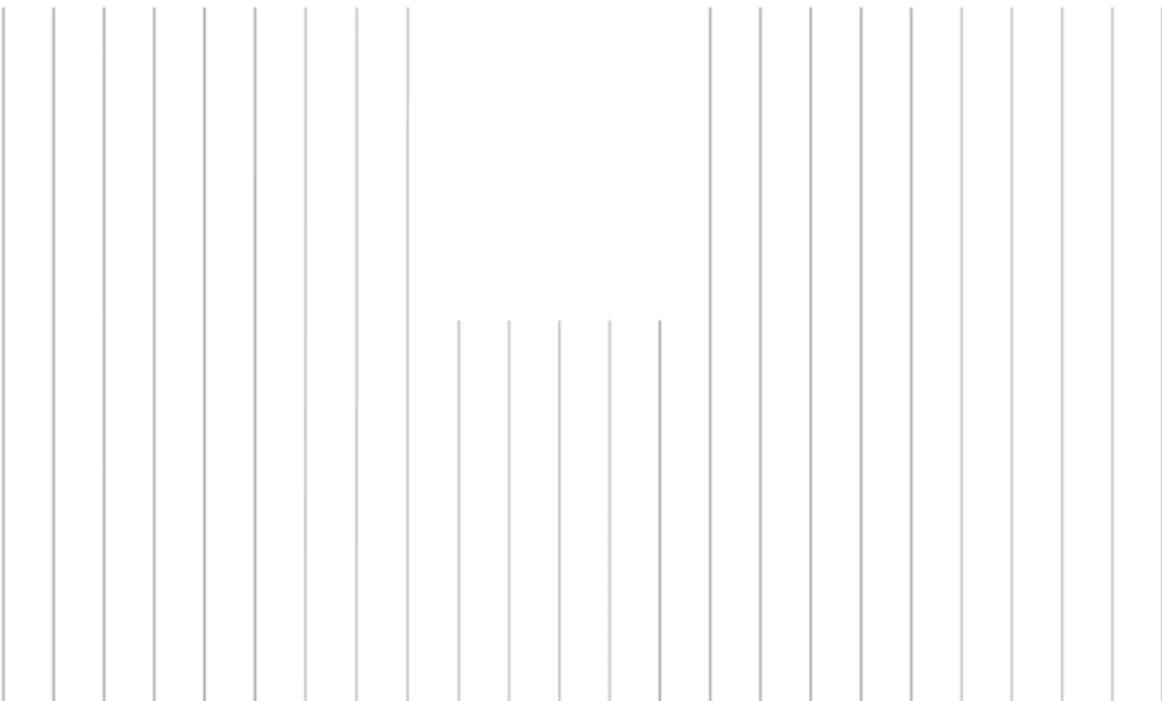
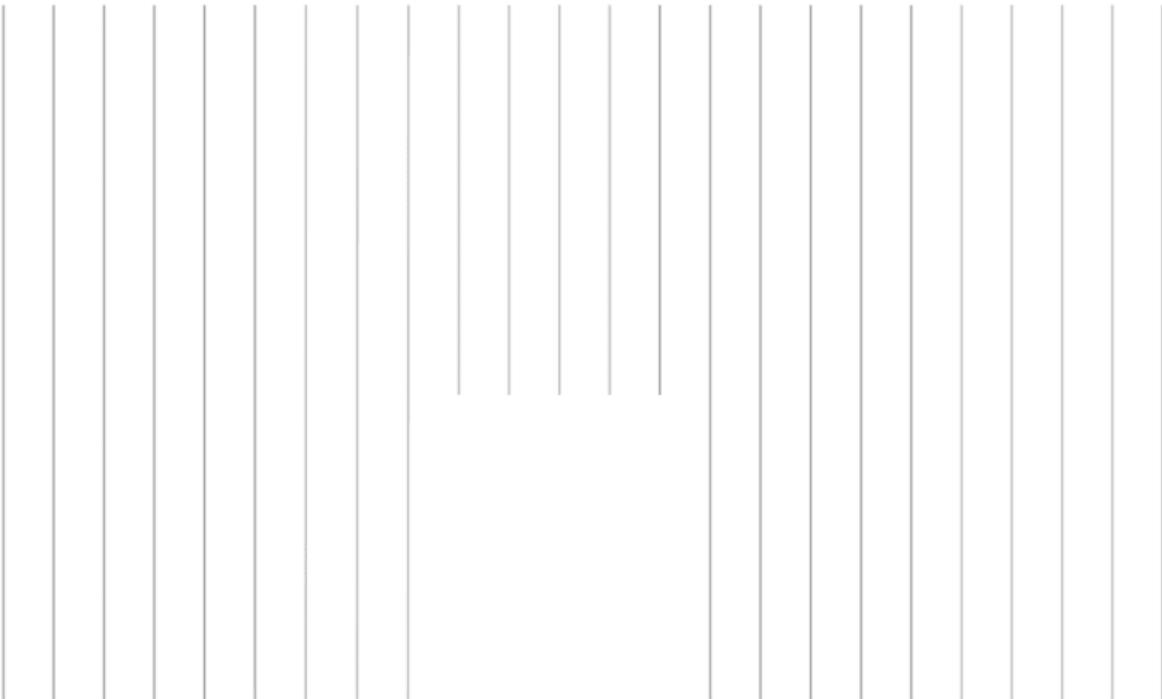
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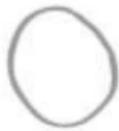
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for illustrations later on.

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# 5th Grade Opinion Writing Rubric

Literary Essay- Storyteller Con

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Standard	1	2	3	4	Feedback
<b>W.5.9.a, W.5.5, RL.5.1, RL.5.2</b>  Read a story and determine the theme Create a plan for a literary essay that includes a thesis, reasons, and evidence					
<b>W.5.1.a, W.5.4</b>  Write an introduction that includes a hook and a thesis statement					
<b>W.5.5</b>  Organize writing into paragraphs					
<b>W.5.1.b, W.5.1.c, RL.5.1</b>  Write body paragraphs that include reasons and evidence to support the thesis					
<b>W.5.1.d</b>  Write a conclusion that reviews the key points of the essay and includes the thesis					
<b>W.5.5, L.5.2</b>  Review work to revise and edit: capitalization, punctuation, and spelling					

1 = standard not met; 2 = standard partially met; 3 = standard met; 4 = exceeds expectations

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# My Opinion Writing Checklist

Literary Essay - Storyteller Con

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Process	Learning Goals	Not yet	Starting to...	Yes!
<b>Read to determine a theme</b>	I can read a short story to determine the theme.			
<b>Plan your essay</b>	I can use an organizer to plan my essay.			
<b>Write an introduction</b>	I can write an introduction that includes a hook and states my thesis.			
<b>Write body paragraphs with reasons and evidence</b>	I can draft body paragraphs that include reasons and evidence.			
<b>Write a conclusion</b>	I can write a conclusion that reviews key points and includes the thesis.			
<b>Fix capitals, spelling, and end marks</b>	I can edit my writing by checking for errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation.			

# Shaken Up

By Jacob Kramer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

"Oh NO! No no no," whined my big sister Jaime, "There's no soda! Burgers. Buns. Veggie burgers. Cake. MOM, I can't believe you forgot the soda!"

Jaime always makes a really big deal out of her birthday. This year she's turning 14. She even got a very special pink dress made out of fancy fabric. She wants everything to be perfect, but if something goes wrong, she gets so mad. Last year, her party was ruined because her soccer ball got stuck in a tree. I never told her it was me who kicked it up there by accident.

"Sweetie, that's not exactly true," said Mom, "You were responsible for making the list."

"What are my friends supposed to drink?" Jamie whined.

I pointed to the hose.

"Ew, no. Mo, that's gross. No way we're drinking hose water! Mom—can you get the soda?"

"Sorry, this barbecue is going and an adult needs to be here," Mom said.

"UGH. MOM. You're the worst."

Jaime can be such a baby sometimes. Even though I'm her little brother, I always have to step up and be mature. This could be my chance to make sure things go perfectly.

I volunteered to get the soda, and Mom gave me a crumpled twenty. I ran all the way to the mini-mart. I picked cherry cola (Jaime's favorite), root beer (classic), orange soda (my favorite), and a six-pack of cream soda because I once saw Abdul drinking it after soccer practice, and I know Jaime has a crush on him. No way this party can be ruined now.

Linda was working at the counter today. She's old, but we're friends.

"These are for Jaime's birthday," I said, "She's turning fourteen."

Linda nodded, "You know, Mo, my fourteenth birthday party was ruined by a wild pig. I left the gate open in our yard, which we were never supposed to do, and it ran right in."

My blood ran cold, as cold as the sodas. I'm scared of pigs. They're a lot bigger and faster than they look in kids books.

"A w-wild pig? I asked, "Can that really happen?"

"Where I grew up, in Texas, we got 2.6 million of 'em. And they're everywhere, Mo. There's wild pigs in thirty-five states. Including this one."

"W-what did you do?" I asked, "W-when the wild pig came?"

"We ran inside! The pig ate the cake, but there was still ice cream for dessert. The toughest part was admitting that it was me who left the gate open. But when I told everyone, they just laughed! It was still a great party."

I tried to push the idea of pigs out of my mind as I ran back towards the park. Jaime's birthday was going to be perfect. The sun was shining, the burgers were on the grill, and it was almost time for a swim. And I was almost 99 percent certain that there were no wild —SKREEEEE!!— PIGS! Squealing right behind me!

I dodged behind a tree, tripped, and went face first into the dirt. The sodas went everywhere. As I brushed the dirt off myself and gathered up the scattered cans, I looked around. No pigs, just a car with squeaky brakes.

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Opinion | Storyteller Con

# Shaken Up

By Jacob Kramer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I was shaken up. And so were the sodas. The special birthday sodas that cost almost twenty dollars! I felt stupid. I couldn't believe how scared I had been. It was embarrassing. I knew I couldn't tell anyone. I was sure the sodas were fine. It was just a little bump, right?

When I got back, people had started to arrive for the party. Jaime was talking with Abdul, and he was admiring her new pink dress. Everything was perfect. The sun was shining, the burgers were on the grill, and the sodas were ice cold. But deep down, I knew that each can was full of bubbles, and those bubbles were freaking out, and if anyone tried to drink them... I made a 'yikes' face to myself.

"Omigosh is that CREAM SODA?" exclaimed Abdul, "My favorite! Mo, how did you know? Ok, Jaime, which one do you want?"

Jaime smoothed her new pink dress. "Um, ok, I guess I'll have one of those, please," she said, blushing. Abdul handed her a cherry cola and she smiled so wide. This was her very special moment of her very special day. I watched in horror as they bumped their cans together. It was too late.

"Cheers!"

Soda erupted in twin volcanoes, covering Jaime in a fountain of sticky brown liquid. It was all over her dress, with the fancy fabric that can't ever get wet.

"My dress!" she shrieked, "MO! WHAT DID YOU DO?"

"Nothing!" I lied.

"DID YOU SHAKE THESE UP? ARE YOU TRYING TO RUIN MY BIRTHDAY?"

I shook my head, trying to think of a better lie to get out of this.

"I don't know... uh... they were... uhm..." The more I stuttered, the more Jamie lost her cool.

"I KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO DO SOMETHING TO RUIN MY BIRTHDAY! Why can't I have ONE day that's about me?" I was about to lie and say I didn't know, but I suddenly remembered Linda's story. When I opened my mouth, the truth came spilling out.

"I THOUGHT THERE WERE PIGS!" I cried, "YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN SCARED TOO!" A stunned silence followed my outburst.

"Wait, what?" said Abdul, shaking soda out of his hair.

I explained the whole thing. As I told the story, I could see Jamie begin to calm down. When I got to the part about hearing a pig, she actually laughed.

"You're so silly! Why didn't you say anything?" said Jaime.

"I was embarrassed. I thought you wouldn't notice, I thought everything was OK."

"You thought the sodas smashed all over the ground were OK?"

"Maybe I just wished they were OK," I said.

"You know, if you had just told me, none of this would have happened," She replied. She was right, of course.

"I just didn't want to ruin your birthday," I mumbled. Jamie looked down at her dress. I knew what she was thinking. It was already ruined. She was about to say something about the dress, when Abdul had an idea to save the party.

"I HAVE A GREAT IDEA! LET'S OPEN ALL OUR SODAS IN THE POND!"

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Opinion | Storyteller Con

# Shaken Up

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

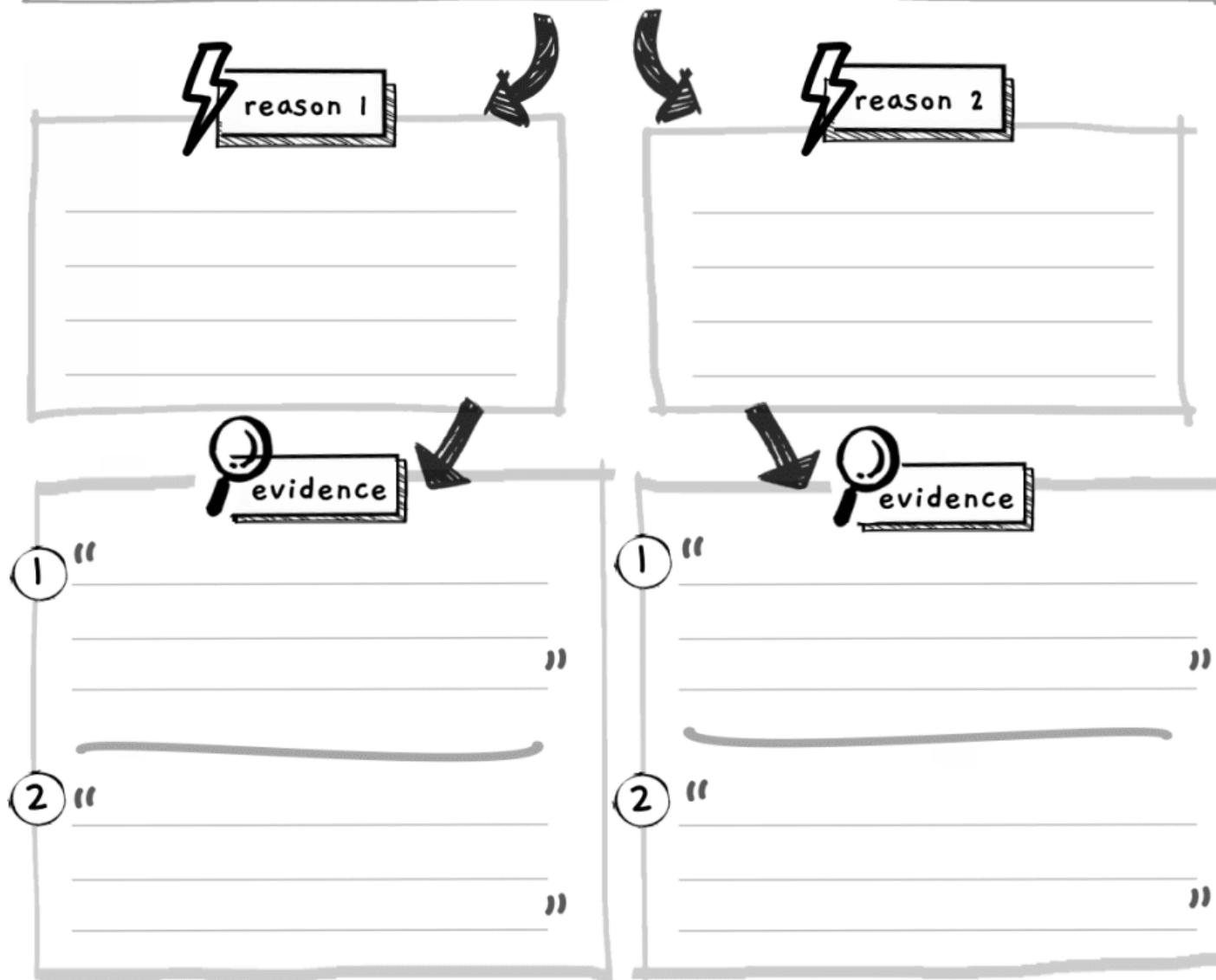
The Writefest website is looking for writers to share ideas about their recent story: Shaken Up. Write a literary essay to share the theme you saw in the story.

## Directions:

- Read Shaken Up by Jacob Kramer
- Think of a theme, or life lesson, that the story is teaching the reader.
- Use the organizer below to plan your literary essay.



The theme of the story is \_\_\_\_\_



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Opinion | Storyteller Con

# Shaken Up

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Write a literary essay to explain the theme you saw in the story Shaken Up.

In your writing, remember to:

- Write an introduction
- Organize your writing into paragraphs
- Include evidence from the story to support your thesis
- Write a conclusion
- Edit your writing

# Shaken Up

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you need more space, continue on a piece of lined paper.

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