

# Quick Start Guide

Wondering where to start with Mystery Writing? Click on your grade to see our suggestions.

## Lesson Plans

[Kindergarten](#)

[1st Grade](#)

[2nd Grade](#)

[3rd Grade](#)

[4th Grade](#)

[5th Grade](#)

## For Lesson Details & Standards

[Mystery Writing Standards  
Alignment Guide 2025-2026](#)



## Drawing to Write

Start with lessons once or twice a week to help students connect drawing and early writing skills.

| Focus                   | Lesson Title                                  |                                                                                    | Description                                                                  |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pictures and Words      | <a href="#">Everyday Signs</a><br>20 mins     |  | Students learn that pictures and words communicate information.              |
| Drawing with Shapes     | <a href="#">Street Scene</a><br>20 mins       |  | Students learn how to see and draw shapes to make people, houses, and trees. |
| Add Details to Drawings | <a href="#">Beach Day Postcard</a><br>20 mins |  | Students add details to drawings to communicate more clearly.                |
| Label a Picture         | <a href="#">Vet's Office</a><br>20 mins       |  | Students label parts of their drawings using words.                          |

## Parts of a Sentence

Next, these lessons show how words come together to form sentences.

| Focus              | Lesson Title                                    |                                                                                      | Description                                                                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nouns              | <a href="#">Name the Animals</a><br>20 mins     |  | Students learn about nouns and create captions for photos.                          |
| Verbs              | <a href="#">Act Like the Animals</a><br>20 mins |  | Students learn about verbs by acting out actions.                                   |
| Create a Sentence  | <a href="#">Class Zoo</a><br>20 mins            |  | Students learn the parts of a simple sentence and practice building one.            |
| Period             | <a href="#">Try Out a Period</a><br>20 mins     |  | Students learn that sentences end with a period.                                    |
| Sentence Mechanics | <b>Coming Soon</b><br>20 mins                   |  | Students learn and practice when to add capitals, spaces and periods to a sentence. |

## Sentence Basics

Start with these lessons to build an understanding of sentences and support early sentence writing.

| Focus                             | Lesson Title                                 |                                                                                      | Description                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject and Action</b>         | <a href="#">Butterfly Parade</a><br>20 mins  |    | Students identify two parts of a sentence: the subject and the action.      |
| <b>Capitalization and Period</b>  | <a href="#">Dino Day</a><br>20 mins          |    | Students learn about and practice adding capitals and periods to sentences. |
| <b>Identifying Fragments</b>      | <a href="#">Kangaroo Care</a><br>20 mins     |    | Students identify sentence fragments (versus complete sentences).           |
| <b>Fixing Fragments</b>           | <a href="#">Penguin Patrol</a><br>20 mins    |    | Students practice fixing fragments by completing the sentence.              |
| <b>Scrambled Sentences</b>        | <a href="#">Sideline Scramble</a><br>20 mins |   | Students put mixed up words in the right order to make a sentence.          |
| <b>Writing Complete Sentences</b> | <a href="#">Cat Cafe</a><br>20 mins          |  | Students write complete sentences based on a prompt.                        |

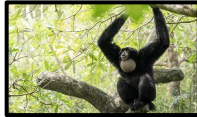
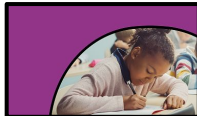
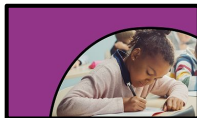
## Types of Sentences

These lessons help students practice writing statements, questions, commands, and exclamations.

| Focus                           | Lesson Title                                  |                                                                                      | Description                                                                            |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Statements and Questions</b> | <a href="#">Telling or Asking?</a><br>20 mins |  | Students identify statements and questions and then practice distinguishing each.      |
| <b>Commands</b>                 | <a href="#">How to Be Bossy</a><br>20 mins    |  | Students learn command sentences and practice using them.                              |
| <b>Exclamations</b>             | <a href="#">Show Big Feelings</a><br>20 mins  |  | Students learn exclamatory sentences and then practice using them.                     |
| <b>Sentence Types</b>           | <a href="#">Trail Talk</a><br>20 mins         |  | Students write two sentences and apply their understanding of the four sentence types. |

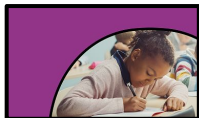
## Teach Narrative Writing

Build skills for narrative writing with this suggested sequence of lessons.

| Focus                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Lesson Title                                                    |                                                                                      | Description                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Partnering</b>                                                                                                                                                                                             | <a href="#"><u>Balloon Crew</u></a><br>30 mins                  |    | Students learn about partnering and then practice listening and following directions.                   |
| <b>Onomatopoeia</b>                                                                                                                                                                                           | <a href="#"><u>Jungle Sounds</u></a><br>30 mins                 |    | Students learn about onomatopoeia and then use it in their writing.                                     |
| <b>Using And</b>                                                                                                                                                                                              | <a href="#"><u>Raccoon Day Poster</u></a><br>45 mins            |    | Students use “and” to combine simple sentences into compound sentences.                                 |
| <b>Pre-Assessment:<br/>Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <a href="#"><u>The Garage Sale Bandit</u></a><br>30 mins        |   | Pre-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                             |
| <b>Narrative Writing Unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Drafting the Beginning</li> <li>• Drafting the Middle</li> <li>• Drafting the Ending</li> <li>• Editing</li> </ul> | <a href="#"><u>Campsite Bandit</u></a><br>5 lessons<br>~2 weeks |  | Students plan and draft a fictional story using descriptions, character feelings and character actions. |
| <b>Post-Assessment:<br/>Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                 | <a href="#"><u>The Beach Bandit</u></a><br>30 mins              |  | Post-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                            |
| <b>Onomatopoeia<br/>Practice</b>                                                                                                                                                                              | <a href="#"><u>Pinball Game</u></a><br>15 mins                  |  | Students get additional practice using onomatopoeia.                                                    |
| <b>Writing Prompt</b>                                                                                                                                                                                         | <a href="#"><u>Make a Monster!</u></a><br>15 mins               |  | Students use a prompt to write independently using description.                                         |
| <b>Setting Writing Goals</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <a href="#"><u>My Writing Journey</u></a><br>30 mins            |  | Students reflect on their writing and make a plan for future writings.                                  |

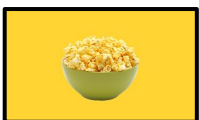
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| Focus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Lesson Title                                                          |                                                                                      | Description                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Adding Details</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <a href="#"><u>It Jumped</u></a><br>30 mins                           |    | Students expand sentences by adding nouns, adjectives, prepositional phrases.                                    |
| <b>Hyperbole</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <a href="#"><u>Best Trip Ever!</u></a><br>30 mins                     |    | Students learn about hyperbole and then apply it to their writing.                                               |
| <b>Elaborating with Feelings</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <a href="#"><u>Roller Coaster Ride</u></a><br>45 mins                 |    | Students revise a narrative text passage by adding descriptive details, actions and feelings.                    |
| <b>Pre-Assessment:<br/>Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                           | <a href="#"><u>Pond Stories</u></a><br>30 mins                        |   | Pre-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                                      |
| <b>Intro to Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <a href="#"><u>Parts of a Story</u></a><br>30 mins                    |  | Students learn the characteristics of narrative writing.                                                         |
| <b>Narrative Writing Unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Your Story</li> <li>Brainstorming a Solution</li> <li>Drafting a Lead</li> <li>Drafting with Character Thoughts</li> <li>Revising and Editing</li> </ul> | <a href="#"><u>Constellation Stories</u></a><br>5 lessons<br>~2 weeks |  | Students plan, draft and edit a complete fictional story including descriptions, character thoughts and actions. |
| <b>Post-Assessment:<br/>Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                          | <a href="#"><u>Nocturnal Creatures Story</u></a><br>30 mins           |  | Post-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                                     |
| <b>Adding Details<br/>Practice</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <a href="#"><u>It Leaped</u></a><br>15 mins                           |  | Students get additional practice adding details.                                                                 |
| <b>Writing Prompt</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <a href="#"><u>The Backpack Monster</u></a><br>15 mins                |  | Students use a prompt to write independently with elaboration.                                                   |

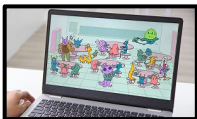
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| Focus                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Lesson Title                                            |                                                                                      | Description                                                                                                                                          |
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| <b>Personification</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <a href="#">A Weekend in the City</a><br>30 mins        |    | Students learn about personification and add it to their writing.                                                                                    |
| <b>Revising Words</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <a href="#">Curious Collections</a><br>30 mins          |    | Students learn about revising through substituting and then practice in a provided text.                                                             |
| <b>Pre-Assessment: Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                        | <a href="#">Playground Stories</a><br>30 mins           |    | Pre-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                                                                          |
| <b>Intro to Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                               | <a href="#">Parts of a Story</a><br>30 mins             |   | Students learn the characteristics of narrative writing.                                                                                             |
| <b>Narrative Writing Unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Story Planning</li> <li>• Beginning a Story</li> <li>• Transition Words &amp; Phrases</li> <li>• Story Endings</li> <li>• Editing and Sharing</li> </ul> | <a href="#">Amusement Park</a><br>5 lessons<br>~2 weeks |  | Students plan, draft, edit and revise a complete realistic fiction story including dialogue, actions, emotions and use transition words and phrases. |
| <b>Post-Assessment: Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                       | <a href="#">Sports Stories</a><br>30 mins               |  | Post-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                                                                         |
| <b>Personification Practice</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <a href="#">Amusement Park</a><br>15 mins               |  | Students get more practice using personification.                                                                                                    |
| <b>Writing Prompt</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <a href="#">Sensational Smells</a><br>15 mins           |  | Students use a prompt to write independently using sensory details.                                                                                  |
| <b>Setting Writing Goals</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <a href="#">My Writing Journey</a><br>30 mins           |  | Students reflect on their writing and make a plan for future writings.                                                                               |

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Build skills for narrative writing with this suggested sequence of lessons.

| Focus                                                                                                                                                                                            | Lesson Title                                                   |                                                                                      | Description                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Similes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                   | <a href="#">Sea Monster</a><br>30 mins                         |    | Students learn about similes and then use them in their writing.                                                 |
| <b>Character Traits</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <a href="#">Alex the Alien</a><br>30 mins                      |    | Students learn about character traits to create characters with thoughts, actions and words.                     |
| <b>Pre-Assessment: Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                         | <a href="#">Picnic Adventure</a><br>30 mins                    |    | Pre-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                                      |
| <b>Intro to Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                                | <a href="#">Parts of a Story</a><br>30 mins                    |   | Students learn the characteristics of narrative writing.                                                         |
| <b>Narrative Writing Unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Leads</li> <li>• Drafting</li> <li>• Drafting &amp; Revising</li> <li>• End Your Adventure</li> </ul> | <a href="#">Australian Adventures</a><br>5 lessons<br>~2 weeks |  | Students plan, write and revise a complete realistic adventure story focusing on character development and plot. |
| <b>Post-Assessment: Narrative Writing</b>                                                                                                                                                        | <a href="#">Pet Store Adventure</a><br>30 mins                 |  | Post-unit writing prompt with rubric and checklist included.                                                     |
| <b>Simile Practice</b>                                                                                                                                                                           | <a href="#">Hammerhead Shark</a><br>15 mins                    |  | Students get more practice using similes.                                                                        |
| <b>Writing Prompt</b>                                                                                                                                                                            | <a href="#">The Unexpected Guest</a><br>15 mins                |  | Students use a prompt to write independently using sequence.                                                     |
| <b>Setting Writing Goals</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | <a href="#">My Writing Journey</a><br>30 mins                  |  | Students reflect on their writing and make a plan for future writings.                                           |