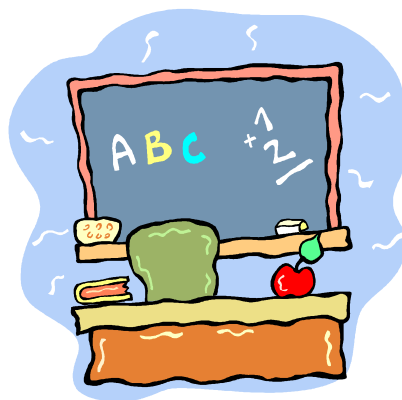


**Response  
to  
Literature**

**Writing Packet**

**Grades 3rd - 5th**





# Response to Literature

“a jewel with so many facets”

“Response to Literature” involves all varieties of reading and literature including:

- **Novel** (Example: *The Hobbit* - Who was your favorite character and why? How was evil portrayed?)
- **Biography** (Example: *Davy Crocket* - What was his contribution to early America? What are the characteristics you admire in this man? Why?)
- **Tall Tale** (Example: *Paul Bunyan* - What are the exaggerations the author uses in his story?)
- **Poetry** (Example: How does that poem make you feel? What is the author trying to communicate?)
- **Short Story** (Example: Compare a character from the story with someone you know.)
- **Fable** (Example: *The Ant and the Grasshopper* - Change the ending fo the story.)
- **Mythology** (Example: *How the Camel Got His Hump* - Take this and spin off into your own animal and how that animal got his skin, teeth, roar, etc.)

This type of writing requires you to **ANALYZE**. When writing this type of paper, consider the following:

- ✓ Read and ANALYZE the literature or text
- ✓ Get your overall “Gut feeling” as to what you have read (ANALYZE)
- ✓ Read the prompt and *think through* what is being asked (ANALYZE)
- ✓ Create an interesting thesis about the text. Make sure you are addressing the prompt or question being asked.
- ✓ Engage the reader’s attention in your introduction
- ✓ Provide textual evidence to support your thesis
- ✓ Use interesting details to support your ideas
- ✓ Correctly use the conventions of the English language

Remember, this is *your opinion*. Anything is good as long as you support your thesis with great details from the piece of literature you have read.

# Response to Literature Outline

## First Paragraph

- Think of a HOOK to engage your reader
- State your thesis after studying the prompt
- Include the title and author if available
- A short summary of the text can be used here or included in a paragraph of its own (second paragraph if needed)

## Second/Third/Fourth Paragraph (depending on age and ability of your child)

- Topic sentence that supports the thesis above
- Include supporting details from the text
- Be Creative and descriptive
- This style of writing is often your opinion “so go for it,” but include your supporting reasons from the text or personal experience

## Closing Paragraph

- Summarize what you have already stated
- Look back to your opening paragraph and either answer the question you asked or reword your thesis thought or statement
- End the writing with something catchy

# Response to Literature

## Suggestions for Three Paragraph Papers

**INTRO PARAGRAPH:** Always include the name of the story in the intro paragraph and the author if known.

Use phrases such as:        This response will show you.....  
  By the end of this paper, you will see.....

OR begin with a question: For example: Have you ever thought about the hare winning the race in the famous story *The Tortoise and the Hare*? It seems silly but....

OR rephrase the question that the assignment is asking and put it in the form of a statement.

**BODY PARAGRAPH:** Remember that a paragraph is simply a group of three or more sentences that work together. Each paragraph has a *topic sentence* that states what the paragraph is about and refers to the assignment question. The *body* of the paragraph explains the details of what you are saying. It is helpful to use examples from the literature you are writing about. The *concluding sentence* of this paragraph wraps up what you want to say.

**CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH:** This paragraph tells what your whole essay was about. Here are some words and phrases you might use to begin this third paragraph that will complete your essay:

To sum up...  
For this reason...  
Therefore...  
In conclusion...

# *The Frogs and the Well* by Aesop

Two frogs lived together in a marsh. But one hot summer the marsh dried up, and they left it to look for another place to live in, for frogs like damp places if they can get them. By and by they came to a deep well, and one of them looked down into it, and said to the other, "This looks like a nice cool place. Let us jump in and settle here." But the other, who had a wiser head on his shoulders, replied, "Not so fast, my friend. Supposing this well dried up like the marsh, how should we get out again??"

**PROMPT:** After reading this short fable, write an essay that shows understanding of the story and addresses the lesson that can be learned from the wise frog.

Note to Parents: This is a short fable, but an easy one to learn the Response to Literature process.

**1st Paragraph** - Have you ever done something and then regretted not taking the time to think it through? The fable *The Frogs and the Well* by Aesop..... (Introduction/Thesis sentence)

**2nd Paragraph** - The story begins with two frogs that need to find a new home because..... They are looking for something moist and almost end up..... (Body)

**3rd Paragraph** - One of the frogs was ready to hop down a deep well without thinking..... This could have been an enormous mistake..... In the story one of the frogs is referred to as "a wiser head" and he warns..... (Body)

**Conclusion** - Fortunately in this short story, one of the frogs is wise and sees the potential danger..... Slowing down and asking a question of his friend allowed the frog to have time to think..... Sometimes it is easy to act quickly and think later....

# *The Moon*

By Robert Louis Stevenson

The moon has a face like the clock in the hall;  
She shines on thieves on the garden wall,  
On streets and fields and harbor quays,  
And birdies asleep in the fork of trees.

The squalling cat and the squeaking mouse,  
The howling dog by the door of the house,  
The bat that lies in the bed at noon,  
All love to be out by the light of the moon.

But all of the things that belong to the day,  
Cuddle to sleep to be out of her way;  
And flowers and children close their eyes,  
Till up in the morning the sun shall rise.

**PROMPT:** Compare the things that Stevenson has written about the moon to what you know about the sun.

**PROMPT:** The poet never used the word “night” in his poem. Explain how the poet sets the scene as the night time.

## *A Close Call*

The deer took a good, long look at himself in the water of the lake. “My, how handsome my antlers are,” he thought. “They are so long, and curved, and wide.” But then he noticed his thin, stick-like legs and was not so pleased. He thought they were very ugly.

While the deer was looking in the water, a lion was watching him. She thought the deer looked nice and tasty. “Just right for dinner,” she said to herself.

When he saw the lion, the deer ran very fast. But his antlers got caught in the branches of a tree. Just as the lion was about to pounce on him, he got the antlers free and ran like the wind.

Safe at last, the deer said to himself, “How silly I was. I thought my antlers were so handsome, but they nearly cost me my life. And my legs, which I thought were so ugly, saved me.”

**PROMPT:** Explain why the title is a good name for this story.

**PROMPT:** Write another story about someone who learns to value something about themselves.



## Grade 4 Scoring Rubric (Response to Literature)

	Organization	Purpose	Focus	Content	Structure	Conventions	Response to Literature
4	<i>Clearly</i> Addresses all parts of the writing task	demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose	maintains a <i>consistent</i> Point of view, focus, and Organization: Paragraphs appropriately	includes a <i>clearly presented</i> central idea with <i>relevant</i> facts, details, and/or explanations	includes a <i>variety</i> of sentence types	contains <i>few, if any</i> , errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling) errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding	demonstrates a <i>clear understanding</i> of the literary work provides <i>effective</i> support through specific references to text and/or prior knowledge
3	addresses <i>most</i> of the writing task	demonstrates a <i>general</i> understanding of purpose	maintains a <i>mostly consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate	presents a central idea with <i>mostly</i> relevant facts, details, and/or explanations.	includes <i>some</i> sentence variety.	contains <i>some</i> errors in the conventions of the English language; errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.	demonstrates <i>an understanding</i> of the literary work provides <i>some</i> support for judgments through references to text and/or prior knowledge
2	addresses <i>some</i> of the writing task.	demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose	maintains an <i>Inconsistent</i> point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing.	<i>suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> facts, details, and/or explanations	includes <i>little</i> sentence variety	contains <i>several</i> errors in the conventions of the English language; errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.	demonstrates a <i>limited understanding</i> of the literary work. provides <i>weak</i> support for judgments.
1	addresses <i>only one</i> part of the writing task.	demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose	<i>lacks</i> a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing.	<i>lacks</i> a central idea but may contain <i>marginally</i> related facts, details, and/or explanations	includes <i>no</i> sentence variety	contains <i>serious</i> errors in the conventions of the English Language; errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.	demonstrates <i>little or no understanding</i> of the literary work. <i>fails</i> to provide support for judgments.