

## I Never Would Have Thought



### Story

Dear Diary,

I learned a lot about animals in science class today. I thought they all ate meat and plants, but I found out that only **omnivores** eat both. **Herbivores** eat plants, and **carnivores** eat meat. I also learned that crabs are **scavengers**. That means that they eat decaying matter. I won't eat them again!

I feel sorry for most animals. We can buy our food at the store, but other animals aren't so lucky. To get a good meal, some snakes must **constrict** their prey until a lack of oxygen kills the prey. Other snakes must inject **venom** into their prey to kill it. Although **camouflage** helps some animals to sneak up on their prey, I still think that hunting for each meal sounds like a lot of work.

I really enjoyed the two videos my teacher showed us. In one of them, we got to watch a snake **molt**. He wiggled right out of his old skin, leaving it behind him in one piece. In the other video, we saw fish **spawn**. I was amazed to find that some fish release as many as a million eggs into the water at one time.

Natasha



### smART Idea

Design a "camouflage" suit of your own. First, imagine the scenery around you. It could be any place ▼ a forest, a sandy beach, a green field, even a snow-covered mountain! Then, choose clothing you could wear to blend in as much as possible with your surroundings. What color would your clothing be? Would your camouflage be a solid color or a combination of colors? On a piece of paper, draw a picture of yourself wearing your camouflage suit in your chosen surroundings. Use colors that are natural for that location. If your camouflage is good, it might be hard for people to find you in the picture!

## Where Will We Keep Him?



### Story

My little brother, Tommy, was so excited the first time I took him to the zoo. Within the first hour, he wanted to take home many of the animals. He wanted a **ferret** to keep the mice out of the garage. He also wanted a **gazelle** because he thought it looked like a beautiful deer. He wanted to keep a furry **sloth** in the tree in the front yard. Since it moved so slowly, he figured it wouldn't escape. Lastly, he wanted a **marsupial** so he could ride in its pouch.

At the petting zoo, I tried to teach Tommy that a **vertebrate** has a backbone and an **invertebrate** doesn't. He was more interested in touching the animals around him. He fell in love with the **amphibians** because of their moist skin. He said the **tarantula** was the hairiest spider he had ever seen.

As we left the zoo, I bought Tommy an **iguana** at the gift shop. He would have his very own pet lizard to remind him of his first trip to the zoo.



### Write Idea

Tommy wanted to keep four of the zoo animals as pets. If you could choose any zoo animal to keep as a pet, what would it be? Write a letter to your parents trying to convince them to let you have this animal as a pet. Why would this animal make a good pet? Are there any ways that this animal could help your family?

## Did You Study?



### Story

- 1) Draw three triangles. One should be **isosceles** with sides 5 cm, 5 cm, and 7 cm. One should be **equilateral** with all sides 2 inches. The last triangle should be **scalene** with sides 3 cm, 4 cm, and 5 cm. On this last triangle, label the 5 cm side the **hypotenuse**.
- 2) Draw a horizontal line. Draw another line **intersecting** this line.
- 3) Draw an angle that measures  $30^\circ$ . **Bisect** this angle. Each new angle should be  $15^\circ$ .
- 4) Draw a circle and label two points on it. With a ruler, draw a **chord** connecting these two points. Using a red pencil, trace the curved shape of the circle to outline the **arc** connecting these two points.
- 5) Using graph paper, label the point whose **coordinates** are  $(-9, 4)$ .

Extra Credit:

If you wanted to multiply 4 by itself 9 times, to what **exponent** would you raise 4?



### Write Idea

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Use some of the words in this lesson to make up your own math test. Some of your questions can include the labeling of drawings. Trade tests with a friend and, after you have taken each other's test, check your answers.

## The Young Scientist



### Story

Ming started doing science experiments at a young age. She would ask herself questions and then **hypothesize** possible answers. When she was ten, her mother found her experimenting with **buoyant** objects in the bathroom sink. Ming said, “I wonder what would happen if I tried to float these objects in oil instead of water?” That was the day her parents decided to build her a science lab.

Her favorite experiments were with plants. **Photosynthesis** always amazed her. “If only humans could use their bodies to produce food like plants do,” she often said. In one of her experiments in growing plants, Ming used chemicals to see if they would make seeds **germinate** faster.

Ming shared her interest in science with her friends. Once they boiled water to form a mist and then quickly cooled it so that it would **condense** and form raindrops. At science camp, Ming had learned how to **dissect** insects to study their insides, so she showed her friends. Sometimes she and her friends would pretend to be archaeologists. Ming would bury **artifacts** in the yard before her friends came over, and they would spend the afternoon **excavating** the objects with small shovels.



### smART Idea

Think of a science experiment that you performed or watched. Pretend that a student at your school recently moved to America from Africa. This student, Kaiya, cannot read English yet. To help Kaiya understand the science experiment you chose, draw pictures of the steps needed to perform the experiment. To help Kaiya learn English, write a sentence under each picture, to describe the steps you drew.

## The Emergency Room



### Story

The emergency room was already filled with patients when the ambulance arrived. A 35-year-old man had been hit by a car. As he was being wheeled in, I noticed his neck was **immobilized** by a brace. The **paramedic** who treated him must have been concerned about a possible spinal injury and wanted to prevent **paralysis**.

The first thing I did was give him fluids to prevent **dehydration**. He was in a lot of pain, so I gave him some medication. After just a few minutes, I could tell that the pain had **subsided** because the patient seemed more relaxed. X-rays showed that he had no **internal** injuries, so I removed the neck brace. Lastly, I applied an **antiseptic** to clean the patient's many scrapes.

Later that day, the hospital released the patient. The hospital pharmacy **dispensed** some more pain medication to him, and he went home.



### Write Idea

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Pretend you are an emergency room doctor like the one in this story. Write a paragraph about a busy day at work. Try using some of your new medical vocabulary.

## A Rainy Forecast



### Story

I am **meteorologist** Jan Barr. After checking the **atmospheric** conditions, I am certain of the **accuracy** of my weather forecast.

Rain will arrive around noon today and end the **drought**. After this **front** arrives, the wind will die down. The weather system will then remain **stationary** over our area for several days. The amount of rainfall is expected to be **substantial**. At times, Brownsville may see as much as three inches of rain per hour. This will probably lead to flooding, which could **devastate** the town. The heavy rain will reduce **visibility** to less than one foot at times which will prevent you from driving safely. Therefore, if you live in Brownsville, it is recommended that you leave before the storm arrives.



### Write Idea

The weather report in this lesson forecasts flooding after a long drought. Pretend you are a meteorologist for your community. Select a season and use some of your new weather vocabulary to write a weather forecast.

## She's Here!



### Story

Mike's little sister, Cindy, was being kept warm in an **incubator**. He peered in through the glass and saw the tiny infant. Mom told him that the **respirator** made it easier for her to breathe.

Mike had always wanted a little sister. Cindy was supposed to be born in June. Unfortunately, she was born **prematurely**, in April, and was very sick. She had a **deficiency** of white blood cells, so her body couldn't fight off bacteria. Because of this, the doctors gave her medicine, including an **antibiotic**. The doctors also said that people with **contagious** diseases weren't allowed near her.

Luckily, Cindy's heart was healthy. It was pumping strongly, so her **circulation** was good. The doctor had told the family that if Cindy's heart wasn't working well, he would need to **transplant** a healthy heart into Cindy's body. They were so happy to hear that this **intricate** procedure, which could take as long as 20 hours, wouldn't be necessary.

Mike knew that his little sister was a fighter and that she would be fine. He planned to take good care of her when she got home.



### Write Idea

Cindy was in the hospital because she was born prematurely. Write a paragraph telling about a time when someone you know was in the hospital. Did the person share a room? What did the hospital serve for dinner? If possible, interview the person you are going to write about to learn details about his or her hospital stay.

## A Letter to Save the Environment



### Story

Dear Mr. Morris:

Our school feels that the county government is not doing enough to protect the environment. **Pesticides** being used by farmers are washing into our streams and killing the fish. **Pollutants** from factories are being dumped into the bay. This ruins the water for humans, as well as for the fish, birds, and other wildlife. **Poachers** are illegally hunting fox and bear. Why aren't they being **prosecuted** by the courts?

What happened to your campaign promises? You said that you would **advocate** legislation to help preserve the **ecosystem**. New laws are needed to help protect the delicate balance between plants, animals, and the environment. You promised that, if you were elected, you would **ban** companies from dumping **toxic** chemicals into the bay. I hope you will keep these important promises you made.

Please do something soon, or it will be too late!

Sincerely,

Travis Lampin



### Write Idea

Travis wrote a letter to Mr. Morris in an attempt to protect his environment from pollution and poachers. Is there air pollution, water pollution, or litter in your community? Write a letter to your Congressman or Congresswoman expressing your concerns about the environment. Ask questions about programs that have been set up in your area to protect the ecosystem. Ask what you can do to help clean up the air and water. When you are finished, send the letter.

## The Big Move



### Story

I will never forget the day we moved to the city. Dad said **that** I would learn to love it, so I tried to be **optimistic**.

As the moving van crossed the city line, I began to panic. The smell of freshly laid **asphalt** from the road made my stomach hurt. I couldn't get over the noise and **congestion** on the streets. With mass **transit** available, why were there so many cars? I decided **that** I would set up the computer and check the Internet as soon as we got to the house. I wanted to look **at** the numbers from the latest **census** to find out how many people **reside** in this city I would soon call home.

As we continued toward our new home, we passed some old buildings **that** were **condemned**. The windows were broken and **graffiti** covered the walls.

All of a sudden, the traffic lights went out. Traffic came to a halt! Dad said there must be a **blackout**. I was tired and nodded off to sleep, thinking about my **tranquil** life in the suburbs. In time, I'm sure I'll come to appreciate the culture and excitement offered by this big city.



### smART Idea

Think of things to do or see that make your town special. Check your newspaper for places, events, and activities that sound interesting to you. Then cut a piece of paper into 10 slips. On each slip, write one thing that you might like to do in your town. Put the slips of paper into a small box. Decorate the box. The next time you and your family are looking for something fun to do, you'll have 10 great ideas in this "activity" box. It might be fun to decide that you are going to do whatever is written on the first slip of paper you take from the box.

## My First Solo Flight



### Story

As flight school neared an end, I was ready for my first solo flight. I had to **charter** a plane since I didn't own one. The **adverse** weather conditions concerned me, but I had flown during a thunderstorm before and handled it. I was a little concerned about the possibility of **turbulence**, but I was sure my training would get me through any violent air currents. When the control tower **authorized** takeoff, I headed down the runway.

I looked at the flight instruments to see how fast I was going. My **velocity** was 70 miles per hour. I knew I had to **exceed** 100 miles per hour to get the plane off the ground. I began to **accelerate**. I finally reached 105 miles per hour and the plane was airborne!

During the **ascent**, I kept a close eye on the **altimeter**. Once I reached an altitude of 15,000 feet, I leveled off the plane. The weather cleared.

I was so excited and proud of myself that I lost track of time. As the sun began to set on the horizon, I landed the plane. My first solo flight was a complete success.



### Write Idea

In this story, a pilot uses an airplane to take her first solo flight. Helicopters, hot-air balloons, parachutes, and hang gliders are also used for flying. Which of these would you most like to try? Which of these would you least like to try? Write a paragraph explaining your choices.

## Ghost Towns



### Story

In the 1850s, gold was discovered in the West. Once word spread, many people left their homes in the East with hopes of striking it rich. The most **desirable** places to settle were those towns where gold was **abundant**.

The journey west was **rigorous** due to wild animals and widespread illness. However, people were filled with dreams of finding gold and achieving **prosperity**. This **incentive** drove people west, even though they faced many hardships along the way.

For many years, towns flourished. Some settlers became rich, but others never found a single ounce of gold. As the supply of gold was **depleted**, finding gold became more infrequent. Eventually, people abandoned the towns. These booming gold towns were transformed into **desolate** places.

Today these towns are known as ghost towns. **Dilapidated** buildings line the streets that were once bustling with activity. Many tourists visit these towns, though few people actually live there.



### Write Idea

Pretend you are living in the East in the 1850s, and gold has just been discovered in California. Your family packs up everything and heads west to strike it rich! Write a story about your adventures on your rigorous journey. Does anyone fall ill? Do you encounter any wild animals along the way? Do you run out of supplies? Do you find gold?

## Guilty or Innocent?



### Story

The case of the state of Texas against Barr came to trial today. Charles Barr is accused of **committing** a burglary with the help of an **accomplice** named Sharon Shawl. This morning, the state began calling witnesses. The first witness, the store owner, was asked to look over his written police statement and **verify** that it was accurate. After doing so, he was asked to **restate** for the jury the events of the day he was robbed. Another local businessman **testified** that he saw Barr running from the scene of the crime. Judge Wong, who was **presiding** over the courtroom, **adjourned** the trial at 6:00 p.m. Within 15 minutes, the courtroom was empty.

The trial will **resume** tomorrow morning. Community polls show that the public expects Mr. Barr to be found guilty by a **unanimous** vote.



### smART Idea

This lesson had a newspaper story about a court case. Most newspaper stories include a photograph, a drawing, or some other illustration to help tell the story. Imagine you must photograph, draw, or find a picture for a newspaper story. First, read a newspaper or magazine story that you think is interesting. Then, find or create a picture for that story. You may use a photograph, a picture from another magazine or newspaper, or a drawing that you create yourself. Cut and paste the picture and story together onto a sheet of paper. Try to make it look like a real newspaper or magazine article. Add a sentence below the picture to tell how the picture relates to the story.

## Our Amazing Earth



### Story

The earth is **spherical** in shape. If you were to cut it in half, each of these halves would be called a **hemisphere**. To discuss the location of places on earth, imaginary lines of latitude and longitude are used. Lines of latitude run horizontally and circle the earth. The equator marks  $0^\circ$  latitude. Lines of longitude run vertically from the North Pole to the South Pole. The prime **meridian** marks  $0^\circ$  longitude.

Different regions of the earth experience different climates. A desert has an **arid** climate year-round. Cactus is the most common **vegetation** found growing in this area. A **tundra** is like a cold desert. The ground in the tundra is permanently frozen with the exception of a shallow surface layer. The only plants that can survive are mosses, **lichens**, and some shrubs. Most people live in **temperate** zones. There are two of these on earth. In each of these areas there are four seasons, a moderate climate, and many types of plant life.

The earth is always changing. Water and wind constantly **erode** the earth's surface. Over millions of years, these forces can greatly change the **topography** of earth.



### Write Idea

Depending on where you live, the weather varies tremendously. Suppose you had to move to either the desert or the tundra. Which region would you choose? Support your choice with several detailed reasons. You may need to use an encyclopedia to learn more about these regions before making your choice.

## Election News



### Story

In our newscast today, we will focus on the election for mayor. The Republican candidate is the **incumbent** mayor. You may recall that health problems last year almost led to her **resignation**. Her opponent was **nominated** by the Democrats in June. His past is being **scrutinized** daily by the **media**. Although past business dealings have been questioned by the press, support for him remains strong.

A debate will take place on Monday. At that time, the candidates will discuss such **controversial** issues as the funding for a new sports arena. Plans for reducing the budget **deficit** by raising taxes will be debated as well.

The **constituents** will cast their votes in November. The winner will be **inaugurated** in January.



### Write Idea

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Pretend your school is holding elections for the school government. You have been nominated to run for president. At the assembly on Monday, you must give a speech to convince the student body to elect you instead of the other candidates. Write the speech that you will give. Be sure to think about the issues that are important to students at your school. How are you going to make your school a better place?

## We Want Freedom!



### Story

The colonists came to America for religious and political freedom. Yet, the British **monarchy** still ruled them. Colonists were forced to pay **tariffs** on tea and other goods shipped from Great Britain. The **revenue** from these taxes went to Britain. The people wanted a voice of **representation** in Britain's **legislature** if they were made to follow its laws.

The colonists grew increasingly angry with Britain's control over them. Soon, a large group of colonists gathered their weapons and planned a **rebellion** against the British government. The differences between Britain and the colonists could not be solved peacefully. War was **inevitable**.

After almost a year of fighting, the colonists **devised** a plan. On July 4, 1776, they declared their independence from the British. By 1779, both France and Spain had joined the colonists as **allies** in the fight against Great Britain. Finally, in 1783, after eight years of fighting, the colonists won their independence.



### Write Idea

Pretend you are a colonist living in America during the time of Great Britain's rule. Write a speech convincing King George to give you and the rest of the colonists your freedom.

## Helpful Hints for Baby-Sitters



### Story

1. Set rules and **adhere** to these rules. If you and the children follow these rules, everyone will have a better time.
2. If the rules are broken, let the parents know. They may choose to **reprimand** the child.
3. **Commend** a child often for good behavior.
4. Learn to **improvise** when something goes wrong. For example, if you can't go outside, make up a puppet show.
5. **Tolerate** a little noise without getting upset or yelling. (Having fun can be noisy!)
6. If two children start arguing over a toy, **divert** one child's attention with another toy.
7. Children often like to **mimic** what adults say. Don't get angry; turn it into a game instead.
8. Be sure that toys with small pieces are **inaccessible** to babies.
9. Remember that baby-sitting is a big **commitment**. If you don't plan to watch the children carefully and keep them safe, don't accept the job.



### Write Idea

In this story, you were given some hints to help you become a better baby-sitter. Think of something you consider yourself an expert at doing. Perhaps you are an expert soccer player or bicycle repairperson. Write a list of helpful hints for someone who is just learning a skill you have already mastered.

## The Penny Saver



### Story

Grandpa Joe is a **miser**. When Dad went to college, Grandpa didn't pay a cent of his **tuition**. He never makes **donations** to charities, no matter how strongly he believes in their causes. I'll never forget the time he tried to **barter** with a car salesman. He wanted to give the salesman a gold watch as a down payment for a car.

Don't get me wrong, I believe in being careful with money, but Grandpa is very rich! He gets a huge **pension** from the company where he served as president. His home was **appraised** for almost \$3,000,000. And his savings account **accumulates** thousands of dollars in interest each day.

One day, my dad sent Grandpa Joe to France for a vacation. When he came back, he was in tears because the airport wouldn't exchange his French **currency** for Canadian money. That was the day that Dad finally explained to me that Grandpa's parents were **bankrupt** when he was a little boy. Now I understand why Grandpa Joe is so concerned about keeping all of his money.



### Write Idea

Think of something that you would like to be able to buy if you had the money. Write a letter that will convince your parents to help you buy this item. Present good reasons explaining why you need this item. Remember to be polite!

## First-Job Jitters



### Story

During the summer of my freshman year I searched for my first job. I really wanted this job, so I dressed in appropriate **attire** and headed out for my interview. As I walked through the front door, I was very **apprehensive**. What if I made a fool of myself?

It turned out that I was the only **applicant** for the position. I had to **negotiate** salary with the manager. I was glad I **asserted** myself because I convinced her to pay me 50 cents extra per hour.

When I arrived for work the next day, I met my **colleagues**. Most of them were students my age. My job was to be a cashier. I would collect money from each **consumer** who wanted to buy items from our store. Once each month, I also had to take **inventory** and report on items that were running low in stock.

I worked very hard that summer. My manager told me that if I continued to work after school in the fall, she would **promote** me to assistant manager by winter.



### Write Idea

The person who wrote this story got a job to earn some extra spending money. Write a paragraph explaining some things that you could do to earn some extra money. Then tell what you would do with the money once you earned it.

## Save Room for Dessert



### Story

Bill and I went to a wedding last weekend. I was happy that the luncheon was a **buffet**. Since I am a **vegetarian** and most people serve meat at meals, I enjoy eating at places where I can serve myself. I fixed myself a salad and took a **pomegranate**, my favorite fruit.

Bill's appetite was **insatiable**. He went up for seconds and thirds. If it was **edible**, he ate it. You would have thought he had just returned from a country that was experiencing a **famine**.

As I watched Bill **gorge** himself, I looked forward to dessert. As usual, I began to **crave** a doughnut filled with **custard**. It turned out that there were no doughnuts at the dessert table, but they did have cheesecake. That is my second favorite dessert. Bill turned down dessert since he had an upset stomach from eating too much. That was no surprise to me.



### Write Idea

The wedding luncheon in this story was a buffet. Pretend you are planning a party and wish to have a buffet dinner prepared by a restaurant. Write a letter to the restaurant requesting their services and describing the foods you would like at the buffet. Be sure to include appetizers, main dishes, desserts, and beverages.

## Growing Up is Hard to Do



### Story

“I’d like to tell you a story,” said Grandma, “about a girl who was very much like you.” Amy listened **intently** as her grandmother continued. “This girl was undergoing a very difficult **transition** in her life. She had gone from being a child to being an **adolescent**. She was a respectful child, but it seemed that the day she turned twelve, she became **rebellious**. Whatever her parents told her to do, she did the opposite. One day she came home with pink hair. Her parents had a terrible time trying to **cope** with their daughter’s complete personality change. They tried to remember that she was **striving** to form an **identity**. Her **peers** had taken the place of her parents as role models.”

“Did her parents give up on her?” Amy asked.

“No, her parents decided it was **imperative** that they support her through this difficult time. Luckily, after a few years, this girl became her old self. Believe it or not, the girl I have described is your mother.”



### smART Idea

In this story, a grandmother helps her granddaughter by sharing a story from the family’s past. Ask a grandparent or some older person to tell you a story about his or her childhood. Imagine what it was like to be the person in the story. Ask to see a photograph, or ask the person to describe what he or she looked like as a child. Then fold two sheets of paper in half to create a small book. Draw pictures to tell the story you heard. Add a few sentences below each picture. Create a cover and a title for your “memory book.”

## Notes From Professional Journals



### Story

**statistician**› Collected and interpreted data for a car dealer

**botanist**: Developed a plant that will grow larger grapes

**optometrist**: Gave vision tests to ten patients

**ornithologist**: Studied about the nesting patterns of geese

**cartographer**: Created a map of Maine

**surveyor**: Found the boundaries of the Bond estate

**philosopher**: Spent time thinking about our purpose on earth

**psychologist**: Observed children learning to share

**zoologist**: Measured the length of the rare turtle



### Write Idea

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In this story, you learned about many different jobs. What job would you like to have when you are older? Write a paragraph describing your career choice and explaining why you think you would enjoy that career.

## Student Life Vocabulary

## Lesson 2

## A Letter to a Friend



### Story

Dear Tirone,

Manny is a new student in my class. He is very smart, but can be **domineering**. No one wants to work with him because he is so bossy.

I told the other kids that there are qualities about all people that can be annoying. There is a boy in our class named Dale who can be very **arrogant**. I've heard him say that he is the smartest boy in eighth grade. I've also seen him **gloating** about the A's he receives on his work. It doesn't mean that I don't like him. I try to keep in mind that that's Dale's personality.

Last week, I saw some kids beginning to **ridicule** Manny by calling him names. I couldn't believe how **callous** they were. It seems they forgot that everyone has feelings. I became **irate**, and everyone could tell by the angry look on my face. I think I **intimidated** some of them, but my goal was not to make them afraid. I wanted them to stop being so mean.

I was **ecstatic** when I came to school the next day and saw people being nice to Manny. He was also trying not to be so bossy. What a great day!

From,

Freddy



### smART Idea

In this story, Freddy was upset because his classmates were unkind to a new student. What can you do to help a new student feel at home in your school? What can you do to help a student who has trouble making friends? Imagine that you are designing a friendship quilt to hang in your classroom. Each block of the quilt has a “key to friendship” — an idea or suggestion for making and keeping friends. Your part is to design one of the quilt blocks. On a square piece of paper, design your “key to friendship.” Use paints, colored pencils, markers, or magazine cutouts to make a colorful design.

## Student Life Vocabulary

## Lesson 3

## So Alike, Yet So Different



### Story

I have a set of identical twins in my class this year named Phil and Bill. How can two people who look exactly the same act so different? I think this is really **bizarre**.

Phil is very **compassionate**. He always takes the time to talk to students when they are sad or in trouble. Although he is very smart, he is humble and never makes his classmates feel **inferior**. Phil's **vivacious** nature makes him a lot of fun to be around. He loves to go to parties and participate in sports.

Bill, on the other hand, is **apathetic** to his classmates' problems. He just ignores others and goes about his business. Unlike his brother, Bill is quite **pompous**. He always lets you know that he is the smartest student in class. Bill's **lethargic** nature is just another negative **trait** that makes him unpopular. He never wants to go to parties or play sports. He'd rather lie around the house.

I think it will always **perplex** me that identical twins can be so completely opposite! Maybe someday Phil's positive qualities will rub off on his twin brother.



### Write Idea

Make a list of five traits that you look for in a friend. Arrange your list in order starting with the trait that you think is most important. Write a paragraph explaining your choices. Do you have a friend that exhibits all five of the traits you chose?

## Student Life Vocabulary

## Lesson 4

**“A” for Effort****Story**

“Good morning, Mr. Patel. We are here this morning to discuss the progress of your daughter, Noni. Noni is working very hard. Since you have been working with Noni on her reading and writing at home, she has become much more **literate**. However, she is still having difficulty with reading **comprehension**. Often she finishes reading a story or poem and is unable to explain what she has read. She needs to practice using **context** to figure out words she doesn’t know,” said Mr. Green.

“How are her writing skills coming along?” asked Mr. Patel.

“I have seen a lot of improvement. I think that the **correspondence** with her friends is helping her. She never forgets to put the **salutation** at the beginning of her letters anymore. Her handwriting is becoming more **legible**. I am also pleased to see her **revising** stories on her own. She is able to make some wonderful improvements without my help. I would, however, like to see Noni attempt to write more poetry. In class, she usually chooses to write **prose**.”

**Write  
Idea**

Mr. Green met with Noni’s father to discuss her strengths and weaknesses in Language Arts. What are your strengths and weaknesses in Language Arts? Pretend that one of your parents is attending a conference with your Language Arts teacher this afternoon. Write the conversation that might take place. Use some of the vocabulary words from this lesson in the dialogue.

## Student Life Vocabulary

## Lesson 5

## From Across the Sea



### Story

Last year we had a Japanese foreign exchange student in our class named Mia. During the first few weeks of class she sat alone, and her **participation** in class discussions was **minimal**. She just sat quietly at her desk. Mia appeared to be **melancholy**, although I would be sad, too, in a foreign country with no friends.

One day I took the **initiative** and introduced myself to her. She was very kind and polite. I introduced her to my friends, and we found that she was quite **sociable**. As she began to feel more comfortable in our country, her personality seemed to come to life. Mia was actually very **inquisitive**. She began to ask many questions about American culture.

Mia's popularity grew. Everyone wanted to work with her on class projects. They knew she was a **diligent** student and that if they worked with her, they would do well. Toward the end of the school year, Mia **auditioned** for the school play and was cast as the star.

What I liked most about Mia was that no matter how popular she became, she always made time to spend with me. I miss her now that she has returned to Japan.



### Write Idea

Pretend that a foreign exchange student comes to your school from Sweden. Like Mia, he is melancholy because he misses his friends and family. Write him a letter that will cheer him up. Suggest some ways that he can get involved in school activities and make new friends.

## Student Life Vocabulary

## Lesson 6

## Buster, the Greek God of Silliness



### Story

We have been studying Greek **mythology**. Our assignment is to write our own story about gods and goddesses.

I am writing a **ludicrous** myth about the god of silliness, Buster. My story begins with a **metaphor**: Buster's smile is a mile-long canyon. I used **personification** to describe Buster's colorful clothes. I said **that** his clothes shouted at people as they walked by him. Putting a **simile** in the story was easy. I said **that** Buster's feet were as wide as a house.

I don't know how to combine all of this **figurative** language into a good story. For some ideas, I looked at some stories in the **periodicals** that we get each month. I read an **excerpt** from a magazine article on myths. Based on this part of the article, I think I will make Buster the creator of rainbows. After all, a rainbow is an upside-down smile.

I wish I could turn in an **anonymous** story. If I put my name on it, people might laugh at my silly ideas. I am thinking of writing a short poem as an introduction to my myth. If I make it only two **stanzas** long, I can still finish in plenty of time.



### smART Idea

In this story, the student was studying Greek mythology. The student's assignment was to make up a myth or story about someone with super powers. Cartoons and comic books often have stories with creatures or people who have special powers. Now it's your turn to create a comic book! What power or ability will your superhero have? What will he or she look like? What kind of story will you use to show his or her powers? Divide a piece of paper into nine blocks. In the first block, give your story a title that includes your superhero's name. In the next eight blocks, draw pictures to tell the story.

## Student Life Vocabulary

## Lesson 7

## A Letter Home



### Story

Dear Parents,

I have news of which we can all be proud. Park Middle School has won a national award for excellence in education. While we have known for years **that** our students **excel**, others have noticed **that** our kids are above average.

Our **objective** here at Park has always been to **motivate** students to do their best. To achieve this goal, we take time to **evaluate** each student. Using tests, we determine each student's strengths and weaknesses. If a student has an **aptitude** in a particular subject, we allow him to **immerse** himself in courses **that** develop this natural ability. We also **exempt** students from courses containing information **that** they have learned on their own.

Park students are also among the best behaved in the country. Students are aware of the standards we have set, and see **that disrupting** classes is not helpful to the learning environment. As a matter of fact, we have not had to **expel** a single student this year.

We can all take pride in Park. Your efforts at home, raising such fine kids, play a large part in Park getting recognized as a school of excellence.

Sincerely,

Mr. Brown



### Write Idea

Park Middle School was recognized for excellence in education. Most excellent schools have hard-working students, supportive parents, and dedicated teachers. Think of an outstanding teacher that you have had. Write this teacher a letter telling why you feel that he or she is an outstanding teacher.

## Hobbies &amp; Activities Vocabulary

## Lesson 2

## Getting Back to Nature



### Story

It was autumn and time for my family's yearly camping trip. A narrow trail provided the only **access** to our campsite, so we parked the car and began our hike. When we arrived at the site, we set up a **canopy** to keep us dry in case of rain. Then Mom moved all **combustible** items, like paper and leaves, away from the fire ring. She pulled out a match to **ignite** the campfire.

As Dad prepared dinner, I hoped that there would be **adequate** food to fill me up. It turned out that there was **excess** food, so we fed the leftovers to our dog, Rusty.

Before bedtime, Dad poured water on the fire to **extinguish** it. The fire must have still been very hot because the coals continued to **smolder**. I fell asleep while staring at the **embers** as they glowed in the ashes.



### Write Idea

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Camping trips are lots of fun, but they do require planning. Pretend you are going camping with your family. Make a list of the supplies that you would take along. Then write a paragraph telling what activities you would plan for your camping trip.

## Hobbies &amp; Activities Vocabulary

## Lesson 3

## My Adventures at Sea



### Story

The most exciting summer of my life was the summer that I went to boating camp. The purpose of this camp was to familiarize us with working at sea in different jobs. We boarded the boat and **embarked** on our adventure at sunrise. As we left the **marina** and headed for the ocean, we waved to our families on the shore.

The next few weeks were full of excitement. We spent a day on a submarine as it **submerged** to a depth of 200 feet. We also spent a day on a large ship. This ship had to **dredge** the ocean floor to gather sand for rebuilding a nearby beach.

Not all of the trip was fun. We spent many boring days doing **tedious** jobs. We had to scrape **barnacles** off the bottom of the boat. The **exposure** to the sun, day after day, left me with a terrible sunburn. And then there was the day that a few of us went out on a canoe and it **capsized**. Our camp counselor had to **inflate** a life raft and rescue us. In spite of this, I had a great time and hope to attend boating camp again!



### Write Idea

Imagine that you are the captain of a ship. There is a 20-person crew working for you. Write a story telling about your adventures at sea.

Where did you sail? Did you pass through any storms? What kinds of jobs did your crew perform? What was the most enjoyable part of your job as captain?

## Hobbies &amp; Activities Vocabulary

## Lesson 4

## Look, but Don't Touch!



### Story

I had a great time at the art museum today. For the first time in my life, I actually saw **authentic** paintings by Picasso. I learned a lot about **animation** from the display on the first motion picture cartoons. My favorite thing about the trip was the **caricature** that an artist made of me. I tried to **envision** myself really looking like the silly drawing, and it made me laugh.

As I was leaving for home, I noticed a clay **figurine** of a cat by the main exit. The small **ceramic** animal was standing on a small bronze **pedestal**. The cat was beautiful. It must have taken a very patient person to **sculpt** something with such tiny details.



### smART Idea

In this story, an artist drew a caricature. A caricature is a funny drawing that exaggerates a person's face, hairstyle, or other physical features. The artist exaggerates the features to make it easy for people to recognize the person in the drawing. Usually, a caricature also shows something about the person's interests, hobbies, or personality. An example of a caricature is shown below.



On a separate sheet of paper, draw a caricature of yourself. Choose one or two features to exaggerate, and draw something that shows your hobbies or interests. When you are finished, do not sign your name on your drawing. Your class may want to display the caricatures and then try to name the person in each drawing.

**Hobbies & Activities Vocabulary****Lesson 5****The World at Your Fingertips****Story**

You can find information and communicate with people around the world using the Internet. To get started, choose an Internet provider. The provider gives you software and **documentation** that tells you how to use this software. The software and your modem use your phone line to connect your computer to a **network** of other computers.

As soon as you are **online**, you can look up any topic. Perhaps you want to find out about camps for athletes. Special programs on the Internet allow you to search for all of the sites that deal with sports camps. Once you find an interesting site, use **hypertext** to find the specific information you want. As you click on these words or pictures, there will be a slight delay to **download** the information to your computer.

The Internet allows you to communicate with others also. You can send **E-mail** to people you know. Or, you can check a **newsgroup** to read or respond to messages on specific subjects.

Exploring the Internet is a lot of fun, so give it a try!

**Write  
Idea**

Have you ever used the Internet? If so, write a paragraph explaining your favorite Internet activities or web sites. If you have never used the Internet, make a list of subjects or people you would like to research on the Internet. Once you have made your list, search for information on some of these subjects or people, either on the Internet or in an encyclopedia.

## Hobbies &amp; Activities Vocabulary

## Lesson 6

## Cooking With Mr. Dough



### Story

Last year, Fran and I joined the cooking club. The first time we walked into the cooking classroom, we smelled a wonderful **aroma**. Mr. Dough, the instructor, had just baked cookies. After giving us a cookie and discussing procedures, Mr. Dough sent us to our own mini-kitchens to bake a pumpkin pie.

The kitchen area that Fran and I were assigned was **immaculate**. Fran and I tend to be messy, so I was **skeptical** that we would ever be able to return it to that state of cleanliness. We collected the ingredients. As I cracked open the eggs, the terrible smell **nauseated** me. The **stench** of the eggs told me that they were rotten! I got fresh eggs, and Fran finished mixing the ingredients. I placed the pie in the oven and set the timer. We almost didn't hear the timer go off because the bell's ring was barely **audible**.

After letting the pie cool, we decided to taste it. We couldn't agree on who would get the first taste. We finally **compromised** and decided we would each take a bite **simultaneously**. Fran and I smiled as we swallowed our first **luscious** bite.



### Write Idea

Fran and her friend baked a luscious pumpkin pie. Have you ever cooked anything? Write a paragraph about the experience. What did you cook? Did it turn out well? Did you enjoy working in the kitchen? Be sure to include descriptive words to help the reader see, smell, and taste what you cooked.

**Hobbies & Activities Vocabulary****Lesson 7****Getting in Shape****Story**

A wide variety of sports can make you physically fit. A team sport, like **lacrosse**, is great for getting in shape since lots of running is required. Gymnastics involves many flips, turns, and splits. This can make a person quite **agile**. Running in a **marathon** can certainly develop **stamina**. While a **cyclist** enjoys the rush of speeding downhill, it is **strenuous** exercise to pedal back up those hills. Throwing a **javelin** can develop arm strength. **Archery** is great for developing hand-eye coordination and strengthening arm muscles. Pick a sport that you enjoy and take the first step on the road to physical fitness.

**Write  
Idea**

People play sports for enjoyment and exercise. What is your favorite sport to play? Write a paragraph explaining what you like about this sport, who you play with, and how long you have played. How does this sport keep you physically fit?

**Special Words Vocabulary****Lesson 2****The Prefix “in-”****Story**

As I sat in math class, all I could think about was the **informal** dance after school. Since I hate to dress up, this dance would be perfect! I was deep in thought when Mr. Freed called on me to prove that the set of whole numbers was **infinite**. I answered, “The dance begins at 6 p.m.”

I knew I was in trouble by the look on Mr. Freed's face. He said, “Actually, your plans for this evening are **indefinite**. You may still be sitting in class at 6 p.m.” I was in shock. It was **inconceivable** to me that Mr. Freed could be so **insensitive** about my feelings. This was the biggest dance of the year! I had been **inattentive** in class, but I felt that staying after school was an **inappropriate** punishment for not paying attention to one question. I thought about pounding on something **indestructible** to release my anger but decided to talk to Mr. Freed after class instead.

As it turned out, Mr. Freed only kept me after school until 4 p.m. Staying after school had been **inconvenient**, but it didn't completely ruin my plans. I made it to the dance in plenty of time.

**Write  
Idea**

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This story uses many words with the prefix “in-.” The prefix “in-” means “not.” How would this story change if you dropped the prefix “in-” from the words? Write a new story that uses the root words instead.

**Special Words Vocabulary****Lesson 3****The Suffix “-able”****Story**

Jim and Ben were home alone. Their parents had **variable** work schedules, and this was one of the days the boys reached home before their parents. A thunderstorm hit, the skies grew dark, and suddenly the lights went out.

Mom was in the car when she heard the report about the storm. It said many trees were down and roads were **impassable**. Since it was **questionable** whether she would be able to get home safely, she pulled off the road to call the boys.

Jim said, “The electricity is out, but we have flashlights. Don't worry, Mom. I'm taking good care of Ben. Earlier he asked if he could go outside. I told him it would be **unacceptable** because he could get hurt.”

“Good thinking!” Mom said. “Leave the refrigerator door closed. We don't want the **perishable** food to spoil. I'm sure that the problem with the wires will be **repairable** once the storm passes.” She told the boys that their calm attitude was **admirable**.

Just then, Dad walked through the door. At first, he was **unrecognizable** because it was so dark. When Jim's flashlight beam spotted Dad, Ben yelled, “Hey, Dad, grab a flashlight and join the party!”

**smART  
Idea**

This story takes place during a thunderstorm. The mother in the story hears about the storm from a report on her car radio. Imagine that you are a television weather forecaster. An unusual change in the weather is about to occur. Write a short script (the words you would use “on the air”) to describe the weather. Create a map showing the approaching weather event.

**Special Words Vocabulary****Lesson 4****Multiple Meanings I****Story**

Mom said, “It is **negative** 10° outside. You three wear your hats, or you are **liable** to catch colds. And Bryan, please drive at a **moderate** speed. You might have an accident if you drive too fast! If you hit someone’s car in the mall parking lot, you’ll be **liable** for the repairs!” Instead of responding in a **negative** manner, Bryan responded cheerfully. He could see **that** Mom was worried.

Before we reached the highway, snow began to **obscure** Bryan's view. He slowed the car to a near crawl. With my **acute** hearing, I detected the long, low whistle of the passenger train. “Did you hear the train?” I asked. The painful look on Julie’s face expressed **acute** fear. We couldn’t see the train! How close was it? Julie began to argue with Bryan about what to do. It was clear someone would have to **moderate** the situation. In a strong, steady voice I said, “Stop arguing! Bryan, turn the car around, right now. Nothing at the mall is worth risking our safety!”

Although this happened 10 years ago, it is not some **obscure** memory. I remember it clearly. It was the shortest and longest trip we ever took to the mall.

**Write  
Idea**

The children’s adventure was caused by a big snowstorm. Has there ever been a big snowstorm in your town? What problems did it cause for your family? What problems did it cause for the community? How were these problems solved? Write a paragraph explaining these winter weather problems and their solutions.

**Special Words Vocabulary****Lesson 5****Multiple Meanings II****Story**

Last summer, I went to a student government **convention** in Virginia to learn leadership skills. We stayed at a **resort** on the beach. There were only two problems. One, the hotel was filled to **capacity**, so there were lines of people everywhere we went. And two, my adviser had the **capacity** to spoil my fun. Wherever I went, she was there to **badger** me about attending meetings. She was **consumed** by a desire to have me learn something every second of the day. I had to **resort** to hiding from her.

I'm glad Dad taught me the **convention** of holding doors for ladies. When I opened the door for one girl, she stopped to talk. Later, we went to a candy shop and **consumed** several candy bars. One evening, we hiked to a nearby campground. We sat on the beach and watched as the campfire **consumed** the wood. On the hike back, I thought I saw a **badger** pop its head out of a hole in the ground. I later found out that this type of animal doesn't live near the beach.

Overall, I had a great time. I met many new friends and learned a lot about student government.

**smART  
Idea**

In this story, the teenager went to a convention at a beach resort. Where else could you hold a convention for teenagers? Consider several locations other than the beach. Choose a place that offers enough room for everyone, as well as fun things for teenagers to do when they are not attending meetings. On a piece of paper, design a brochure that invites people to the convention. Make the convention and the location sound as interesting as possible. Use drawings or clippings from magazines to illustrate your brochure. Share your ideas and brochure with your class.

**Special Words Vocabulary****Lesson 6****The Prefixes “ir-” and “mis-”****Story**

Maybe I was being **irrational** when I assumed that my first day of work as a camp counselor would be fun. It wasn't!

First, I **miscalculated** how long it would take me to ride my bicycle to camp, so I was late! Once I arrived, things got worse. I thought I would be working with teenagers, but this was a **misconception**. I was assigned to work with preschoolers instead. I was sure I had been **misinformed** by the person who hired me, but he insisted that I had **misinterpreted** his comments. At this point, it was **irrelevant** whose mistake it was. The problem remained that I had no experience with young kids.

When I went into their cabin, the kids were writing on walls with markers. I tried to wash the marks off, but the damage was **irreversible**. When I did a puppet show for them, I **misquoted** one of the characters. The character was supposed to yell, “Pop!” but I yelled “Stop!” The kids started screaming then. The worst part of the day was when a child threw the key to my bike lock down the sink drain. The key was **irretrievable**, so I had to walk home.

**Write  
Idea**

Many words that begin with the prefix “mis-” refer to things done accidentally or incorrectly, for example, miscalculated and misinformed. Write a paragraph, either true or made up, about a day when things did not go according to plan. Use as many “mis-” words as you can.

**Special Words Vocabulary****Lesson 7****The Suffix “-ly”****Story**

Tim was crying **uncontrollably**. He had been knocked off of his tricycle when his older sister Karine accidentally bumped into him with her bike. Mom picked him up, and he finally calmed down.

“I didn't hurt Tim **intentionally**. I was riding **cautiously** like you told me to,” said Karine **irritably**.

“Don't be angry. I know you didn't mean to hurt your little brother, but he won't know **that** unless you say you're sorry,” explained Mom.

“I'm sorry, Tim. I didn't mean to knock you over,” said Karine **apologetically**.

“That's okay, Karine,” Tim sniffled. “You are a much better bike rider than I am,” he continued **convincingly**. Karine could see **that** Tim had forgiven her.

“I'm not really **that** good. If I were, I wouldn't have bumped into you,” Karine said **humbly**.

Mom smiled at her children **approvingly**. She knew they were good kids and thought they had handled the situation **remarkably** well.

**Write  
Idea**

Tim and Karine handled the situation remarkably well. Have you ever been in a situation where you accidentally hurt someone, or hurt their feelings? Write a paragraph about a similar situation. How did you handle it? How did the person respond? What, if anything, would you do differently if it happened again?

## Special Words Vocabulary

## Lesson 8

## Easily Confused Words



### Story

Bill went to his boss to discuss his **personal** concerns about his new job. “I’m learning a lot about the company and doing everything I can to **adapt** to my new responsibilities. I think I’m doing a **decent** job, but the person who **preceded** me in this position was very **adept** at running the office. I’m not as experienced as she was, but I am trying very hard to be! I am concerned **that** the company **personnel** are comparing my work to hers, and **that** they think I’m not doing a good job.”

“I understand your concern, Bill, but I think you are doing a fine job. At the next company meeting, let’s talk to your co-workers and see if we can work things out together,” said the boss.

Bill felt better after expressing his concerns. He left his boss’s office and walked onto the elevator. The elevator’s **descent** was calming. By the time he reached the bottom floor, Bill felt better. He stepped off the elevator, returned to his desk, and **proceeded** with his work. His talk with his boss had given him a new sense of confidence about the challenges of his new job.



### Write Idea

Bill’s boss seems to think that talking with the office personnel will help people accept Bill. Write a paragraph describing the next company meeting. What do you think the boss will say? What should Bill say to his co-workers? How will his co-workers react?

