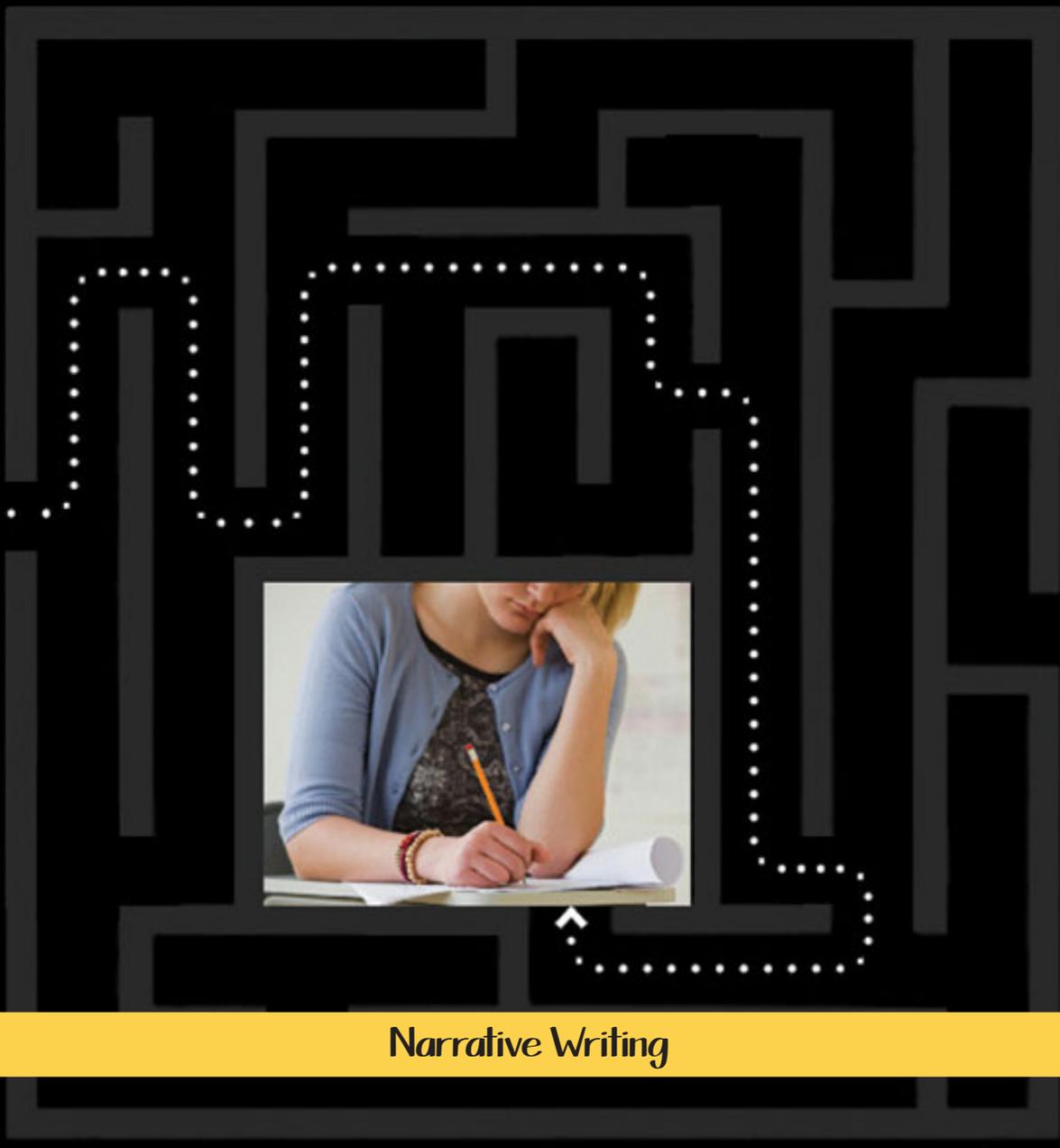


FRIDAY FREEBIE

LISA DONOHUE

The Write Beginning

Instruction that starts with the end in mind and guides students to become more effective writers



Narrative Writing

Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is writing that tells a story. It consists of a plot, characters, and a setting. Writers need to sequence their ideas in a logical way, so that the reader can understand how the various elements of the story are connected. The plot needs to include some form of conflict and a resolution. This is an important form in which students need to think about their voice, ideas, word choice, and sentence fluency. These traits, when combined with the features of a narrative, help to build fluent engaging stories.

Success Criteria for Narrative Writing

Success criteria that the students might identify when deconstructing narratives and setting success criteria for their own work include, but are not limited to the following:

Knowledge

- I will think about the topic, purpose, and audience for my writing.
- My writing will include the elements of a narrative (setting, characters, and plot; with a beginning, middle, and end).
- I will create an effective story line with creative/exciting plot development

Thinking

- I will develop my ideas in a logical and sequential way.
- I will organize my ideas so the story flows clearly.
- My writing will create visual images for the reader.
- I will include enough information to make the story fit together.
- I will include descriptive words and phrases in my writing.

Communication

- I will use my voice and word choice to enhance my ideas.
- I will use conventional spelling, grammar, punctuation, and paragraphing.
- I will use quotation marks for direct speech.

Application

- My writing will include some of my background knowledge.
- I will demonstrate my personal connections to my writing.
- My writing will include an overall theme, moral, lesson, or purpose to the story.

Narrative Writing Advance Organizer

Once the students and teacher have identified the success criteria for a given piece of writing, the students will need to begin planning and organizing their

writing. As the students begin to think about their writing, they may find it helpful to use an advance organizer as a way of planning and recording their ideas. Using a graphic organizer allows young writers a format to think about their writing, and how their ideas will unfold in their piece. The Narrative Writing Advance Organizer on page 50 can serve as a helpful guide for students to begin to organize their ideas about their writing. They can use the various boxes to record information about the characters, setting, and plot. They might choose to think of ways to build suspense through the plot development, and enrich the readers' understanding of the characters through their different attributes. They can include descriptive words to help the reader envision the setting and understand the intricate components of the various characters' personalities. Writers might choose to record key words and phrases that may be helpful when drafting the first piece of writing.

Teacher Prompts

As students move from determining success criteria to drafting their writing, the teacher needs to continue to support the students in crafting their ideas. Throughout this time, use guiding questions to refocus the students' attention to the success criteria while they generate ideas for their own writing. While guiding students' thinking around this text form, the following prompts may be helpful to teachers in order to scaffold students' thinking and writing:

- What is your writing about?
- Why are you writing?
- What will be the problem/conflict in the story? How will it get resolved?
- For whom are you writing?
- How will you capture your reader's attention at the beginning?
- How might you create suspense/humor/foreshadowing/joy/empathy through your writing?
- What similar words or phrases could you use instead of _____?
- What time order words (*first, then, after, finally*, etc.) might help clarify the sequence of events in the story?
- Are there words or sentences in your story that make the reader understand how you (or the characters) are feeling?
- How can you help your reader make a picture of this in their mind?
- How do the sentences sound when you read them aloud?

Example of the Narrative Writing Process

WRITING PROMPT: *Students were given the phrase "He/She felt the little box in his/her pocket and smiled" and needed to include this phrase somewhere in their writing.*

Sample Success Criteria: Narrative Writing

Knowledge

- I will include the elements of a narrative (setting, characters, and plot).
- The plot development will include a clear climax and resolution.
- The message of the narrative will convey a strong emotion.

Thinking

- I will use descriptive writing.
- My narrative will be logical and make sense.
- I will create visual images for the reader.
- I will include enough information to make the story fit together.

Communication

- I will demonstrate my word choice, voice, and sentence fluency.
- My writing will be neat and have correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Application

- I will use my background knowledge to include connections to my writing.
- My narrative will include an overall theme, lesson, or purpose.

The following short narrative is highly effective in conveying a strong emotion in the reader. This youngster was able to use strong word choice and vivid imagery to support her ideas. The overall mood of the writing is clear.

The Little Box

By Victoria

"Where am I?" asked Daniel in confusion.

"You're in the hospital." Replied his wife Taylor sweetly. Daniel remembered just a few days before when the nurses told him that he had pancreatic cancer.

Daniel knew that in only a few days time it would be Taylor's birthday. He had bought her a beautiful diamond necklace. His thoughts were interrupted by Taylor's voice.

"I'd better get going," said Taylor with a sigh. "I'll be back soon."

Just then the nurse came in to take him to the operating room. A little while later, Taylor returned.

"How'd it go?" Taylor asked the nurse eagerly.

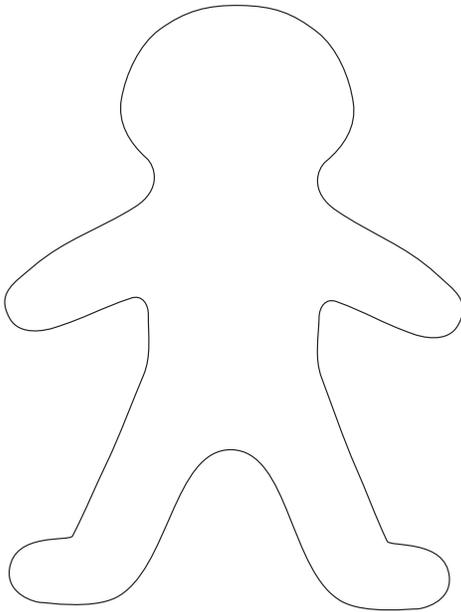
"Not so well." Replied the nurse filled with regret.

As Taylor entered the room, there in the bed was Daniel with his hand outstretched. As she got closer she saw a little box in his hand. On it were the golden letters 'Happy Birthday'. She scanned his body frantically, hoping to see any sign of movement, but there was nothing. As she opened the little box, she found a beautiful diamond necklace.

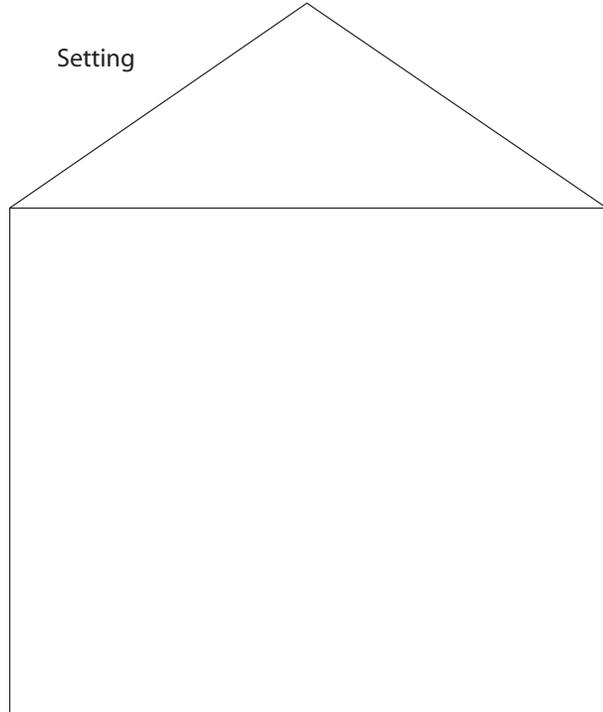
A few days later, at Daniel's funeral, as the minister was speaking, she felt the little box in her pocket and smiled as the tears ran down her cheeks.

Narrative Writing Advance Organizer

Characters



Setting



Climax

Plot

