

A Poem is a Lightning Bolt

A poem can be big and powerful, illuminating an idea in a quick flash. That sentence, like Janet S. Wong's poem "Breath," uses a metaphor to help talk about an idea. A metaphor is a figure of speech that describes something by calling it something else. It can help readers see a different side of an idea or object, or it can emphasize something we already see.

Directions: Write a metaphor for each of the objects below. Then, explain how the metaphor helps to describe the object.

1. A test is a trek across a desert island to the shining sea.
2. My house is a _____
3. A book is a _____
4. A pet (or my pet) is a _____

**Now, explain how each metaphor works.
What does the comparison tell you about the original object?**

1. A test and a trek are both difficult and require hard work. They are also both rewarding when finished. The metaphor shows the good feeling of completing a challenge.

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Write Now!

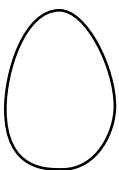
The poem "Breath" takes one metaphor and develops it through four short verses. Pick your favorite metaphor and write a short poem like "Breath," using and expanding the ideas you wrote down above.

Eragon's Order of Events

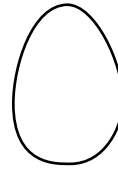
Eragon flies off with his dragon. Eragon discovers a mysterious blue egg. Eragon meets the old rider, Brom. All these events happen in the play, so does it really matter in what order? Yes! How could Eragon and Saphira go on their journey *before* Eragon found the egg? While reading or telling a story, understanding the sequence of events helps the story make sense.

Directions: After carefully reading the play, put the events below in the right order by numbering each set from 1 to 3. Then label the egg next to each set with the number of the scene in which the events happen.

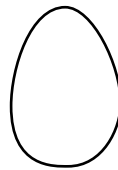
Hint: Be sure to refer to the play for help!



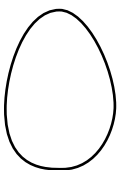
- ___ Eragon and the dragon learn to communicate.
- ___ Eragon names the creature Saphira.
- ___ Eragon realizes the creature from the egg is a dragon.



- ___ Eragon and Durza meet.
- ___ Brom appears in the fortress.
- ___ Eragon sneaks into Durza's fortress.



- ___ Eragon, Brom, and Saphira begin a journey.
- ___ Soldiers set the village on fire.
- ___ Eragon meets Brom.



- ___ Eragon and Arya enter the mountain of the Varden.
- ___ Eragon, Brom, Arya, and Saphira head for the mountains.
- ___ Arya grows weaker.



- ___ Galbatorix demands Eragon's death.
- ___ Durza tells Galbatorix that the egg has hatched.
- ___ Durza leaves to find Eragon and Saphira.

Where Is Eragon Now?

The setting of a story is where and when it takes place.

The setting also tells important clues about the story. When asked to describe a scene in a play, you should be able to list specific details about the environment the characters are in, as well as what time (or what year) the action is taking place.

Directions: Answer the questions in the space provided.

• Describe the setting in scene 1 : _____

• How does this setting affect the plot? _____

• Describe the setting in scene _____ (you choose). _____

• How does this setting affect the plot? _____

My Own Pet Creature

While writing *Eragon*, author Christopher Paolini spent months imagining Saphira, the dragon. What would she look like? What would her powers be? What would her relationship be to Eragon? How would she fit into the plot? Stretch your creative muscles when doing this activity and create a creature on your own. Who knows, maybe you'll be inspired to write your own best-selling book!

Directions: Answer the questions below. Use a separate piece of paper if you need more room. Then do the writing activity at the bottom of the page.

My Creature

Where does my creature live? _____

How big is it? _____

What does it look like? _____

How does it move around? _____

How does it communicate? _____

What are its special powers? _____

What are five adjectives that describe my creature? _____

Write Now!

Using the ideas above, write a well-organized paragraph in which you describe an adventure you and your creature share. (Use a separate piece of paper)

My Thoughts on Video Games

A good way to help you understand a story's Big Picture is to pay attention to its supporting details. These details enable you to draw conclusions and form opinions about what you're reading. You can practice using these critical thinking skills while reading the "Yesterday & Today" article on video games, then by doing the activity below.

Directions: Think about the following questions and answer them in the space provided. Then, do the writing activity at the bottom of the page.

Why do you think people were excited to play *Pong*? _____

Why do you think the *Harry Potter* video games are so popular today? _____

Write Now!

Write a well-organized paragraph about whether or not you enjoy playing video games and why. Make sure to provide plenty of examples to back up your opinions. (Use a separate piece of paper)

Five and Five

When you want to compare and contrast two things, start by writing down basic facts about each thing. Then you can think about how the two things are alike and how they are different.

Directions: In the box on the left, write five facts about *Pong* from "The Birth of Video Games." In the box on the right, write five facts about the *Harry Potter* video games from "Making Video Game Magic."

Facts	
<i>Pong</i>	<i>Harry Potter</i> video games
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
5. _____ _____	5. _____ _____

Write Now!

Now use your list to write a well-organized paragraph in which you compare and contrast *Pong* and the *Harry Potter* video games. (Use a separate piece of paper)

What Comes Next?

Part of being a good reader is making predictions about what's about to happen.

To make a good prediction, you need to be on the lookout for clues. You can find clues in the story, of course, and also in the illustrations, captions, and headline. The activity below will help build your powers of prediction, using the story "Lost and Found," by Lisa Yee.

Directions: Follow the prompts in each box.

What did you think was following Benny home in the beginning of the story?

Why did you think that?
(What were your clues?)

What really happened?

What did you think would happen when Benny hid Bruiser in his room?

Why did you think that?
(What were your clues?)

What really happened?

What did you think would happen when Benny brought Bruiser back to Mrs. Paul?

Why did you think that?
(What were your clues?)

What really happened?

Write now!

Why is it important to make predictions when you're reading a story or a book? How does this help you become a better reader? Write your answer in a well-organized paragraph.

Understanding Benny

How do you know what a character in a story is like? Pretty much the same way you know what a real person is like: from what he or she says and does, and from how others react to him or her. When asked to describe a character, you should be able to list his or her qualities and also give examples that show why you think what you do.

Directions: See how well you can describe the character of Benny from the story "Lost and Found."

1. List words and phrases that you think describe Benny's character.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Choose three words or phrases from your list and plug them into the sentences below. For each one, provide two supporting examples from the story.

I think Benny was _____ because _____

I think Benny was _____ because _____

I think Benny was _____ because _____

Found: Three Big Problems

In Lisa Yee's story, *Lost and Found*, Benny is relieved to discover he is being followed by a dog, not a monster. A monster might have been big trouble, but the dog brings a few problems, too.

Directions: Briefly describe the story's solution to the three problems listed below.

1. After Benny and his parents grow to love Bruiser, Benny sees fliers posted about a missing dog.

2. Benny begins to feel guilty about tearing down the posters.

3. Benny and Mrs. Paul both love the dog, and the dog loves both of them.

Now, find a problem from the story on your own and explain how it was solved.

Problem: _____

Solution: _____

Fact or Opinion?

"You ate too much candy." Is that statement true or false? It probably depends on who you ask—your mom, your best friend, or you! Here's another question: Is the statement that you ate too much candy a fact or an opinion? That one's clear: It's an opinion. An opinion, remember, is any statement that expresses an individual view or belief; a fact is something that can be proven.

Directions: Circle **F** for fact or **O** for opinion for each statement below about the story "Ryan and Jimmy."

1.

Ryan raised more than \$1.5 million to build wells around the world.

F O

2.

Jimmy is a courageous young man.

F O

3.

Building a well is very expensive.

F O

4.

Many people in Uganda and other countries do not have access to clean water.

F O

5.

The water that Jimmy would collect near his village was often dirty.

F O

6.

Thousands of people welcomed Ryan when he visited Uganda.

F O

7.

Jimmy had never been out of Africa before going to live with Ryan's family.

F O

8.

Jimmy liked living in Canada better than living in Uganda.

F O

Ask What, Ask Why

You study hard. What happens? You get an A. You get sent to your room. Why? You picked on your little brother. It's easy to figure out cause and effect relationships by asking two simple questions: "What happened?" (to find an effect) and "Why did this happen?" (to find a cause). Try it out to find the cause and effect relationships in "Ryan and Jimmy."

Directions: Fill in what's missing from each cause and effect pair. Use the hints to help you.

1. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: Ryan wanted to help people in Africa get clean water.

HINT: *Why did Ryan want to help? Where did he hear about the problem?*

2. CAUSE: Some people in Africa did not have clean water to drink.

EFFECT: _____

HINT: *What happens to people when they drink dirty water?*

3. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: Jimmy's parents disappeared, and he had to live with his aunt.

HINT: *Why did Jimmy's parents disappear?*

4. CAUSE: A newspaper article appeared about Ryan's efforts.

EFFECT: _____

HINT: *What did people do when they read the article?*

5. CAUSE: Ryan raised enough money to build a well in Agweo village, Uganda.

EFFECT: _____

HINT: *What happened to the people in Agweo village after the well was built?*

6. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: Ryan welcomed Jimmy into his family.

HINT: *Why did Ryan's family bring Jimmy to Canada?*

Now, on your own, find two cause and effect relationships from the story.

7. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: _____

8. CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: _____

The Elephant's New Words

**Everyone knows what a *muggle* is—now. But no one knew before J.K. Rowling imagined the word and used it in the Harry Potter books. Sometimes writers make new words to better describe the ideas in their stories. These can require careful reading and thought to understand, because you can't just look them up in the dictionary.
(By the way, for non-*Harry Potter* fans, a *muggle* is a non-wizard.)**

Directions: Read "Elephant Eternity" and look closely at the four terms found below.

Using your own words, write what you think each term means in the poem. (**Hint:** look at each individual word in the term. What do they mean separately? How do the words together help you understand the poem better?)

juicy-leaf

foam-floody

mothery

elephant trees
