

STORYWORKS

Secrets from a Winner!

SEPTEMBER 2009

THE PROMPT WAS: If you had special abilities like Mo, what book would you read yourself into? Tell us what book you'd choose and why.

AND A WINNER WAS: A. J. POZNANSKI of Mrs. Rosenthal's 3rd grade class at Nut Swamp Elementary School in Middletown, New Jersey

WHY HE WON: Take a look at what made A.J.'s paragraph a winner. Use his secrets in your next paragraph!

The Book of Dragons

If I had powers like Mo, I would read myself into *The Book of Dragons*. I would choose this book because I think dragons are fascinating! I could ride on the back of a dragon. I could train a dragon and keep him as a household pet. I could use my dragon to fend off other dragons. Last, but not least, I could explore foreign countries far and wide and meet other dragons in each country. I would most like to explore Rotundia because everything is opposite in that country. For example, bread grows on trees and you need to bake carrots in the oven. I chose this book because I have always liked books about dragons.

1. **A.J. begins his paragraph with a strong topic sentence that tells the reader exactly what the paragraph will discuss. Another option is to ask the reader a question about your topic. Just remember to be clear and to the point!**

2. **A.J. does a good job offering support for his ideas. He explains his point of view (that he likes dragons) and then provides examples to back up his opinion (all the fun things he might do with dragons.)**

3. **Like A.J.'s topic sentence, his concluding sentence is clear and snappy. It summarizes the main idea of the paragraph. In your own writing, you can restate the topic sentence in different words or come up with a creative way to remind the reader of the main idea.**

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THE PROMPT WAS: In Arthur Conan Doyle's stories about Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson recorded the tales of his friend. If you were Dr. Watson, how would you describe Holmes?

AND A WINNER WAS: 10-year old ANMOL OBEROI of J. Mirabelli's class at Hollywood PS in Toronto, Ontario

WHY HE WON: Take a look at what made Anmol's paragraph a winner. Use his secrets in your next paragraph!

Sherlock Holmes the Detective

If I was Dr. Watson, I would describe Sherlock Holmes as an expert problem solver because he always solves any case. In addition, I think he is very shrewd because he notices every detail. An example of this would be in the story "The Red-Headed League." Holmes notices that Vincent Spaulding's pant knees were soiled. From this he knew that Spaulding was digging a hole in his shop. He is also a person who thinks a thing over very carefully and reviews it over and over. Holmes doesn't rule out anybody because anyone could be the culprit. The last but not least tidbit about Sherlock Holmes is that he's very inquisitive. He asks a lot of questions, gathers information, and never leaves a rock uncovered. That is why I think he's intelligent and brilliant!

1. Anmol's clear topic sentence directly answers the question in the prompt. Always read the prompt carefully and stay on topic.

2. Anmol uses examples from the story. He writes an idea (that Holmes notices every detail) and then backs it up by mentioning an episode from the play. He gives enough details from the story to fully explain his idea.

3. We love Anmol's language! Vibrant words like inquisitive and shrewd make his writing more interesting. In your own writing, use strong vocabulary to express your ideas and make a paragraph more gripping. Just make sure you use a dictionary to get all the words right!