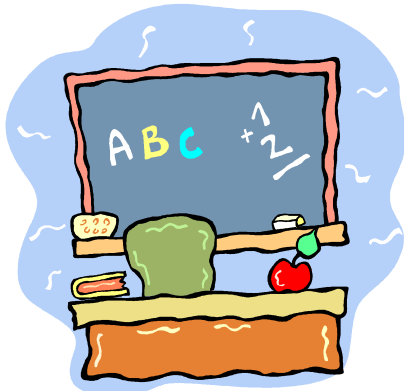


**Response
to
Literature**

Writing Packet

Grades 6th - 8th





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 Five Paragraph Papers

The intro paragraph is the same as for the three paragraph paper, however if the author's name is available, give the name of the story AND the author.

In thinking about writing three paragraphs for the Body of your paper, it is helpful to think of them as three points that you want to make. In each paragraph have a specific detail that refers to the assignment. If you make a statement or express an opinion, back it up by using something specific from the assignment. Your three paragraphs will be in order or sequence. Some key words for sequencing paragraphs are:

- So
- However
- Also
- Therefore
- Besides
- Even though

The conclusion paragraph is telling what your whole paper was about. Sometimes it is good to use transition words to tie up the three paragraphs and your conclusion paragraph. Some examples of these kinds of words are:

- Finally
- As a result
- In other words

Other phrases you can use to begin the conclusion paragraph are:

- To sum up
- For this reason
- 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....

Count That Day Lost

By George Elliot

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went-
Then you may count that day well spent.

But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay-
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face-
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost-
Then count that day as worse than lost.

PROMPT: Write an essay in which you present an understanding of the overall meaning of the story.

PROMPT: Compare the two days in the poem and write an essay describing their differences.

A Stupid Thing to Do

“Is that you, Enrique?” called Mr. Torres from his big chair in front of the television.

“Yeah, it’s me, Dad,” answered Enrique as he shut the front door behind him.

“Come in here a minute, Son, I want to talk to you,” said Mr. Torres.

Enrique sighed and slowly walked toward his father with his hands in his pockets. “I really need to do something in my room, Dad.”

“Listen, Enrique. Isn’t it a little late for you to be coming home from Lloyd Carlson’s house? I know it’s a Friday night, and there is no school tomorrow, but I don’t like you out on the streets at this hour.”

“Hey, Dad, the Carlsons just live in the next block. It’s not like I’ve been walking all over town,” replied Enrique, gesturing with his hands.

“What’s that on your hands, Son?” asked Mr. Torres.

Enrique looked at his hands and saw streaks of blue paint. “Oh, Lloyd and I were working on some models. I guess I wasn’t very careful with the paint.”

“Okay, Enrique, off to bed. We’ll talk about this more tomorrow. I don’t want you out on the streets when it gets this late, even if it’s just a block away. Things happen.”

Mr. Torres turned off the television and sat in his chair thinking about his son. He sighed, then he went out to the garage to see if the door was closed before he went to bed. He noticed that the can of blue spray paint was not on the shelf where it belonged.

The next morning, Mr. Torres called the Carlsons on the telephone. When he finished speaking to Mrs. Carlson, he hung up the phone and sat drinking a cup of coffee until Enrique came into the kitchen for breakfast.

“Well, good morning, Son,” said Mr. Torres with a smile. “You and Lloyd are in for a big surprise next Saturday. There’s a very special event taking place in town, and the Carlsons and I have signed you two boys up.”

Enrique’s face lit up. “What is it, Dad? A Bike-a-thon? A basketball game? Is ia celebrity coming to town?”

“No, Son,” said Mr. Torres. “None of those things. It’s our city’s third annual Paint the Town Day. About a thousand people are getting together to paint over graffiti that has been sprayed painted on walls, fences, and building. The only celebrity you’re likely to see is the major, who is handing out 5,000 gallons of paint and brushes for this project.

Enrique’s face fell. “You know, huh?”

“yes, Enrique. Lloyd’s parents thought you boys were over here last night. When I told them I thought you were over there, we figured out what you had done. My reist impulse was to call the police, but Mr. Carlson suggested we give you one more chance. On the phone this morning we came up with this idea as a suitable way for you boys to pay the community back for what you have done,” said his father. “Graffiti makes our city look bad and costs a lot of money to clean up. So next Saturday, you and Lloyd are going to put in a long day’s work.”

“Okay, Dad. It was a stupid thing to do, and I’m really sorry. Lloyd and I never did anything like that before, and I promise we won’t ever do it again. Next Saturday, we’ll be the two best painters in town. You can count on it!”

PROMPT: Write an essay in which you present an understanding of the characters and the overall meaning of the story.

Grade 7 Scoring Rubric (Response to Literature)

	Organization	Purpose	Focus	Content	Structure	Conventions	Response to Literature
4	Clearly Addresses all parts of the writing task	demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose	maintains a consistent point of view, focus, and organizational structure effective use of transitions	Includes a clearly presented central idea with relevant facts, details, and/or explanations	Includes a variety of sentence types	contains few, if any , errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling) errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding	Develops interpretations that demonstrate a thoughtful, comprehensive grasp of the text organizes accurate and coherent interpretations around clear ideas, premises, or images from the text provides specific textual examples and details
3	addresses most of the writing task	demonstrates a general understanding of purpose	maintains a mostly consistent point of view, focus, and organizational structure use of isolated and/or single word transitions	presents a central idea with mostly relevant facts, details, and/or explanations.	includes some sentence variety.	contains some errors in the conventions of the English language; errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.	develops interpretations that demonstrate a comprehensive grasp of the text organizes accurate and reasonably coherent interpretations provides textual examples and details to support the interpretations
2	addresses some of the writing task.	demonstrates little understanding of purpose	maintains an Inconsistent point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; ineffective or awkward transitions	suggests a central idea with limited facts, details, and/or explanations	includes little sentence variety	contains several errors in the conventions of the English language; errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.	develops interpretations that demonstrate limited grasp of the text includes interpretations that lack accuracy or coherence as related to ideas, premises, or images from text provides few, if any textual examples and details to support interpretations
1	addresses only one part of the writing task.	demonstrates no understanding of purpose	lacks a clear point of view, focus, organizational structure, and transitions that unify important ideas	lacks a central idea but may contain marginally related facts, details, and/or explanations	includes no sentence variety	contains serious errors in the conventions of the English Language; errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.	demonstrates little grasp of the text lacks an interpretation or may be simple retelling of the passage lacks textual examples and details