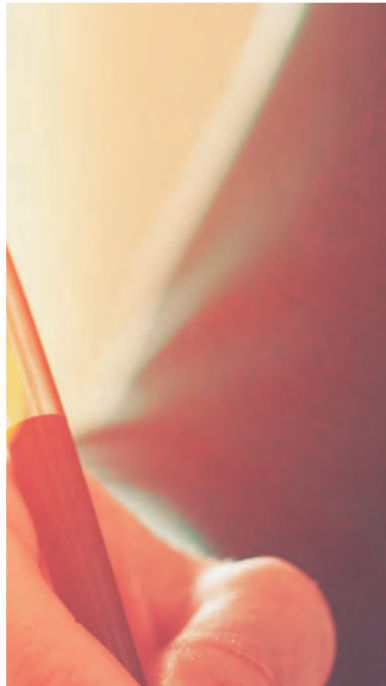


J

LANGUAGE ARTS



Spelling
Grammar
Vocabulary
Readers
Creative Expression





Thank you for downloading this sample of Sonlight's Language Arts J Instructor's Guide (what we affectionately refer to as an IG). In order to give you a full perspective on our Instructor's Guides, this sample will include parts from every section that is included in the full IG.

Here's a quick overview of what you'll find in this sample.

- A Quick Start Guide **START HERE**
- A 3-week Schedule
- Copywork/Dictation practice exercises and fun **Creative Expression** assignments.
- Activity Sheets that follow each week's Schedule and Notes.
- A **Scope and Sequence** of topics and skills your children will be developing throughout the school year
- Discussion and comprehension questions for each **Reader** title.

SONLIGHT'S "SECRET" COMES DOWN TO THIS:

We believe most children respond more positively to great literature than they do to textbooks. To properly use this sample to teach your student, you will need the books that are scheduled in it. We include all the books you will need when you purchase a package from sonlight.com.

Curriculum experts develop each IG to ensure that you have everything you need for your homeschool day. Every IG offers a customizable homeschool schedule, complete lesson plans, pertinent activities, and thoughtful questions to aid your students' comprehension. It includes handy teaching tips and pointers so you can homeschool with confidence all year long.

If you need any help using or customizing our IGs, please reach out to our experienced homeschool advisors at sonlight.com/advisors.

We hope you enjoy using this sample. For even more information about Sonlight's IGs, please visit: sonlight.com/ig. It would be our pleasure to serve you as you begin your homeschool journey.

If you like what you see in this sample, visit sonlight.com/languagearts to order your History / Bible / Literature package.

Blessings!

Sarita Holzmann,
Co-founder and president
of Sonlight Curriculum

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Language Arts

Language Arts J

By the Sonlight Team

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,
But fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*

Proverbs 1:7 (NKJV)

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“Do to others what you would have them do to you”
(Matthew 7:12).

“The worker is worth his keep” (Matthew 10:10).

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NOTE TO PURCHASER

Sonlight Curriculum, Ltd. is committed to providing the best homeschool resources on the market. This entails regular upgrades to our curriculum and to our Instructor’s Guides. This guide is the 2020 Edition of the Sonlight Curriculum® “Language Arts J” Instructor’s Guide and Notes. If you purchased it from a source other than Sonlight Curriculum, Ltd., you should know that it may not be the latest edition available.

This guide is sold with the understanding that none of the Authors nor the Publisher is engaged in rendering educational services. Questions relevant to the specific educational or legal needs of the user should be addressed to practicing members of those professions.

The information, ideas, and suggestions contained herein have been developed from sources, including publications and research, that are considered and believed to be reliable but cannot be guaranteed insofar as they apply to any particular classroom or homeschooling situation.

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For the latest information about changes in this guide, please visit www.sonlight.com/curriculum-updates. Please notify us of any errors you find not listed on this site. E-mail corrections to IGcorrections@sonlight.com and any suggestions you may have to IGsuggestions@sonlight.com.

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(Learn more about Readers packages at sonlight.com/readers.)

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INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDES LANGUAGE ARTS

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!

Get a three-week sample of any Sonlight Instructor's Guide—FREE!
sonlight.com/samples

Teach writing naturally and with confidence using Sonlight's unique Language Arts Instructor's Guides. LA Guides also include:

- 1 **Teaching Scripts (in the early grades)**
Read the teaching scripts in the IG when you introduce new ideas, concepts, and assignments. Great for parents just starting to homeschool or to provide extra confidence when teaching!
- 2 **Overview Summaries**
Weekly overviews summarize the concepts, skills and assignments for each week.
- 3 **Copywork/Dictation Assignments**
With weekly copywork or dictation assignments, children model master communicators to learn the basics of writing. Assignments are based on your children's ages and ability levels, and most passages come from their Readers.
- 4 **Spelling**
Sonlight Language Arts Instructor's Guides include spelling lists in levels 1-4. Beginning with Level 1, each week's spelling list corresponds with the reading. For Language Arts D-F, choose one of the stand-alone programs. The IG has a space to record your progress.
- 5 **Grammar and Writing Mechanics**
Receive clear grammar instruction about specific concepts from the week's copywork or dictation passage, then complete a few exercises to practice and reinforce the concepts. Answers included. Your children will learn to communicate effectively.
- 6 **Evaluative Rubrics**
Easily determine how to evaluate your children's work. Are they on track? What areas could use additional practice? What are the expectations in this assignment?

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7 Copywork/Dictation Assignments

1 Write the Story

6 The Cat Book Skills Checklist

2 Letter of the Week

CREATIVE EXPRESSION	Copywork 1	Copywork Application	The Cat Book	Copywork 2 Optional: Dictionary
Other Notes:				
Weekly Overview				
Letter of the Week:	Creative Expression:			
Language, Phonics & Spelling:	Copywork Application: Root/base words with different initial sounds; names; rhymes; vowels. (I)			
Special Interest Vocabulary: Introduce your children to vocabulary for topics that are important to your family's life.	Write a story to go along with predetermined illustrations. (Narration)			
Brain Challenges—Organization: Sorting practice.				
Building Words: Form words with vowel and consonant cards; letter sound recognition; word recognition.				

7 Effective Creative Writing Instruction

Step-by-step creative writing instruction encourages exploration and sets your children free to develop their creative side. They become superb written communicators, too.

Your IG includes assignments in a wide variety of styles and genres, including imaginative, persuasive, expository, narrative, journaling, etc. Each assignment includes instruction and a sample of what your student might produce.

The writing assignments follow a consistent pattern each week: copywork or dictation on Days 1 and 5; mechanics instruction and practice on Day 2; pre-planning for writing on Day 3; writing assignment on Day 4.

8 Activity Sheets and Answers

Activity sheets reinforce your teaching and provide assignments that make your children eager to learn how to write well. A variety of activity options coordinate with your students' language arts studies and draw on a range of skills and interests. Weekly notes provide answers to grammar questions and suggested responses for creative writing assignments.

9 Schedules for Optional Workbooks

All levels include schedules for optional workbooks. These workbooks offer your children additional practice in areas where they may struggle, such as phonics, grammar, and vocabulary. Visit sonlight.com for these supplemental materials.

How to Choose Language Arts for Sonlight Levels K-C and Readers K-4

Pick the language arts program that is closest to your children's ability level. Take the language arts assessment at sonlight.com/assessment. Then add the same level Readers for each child. Your Language Arts Guide includes the schedule and notes for those corresponding Readers. ♦

Language Arts 1
Days 86-90: Date: _____ to _____

Week 18					
Date:	Day 86	Day 87	Day 88	Day 89	Day 90
SPELLING	Words	Introduce the Words	Write Them Big!	Copy Them Small	Mix It Up!
PHONICS	<i>I Can Read It!</i> Word Lists	Lesson 18			
	Phonics Activities		Form Words	Play Concentration	
	Optional: <i>Explode the Code 2</i>	pp. 55-56	p. 57	p. 58	p. 59
HAND-WRITING	<i>Handwriting Without Tears: My Printing Book</i>	p. 50		p. 51	
READERS	<i>I Can Read It!</i> Book 3	"The Tent" pp. 12-14	"A Hint" pp. 15-16	"A Cast" pp. 17-18	"The Fish" pp. 19-20 "Fish and Chips" pp. 21-22
CREATIVE EXPRESSION		Copywork 1	Contractions	Synthesis	Match Middle Sounds Copywork 2
Other Notes:					

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9

4

Parental Notes

Weekly Overview

Spelling: /qu/ digraph
Phonics: Form Words: vowels and consonants; digraphs; word recognition
Play Concentration: sight words; memorization

Creative Expression:
Contractions: apostrophes; word shortening
Synthesis: focused thinking; sequential description; narration
Match Middle Sounds: vowels; recognize letter sounds

Vowel Activity Sheet 4

Circle the letter that makes the first sound in the name of each picture. Then write the letter in the space provided.



a f m



f a p



d o a



c b a

ant, Africa, astronaut, antler

Vowel Activity Sheet 4 | Language Arts 1

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Not sure what levels your children need?

TAKE A FREE LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENT.

sonlight.com/assessment

Before You Begin ...

You are about to embark on an exciting journey! With Sonlight’s Language Arts program as both your passport and map, you and your children will travel to exotic, wonderful places. Be aware, though, that you may at times face some rough seas. And that’s OK.

In fact, it’s more than OK. Confusion and frustration are perfectly common, natural reactions in any educational setting. Sonlight’s goal is to minimize such distractions on your Language Arts voyage. We thought it would be a good idea to explain a couple of things up front that we hope will calm the seas, fill your sails, and lead to safe harbor.

Leaving Your Comfort Zone

As you launch Sonlight’s Language Arts program, it will not take you long to notice that something different is going on here. Are you missing something? Probably not! The mental map of your experience probably does not match what you are seeing.

You were probably taught Language Arts in a traditional way using workbooks and repetition. Sonlight does not teach Language Arts this way. Our research revealed that traditional methods, while comfortable, produced inferior results and were boring!

Traditional methods focus on repetition and drive students to memorize chunks of unrelated material in order to pass a test. What happens after the test? Unfortunately, students usually soon forget what they learned. Has learning really occurred then? Maybe. But, many students only learn how to beat the system!

“Memorize, pass test, forget” is not the pattern Sonlight promotes.

The Sonlight Way

Instead, Sonlight’s Language Arts program is based on the “natural learning” approach. “Natural” or “integrated” learning means students learn by discovery. They observe, analyze, and then seek to imitate what they have seen a master wordsmith do before them.

The “natural learning” approach is not as intuitively obvious as the instruction found in most standard workbooks. Students will make a discovery, and we will reinforce it for them. However, they won’t find 50 similar “problems” neatly laid out for them to “solve.”

In “natural learning,” students see each principle at work in the natural context of a sentence or paragraph that they have read in one of their assignments. They have to really puzzle things through, and you will occasionally have to help them figure things out.

The “natural learning” approach is, in some ways, slower than traditional workbook methods. But here’s the key: when students “get” a principle that they’ve been striving to master via this method, they will never forget it! They will understand it thoroughly and be able to apply it in almost any context. That is true learning. That is our goal.

For more in-depth information regarding Sonlight’s Language Arts philosophy, go to: www.sonlight.com/educational-philosophy.

Additional Resources

As you adjust to teaching with the “natural learning” approach, you may want some additional assistance at times. For example, you may want to familiarize yourself with quality resources such as Dr. Ruth Beechick’s books. For further study, we recommend Dr. Ruth Beechick’s books *The Three-R’s Series* and *You CAN Teach Your Child Successfully*.

If you feel like your children just seem to be struggling or overwhelmed with their work, don’t hesitate to put some books away and simply wait awhile. Instead, spend more time on your Read-Alouds and simply continue to encourage a love for reading. In a few months, try again, and you will probably find that allowing a little extra time for your children to grow will make success easier for them to attain.

Join the Family

Besides referring to your Instructor’s Guide and books, please visit our Sonlight Connections Community (sonlight.com/connections). If you have any questions about how to teach, or why you might (or might not) want to do something; if you wonder if someone has an idea about how to do something better, or whether you or your children are on track or need special help or attention; or for whatever reason, you will find a large community of friendly, helpful people available.

About this Instructor’s Guide

Sonlight’s Language Arts program seeks to develop your children’s writing abilities via dictation, application, vocabulary and creative expression. Your children will write daily in a variety of ways.

We provide a 36-week, normal school length schedule. Please take some time now to plan your school year so that you can meet your educational objectives as well as your family’s needs. It is okay to use more time to finish this program.

This guide consists of several parts.

Section One provides a brief overview of your Language Arts studies for the year. We want you to not only know what to do, but also why you do it.

Section Two includes the heart of the program: record-keeping/schedule sheets and notes. Use the schedule sheets to find each week’s assignments and to record what you’ve done each day. Simply place a check mark by each assignment as it’s completed. You can also use these sheets to record problem areas or subjects and topics needing special review. Please feel free to modify our suggested schedule to match your own—and your children’s—specific needs.

Keep these records to demonstrate to others (government authorities, in particular) what you have taught your children.

Immediately following the schedule, you’ll find Notes with instructions for assignments and Answer Keys. These notes contain Weekly Overviews that outline the skills and assignments covered that week, as well as rubrics that will help you evaluate the week’s writing assignment. See the “Recommendations for Teaching Writing” article in Section Four for more information about rubrics. Directly after the Notes are the Weekly Activity Sheets with your children’s dictation passages as well as their other assignments.

Section Three includes **Reader Study Guides** that contain discussion questions and other teaching notes that will help you guide your students through the Readers scheduled in this guide.

Section Four contains several helpful resources for all users. This section contains an overview of topics scheduled in this guide, teaching tips for how to use the tools included in this program, as well as suggestions that will help you modify this program to best fit your family’s needs.

We also recommend you visit the **My Downloads** section of your Sonlight Account for several other helpful teaching tools, including:

- Getting Organized—includes great tips about scheduling your school year, modifying our program and keeping records
- Tips When Using the Internet

Items You Will Need

- lined notebook paper
- #2 pencils
- art supplies for illustrations (crayons, colored pencils, or markers)
- lined index cards for a couple assignments (e.g., the research paper project)

If you might reuse your Instructor’s Guide and Student Activity Sheets in the future (for a younger child, for instance), we strongly suggest that you purchase an extra

set of Activity Sheets when you buy the Instructor’s Guide. That way, when we update our Instructor’s Guides you will have matching Activity Sheets when you need them. Please contact us if you are looking for Activity Sheets from the past.

Program Features and Rationale

Dictation

Every year customers ask: “How can I teach my children proper grammar [punctuation, etc.]? They don’t know the first thing about proper sentence construction ...” Our answer? Dictation! No matter how much your children complain, unless they consistently come back with 100% correct papers, make dictation a priority!

If you’re unfamiliar with dictation, it’s exactly what it sounds like. You read a passage to your children, and they write it exactly as read, concentrating on correct spelling, punctuation, etc. We agree with Dr. Ruth Beechick that dictation exercises provide a “well-rounded approach to language” by enabling the parent to deal with issues of grammar, punctuation, spelling, writing, and thinking in a natural (uncontrived) setting, with a relatively small time-expenditure and no workbooks. If you own her book, please read—or reread—Dr. Beechick’s comments in *You CAN Teach Your Child Successfully* (pages 69-89).

Your children may resist dictation at first. In the long run, they will come to enjoy it if you simply persist. Tell your children that they are “teaching their hands to obey their mind.”

Mechanics Practice

In order to become more proficient writers, we believe students need to not only practice writing but also understand “what’s going on under the hood” in what they’re reading and writing. Therefore, each week we offer an introduction to a grammatical or writing mechanics topic (grammatical rule, literary term, punctuation, capitalization, etc.). Look for the skills covered each week in the “Weekly Overview” table, located just before the Creative Expression notes for each week. For a 36-week progression of topics and skills studied this year in Language Arts, see our Schedule of Topics and Skills, located in **Section Four**.

Creative Expression (Writing)

Sonlight’s Creative Expression assignments encompass a wide variety of writing tasks, styles, and skills. For example, your children will encounter traditional composition practice (ranging from formal essays to informal thank-you notes), research, poetry, book reports, analysis, and fun, inspired creative assignments. We believe that

the breadth and variety of writing assignments will launch your children to new heights in their writing—and that they'll have a lot of fun in the process!

We designed our writing assignments to help your children develop fundamental skills that they will build upon in the future. We hope you are looking forward to the new challenges we present this year. If you've had a chance to preview this guide and some of the work seems daunting, don't worry: Just because we use new or advanced concepts (similes, metaphors, etc.) doesn't mean the assignments themselves are hard. Give your children the benefit of the doubt! Let them try the assignments as they are, but feel free to modify if necessary.

Our desire at this point is not mastery (either of vocabulary or concepts), but acquaintance and familiarity. We believe mastery can come over years of repeated brief encounters with the same material.

For more information about how to use this program to help you confidently teach writing this year, please see the "Recommendations for Teaching Writing" article in **Section Four**.

Spelling

In our early elementary products, spelling has been incorporated into the Language Arts programs. From this point forward, however, you will need to decide how much more spelling practice your student needs. Generally we recommend choosing a spelling program for at least Levels D-F and then continue with the spelling program if your student struggles. *Spelling You See* is a great option to help your students as spelling challenges advance. Use the blank rows on the Schedule pages to record your spelling work.

As students get older, correcting their writing assignments will eventually become the natural spelling work for most students. You can also use the weekly dictation exercises to help you monitor your students' spelling progress. Consider keeping records on the weekly schedule pages of errors you see consistently. Use the list of spelling rules included in the **My Downloads** section of your Sonlight account to help you review those issues with your student.

Grammar Ace

We recommend *Grammar Ace* for one year between 4th–7th grade. This self-paced grammar supplement contains a progressive journey through only the most practical grammar your children need and makes a great addition to Sonlight's Language Arts. Once you have finished *Grammar Ace*, we recommend you choose either *Grammar 5 & 6* with *Winston Grammar* or *Keys to Good Language*, but not both as the programs teach using a different format

and lesson progression. Use the space on the Schedule page to record what you have done.

Vocabulary

While the bulk of our Vocabulary study is contained in the Read-Aloud study guide and part of the History/Bible/Literature Instructor's Guide, you will see some terms defined in the Reader Study Guides in **Section Three** as well. The books we choose for you to read aloud are usually written at a higher reading level than the books we schedule as Readers. Therefore, Read-Alouds provide rich, content-relevant language presented during a time in which you can easily pause and discuss unfamiliar words with your students.

In all of our study guides, we categorize the words we highlight in two ways. **Vocabulary** words are words your students will probably encounter in other texts --not just those included in this curriculum. We list these words within an excerpt of the text from the book in which they are found so that you may challenge your students to define the terms using the clues found in the context of the rest of the story. Simply read these short quotes aloud and see if your students can tell you the meaning of the **bold italicized** terms. For example:

Read: "**Unobtrusively**, Johnny got his notebook and pencil."

Ask your child: "What do you think 'Unobtrusively' means?"

After your student answers, compare their response to the answer in parentheses: (*in a manner to avoid notice*)

Cultural Literacy terms are words that, if defined while your students are reading, will broaden and deepen their understanding of the text. However, these words are generally specific to course content, and we wouldn't expect your students read or hear them on a regular basis. You may use these words, formatted in **bold** followed by a colon and their definitions, more like a convenient glossary. For example:

Define the word when it comes up in the text—**amplitude**: the arc of the horizon between east and west.

If you'd like more vocabulary practice, we recommend the *Classical Roots A* program. We schedule this optional workbook for you.

Student Activity Sheets

We have included Activity Sheets to help you help your children. For levels D-J, to enable your children to study independently, you will find the bulk of the Language Arts instruction on the Weekly Activity Sheets, with a small summary of what we teach each day included in your notes. Feel free to read and work with them through the lessons on the Activity Sheets, or give them the reins to work solo, once you feel they are able to do so.

Supplementary Websites

We know that there are times throughout our curriculum when we simply cannot cover all the material on a given subject. In these instances we will provide internet search instructions for you to find more information. Please use caution and your own discretion as you look at different internet sites. We highly recommend that you as the parent and teacher look before allowing your student to do the search with you or on their own. We hope you find this helpful!

Corrections and Suggestions

Since we at Sonlight constantly work to improve our product, we would love it if we could get you to help us with this process.

Whenever you find an error anywhere in one of our Instructor's Guides, please send a short e-mail to: IGcorrections@sonlight.com. It would be helpful if the subject line of your e-mail indicated where the problem is. For instance, "Language Arts D/Section Two/Week 1/Day 3." Then, in the message portion of the e-mail, tell us what the error is.

If, while going through our curriculum, you think of any way we could improve our product, please e-mail your suggestions to: IGsuggestions@sonlight.com. If you know of a different book we should use, if you think we should read a book we assign at a different point in the year, or if you have any other ideas, please let us know. Your efforts will greatly help us improve the quality of our products, and we very much appreciate you taking the time to let us know what you find. Thanks for your help! ■

Section Two

Schedule and Notes

Language Arts J

Days 1–5: Date: _____ to _____

Week Overview																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36

Week 1						
	Date:	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
SPELLING						
READERS	The Thief	chaps. 1–2 	chap. 3	chap. 4	chap. 5	chaps. 6–7
VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT	Optional: Classical Roots A	pp. v–viii	Lesson 1; study Key Words	Exercise 1A	Exercise 1B	Exercise 1C
CREATIVE EXPRESSION		Dictation—Read Mechanics Practice	Fantasy—Plan	Fantasy—Write 	Fantasy—Edit	Dictation—Write
Other Notes						

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1. Purchase optional materials separately: We do not include them in the LA Package.
2. Find notes for the Readers in **Section Three**, arranged in the order scheduled. To accommodate various reading speeds, we recommend pulling each set of book notes and simply placing them with each reading title.

Weekly Overview
<p>Mechanics Practice: Sentence Basics Nouns: common/proper; gender; concrete/abstract; compound; collective</p> <p>Creative Expression:</p> <p><u>Skill:</u> Narrative Writing</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> Write a fantasy story</p>

Spelling

Your schedule includes a blank “Spelling” line. Please use this line to record the lessons you’ve completed in whatever spelling program you’ve chosen to use.

Alternative Spelling

Days 1–5	Pretest–Posttest: “Ways People Speak”
--------------------	---------------------------------------

If you don’t have a spelling program we provide one for you. Our spelling program consists of over 550 words late-middle- and early-high-school students should know. Use it or ignore it at your pleasure.

One way to use these words:

Day 1: Take a pretest. Read the spelling words for the week to your students. Have them write the words and see how many they can spell correctly without seeing them first.

Day 2: Have your students define each word and then incorporate each spelling word into a sentence, making sure they use the word in the proper context.

Days 3 & 4: Have your students write out each of the words three times. If any are spelled wrong on Day 1, have your students write the misspelled words ten times.

Day 5: Take a posttest. Read the spelling words to your students. They may either recite them orally or write them as you say them. We suggest any misspelled words be added onto the next week's spelling words.

* * *

Words: aloof, apathetic, articulate, brevity, brusque, circumnavigate, curt, confide, demur, dispel, doleful, empathize, fulsome, garble, inaudible, insinuate, taciturn

Readers

We include the Readers schedule and corresponding Study Guides in both the History and Language Arts Guides. However, we do not include the map points in the Language Arts guides because we consider geography part of our History program. Please refer to your History/Bible/Literature J Guide for more information about maps. You will find the Study Guide notes for the weekly Readers in **Section Three**.

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary

While the bulk of our Vocabulary study is contained in the Read-Aloud study guide and part of the History/Bible/Literature Instructor's Guide, you will see some terms defined in the Reader Study Guides too.

In all of our study guides, we categorize the words we highlight in two ways. **Vocabulary** words are words your students will probably encounter in other texts—not just those included in this curriculum. We list these words within an excerpt of the text from the book in which they are found so that you may challenge your students to define the terms using the clues found in the context of the rest of the story. Simply read these short quotes aloud and see if your students can tell you the meaning of the bold italicized terms.

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Vocabulary

If you'd like more vocabulary practice, we recommend the *Classical Roots A* program. We schedule this optional workbook for you.

Creative Expression

Our goal is to have your students writing all week long. To keep things interesting and to offer a broad range of skill practice, this writing practice varies throughout the week. On the first day, your students will study a Dictation passage that they will write down as you read it at the end of the week. After studying the Dictation passage, they will learn about a concept for Mechanics Practice. On the remaining days of the week, they will work on more formalized Creative Expression assignments. These assignments vary widely each week in order to give your students experience in all types of writing—and oral presentation, too.

Preferred Dictation Method

This dictation method involves two steps. First, on Day 1 ask your students to read through the dictation passage to familiarize themselves with it. They should note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention. This is also their opportunity to ask you to clarify anything they're unsure about. They will merely study the passage on Day 1, but will write the passage out on Day 5. Once your students feel comfortable with the passage on Day 1, have them complete the "Mechanics Practice" activity on the Activity Sheet.

On Day 5, your students should take no more than five to ten minutes to prepare independently for the final dictation. Preparation may involve writing out unfamiliar words, practicing spelling them out loud or on paper, trying to remember how a word looks by "seeing" it in their minds, drawing a word in large letters written in mid-air with an imaginary pen, etc. When their time is up, give the dictation, clause by clause, reading each clause twice (repeating it only once). As you read the passage to them, avoid the temptation to emphasize the different sounds in each word. Your students should write in the cursive style.

Before handing their papers to you, your students should check their work for errors. They should mark and correct any errors they find. Discuss with your students what you think they have done particularly well, as well as what they could do better.

Use the list of spelling rules included in the My Downloads section of your Sonlight account to help you review those issues with your students.

Mechanics Practice

On Day 1 of each week, we offer a brief introduction to one grammatical or mechanical topic. This year your students will work through four basic groups of skills. We will study basic grammar skills in two main sections: **Sentence Basics** (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.), and **The Building Blocks of Sentences** (phrases, clauses,) Later

in the year we will challenge your students to apply what they've learned with **Writing Strategy** (active and passive voice, mood, similes, dialogue, etc.). We'll intersperse these grammatical lessons with common **Mechanics** topics that we'll schedule throughout the year.

Look for the skills covered each week in the "Weekly Overview" table, located after each weekly schedule. For a 36-week progression of topics and skills studied this year in Language Arts, see our "Scope & Sequence: Schedule of Topics and Skills," located in **Section Four**.

Creative Expression

In order to broaden your students' experience and to encourage them to think more deeply about the wide range of topics studied throughout the year in the Sonlight J History/Bible/Literature program, you will notice that some of this year's Creative Expression assignments reference not only this year's Readers but sometimes titles used in our History or Read-Aloud programs as well. For an overview of what is covered and when, please see the "Scope & Sequence: Schedule for Topics and Skills" list located in **Section Four** of this guide. You may find it helpful to know when we pull ideas from other subjects so that you can plan your day and the timing of your students' Creative Expression activities accordingly. Don't worry: if you did not purchase the corresponding HBL program, your students will still be able to complete each assignment with the information provided in this guide. We will make recommendations in your notes and on your students' Activity Sheets of how to break down this three-day assignment, but feel free to make adjustments as needed to accommodate your schedule and individual pacing.

Note: As many writing assignments require your student to write on a separate sheet of paper, we recommend purchasing a notebook specifically for these assignments.

Feeling Overwhelmed?

Due to the myriad of concepts to cover—many of which may seem abstract—and the subjectivity that evaluating writing assignments often requires, the idea of teaching Language Arts may seem daunting. Understandably! For this reason we have included an article called "Recommendations for Teaching Writing" in **Section Four** of this guide to help you navigate the writing portion of your Language Arts journey this year. We hope the suggestions found here will help you determine how to use this program so that it works best for your family, and will provide answers to further teaching questions you may have.

Day
1

Dictation Passage

Read through the dictation passage with your students. Have them note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention. On Day 5, you will read it aloud as your students write it down.

The cobblestoned square looked newly washed from the night's rain. Muggles frowned in sudden remembrance of her dream, and then shook her head impatiently. Today Minnypins of all ages were scurrying about the marketplace, green cloaks flying in the breeze. Round rosy housewives, their brown weave dresses tucked up, were scrubbing their doorstones or polishing the silver doorknobs on their watercress-green doors, while students were watering the flowers that grew around the family trees.¹

Mechanics Practice

This year, your students will delve more deeply into the mechanics of the English language, and we'll begin to serve up some rather meaty grammatical topics. To help both of you in your study this year, we have included a *Grammar Guide* in **Section Four** that succinctly explains topics we'll discuss for Mechanics Practice. Please keep this appendix handy for reference as you work this year. We hope you make great use of it whenever you need a refresher on any topic.

Today your students will learn about several types of **nouns**. For more information, see the **Week 1 Activity Sheet**.

Note: Today's activity asks your students to find and categorize the nouns in the passage. The word *night's* is a possessive (proper) noun, so your students should first mark it as a noun. However, if your students have some grammatical studies under their belts, they may notice that where it sits in the middle of a prepositional phrase, one could say it *functions* as an adjective. But here's where grammatical analysis can get a little "gray." Some grammarians say possessive proper nouns can function as adjectives. Others say that they aren't adjectives because they're actually "genitive nouns"—nouns that function like determiners. (Determiners are words like "this" or "that," as in: "this pencil" or "that textbook.") Still others argue that possessive proper nouns are genitive nouns, but within the structure of the sentence they function as adjectives because they describe or modify another noun.

Since this is only the first week of your grammatical study this year, do not feel compelled to delve into this idea with your students today if it doesn't come up on its own. We will address adjectives later on, and have only provided this explanatory note for your edification, and in case your students do have questions about the word *night's*!

Most importantly, please understand that this is upper-level grammatical analysis you're working on for this point, so if this or any other topic seems too difficult, simply use our answer key as a guide and work together to decide how you'd like your students to mark a passage, and move on before the lesson becomes frustrating. As always, congratulate them on their hard work!

1. Carol Kendall, *The Gammage Cup* (New York: Odyssey/Harcourt, 2000) 14.

Answers:

1. Underline all of the nouns in the passage. Double underline proper nouns. (See answers below.)
2. Label the gender of each noun. Use **F** for feminine, **M** for masculine, **N** for neuter and **I** for indefinite.

The cobblestoned square looked newly washed from the night's rain. Muggles frowned in sudden remembrance of her dream, and then shook her head impatiently. Today Minnipins of all ages were scurrying about the marketplace, green cloaks flying in the breeze. Round rosy housewives, their brown weave dresses tucked up, were scrubbing their doorstones or polishing the silver doorknobs on their watercress-green doors, while children were watering the flowers that grew around the family trees.²

3. *Marketplace is a compound noun.*
4. *Answers will vary. Possible: **concrete:** truck; **abstract:** jealousy; **compound:** doorknobs; doorstones; housewives; **collective:** crew*

Day 1

Optional: Dictation

For your convenience, we provide an additional dictation passage each week. If your students are having an "off" day, just use one of these alternative dictation passages instead of your writing assignment for the day. Feel free to take a break instead of trying to grind your way through the regular assignment.

No one had ever before been outlawed. It was the worst of all punishments, written down in the books but never used.

The dreadful word went whispering around the hall...outlawed...outlawed...

Ltd. rapped for order; he looked unhappy. "Now, my good people, we must think very carefully—"

"That won't be necessary!" Walter the Earl stood up, straight and proud in his gold-embroidered cloak. "We have no wish to set minnipins at odds with their consciences. Nor do we intend to stand in the way of their winning the Gam-

mage Cup. We are not lampreys, but neither are we flies to be swallowed by trout. And so tomorrow morning we shall take leave of this village to settle elsewhere. In short, we are outlawing Slipper-on-the-Water."

Walter the Earl turned, and without a backward glance talked from the meetinghouse. Curley Green and Gummy followed close behind him. For a moment Muggles and Mingy looked at each other, and then in the awful waiting silence, they too rose and walked out.

The money box remained behind on Mingy's stool.³

Day 2

Fantasy-Plan

This year, your students will read several examples of fantasy. As a genre, fantasy goes beyond simple fiction to stretch an author's imagination to its limits. Nothing is too fantastic, and in fantasy, magic, talking creatures, far off planets, supernatural abilities, unusual societies and futuristic settings are all within the realm of possibility.

The first writing assignment this year will be to write a fantasy narration. Your students should aim for a short story consisting of dialogue, action, description and thoughts.

Before they begin their planning today, read the Literary Analysis Overview article located in **Section Four** with your students to familiarize them with basic story elements and the elements of plot. This document should help them tremendously over the course of this year's studies to develop thoughtful and engaging papers.

When you're finished, your students will use the space provided on the Activity Sheet under "Plot Line Plan" to plan out the story elements for the fantasy they will write this week. Check in with them while they work to make sure they have some good ideas for a direction for their story. If they're really struggling to make progress, try giving them a head start by suggesting they use ready-made setting and character set: can they write a new episode or chapter of a well-known fantasy movie or book?

As long as they have a solid Plot Line Plan when they finish today, your students should be able to begin writing with confidence tomorrow. As they draft, they will be able to determine the course of the story by simply following their plan on the plot diagram.

2. Ibid,14.

3. Carol Kendall, *The Gammage Cup* (New York: Odyssey/Harcourt, 2000) 115–116.

Days
3

Fantasy–Write

Today your students will use their Plot Line Plan from yesterday to write their stories. If your students are up for the challenge, have them consider writing the events in their story out of sequence to create flashbacks, or use multiple points of view in their story to create more round characters. This will take a little more planning and careful monitoring, but will be well worth the effort!

We hope that your students are really “in the zone” with their stories. However, if that’s not quite the case, you may need to intervene. Look over their plot line from earlier this week. Does it make sense? Can they explain to you their ideas orally? If not, they’ll be stuck doing it in writing. Help them work out their ideas orally with you first and then it should be easier for them to get them down on paper.

Note: We plan for students to have their assignments due on the fourth day of each week. However, if in the next few weeks you find that your student would benefit from more time with each assignment, then please feel free to let them write more tomorrow and complete the editing/final draft portion of the assignment each week on the fifth day. We want to encourage routine and accountability, so please do find a regular ‘work’ schedule that works for both you and your student.

Day
4

Fantasy–Edit

How To Evaluate This Week’s Assignment

How did this first assignment go? Were your students able to work fairly independently or do they prefer to touch base with you periodically as they work? Either is fine, just remember that as they get older, you should be gradually training them to be able to complete writing assignments like this on their own.

As you read their submissions, keep an eye out for the structure and planning they completed earlier this week. Do their stories show evidence of the literary analysis points they thought through early in the week? Were they able to apply that work to a creative piece like this story? If so, congratulate them.

For this early assignment, we provide a simple checklist rubric. Feel free to work through it with your students to evaluate their writing together or use it yourself to provide feedback. One way to distinguish different areas of writing is to color-code your feedback. Use one colored pencil or marker to correct or comment on organization on their final drafts, and another color to correct spelling and punctuation. That way, it’s easy to tell which areas need the most attention.

Fictional Narrative Rubric*Content*

Yes	Partially	No	
			Presents a well-developed story with a beginning, middle, and end
			Develops characters through dialogue, action, and narration
			Uses sensory language, well-chosen details, dialogue and other techniques to advance the plot
			Sequences events logically, using transition words as appropriate
			Uses comfortable pacing with an appropriate level of detail

Mechanics

Yes	Partially	No	
			Uses correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
			Punctuates dialogue correctly and includes a variety of attributions
			Uses a variety of sentence structures effectively

Day
5

Dictation—Write

Read the dictation passage aloud and have your students write the passage in the space provided on the weekly Activity Sheet. Note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention.

The cobblestoned square looked newly washed from the night’s rain. Muggles frowned in sudden remembrance of her dream, and then shook her head impatiently. Today Minnypins of all ages were scurrying about the marketplace, green cloaks flying in the breeze. Round rosy housewives, their brown weave dresses tucked up, were scrubbing their doorstones or polishing the silver doorknobs on their watercress-green doors, while students were watering the flowers that grew around the family trees. ⁴ ■

4. Carol Kendall, *The Gammage Cup* (New York: Odyssey/Harcourt, 2000) 14.



Dictation—Read | Day 1

Read through the dictation passage. Note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention. On Friday, listen to Mom or Dad read the passage aloud while you write it on a separate sheet of paper.

The cobblestoned square looked newly washed from the night’s rain. Muggles frowned in sudden remembrance of her dream, and then shook her head impatiently. Today Minnipins of all ages were scurrying about the marketplace, green cloaks flying in the breeze. Round rosy housewives, their brown weave dresses tucked up, were scrubbing their doorstones or polishing the silver doorknobs on their watercress-green doors, while children were watering the flowers that grew around the family trees.¹

Mechanics Practice

By now we imagine that you know a **noun** is a word that names a person, place, thing or idea. A **proper noun** names a specific person, place, thing or idea, such as Pittsburgh, Mary, or Ford. **Common nouns** do not name something specific: tomato, pencil, park. Proper nouns are always capitalized, whereas common nouns are not.

Did you know that nouns can also denote **gender**? Nouns can be *feminine, masculine, neuter* or *indefinite*? For example:

	Example:
Feminine: (female)	mother, aunt, hen, waitress
Masculine: (male)	father, uncle, rooster, waiter
Neuter: (neither male nor female)	table, lamp, car
Indefinite: (either male or female)	teacher, children, horse

Nouns may either be **concrete** objects (like a *pool* or a *trampoline*) or an **abstract** idea (like *love, sadness, or justice*). **Compound nouns** are made up of two or more words (like *football, step-sister* or *middle school*), and a **collective noun** names a specific kind of group (like a *gaggle, herd, or team*).

Read the dictation passage again and then answer the questions that follow.

1. Take a moment to underline all of the nouns in the dictation passage (not pronouns—we’ll work on those later). If you find a proper noun, underline it twice.
2. Once the nouns are underlined, label the gender of each one. Use **F** for feminine, **M** for masculine, **N** for neuter and **I** for indefinite.
3. What type of noun is *marketplace*?

4. Write your own example for each of the following type of nouns:

concrete: _____

abstract: _____

compound: _____

collective: _____

1. Carol Kendall, *The Gammage Cup* (New York: Odyssey/Harcourt, 2000)14.



Fantasy—Plan | Day 2

This year, you will read many examples of fantasy. Fantasy stories make great use of an author’s imagination, and feature the use of magic, talking animals, strange creatures, powerful potions, futuristic settings, and aliens traveling through space. As a genre, fantasy goes beyond simple fiction. It’s not just something that didn’t happen in real life, it’s something that *couldn’t* or *hasn’t* yet happened. The fantasy genre includes science fiction, fairy tales, dystopian future, horror, and other types of writing.

This week, you will become a fantasy writer! Your assignment will be to write your own narrative story that includes some element(s) of fantasy.

Before you begin, please locate and read the Literary Analysis Overview in **Section Four** to familiarize yourself with the main literary analysis concepts and the elements of plot. Your first task this week will be to plan all of these elements for your fantasy story so that when you begin to write, you will already know where you want the story line to go.

When you finish reading the article, use the space provided on the following page under “Plot Line Plan” to begin to plan the elements of your story. Will you use a contemporary setting (perhaps writing a story about a thinking and talking object in your home) or a made-up one (like an alien planet). Do you want your characters to be human, animal, inanimate, or alien? What type of conflict will you use?

Your plot should include exposition (background information), rising action, a climax, falling action, and a resolution. Use the space in the plot diagram to jot down your ideas about each of these elements, and then use the lines under “Setting”, “Character”, etc., to plan your ideas for these elements of your fantasy story. When you’ve completed each space, you should have a pretty solid outline for your story and will be able to begin writing it tomorrow.

Fantasy—Write | Day 3

Get drafting! Use your notes from yesterday to start fleshing out your story. Try to maintain a balance of action, description, dialogue, and thoughts. While you do need to tell a complete story, the story you tell does not have to be told chronologically. You might decide to begin at an exciting point in the plot and fill in the background through flashbacks or other techniques. Or, you could also choose to tell the story from different characters’ view-points. When authors change who is narrating the story, they are able to add more round characters to the story and provide deeper insight to each character’s motivation.

Don’t limit yourself to just a few pages. Give yourself enough time and paper today to really let your story develop.

Fantasy—Edit | Day 4

Welcome back, author! We hope you now have several pages of a great fantasy story written. But don’t put down that pencil yet—all authors need to revise and edit before their work is ready to publish. Take a step back and try to reread your story with fresh eyes. Is there any way you can make it sound better? This could mean changing a word or adding an entire paragraph. Finally, zoom in on the mechanics of spelling and grammar to ensure your story looks good, too.

Dictation—Write | Day 5

Write the passage as dictated in the space below. ■

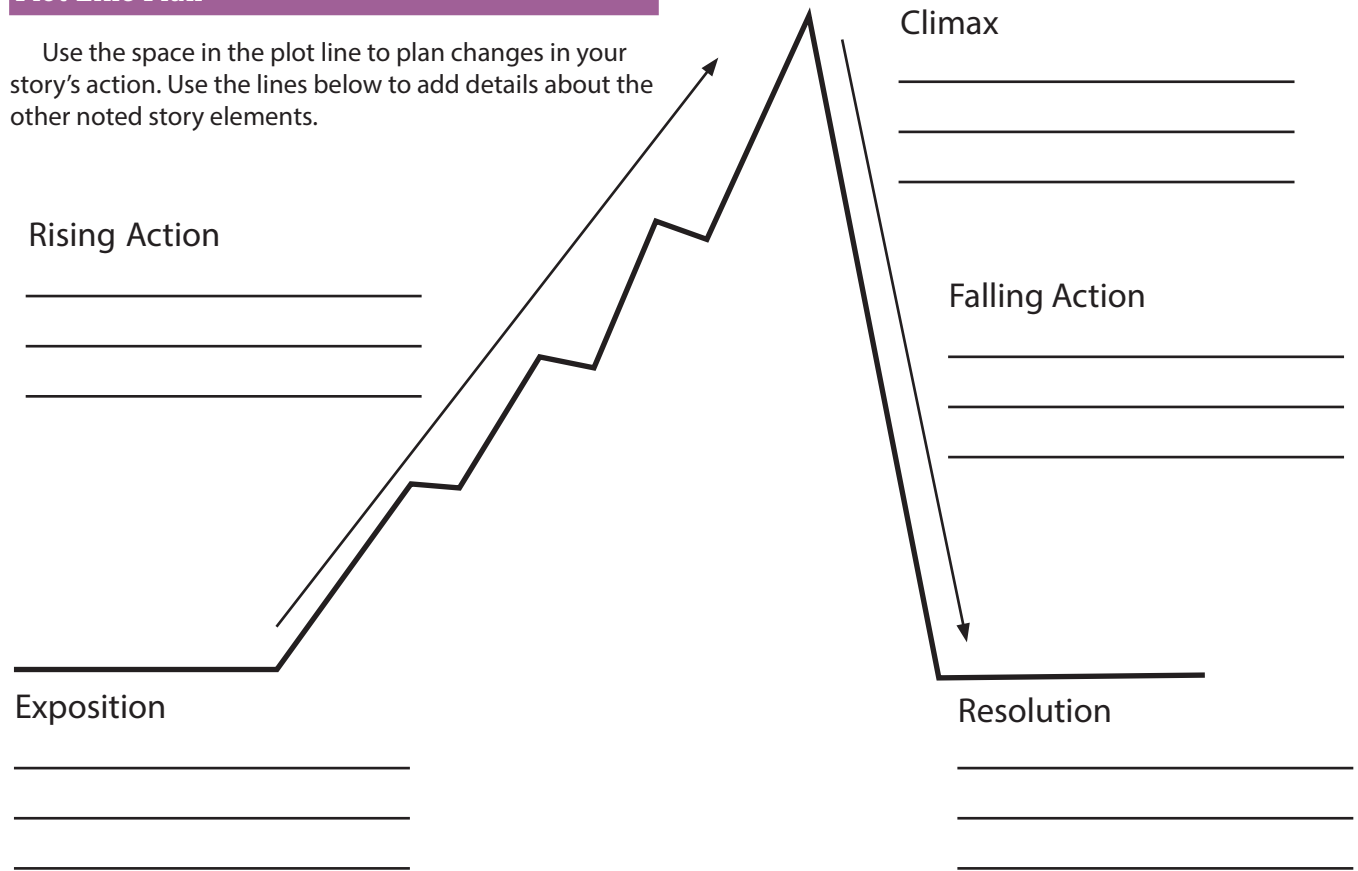
Blank lined area for dictation writing.

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Plot Line Plan

Use the space in the plot line to plan changes in your story's action. Use the lines below to add details about the other noted story elements.



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Setting:

Four horizontal lines for writing the setting.

Point of View:

Four horizontal lines for writing the point of view.

Character:

Four horizontal lines for writing the character.

Conflict:

Four horizontal lines for writing the conflict.



Theme:

Two horizontal lines for writing the theme.

Language Arts J

Days 6–10: Date: _____ to _____

Week Overview																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36

Week 2						
Date:	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	
SPELLING						
READERS	<i>The Thief</i>	chap. 8	chap. 9	chap. 10	chap. 11	chap. 12
CREATIVE EXPRESSION		Dictation—Read, Mechanics Practice	A Short Story of Mythical Proportions—Plan 	A Short Story of Mythical Proportions—Write	A Short Story of Mythical Proportion—Edit 	Dictation—Write
Other Notes						

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Weekly Overview
<p>Mechanics Practice: Sentence Basics Verbs: action; state of being; helping; form—singular/plural</p> <p>Creative Expression:</p> <p><u>Skill:</u> Narrative Elements</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> Write a short story based on a myth or fairy tale</p>

Alternative Spelling

Days 6-10	Pretest–Posttest: "Be- and De- Prefixes"
---------------------	--

If you don't have a spelling program we provide one for you. Our spelling program consists of over 550 words late-middle- and early-high-school students should know. Use it or ignore it at your pleasure.

One way to use these words:

Day 6: Take a pretest. Read the spelling words for the week to your students. Have them write the words and see how many they can spell correctly without seeing them first.

Day 7: Have your students define each word and then incorporate each spelling word into a sentence, making sure they use the word in the proper context.

Days 8 & 9: Have your students write out each of the words three times. If any are spelled wrong on Day 6, have your students write the misspelled words ten times.

Day 10: Take a posttest. Read the spelling words to your students. They may either recite them orally or write them as you say them. We suggest any misspelled words be added onto the next week's spelling words.

* * *

Words: becalm, becloud, beguile, belated, belie, bequeath, bewilder, debunk, decorum, defile, demolish, depose, depreciate, detach, deter, devoid

Note: The prefix **be-** is used to form verbs and can mean "to surround completely," "to affect completely or excessively," "to consider as or cause to be," or when used with verbs, "at, for, against, on, or over." The prefix **de-** means "from, down, away, to do the opposite, reverse or against." For more information about roots, prefixes and suffixes, see the Mechanics Practice lesson in **Week 31**.

 Parental Notes

Creative Expression

Day
6

Dictation Passage

Read through the dictation passage with your students. Have them note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention. On Day 10, you will read it aloud as your students write it down.

...Gummy stirred and she bathed his forehead and changed the dressing on his shoulder. The wound was inflamed, but Muggles thought it looked no worse than before. She steeped some fresh willow leaves in the bark mixture already brewing and added herbs from her stock. Then she salved a bit of the remaining ointment gently into the wound, laid the poultice on it, and bound it in place with a clean piece of cloth.¹

Mechanics Practice

Today your students will learn about **verbs: action verbs, helping verbs, and singular and plural verbs**. See the **Week 2 Activity Sheet** for more information.

Answers:

1. *stirred; bathed; changed; thought; looked; steeped; brewing; added; salved; laid; bound.* Note: dressing is a gerund, which is a verb acting like a noun, and so we would not mark it as a verb in this passage. We will discuss gerunds and other verbals later this year.
2. She can steep some fresh willow leaves in the bark mixture already brewing and can add herbs from her stock. Then she can salve a bit of the remaining ointment gently into the wound, can lay the poultice on it and can bind it in place with a clean piece of cloth
Note: for sentences with a compound predicate like the last one (that use more than one verb), it will probably feel awkward to use “can” this many times! We included “can” each place your students will need to change the verb to add a helping verb, but use this example for discussion. If you were simply saying this sentence aloud to someone, would you say “can” this many times? Where could you add the word “can” to communicate the same meaning and tense, but without so much repetition? (Possible: only with “salve” or with “salve” and “bind”.)
3. s—am; p—are; p—think; s—thinks; p—vote; s—votes

Day
6

Optional: Dictation

“Haven’t you ever believed in something contrary to the evidence?” I asked.

Sheriff Peters frowned. Then he said soberly, “I once believed that a man we had caught with all the evidence of murder around him was inno-

cent. We ended up sending him away because we had to present evidence against him.”

“Was he proved innocent?” I asked. “No, but I continue to think after all these years that he was. And I can’t give you a single good reason for it.”

We looked at each other knowingly, I nodded, turned around, and went home.²

Day
7

A Short Story of Mythical Proportions—Plan

This week your students will use inspiration from *The Thief* by Megan Whalen Turner to write a short mythical adventure story, or a story based upon a Greek myth or fairy tale.

If your students are unfamiliar with Greek myths, we have suggested they conduct a little research today to find a story they would like to rewrite—should they choose this option. If they would like to write an original story, we have listed some common characteristics of Greek myths on this week’s activity sheet as guidelines to help them craft their stories. While there are no length-constraints on this assignment, the final stories should contain the characteristics of a Greek myth.

To wrap up their time today, they should jot down their ideas about the literary analysis points they want their stories to contain in the space provided on the **Week 2 Activity Sheet**. Since myths try to explain some feature of the world, life and/or teach a moral or value, it may be helpful to hone in on issues that are easier to write about, such as acts of heroism, noble gestures, or stories based on iconic ideals.

Optional: If your students found the plot line from the Week 1 assignment helped them focus while they wrote, we have suggested they create one for this assignment on a separate sheet of paper. **Or, you can find an extra copy of the page from Week 1 in the My Downloads tab of your Sonlight account.** They may complete this page on their own for any story they are asked to write this year.

Note to Parents: This writing assignment is the quintessential narrative — a story with a beginning, middle, and end. Your students should be very familiar with this structure and its elements from the time you read them their first picture book. Keep in mind the purpose of this fictional narrative; myths serve as entertainment, but can also be instructional or attempt to explain natural phenomena. For finer points on setting, characters, point of view, theme, and plot, refer to the Literary Analysis Overview in **Section Four**.

1. Carol Kendall, *The Gammage Cup* (New York: Odyssey/Harcourt, 2000) 217–218.

2. Polly Horvath, *Everything on a Waffle* (New York: Square Fish, 2008), 36.

Days
8

A Short Story of Mythical Proportions—Write

Your student will work to write their myth over the next day or so. Remember, they can also add on to or revise a current myth if they are having trouble coming up with one of their own.

Have them review the literary analysis points that they worked on to get started on their ideas. If they chose to create a plot line as well, they may find it helpful to incorporate details directly onto the plot line to help craft their myth (character behaviors, challenges, scenario, etc).

Day
9

A Short Story of Mythical Proportions—Edit

Note to Parents: The grammatical rules for writing dialogue are complex. If you would like to brush up on these rules, feel free to flip ahead to the Mechanics lesson on **dialogue and attributions** in Week 28 for more information. Depending on how much attention you have given this topic, you may want to use this writing piece as a “teachable moment” to further your students’ dialogue-writing skills. Look at this area of their writing as an opportunity for instruction rather than assessment. However, if writing dialogue is something you expect your students to do correctly at this point, go ahead and include it in the following rubric.

How To Evaluate This Week’s Assignment

You will use an identical checklist to the one that was used last week. However, if you feel that you wanted to add more to the list that brushes up on particular skills or areas, please feel free to do so.

Fictional Narrative Rubric			
Content			
Yes	Partially	No	
			Presents a well-developed story with a beginning, middle, and end
			Develops characters through dialogue, action, and narration
			Includes the elements of a myth, as described on this week’s Activity Sheet
			Uses sensory language, well-chosen details, dialogue and other techniques to advance the plot
			Sequences events logically, using transition words as appropriate
Mechanics			
Yes	Partially	No	
			Uses correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
			Punctuates dialogue correctly and includes a variety of attributions
			Uses a variety of sentence structures effectively

Day
10

Dictation Passage—Write

Read the dictation passage aloud and have your students write the passage on a separate piece of paper. Note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention.

...Gummy stirred and she bathed his forehead and changed the dressing on his shoulder. The wound was inflamed, but Muggles thought it looked no worse than before. She steeped some fresh willow leaves in the bark mixture already brewing and added herbs from her stock. Then she salved a bit of the remaining ointment gently into the wound, laid the poultice on it, and bound it in place with a clean piece of cloth.³ ■

3. Carol Kendall, *The Gamage Cup* (New York: Odyssey/Harcourt, 2000) 217–218.



Dictation—Read | Day 6

Read through the dictation passage. Note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention. On Friday, listen to Mom or Dad read the passage aloud while you write it on a separate sheet of paper.

...Gummy stirred and she bathed his forehead and changed the dressing on his shoulder. The wound was inflamed, but Muggles thought it looked no worse than before. She steeped some fresh willow leaves in the bark mixture already brewing and added herbs from her stock. Then she salved a bit of the remaining ointment gently into the wound, laid the poultice on it, and bound it in place with a clean piece of cloth.¹

Mechanics Practice

Do you remember the purpose verbs serve in a sentence? Verbs express actions or states-of-being. While nouns are the people, places, and things in a sentence, verbs tell what those people, places, and things *do* or *are*. **Action verbs** describe just that—the action.

Helping (or **auxiliary**) **verbs** when paired with another verb help control verb tenses, and they express a sense of necessity, certainty, probability, or possibility. For example:

- The doctor *will* come soon.
- There *might* be trouble next door.
- Elvis *has* left the building.

Here is a list of common helping verbs:

Helping Verbs				
has	have	had	do	did
should	would	could	is	are
will	was	were	been	can

Have you ever noticed that verbs change slightly when the subject of the sentence is either singular or plural? Read the following sentence pairs. Do you notice a pattern in how the **verb form** changes?

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| He <i>speaks</i> . | We <i>speak</i> . |
| She <i>runs</i> . | They <i>run</i> . |
| Jeanette <i>swims</i> . | Jeanette and Amber <i>swim</i> . |

When the subject is singular, we use a singular verb, and when the subject is plural, we use a plural verb. However, the rule for singular and plural verbs is just opposite from singular and plural nouns: while most nouns that end in *-s* are plural, but most verbs ending in *-s* are singular (or pair with a singular subject). So:

Singular Verbs	Plural Verbs
speaks	speak
runs	run
swims	swim

Read the dictation passage, then answer the questions that follow.

- Write all of the action verbs you find in the dictation paragraph. **Hint:** *dressing* is a gerund, which is a verb that acts like a noun. We will discuss gerunds and other verbals later this year.

- The way it's written, this week's dictation passage doesn't contain any helping verbs. Re-write the final two sentences in the passage to change the tense of Muggles' actions so it sounds as though she hasn't done them yet, but **can** or **will** in the future. For example:

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1. Carol Kendall, *The Gammage Cup* (New York: Odyssey/Harcourt, 2000) 217–218.



Language Arts J: Week 2 Activity Sheet

When Gummy stirs, she can bathe his forehead...

3. Use **s** to identify each subject as singular, **p** for plural. Then circle the correct verb form.

_____ I	am	are
_____ They	am	are
_____ We	think	thinks
_____ Kelly	think	thinks
_____ Bo and Luke	vote	votes
_____ Yuong	vote	votes

A Short Story of Mythical Proportions | Day 7

Your assignment this week is to use *The Thief* as inspiration to write your own short mythical adventure story. You can create one from scratch, as did Megan Whalen Turner, or retell a Greek myth or favorite fairy tale, expanding on it in a new and interesting way.

If you're not sure you know a Greek myth well enough to retell one but are interested in this option, do a little research online into famous Greek myths. You may be surprised by the number of myths that you do already know. In fact, as you think about which myth or fairy tale to use, evaluate the possibilities critically. Is there something about a particular myth or fairy tale that you disagree with? Is there something that jumps out at you as being particularly inconsistent with real life? Hopefully this thought process will help you to choose a myth or fairy tale as inspiration, and also to develop an interesting angle or theme to guide your story.

If you want to write an original story that reads like a Greek myth, please note that Greek myths have several common characteristics you will want to incorporate into your adventure story:

- The story's conflict should feature a hero and a villain, and pit good against evil.
- Some characters should have superpowers or supernatural abilities. The story should feature elements of fantasy, adventure and, likely, violence.
- The story can feature gods or goddesses who are immortal, have special powers and both positive and negative personality traits. They may be powerful, but they have very human natures! In Greek mythology, gods and goddesses could exercise their powers on each other and on humans, so it was import for humans to pay attention to the gods and try to appease them with food offerings and animal sacrifices.
- The story should try to explain the world (nature and the physical world, or the origins of life) or describe life itself (relationships, gender/age roles, family conflict, etc.) in some way.
- The story should teach a moral or value, or warn against unacceptable behavior.

The length of your short story will depend upon several aspects: the myth or fairy tale you choose, what you want to say in your version, how inspired you are, etc. You will need to write enough to tell a complete story and meet the characteristics of a typical myth listed above. Enjoy the freedom from length constraints this week.

If you plan to base your story on one that has already been written, a good start today would be to review some Greek myths and fairy tales. Try to narrow your inspiration down to 2-3 options. When you're ready, or if you simply plan to write your own story, wrap up today by jotting down some "literary analysis points" about your story: setting, characters, point of view, conflict, and theme. This will give you a good frame of reference from which to launch your myth writing tomorrow.

Optional: If you found the completed plot line from the Week 1 assignment gave you direction while you were writing, feel free to create one for this assignment on a separate sheet of paper. Or, you can find an extra copy of the page from Week 1 in the My Downloads tab of your Sonlight account. Feel free to print one out and complete it during your planning for any story you are asked to write this year.

Setting:



Character:

Four horizontal lines for writing the character name.

Point of View:

Four horizontal lines for writing the point of view.

Conflict:

Four horizontal lines for writing the conflict.

Theme:

Four horizontal lines for writing the theme.

A Short Story of Mythical Proportions | Day 8

It's time to get writing! Beginning in chapter 5 of *The Thief*, you will see two good examples of myths as Megan Whalen Turner tells the stories of Earth's Creation and the Birth of the Gods and The Birth of Eugenides, God of Thieves. You'll notice how she incorporates dialogue into each myth. Dialogue between characters helps reveal their personalities and it moves the plot forward. Look for ways to incorporate dialogue into your myth.

As you write your first draft today, let your notes from earlier this week guide you. Include dialogue where it is meaningful to the story. If your myth is longer than 2-3 pages, you may continue writing tomorrow.

A Short Story of Mythical Proportions | Day 9

Today, finish writing your myth. Then, reread and revise. Don't rush this process! When you revise, your goal is to make your work sound better. Will it make sense to readers? The main steps in revising are adding, removing, and rearranging. Once your writing sounds good, it's time to make it look good by editing. Editing involves making changes to spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, grammar, and other aspects of writing. If you used dialogue in your story, pay close attention to how it is punctuated. If you need a refresher on how to punctuate **dialogue and attributions**, skip ahead and review the Mechanics lesson in **Week 28**.

Dictation—Write | Day 10

Write the passage as dictated in the space below. ■

Twelve horizontal lines for dictation.

Language Arts J

Days 11–15: Date: _____ to _____

Week Overview																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36

Week 3						
	Date:	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15
SPELLING						
READERS	Going Solo	pp. 1–19	pp. 20–40	pp. 41–66	pp. 67–96 	pp. 97–121
VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT	Optional: Classical Roots A	Lesson 2; study Key Words	Exercise 2A	Exercise 2B	Exercise 2C	Review for Lessons 1 & 2
CREATIVE EXPRESSION		Dictation—Read Mechanics Practice	Response Paper: Analyze Plot—Plan	Response Paper: Analyze Plot—Write	Response Paper: Analyze Plot—Edit	Dictation—Write
Other Notes						

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Weekly Overview
<p>Mechanics Practice: Sentence Basics Pronouns: personal; subject; possessive; gender</p> <p>Creative Expression:</p> <p><u>Skill:</u> Analyzing Plot</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> Write a response paper</p>

Alternative Spelling	
Days 11-15	Pretest–Posttest: "Con- and Com- Prefixes"

If you don't have a spelling program we provide one for you. Our spelling program consists of over 550 words late-middle- and early-high-school students should know. Use it or ignore it at your pleasure.

One way to use these words:

Day 11: Take a pretest. Read the spelling words for the week to your students. Have them write the words and see how many they can spell correctly without seeing them first.

Day 12: Have your students define each word and then incorporate each spelling word into a sentence, making sure they use the word in the proper context.

Days 13 & 14: Have your students write out each of the words three times. If any are spelled wrong on Day 11, have your students write the misspelled words ten times.

Day 15: Take a posttest. Read the spelling words to your students. They may either recite them orally or write them as you say them. We suggest any misspelled words be added onto the next week's spelling words.

* * *

Words: commensurate, commission, commute, compelling, compliant, compulsive, condone, confederation, confiscate, conflagration, conjecture, consign, consolidate, consonant, constrict, convert

 Parental Notes

Note: The prefix **con-** means “fully.” The prefix **com-** can also mean “fully”, or it can mean “with” or “together”.

Creative Expression

Day
11

Dictation Passage—Read

Read through the dictation passage with your students. Have them note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention. On Day 5, you will read it aloud as your students write it down.

Marian stared at him. "What are you talking about? It is only that I have long preferred the company of trees. My father's house, with Aethelreda there, runs very well without me; I spend more of my time at Blackhill than at the city house, and there is only so much embroidery that I can do without going mad. I taught myself years ago, when I was still young enough to be thrashed for coming in late for dinner, not to get lost, for fear of being forbidden to go among my friends again. I cannot stop Beatrix from quarrelling with everyone, but I can get our party back to Whitestone Mill." ¹

Mechanics Practice

Today your students will learn about **pronouns** and **antecedents**, **personal**, **possessive** and **subject pronouns**, and the **gender of pronouns**. See the **Week 3 Activity Sheet** for more information.

Note: This week we discuss subject pronouns. Pronouns may also serve as objects, which we will discuss further when your students learn about transitive verbs and direct objects.

Answers:

“We” refers to Nile and Nate.

1. *him; you; it; I; My; me; I; my; I; I; myself; I; my; I; everyone; I; our*
2. *his; her; their*
3. *She; They; I*

Day
11

Optional: Dictation

I got bodily into the apple barrel, and found there was scarce an apple left; but, sitting down there in the dark, what with the sound of the waters and the rocking movement of the ship, I had either fallen asleep, or was on the point of doing so, when a heavy man sat down with rather a clash close by. The barrel shook as he leaned his shoulders against it, and I was just about to jump up when the man began to speak. It was Silver's voice, and, before I had heard a dozen

words, I would not have shown myself for all the world, but lay there, trembling and listening, in the extreme of fear and curiosity; for from these dozen words I understood that the lives of all the honest men aboard depended upon me alone. ²

Day
12

Response Paper: Analyze Plot—Plan

Over the course of the year, your students will write several Response Papers that focus on certain characteristics of the books they are reading. These papers are designed to challenge your students to begin thinking about how an author executes their craft. What has this author done through the writing to make this story great? Why does it work? What have they done that I don't care for or don't like? How could they have changed the writing to engage me more? By thinking critically about another author's work, your students will begin to take all of the writing "tools" and skills they have learned to this point and begin to think about how others use them to manipulate language in different ways. Through analysis (and later application), your students can begin to decide for themselves what they feel works in their own writing, and can begin to incorporate some of the style and talent from the books they're reading into their own writing. They will be better able to look at their own writing with a critical eye to see how they can improve it themselves.

This week, your student will be writing a response paper about the book, *The Thief*. This week, they should focus on the plot of the book, and reflect on what they found compelling or worthy of critique. Today they will map out a plot line of the story so they can decide which points they would like to focus on for their papers. Be sure they think more about what they would like to comment on and avoid simply writing a summary of the book. They may find it helpful to use the plot line from the Literary Analysis Overview in **Section Four** as a model. If the space we provide is confining, feel free to let them work on a large sheet of paper.

Literary Analysis can be challenging for young writers. It requires higher-order thinking skills. Of course, the ability to analyze a story does depend heavily on basic comprehension, but it goes beyond just summarizing or retelling. We feel that the visual of the plot line is a great way to get students started on this assignment. Remind them that they're not jotting notes about what happened in the plot for each section. Rather, they are thinking critically about the author's craft and their own response. If they need a refresher on what happens in each chapter, review the "To Discuss After You Read" questions from previous days.

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1. Robin McKinley, *The Outlaws of Sherwood* (New York: Ace Books, 1988), 39.

2. Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island* (New York: Bantam Classic, 2004), 59.

Today your student will be working on the response paper. If they would benefit from an extra day to write, feel free to let them continue their draft tomorrow and work to edit and revise on the last day of this week. Today we provide examples of how to blend analysis of the author's craft with their personal commentary, and how to cite direct quotes from the novel within their papers on the **Week 3 Activity Sheet**. We also recommend they write their papers chronologically, but allow them the freedom to organize differently if they feel compelled to do so. Please see the **Week 3 Activity Sheet** for more information.

How To Evaluate This Week's Assignment

This is your students' first attempt at literary analysis this year, but it won't be the last. Use this assessment as a starting point for growth. Does your students' writing reveal a solid understanding of the reading? Does it dig deep to think critically about the author's choices?

Remember, literary analysis is not a summary or a book report. It needs to go beyond "I liked/didn't like." The following rubric will help you evaluate your students' work. To score your students' papers, read the descriptions for each category and determine which level description most closely applies to their presented work. A Level 5 paper should contain the elements described in the Level 5 column and should exceed expectations for this grade level. A Level 3 paper will be average for this grade level, and a Level 1 paper is below expectations. It's okay if you decide that in some categories your student is a 4 or a 5 and in others he or she is lower. We hope you primarily use these rubrics as a tool to help guide your conversations when you conference with your students about their work. Lower scores in some categories will help you identify which areas of writing you may want highlight in your instruction this year, and will help your students identify and set specific goals for their own writing.

Literary Analysis Rubric			
	Level 5	Level 3	Level 1
Content			
<i>Organization</i>	Clear, interesting introduction identifies the topic. The text has an effective structure and organization that groups information into logical categories or sections.	Introduces the topic. Overall, the text is organized logically.	No clear statement of a topic. Little evidence of organization or structure.
<i>Development</i>	Relevant, well-chosen information develops the topic and demonstrates critical thinking. Includes a variety of facts, definitions, details, quotations, and examples. Concluding statement effectively supports the information provided.	Uses a variety of information to develop the topic and demonstrate understanding. Includes a concluding statement.	Little or no information to support the topic or inaccurate information. Concluding statement is illogical or missing.
<i>Language</i>	Uses various, relevant words, phrases, and clauses to show the relationship among ideas and concepts. Links major sections of the text. Uses sophisticated language and specific vocabulary.	Words, phrases, and clauses link ideas clearly. Uses appropriate language and vocabulary.	Lacks the use of linking words and phrases or uses them incorrectly. Inaccurate or inappropriate use of language and vocabulary.
Mechanics			
	Demonstrates proficient command of conventions and grammar with few/no errors.	Demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions and grammar with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension.	Demonstrates a lack of command of conventions and grammar with frequent errors that hinder comprehension.

Read the dictation passage aloud and have your students write the passage on a separate piece of paper. Note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention.

Marian stared at him. "What are you talking about? It is only that I have long preferred the company of trees. My father's house, with Aethelreda there, runs very well without me; I spend more of my time at Blackhill than at the city house, and there is only so much embroidery that I can do without going mad. I taught myself years ago, when I was still young enough to be thrashed for coming in late for dinner, not to get lost, for fear of being forbidden to go among my friends again. I cannot stop Beatrix from quarreling with everyone, but I can get our party back to Whitestone Mill."³ ■

3. Robin McKinley, *The Outlaws of Sherwood* (New York: Ace Books, 1988), 39.



Dictation—Read | Day 11

Read through the dictation passage. Note any words, capitalizations, or matters of punctuation that require special attention. On Friday, listen to Mom or Dad read the passage aloud while you write it on a separate sheet of paper.

Marian stared at him. “What are you talking about? It is only that I have long preferred the company of trees. My father’s house, with Aethelreda there, runs very well without me; I spend more of my time at Blackhill than at the city house, and there is only so much embroidery that I can do without going mad. I taught myself years ago, when I was still young enough to be thrashed for coming in late for dinner, not to get lost, for fear of being forbidden to go among my friends again. I cannot stop Beatrix from quarreling with everyone, but I can get our party back to Whitestone Mill.”¹

Mechanics Practice

Wouldn’t it be awkward if our language didn’t have pronouns? For example, you might hear someone say something like this:

“Dad,” asked Nate, “May I go to Nile’s house to play with Nile’s new basketball hoop? Nile and Nate would have so much fun! Nile’s mom said it would be okay.”

Pronouns are words—like *I, me, he, she, they, it, mine, yours*, etc.—that are used in place of common or proper nouns. In order for pronouns to make sense, they must follow a common or proper noun. For example:

“Dad,” asked Nate, “May I go to Nile’s house to play with his new basketball hoop? We would have so much fun! His mom said it would be okay.”

The noun a pronoun refers to is called its **antecedent**. For example, in the sentence:

“May I go to Nile’s house to play with his new basketball hoop?”

...*Nile* is the antecedent to which the pronoun *his* refers. Who does the pronoun *we* refer to in our example?

1. Robin McKinley, *The Outlaws of Sherwood* (New York: Ace Books, 1988), 39.

Personal pronouns, which are listed above, are the most common type of pronouns. **Possessive pronouns** show possession or ownership. They may be used alone or before a noun, and they act like an adjective:

This sandwich is *mine*.

Is that *your* computer?

If a pronoun serves as the subject of a sentence, we call it a **subject pronoun**:

He is a great athlete.

She jumped into the pool.

Keep in mind that as you write pronouns, they must agree with the **gender** of the subject. That means you shouldn’t say *she* or *her* if the antecedent of the pronoun is male. Instead, write:

Adelie lay **her** books on the piano bench.

Read the passage below, then answer the questions that follow.

Marian stared at him. “What are you talking about? It is only that I have long preferred the company of trees. My father’s house, with Aethelreda there, runs very well without me; I spend more of my time at Blackhill than at the city house, and there is only so much embroidery that I can do without going mad. I taught myself years ago, when I was still young enough to be thrashed for coming in late for dinner, not to get lost, for fear of being forbidden to go among my friends again. I cannot stop Beatrix from quarreling with everyone, but I can get our party back to Whitestone Mill.”²

1. Circle the pronouns in this passage.
2. Complete the following with pronouns that agree with the given antecedents.

2. Robin McKinley, *The Outlaws of Sherwood* (New York: Ace Books, 1988), 39.



Language Arts J: Week 3 Activity Sheet

Elijah wiggled _____ feet in the water.

Jen wrote five invitations to _____ friends.

Nan and Chris went to _____ son's wedding.

3. Complete the following with subject pronouns.

_____ cleaned the kitchen for her mom.

_____ sang their favorite songs together.

_____ hung my coat on the hook.

Response Paper: Analyze Plot | Day 12

This week, you'll write a response paper about the book *The Thief*. Focus on the plot of the story. What do you think was the main conflict? What point do you consider to be the climax? What do you like about the plot? What would you change? Try to find a balance between analyzing Megan Whalen Turner's writing and sharing your own thoughts about the story. Avoid writing a summary of the story.

One way to begin your writing is to go back to the plot line in the Literary Analysis Overview of your **Section Four** resources and use it as a model for today's assignment: in the following space, sketch out a plot line for *The Thief*. Include all the main plot elements of a narrative. The climax does not have to occur exactly in the middle or exactly where it appears in the diagram in your resources. Jot notes about each element. How does the author develop the plot in each section? What do you think of it? How did you feel as a reader at each point in the story? Engaged? Bored? On pins and needles, waiting to find out what would come next? How well did the author draw you into the story through the plot itself?

Plot Line for *The Thief*



Response Paper: Analyze Plot | Day 13

Today, work on writing your response paper. Use your plot line notes to guide your writing and remember to blend analysis of the author’s craft with your own response. Here’s an example of how that might sound in one paragraph of a response paper:

I would consider chapters 2–7 to be the rising action of the story. As I first read through the story, I felt that the action in these chapters moved a little too slowly. Now that I’ve finished the book, I realize that Megan Whalen Turner had been laying important ground-work throughout this section. While reading about day after day on the horses, the lack of food, and the tensions between characters, I felt a bit bored by the story. The inclusion of myths through the characters’ storytelling didn’t seem to have much bearing on the story. I worry that Turner might lose some readers through this long stretch of travel and inactivity. However, looking back on these chapters now, it’s clear what the author was doing. It’s during this section of rising action that she develops the characters and their relationships, which leads later to the murder of one, the tragic death of another, and the sacrifice and friendship of the rest. During this time, Gen reveals multiple clues about his true identity—clues which I did not detect until I thought back after the final chapter. In addition, I now see that the author cleverly wove the background mythology into the main story by having the characters share tales around the fire. I feel these chapters would be much more interesting if I were to reread the whole book with the end in mind. However, if I recommended this book to a friend, I think I’d have to do some convincing to get her past the hump of this slow rising action.

Also, feel free to include direct quotes from the story as examples, noting the page number after each. Here’s an example of how to do so:

Even the exposition includes clues about Gen’s true identity. When the magus first encounters Gen’s boastfulness, he comments that Gen doesn’t pretend well. In response, Gen claims “I opened my mouth to say something I shouldn’t have ..” (13). Upon first reading this section, I agreed with the magus that Gen couldn’t be that good a thief. I thought Gen was simply holding back rude comments. However, knowing now who he is and what he is capable of, I realize that it must have been difficult for Gen to keep up this ruse under the magus’ taunting. And he certainly did pretend well.

It probably makes the most sense to work chronologically through the book in your analysis, though you’ll likely have some over-arching ideas as well. By the end of today, you should have finished your first draft of the response paper.

Response Paper (analyzing plot) | Day 14

The final chapter of *The Thief* reveals quite a plot twist! When you read chapter 12, you probably thought through the entire story to make sense of it based on this new knowledge. How do you feel about the way events unfolded? Were you surprised to learn the truth about Eugenides? Why do you think the author kept his identity secret, even from readers, until the very end?

Today, look over your response paper and find ways to improve your writing. You might need to spend time on revising – adding, deleting, or rearranging ideas to make your paper sound better. As you reread your work, think about how you organized and developed main points. Did you include enough detail or examples? Could a reader understand your message, even without having read *The Thief*? Once your paper sounds good, it’s time to make sure it looks good. Editing involves corrections to spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. Watch out for any tricky homophones like its/it’s or affect/effect in your writing.

Dictation—Write | Day 15

Write the passage as dictated in the space below. ■

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Section Three

Reading Assignments and Notes

Overview

The magus (wise advisor) of Sounis takes the talented thief, Gen, out of prison in order to steal a hidden treasure. As they travel, they share myths; they are set upon by soldiers; they risk death at every turn. This is an awesome book with a surprising twist at the end!

Setting

The characters dwell and travel in Sounis, Eddis, and Attolia, three imaginary countries something like Greece, something like ancient times, but with watches and an occasional gun (first invented in the ninth century).

Vocabulary

Rationale: Knowing definitions is critical to understanding, so we have included vocabulary words in this Instructor’s Guide. We also add cultural literacy terms that provide depth to stories.

... to look **lithe** and graceful and perhaps **feral** ... (*lithe: thin, supple, and graceful; feral: in a wild state, especially after escape from captivity or domestication; resembling a wild animal*) [chap. 1]

... sat back in my chair, **mollified** and delighted ... (*ap-
pease the anger or anxiety of someone*) [chap. 1]

... crossing the more **circuitous** Sacred Way ... (*winding,
indirect route*) [chap. 2]

... thanks to the **ministrations** of the king’s magus ... (*dealings, provisions*) [chap. 2]

... the edge of a **veranda**. (*a covered porch*) [chap. 2]

... not even an **undulation** in the ground ... (*have a wavy
form or outline*) [chap. 2]

... I **consigned** to the fires ... (*gave into another’s custody*) [chap. 2]

Not exactly **stalwart**, are you? (*loyal, reliable, and hard-
working; sturdy and strong; perhaps “stoic” would be a better
word in this case*) [chap. 2]

* * *

Cultural Literacy

megaron: the great hall of the Grecian palace complexes. It was a rectangular hall, fronted by an open, two-columned porch, and a more or less central, open hearth vented though an oculus in the roof above it and surrounded by four columns. [chap. 1]

sconce: a candle holder, or a holder of another light source, that is attached to a wall with an ornamental bracket. [chap. 1]

agora: in ancient Greece, a public open space used for assemblies and markets. [chap. 1]

amphora: a tall ancient Greek or Roman jar with two handles and a narrow neck. [chap. 1]

hypocaust: a hollow space under the floor of an ancient Roman building, into which hot air was sent for heating a room or bath. [chap. 1]

retort: a glass container with a long neck, used in distilling liquids and other chemical operations. [chap. 2]

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What previous contact had Gen had with the magus and the King of Sounis before the meeting in the study? [chap. 1]

A: *he had seen the magus at his trial, and perhaps he hadn’t seen the king before, but we know that he had crept through the palace and hid in his treasure room*

Q: What threat does the King promise Gen? [chap. 1]

A: *if he runs, the king will offer gold pieces to anyone who captures Gen, and since each piece would buy a farm, that’s a large reward*

Gen mentions a lion gate. To see photos online of a real life lion gate, such as the entrance to Mycenae in southern Greece, use your favorite search engine to look up the phrase, “lion gate”. [chap. 2]

Q: Briefly describe each of Gen’s traveling companions. [chap. 2]

A: *the magus is the king’s scholar, a curt, composed leader; Pol is a soldier, strong and quiet; the boys are well-bred apprentices; the older one, Ambiades, is haughty and strong; the younger one, Sophos, is curious, book-smart, and feebler*

Vocabulary

...blending together into an **undifferentiated** forest ... (*lacking variety; uniform*)

...made my **hackles** rise. (*hairs on the back of an animal’s neck that rise when it is angry*)

...liked to put people in a **hierarchy** ... (*a system of organization that ranks some above others*)

...in spite of my **subservient** position... (*less important; subject to obey another*)

The magus **commiserated**. (*shared in a negative feeling; sympathized*)

He’s probably **septic**. (*infected with bacteria*)

...just a little more **condescending** ... (*showing superiority*)

To Discuss After You Read

Q: Why was Gen imprisoned? [p. 58]

A: *apparently, he bet a man that he could steal the king's seal and then show it as proof the next day in a wineshop*

Day
3

Chapter 4

Vocabulary

... as I had been doing **assiduously** since our first meal... *(showing great care and perseverance)*

... the only easily **traversable** pass ... *(travel across or through)*

There is an almost infinite **pantheon** ... *(entire set of gods)*

When a **usurper** stole the stone ... *(someone who wrongfully takes another's place or position)*

He smiled **benignly** ... *(kindly; in a way that is not harmful)*

Once I **elicited** the information ... *(drew forth a response)*

... dropped my mouth open in **patent** disbelief ... *(easily recognizable; obvious)*

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What do we know about Eddis?

A: *at the top of the mountains between Sounis to the north and Attolia to the south, the country has the only pass through the mountains and acquires wealth by taxing the caravans that go through the mountains, and by selling timber from the mountains to Sounis and Attolia*

Day
4

Chapter 5

Vocabulary

... **emigrants** like your mother ... *(a person who leaves his or her home country)*

... my mother never **debased** anything ... *(reduced in quality)*

... tried to force me, I **balked**. *(hesitated; expressed unwillingness)*

I retired **chagrined** from the field of contest. *(distress or embarrassment at having failed or been humiliated)*

... your first **heathen** temple. *(not adhering to a widely-held religion)*

... she will **intercede** on their behalf. *(intervene; act as a go-between on behalf of another)*

Cultural Literacy

flysch: a deposit of sedimentary rocks.

To Discuss After You Read

Q: What is Hamiathes's Gift?

A: *according to myth, a stone that the goddess Hephestia dipped in the water of immortality that frees the bearer from death; she gave it to the king, and when his natural lifespan ended, the king gave it to his son; when the throne needed to change hands, one person would steal the stone and give it to the chosen candidate, making him king and avoiding civil war; the Gift, though, disappeared at some point, and has remained hidden*

Q: The magus claims that he needs to steal the Gift in order to persuade Eddis to marry Sounis. What is the real reason?

A: *Sounis wants the pass so he can invade Attolia*

Day
5

Chapters 6–7

Vocabulary

... the **precipitous** edge of the mountain... *(dangerously high or steep)* [chap. 6]

Well, **dithering** won't help ... *(delaying due to indecision)* [chap. 6]

A little **circumspection** might be wise ... *(consideration of potential consequences; unwillingness to take risks)* [chap. 6]

I paused to **filch** a comb... *(steal something small in a casual way)* [chap. 6]

... not a **propitious** start to the day. *(giving or indicating a good chance of success; favorable)* [chap. 6]

... **interposing** himself ... *(placing between one thing and another)* [chap. 7]

... to keep it from **sidling** ... *(walk in a furtive, unobtrusive, or timid manner, especially sideways or obliquely)* [chap. 7]

... cast a **contemptuous** glance in my direction. *(showing disregard; scornful)* [chap. 7]

... for fear of **contagion**. *(the spread of disease)* [chap. 7]

... that's **treasonous**. *(characteristic of betraying one's government or leader)* [chap. 7]

... made Sophos **writhe**. *(squirm; make continuous twisting movements)* [chap. 7]

... the **striations** in the soil ... *(a series of linear marks in rock or soil that show layers of deposit)* [chap. 7]

Cultural Literacy

dystopia: an imagined place or state in which everything is unpleasant or bad, typically a totalitarian or environmentally degraded one. The opposite of utopia. [chap. 6]

To Discuss After You Read

During the Eumen conspiracy, Ambiadēs' grandfather "tried to return the oligarchy." This means that, rather than a king (monarchy), the grandfather wanted some form of oligarchy, or rule by a few; presumably, himself and a few choice friends. This didn't work, and he was killed, with his lands and titles forfeit to the king. So Ambiadēs is extremely poor, from a disgraced family, yet, on some level, hoping to be honored for his ancestry. [chap. 6]

Q: What mystery does Ambiadēs offer? [chap. 6]

A: *his comb is very expensive; he is excessively moody and grumpy*

Q: The original Eugenides gets immortality, but also what? [chap. 6]

A: *a bitter life*

Q: When Gen is beaten for his assumed theft of food, what new bits of information do we learn about him? [chap. 7]

A: *he knows horses: he can mount on his own, and knows how to use the reins, so much that his horse is surprised; he wants to be a kingmaker and famous; he wants to reduce the arrogance of the magus; he held his tongue, which was new for him, and he had been angry enough that the magus had been frightened*

Q: Gen has several distressing things happen to him in Chapter 7. What are they? [chap. 7]

A: *he is beaten with a riding crop and almost has his hands destroyed from lack of circulation by the foolish Ambiadēs*

Q: What does Gen learn about Sophos? [chap. 7]

A: *not only will he be duke one day, but his father only is concerned that he learn riding and fencing; Pol is captain of his father's guard, which means that his father values Sophos very much, to send Pol as bodyguard*

Q: When Gen learns a bit of the history of the magus, what light does it shed on his own life? [chap. 7]

A: *he wonders if it was better to have relatives than not to have them; even though he dislikes most of his, he loves one, and that makes him better off*

Q: What casual dig infuriates Ambiadēs? [chap. 7]

A: *Gen accuses him of serving someone else—maybe himself*

Day
6

Chapter 8

Vocabulary

... Eugenides **evaded** his request ... (*escaped or avoided, especially through cleverness*)

... he nagged and **cajoled** ... (*persuaded; coaxed*)

... flowed through a **sluice** in its dam. (*a sliding gate that controls the flow of water*)

... waved one hand in a vague **benediction** ... (*the utterance or bestowing of a blessing*)

... I muttered a **perfunctory** prayer to the god of thieves ... (*done with minimal effort*)

... gotten myself **irretrievably** stuck ... (*in a way that is impossible to recover*)

... of the gods or of their **supplicants**. (*those who ask for favor or help from someone more powerful*)

The magus had been **swoggled** ... (*tricked or cheated*)

... feet began moving of their own **volition** ... (*the power of using one's own will*)

* * *

Cultural Literacy

peplos: a rich outer robe or shawl worn by women in ancient Greece, hanging in loose folds and sometimes drawn over the head.

naos: was the sanctuary, the innermost chamber, of a Greek temple.

pronaos: a vestibule at the front of a classical temple, enclosed by a portico and projecting sidewalls.

canted: sloped or tilted.

opisthodomos: treasure room of a temple.

fibula pins: a brooch for fastening garments.

To Discuss After You Read

Q: In his dream, what instruction is Gen given? [p. 146]

A: *"Take what you seek if you find it then, but be cautious. Do not offend the gods" (p. 146)*

Day
7

Chapter 9

Vocabulary

My **predecessor** came here ... (*a person who held a position before the current holder*)

An **astute** observation ... (*the ability to accurately assess a situation and use it to one's advantage*)

... and my ready **compliance** ... (*obedience*)

The magus **capitulated** with a smile ... (*stopped resisting; surrendered*)

... a comforting **pretense** of anonymity... (*attempt to make something that is not true appear so*)

... cast its **frugal** glow ... (*not excessive*)

... afraid of the **retribution** ... (*punishment inflicted for a wrongdoing*)

... to get some **purchase** in order to lift my head ... (*a position that allows something to be used advantageously*)

To Discuss After You Read

- Q: Who does Eugenides meet unexpectedly in Chapter 9?
A: *Eugenides the immortal, Moira, Hephestia, Oceanus, and other gods and goddesses*
- Q: What unexpected enemy does Eugenides make in Chapter 9?
A: *Aracthus, the river, who was charged to let no one enter, but then this human did*

Day
8

Chapter 10

Vocabulary

... how close he was to being **spitted**. (*having a skewer or sword passed through*)

My tone **nettled** him ... (*annoyed*)

... **recriminations** of uselessness ... (*accusations in response to one from someone else*)

... eager to **divest** myself of the gods' attention... (*rid oneself of something unwanted*)

* * *

Cultural Literacy

stela: also stela; an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone.

ostler: hostler; one in charge of the horses of those staying at an inn.

To Discuss After You Read

- Q: Very early on, the magus and Gen had an interesting interaction. "We might someday attain a relationship of mutual respect," he said softly. First, I thought, I will see gods walking the earth. He went on. "For now I will have your obedience." How does this possibility play out?
A: *Gen sees gods on the earth; shortly after, the magus says that he's a wonder and "hugged me like his own son, or anyway like a close relative" (p. 193)*
- Q: Why did Sophos know that the stone was Hamiathes's Gift?
A: *it carries its own authority*
- Q: What unsettling thing happens to Gen when he steals horses?
A: *not only are there no watchmen around, and the ostler is blind drunk, but when the horses walk on the cobbles, they stay silent: the god of thieves continues to look out for him*
- Q: Is Gen pleased that the god of thieves is helping him? [p. 212]
A: *"I'd discovered I was eager to divest myself of the gods' attention as quickly as possible"; he would rather not be quite so noticeable to the gods*

- Q: Why does Gen decide to help the magus?
A: *because he has grown to like some of them, and doesn't want to see them killed*

Day
9

Chapter 11

Vocabulary

Discretion prevented me from saying ... (*behavior that prevents revealing offensive or private information*)

The magus was **consternated**. (*filled with anxiety*)

My new, **vehement** belief in the gods ... (*strong or forceful; passionate*)

... we will be **subjugated** as we never were before ... (*brought under control through conquest*)

To Discuss After You Read

- Q: Gen thinks about the killing he did. "I might just as well have stabbed him in the back in an alley". Is Gen right to think that? [p. 238]
A: *no; as a soldier, the opponent knew he was getting into a tussle with an enemy; I think Gen is feeling more guilt than he needs to*
- Q: As Gen talks to Eugenides, he says, "The god beside me was silent, and the silence stretched out from my bedside through the castle and, it seemed, throughout the world as I remembered that Lyopidus had burned and died while Eugenides had not". What does this mean? [p. 235]
A: *Gen feels sorry for himself, and he says that he wishes that he had died, so he wouldn't have to think about the lives of Sophos and the magus, but then remembers that the god lives forever with the knowledge that he stole thunderbolts that burned the world and killed the brother he loved; basically, part of living is dealing with grief and, I suppose, guilt*
- Q: What does the god mean when he says to Gen, "His wife died in the winter. His three children live with their aunt in Eia"? [p. 236]
A: *the god tells Gen about the family of the man he killed, and Gen can release his guilt and get on with life*
- Q: What does the magus want most in the world?
A: *to be at the wedding of Sounis and Eddis, in hopes of alliances of the three countries so that they can stand together against the Medes*
- Q: Why does Gen have a feather-shaped scar on his cheek?
A: *Eugenides the god has marked him with his own scar, as a sign of approval*

Vocabulary

... managed a **perfunctory** appearance ... (of an action or gesture, carried out with a minimum of effort or reflection)

... my queen and **staunchest** defender ... (most loyal)

If the gods were **incarnations** of the mountains ... (physical embodiments of deities)

... responsibility to be **opulent** ... (excessively luxurious)

... powers to **confer** immortality ... (grant or bestow)

... he was feeling **vindicated** ... (cleared of blame or suspicion)

* * *

Cultural Literacy

torque: also spelled torc; a neck ring.

cabochon: a gem polished but not faceted.

Asklepios: a god of medicine in ancient Greek religion and mythology.

To Discuss After You Read

As Gen and the others go to the palace of Eddis, he mentions the ponies' hooves "as they climbed the stone roadway that ran up the cleft in the mountains, cut by the Aractus before its path had changed" (p. 258). This is a reference to the story of Eugenides and the Great Fire (p. 151): it was the Aractus that had no desire to help Eugenides.

Q: What surprises show up in the final chapter?

A: *Eugenides is from Eddis, in fact, that same Eugenides the magus mentioned earlier: "The title of King's Thief is a hereditary one now in Eddis, and I think the current Thief is named Eugenides. Maybe you're related" (p. 86); and, Eugenides stole Hamiathes's Gift not once, but twice (reread p. 197 for the sneaky way Gen describes his second theft)*

Q: How did Pol know Gen's identity?

A: *when Gen thanked him for the ossil berries, he said, "Be blessed in your endeavors" (p. 139), an Eddisian thanks*

When Gen says to the magus, "I'll probably have to burn it" (p. 266), he's referring back to the initial interview, where Gen sits in the most comfortable chair and the magus tells him that it will now have to be cleaned (chap. 10).

Review

Q: Now that you've finished the book, can you think of any hints that pointed to the surprise ending?

A: *They are sprinkled throughout. How does Gen know about the history of the agora, about the magus, about the height of the king of Sounis's father (p. 14)? He is far too well-informed of history and politics to be a com-*

mon thief. He mentions that he had been in the treasure room before, but apparently didn't steal (p. 16); he also was in the king's record room, to plant a false history (p. 234). The first time he tells the magus his name, he says, "He wasn't interested in the rest" (p. 7), which would have been helpful for the magus to know, perhaps. He delivers an ambiguous line about leaving the city: "two carved lions that were supposed to roar if an enemy of the king passed beneath them... They remained silent as we passed under" (p. 23). This could mean that they were not enemies, or it could mean that he was (or that there were multiple enemies), but that that myth was not true. Another ambiguous line: "I saw the magus watching me finger the wool, like a tailor assessing its value—or like scum from a gutter touching something he knows he shouldn't. I turned my back on him and let him think what he wanted" (pp. 61–62). He says truth throughout, but in such a way that it sounds disguised: "My uncle used to keep that much under his bed and count it every night" (p. 16); "I wouldn't know, not being scum from the gutter. But my father is a soldier" (p. 55); Gen reminds the magus, "that it was my place to be King's Thief" (p. 73). He says the treasonous line, "Gutter scum gets drafted into the infantry and fights for a worthless king, and hangers-on like you watch" (p. 141) to Ambiades, but that's because he owes no loyalty to Sounis, as he says, truthfully, to Attolia: "I have no particular loyalty to the king of Sounis" (p. 233). Far earlier than he should have, "I heard the king of Sounis and the queen of Eddis and other voices" (p. 225). Here he was in Attolia's prison, yet he knows what the queen of Eddis's voice sounds like? He also tells Attolia that he is promised to someone (p. 234), which is unexpected, as we've heard nothing about a sweetheart thus far. Just before the big reveal of the Gift, the magus is unsurprised by Gen's identity, and Gen hopes, "that the magus didn't know all my secrets" (p. 260).

Did you catch who commissioned Gen to attempt his foolhardy plan? "After years spent trying to dissuade me from wasting my time acquiring valueless skills, he had come to my study one night to tell me why the queen of Eddis would consider a marriage proposal from Sounis and why her council, himself included, urged her to accept. He'd left a stack of double-heavy coins on the table and gone away" (p. 266). Piecing the story together, Sounis had sent a message to Eddis that he had Hamiathes's Gift and was, thus, rightful king. Gen assumes that is because Sounis wants the pass so he can invade Attolia in revenge, but it could be that he is taking the long view, as is the magus, and wants Eddis so the three countries can fight against the Medes. In any case, Gen's father basically gives Gen the money and motivation to go get the Gift, whether by stealing it from Sounis's megaron or, as ends up happening, drinking through cheap taverns until he's arrested. ■

Did you grow up loving books (or movies) like *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Matilda*, or *James and the Giant Peach*? Well if you love Roald Dahl's imaginative fiction, you're sure to enjoy the true story of this British author's life. While Dahl reminisces about his younger years in the autobiographical *Boy*, *Going Solo* focuses on the adventures of his young adulthood during World War II. Please note that he uses rougher speech when he refers to a "don't give a damn attitude" and "to hell ..."

Overview

Going Solo is Roald Dahl's memoir of a few years of his life. While an autobiography tells the story of the author's life, from birth to the time of writing, a memoir is only a select collection of the author's memories, a bit more focused. Dahl especially is a keen observer of life and tells a fascinating story.

After serving as a Shell Company employee in Africa for about a year, Dahl decided to join the Royal Air Force (RAF). In 1939, he began his training with fifteen other men, thirteen of whom would die in the next two years. In a statement typical of Dahl's style, he comments, "In retrospect, one gasps at the waste of life"—then he continues his narration. He crashes in Africa, convalesces in Alexandria, fights a losing battle in Greece, meets some of the earliest Jewish refugees that moved to Palestine, and finally returns to England in 1941.

Setting

The events in *Going Solo* take place between 1938 and 1941, from shortly before World War II and into the early years of the war. Dahl has adventures in many interesting places, from his home in England, to Egypt, Greece, and Palestine. As you read, consider how the particular times and places in the book affect Dahl's journey and impact his development.

With Dahl's help, you're going to learn quite a bit of geography this week!

Vocabulary

... Empire-builders' **jargon** would have filled ... (*the specialized or technical language of a particular trade or profession*)

... best of all about them was their **eccentricities** ... (*deviation from the normal or expected behaviors*)

... have seen a genuine **apparition** ... (*a ghostly figure*)

... Only a **bounder** would do that ... (*an ill-bred, unscrupulous man; a cad*)

... Major Griffiths was **vapid**, vulgar, arrogant ... (*lacking liveliness, animation, or interest; dull*)

... the full **regalia**, and to hell with the climate ... (*magnificent attire; finery*)

... be some subtle perfume or a magic **aphrodisiac** ... (*a drug or food that arouses or intensifies sexual desire*)

... He did it **ostentatiously**, slapping ... (*pretentiously*)

* * *

Cultural Literacy

Venus de Milo: famous Greek statue from 130–120 B.C.E.; can be viewed at the Louvre in Paris.

Polo: game played by two teams of three or four players on horseback who are equipped with long-handled mallets for driving a small wooden ball through the opponents' goal.

boomerang: a flat, curved, usually wooden missile shaped so that when thrown it returns to the thrower.

Isak Dinesen: pseudonym of Karen Blixen (1885–1962), the most celebrated Danish writer of the twentieth century; known for several books written in English, including *Seven Gothic Tales* (1934), *Winter's Tales* (1942), and *Out of Africa* (1938).

gramophone: a record player.

Cantharides: a toxic preparation of the crushed, dried bodies of the brilliant green blister beetle.

Sikh: a member of a monotheistic religion; never cuts his hair—either rolls it up on the top of his head or in a turban.

wallah: one employed in a particular occupation or activity; for example, a kitchen wallah.

coit: a flat ring of iron or rope thrown at a stake in the game of quoits.

pilchard: a small, herring-type of fish.

lager: A German beer.

To Discuss After You Read

In the 1930s, the sun never set on the British Empire. That fact is quite a testimony to Great Britain's ability to successfully colonize much of the world. Online find a historical map of the British Empire.

Q: Dahl writes wonderful sketches of people and places. He generally gives a one-paragraph intense description of a person, and then relates an anecdote about them. Notice that he uses colorful adjectives to describe a person or location he has closely observed. Find an example of each in today's reading.

A: *the Major who runs naked about the ship with his wife* (second paragraph, p. 5); *the woman who refuses to touch*

anything with her fingers (fourth paragraph, p. 8), and dreads toes even more; U.N. Savory has no single paragraph description, but his story is fantastic, as he elaborately disguises his baldness

Day
12

pp. 20–40

Vocabulary

... In those **benighted** days of Empire ... (*unenlightened*)
... an immense low-slung **protuberant** belly ... (*bulging*)

* * *

Cultural Literacy

Mussolini: Benito Amilcare Andrea Mussolini (1883–1945); fascist dictator of Italy during World War II.

Abyssinia: modern day Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

casuarinas: a tree and shrub.

acacia: small tree or shrub, of the mimosa family, having clusters of small yellow flowers.

Swahili: African language of Bantu origin; borrows words from other languages, such as Arabic, as a result of the Swahili people using the Arabic Qur'an for spiritual guidance as Muslims.

Nyasaland: now called the Republic of Malawi; located in East Africa.

sisal: an agave that generates a stiff fiber used to make rope.

black mamba: a dark-brown to gray African snake belonging to the cobra family.

baobab: a large tree native to tropical Africa, with an exceedingly thick trunk, and a gourdlike fruit.

simba: Swahili for lion.

tarboosh: a brimless top-hat with a black tassel.

To Discuss After You Read

Mussolini invaded Abyssinia with one hundred thousand troops. Abyssinia, independent since the days of King Solomon, had been the only African nation to resist the European invasion. The League of Nations imposed economic sanctions against Italy as a result. Some believe Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia as a result of Mussolini's actions.

Q: In the last section, you found intense, one-paragraph sketches of people and places Dahl has closely observed. Find another example in today's reading.

A: *Dar-es-Salaam (third paragraph, p. 22); the Sanford house (paragraph on pp. 32–33), etc.*

Q: What happens to the cook's wife?

A: *a lion runs off with her, but she plays dead so the lion will not bite through her clothes; Robert Sanford shot in front of the lion, who turns, drops the wife, and runs away*

Day
13

pp. 41–66

Vocabulary

... safely put inside an **internment** camp ... (*to confine, especially during war*)

... out on to the grass **verge** as we went slowly ... (*the shoulder of the road*)

... the frogs were croaking **incessantly** ... (*continuing without stopping*)

... does it by blowing out his **dewlap** and letting ... (*a fold of loose skin hanging from the neck*)

* * *

Cultural Literacy

sundowner: an alcoholic drink in the evening.

pawpaw: the largest edible fruit native to America. Individual pawpaw fruits, which look similar to the mango, weigh 5–16 ounces and are 3–6 inches in length. They usually have 10–14 seeds in two rows; the brownish to blackish seeds are shaped like lima beans. Pawpaws occur as clusters of individual fruits. The ripe fruit is soft and thin skinned.

Armistice: the truce, the end of World War I.

Kilimanjaro: a mountain located in the northeastern part of Tanzania; it has the highest peak in Africa.

To Discuss After You Read

Q: Dahl mentions that some snakes were deadly and some were simply poisonous. What does this mean?

A: *the bite of some snakes would kill you, whereas others would merely make you sick*

Before World War I, Tanganyika had been a German colony (German East Africa). But in 1919 after the Armistice, Germany was forced to hand the territory over to the British, who renamed it Tanganyika.

Dahl tells Mdisho that countries must declare war before they may go and fight. In World War II, Hitler invaded countries without declaring war. Great Britain declared war on Germany on September 1, 1939, after Hitler's troops invaded Poland.

Day
14

pp. 67–96

Vocabulary

... sipping the whisky and **ruminating** upon ... (*to turn a matter over and over in the mind*)

... a wonderfully **magnanimous** gesture ... (*noble in mind and heart*)

... they never ceased to **enthrall** me ... (*to hold spell-bound*)

Section Four

Instructor's Guide Resources

Appendix 1: Language Arts J—Scope & Sequence: Schedule for Topics & Skills

Week	Literature	Mechanics	Creative Expression
1	<i>The Thief</i>	Sentence Basics: Nouns-common/proper; gender; concrete/abstract; compound; collective	Fantasy (narrative Writing, fantasy story)
2	<i>The Thief</i>	Sentence Basics: Verbs-actions, state of being, helping; form-singular/plural	A Short Story of Mythical Proportions—Narrative Writing: Short story (myth or fairy tale with dialog)
3	<i>Going Solo</i>	Sentence Basics, Pronouns: personal; subject; possessive; gender	Response Paper: Analyze Plot (analyzing plot)
4	<i>Going Solo</i>	Sentence basics, Personal pronouns: 1st, 2nd, 3rd	Memoir (personal narrative)
5	<i>The Gammage Cup</i>	Sentence basics, Types of pronouns: interrogative, demonstrative	Response paper: Analyze a Character (analyzing character)
6	<i>The Gammage Cup</i>	Sentence Basics, More Types of pronouns: Intensive, Reflexive, Indefinite, & Reciprocal	Adventure Story Comparison (compare and contrast)
7	<i>The Gammage Cup</i>	Sentence Basics, Adjectives-Proper & common; compound; articles	Travel Guide
8	<i>Everything on a Waffle</i>	Sentence Basics, Types of adjectives: demonstrative; indefinite	A Good Hook
9	<i>Everything on a Waffle</i>	Mechanics Practice: Commas	Response Paper: Analyze Conflict (analyzing conflict)
10	<i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde</i>	Sentence Basics, Types of adverbs: review definition; adverbs of time, of place, of manner, of degree; conjunctive adverbs	Timed Essay: Practices 1 & 2 (argumentative essay)
11	<i>Outlaws of Sherwood</i>	Sentence Basics, Adjective & Adverb forms: positive, comparative, superlative; irregular	Read All About It (newspaper)
12	<i>Outlaws of Sherwood</i>	Sentence Basics, complete sentences: subject/predicate; understood subjects; linking verbs; predicate adjectives & predicate nouns	Read All About It (newspaper)
13	<i>Outlaws of Sherwood</i>	Sentence Basics, Types of subjects and predicates: simple; compound; complete; modifiers	Response Paper: Point of View (analyzing point of view)
14	<i>Outlaws of Sherwood</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Verb Tenses: simple; perfect; continuous	Literary Analysis: Snapshots #1–3

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Week	Literature	Mechanics	Creative Expression
15	<i>Treasure Island</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Verb Forms: transitive, direct objects, object pronouns, indirect objects, intransitive	Forgotten Chapter (narrative writing)
16	<i>Treasure Island</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Active and Passive Voice: avoid “be” verbs	What’s Your Opinion?—(persuasive writing; argumentative essay)
17	<i>Treasure Island</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Phrases: noun, verb, adverb, prepositional phrase, appositive phrase, verbal phrase	Looking Back and Ahead—(personal, reflective writing; journal entries)
18	<i>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, prepositional phrases: prepositions, object of the preposition	Timed Essay: Practices 3 & 4 (descriptive essay)
19	<i>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Clauses: conjunctions; independent clauses; coordinating conjunctions; correlative conjunctions; non-restrictive phrases and clauses	Literary Analysis: Snapshots #4–6
20	<i>The Westing Game</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Dependent clauses and subordinating conjunctions; relative pronouns; complex sentences; adverbial and adjectival clauses	Compare/contrast, literary themes
21	<i>The Westing Game</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Sentence Structure: simple, compound, complex	Interview
22	<i>The Giver</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Verbal: gerunds, participles, infinitives; dangling participles	Whodunit (write a short mystery story)
23	<i>The Giver</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Types of Sentences: declarative, interrogative, imperative; exclamatory	Character Sketch (descriptive/analytical writing)
24	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Mood: Indicative, Imperative, Subjunctive and Conditional	The Way It Is (expository writing)
25	<i>Pictures of Hollis Woods</i>	Building Blocks of Sentences, Agreement: subject-verb; noun; pronoun; Agreement with Intervening Phrases	Holiday Memory (descriptive writing)
26	<i>Pictures of Hollis Woods</i>	Writing Strategy, Improve sentences: fragments, rambling sentences, run on, avoid double negatives	Human Connection (analyze human relationships and connections in literature)
27	<i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i>	Writing Strategy, Vary Sentence Length	A Picture (narrative descriptive writing)
28	<i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i>	Mechanics and Writing, Strategy, Quotation Marks; Dialog and Attributions	Research Project or Radio Broadcast
29	<i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i>	Mechanics, Hyphens & Dashes	Research Project or Radio Broadcast

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Week	Literature	Mechanics	Creative Expression
30	<i>The Teacher's Funeral</i>	Mechanics, Ellipses and Parentheses	Research Project or Radio Broadcast
31	<i>The Teacher's Funeral</i>	Mechanics, Improve Your Spelling	Research Project or Radio Broadcast
32	<i>The Wolves of Willoughby Chase</i>	Writing Strategy, Use of the Passive Voice	How-To (expository writing)
33	<i>The Wolves of Willoughby Chase</i>	Mechanics, Colons and Semi-colons; Review; Conjunctive adverbs	Response Paper: Genre (analyzing genre)
34	<i>Enchantress From the Stars</i>	Mechanics, Homonyms, Review: Nonrestrictive phrases	Writer's Choice
35	<i>Enchantress From the Stars</i>	Mechanics, Plurals	What in the World is THAT? (narrative writing; descriptive writing)
36	<i>Enchantress From the Stars</i>	Writing Strategy, Similes and Metaphors	Response Paper: Theme (analyzing theme)

Appendix 2: Recommendations for Teaching Writing

Since we know that no two budding writers will grow and develop at the same pace, we have designed the writing program in this guide to be flexible. We also understand that parents may feel unprepared to teach writing. Some parents feel like they're not good writers themselves. Other parents may write well, but do not understand how to communicate what they know in a meaningful way to their children. To all these parents, we say, "Don't worry! You can do it." The following suggestions will help you know how to use the tools we provide and, if necessary, how to modify this program to best meet your and your students' needs.

Allow Students to Write at Their Own Pace

In the same way that we wouldn't teach a toddler to ride a bike with a 10-speed on a nice steep hill, we don't expect beginning writers to produce polished work on a tight schedule either. If you find that the pace we present in this guide is too much for your students, simply allow your students to work through the assignments at their own pace.

Start with our first writing assignment in Week 1. Ask your students to work on it for a set amount of time each day as it fits into your daily schedule. For older children, this could be part of their independent work time, but be careful not to let it consume all of their time. Of course we're happy if they're enjoying a project and don't want to put it down, but don't hesitate to set a timer so that they can have time to accomplish other work, too. A timer might also help when they're struggling with an assignment, so they know that there is an end in sight to their writing time.

If your students can complete some of the brainstorming activities in the time we suggest, have them do so. But we'd understand if the creative writing portion takes longer. Therefore, if your students seem to need more days to complete the assignments than outlined in our guide, give it to them. Don't feel as though you have to move on to our next assignment if they're still working on the last one. Writing is a creative process and at this level, please let the creative juices flow.

If you'd like to spend a day reviewing your students' work with them when they complete an assignment, consider it time well spent. It is during these review sessions that you can reinforce the grammar and mechanical skills they learned that week by correcting issues and pointing out things they've done well in their own writing. You

could then cement lessons learned in your discussion by having them use your edits to write a final draft. Simply give them the time they need to complete each task successfully. Then, pick up with the next assignment in the guide in whatever week you happen to be in when you're ready.

If you start to feel like this slower paced method might jeopardize the variety of assignments your students are exposed to, or causes you to miss assignments you think your students might enjoy, use the Scope and Sequence list in **Section Four** to help you vary the assignments and select a more appropriate topic from another week. At this age, we want writing to be enjoyable, so select topics you think will most inspire your students. And remember, the more practice they get recording their thoughts on paper, the easier it will be for them when they're older and do need to produce polished work on a deadline.

*Relax, slow
down, and
write at a pace
that is fun.*

The Writing Process

Coaching the Writing Process

For their first drafts, ask nothing more of your students than to simply put their thoughts on paper. At this stage, anything goes. If you're working with them, resist the urge to correct their spelling or revise their sentence structure, and help them do the same—you will have the opportunity to edit later. Build their writing confidence and show you value their creativity by giving them the freedom to "just write," and not interrupt their creative flow. Pay more attention to the fact that they're meeting the requirements of the assignment: Are they successfully writing a fairy tale? A poem? Are they impressing you with their inventiveness or imagination? If so, applaud them!

Have your students write their first drafts on wide-ruled handwriting paper, or by skipping every other line on notebook paper so you (and they) will have room to write edits directly on their rough drafts. At review time, sit with your students and ask them to read their pieces aloud while you read them over their shoulders. Watch for misspelled words and other mechanical errors that don't align with the way your child reads what he or she

wrote. Help them think through the corrections as you go, but more importantly, help them make the words say on paper what they dreamed up in their heads. For now, your students probably speak better than they write. They form sentences correctly and can “hear” when something isn’t right, so simply help them align their writing to their speaking proficiency. More importantly, praise them when they catch and correct their own mistakes.

For example you might say “Oh! You just paused there, what kind of punctuation do you think you might need?” or “Let’s sound out the spelling of ‘incredible’ together.” Or, “let’s look that word up in the dictionary...” Practice review skills together that you’d like them to be able to use on their own later. Also, help them think through holes in their description or story line. If you see a conspicuous gap, ask them to stop reading and ask them questions about the story that any interested reader would have. If they can tell you answers that help to fill the gap, help them write a few sentences to include this information in the story for other readers to enjoy.

Simply modeling the right way to do something is a very effective teaching tool at this age. When you find mistakes in their written work, pick and choose which ones you want them to help you correct, but sometimes simply demonstrate the right way to spell something or word a phrase in a sentence by quietly writing it on their paper as they read. Remember, they’ll see your correction and write it correctly when they rewrite their final drafts, so the more you can make your review session about showing you value what they created and less about making a big deal over every mistake, the more they’ll enjoy reviewing their papers with you...and the more they’ll like the writing process.

Think about how you’d like each child to handle words they repeatedly misspell. If it’s a word like “said” that they will use frequently now and in the future, you may ask them to rewrite it correctly on their rough draft each time it appears to help them memorize the correct spelling. If the word is lengthy, correct the spelling together for the first instance, and then simply circle the misspelled word each time it appears so they know to reference the first time you corrected it when they write the rough draft.

We strongly encourage you to review your students’ writing with them, rather than edit it yourself and hand it back to them later. By walking your students through the editing

Coach the writing process and edit as a team.

process each time, you will teach them how to edit and revise their own papers, how to catch their own mistakes, and how to look up correct answers on their own. As the old adage goes: “Give a man a fish and you’ll feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish and you’ll feed him for a lifetime.” By working with your students to edit and revise, you’ll be teaching them to fish, or, more accurately: to write!

How DO I Evaluate Writing Assignments?

Using Sonlight’s Rubrics

We understand that the idea of evaluating your students’ writing may be just as overwhelming for you as it was for them to write it. And yes, evaluating writing can be highly subjective. Therefore, we’ve included evaluation checklists or **Rubrics** for most assignments in your weekly notes that will help you focus your thoughts on the most important skills each assignment addressed. These rubrics should help you make the evaluation process more concrete and less subjective. And by the time you get to the evaluation stage, you should be very familiar with your students’ work and the skills addressed because you’ve coached their progress along the way. Feel free to adjust or modify our rubrics at any time if you feel your child worked on skills we didn’t include on our list.

Much of literary critique is subjective, but we understand that sometimes its helpful to have a concrete way to help you focus your critique. A rubric is a simple form that will help you give point values to certain characteristics of an assignment

At this age, we want to emphasize the writing *process* more than the final result. Do you remember when they were learning to talk? If you pointed to that colorful floating orb in the sky and said “Look, a balloon!” and they repeated “Bay-yoon!” did you correct their pronunciation and then give them a bad grade? Probably not. We hope you laughed, and simply said it again the right way. Even if they called it a “bay-yoon” for the next three months, we imagine you simply kept presenting them with the correct pronunciation and eventually they learned it.

Please think of learning to write as “learning to speak on paper.” Since hopefully your students have had a few years to practice writing by this point, it’s okay to start honing their technique. Strive to teach your students with the same small steps, and the same gentle redirections—slowly, over time. Be careful not to expect too much too quickly. It will come. Celebrate the small accomplishments, and keep engaging your students with examples of good writing (just like the ones in the books you’re reading), and talk about what could be improved when you come across lesser samples.

Creating your own Rubrics

Please note that the items we chose to emphasize on our sample are just ideas of things you might want to include on a rubric of your own. As their teacher, only you will know how your students are writing—where they shine and what they need to polish up—so be sure to include both potential challenges and potential successes on rubrics you compose.

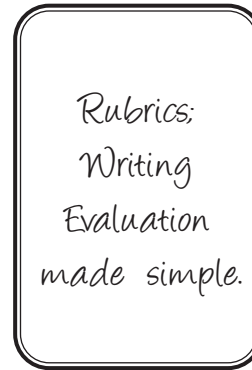
When you create a rubric, first draft a list of all the things you hope the assignment will accomplish, or you hope your child will learn or practice as they complete the assignment. Sometimes it's helpful to list skills by category, so you're sure you've thought of everything you want to evaluate.

Next, assign a point value for each item, giving more points to skills you want to weigh more heavily (or see as more important). Add up all of the points in the rubric to determine the number of points that will equal 100%. After that, simply read through your students' work, thinking about each point on your rubric as you go. Divide the number of points your students earned by the number of points possible to determine a percentage.

Sample Rubric		
<i>Content</i>		
_____	5 pts	Presented a clean, polished, final copy
_____	5 pts	Successfully revised the description from Week 1
_____	5 pts	Included at least 1 simile
<i>Mechanics</i>		
_____	5 pts	Worked with Mom or Dad to edit this assignment
_____	5 pts	Used the dictionary to research the spelling of a word
_____	÷ 25 pts possible = _____ %	
Total pts		

When your students are older, it may help to hand them a copy of your evaluation rubric when they first begin an assignment. Isn't it easier to hit the target when you can see what you should be aiming for? Afford this same opportunity to your students in the future when they work on writing assignments.

At this age, you may be able to let your students write their first drafts independently, but they will probably still benefit from an "Editorial Review" session with you before they draft their final copies. Later in the year, you might



put together an Editing Checklist with your students if you'd like them to begin editing their own papers independently as well. Draft such a checklist together, and be sure to include both basic content you always want them to check, and common mistakes you know they're still working on. Most importantly, use rubrics to help you more clearly gauge the areas in which your students

could use more work and revise your instruction accordingly.

Additional Resources

Over the years, we have noticed that many parents who otherwise feel confident and competent to teach their children at home nonetheless experience some anxiety when it comes to teaching them how to write well. Such writing-related anxiety often stems from a feeling that writing is not one of their strengths, combined with the fact that judging "good" writing is a somewhat-subjective endeavor. While 2+2 will always equal 4, the quality of a particular paragraph can often be open for debate.

Does this describe you? If so, don't worry—you're not alone. What you feel is perfectly normal. But let us reassure you about a couple of things. First, you probably write better than you think you do. But even if writing is not your strong suit, you don't have to be an exceptional writer to help your students learn to write well.

Second, don't be afraid of the evaluation process. Trust your instincts. You know when something just doesn't sound right. Be supportive and encouraging and work with your students to make their assignments better. Never forget that writing is a collaborative process. Even professional writers rarely get things perfect on the first try.

Lastly, don't be afraid to show your students that you still have things to learn, too. We can never really stop learning, can we? Share with them when you pick up something you hadn't known before about anything you're learning together, and acknowledge mistakes when you make them. Let them see you correct mistakes and model for your students how you learn from them—you'll be showing them how to be a humble, mature, patient, and teachable student (or teacher!) when you do.

If you do, however, feel like you could benefit from further resources, check out *Writers INC.* (available on our website, item #RL04). This book contains a complete guide

to the writing process, as well as information on basic writing fundamentals, like constructing sentences and paragraphs, to information on style, grammar, documentation and more. You can find more information about how to write a Research Paper from our Research Paper Packet, also located in **Section Four**. And, for additional grammar help, check out our various grammar programs also available on our website.

You can teach your students to write well. Keep the faith and work together with your students to improve their writing. You'll be glad you did! ■

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2020-2021 CATALOG



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