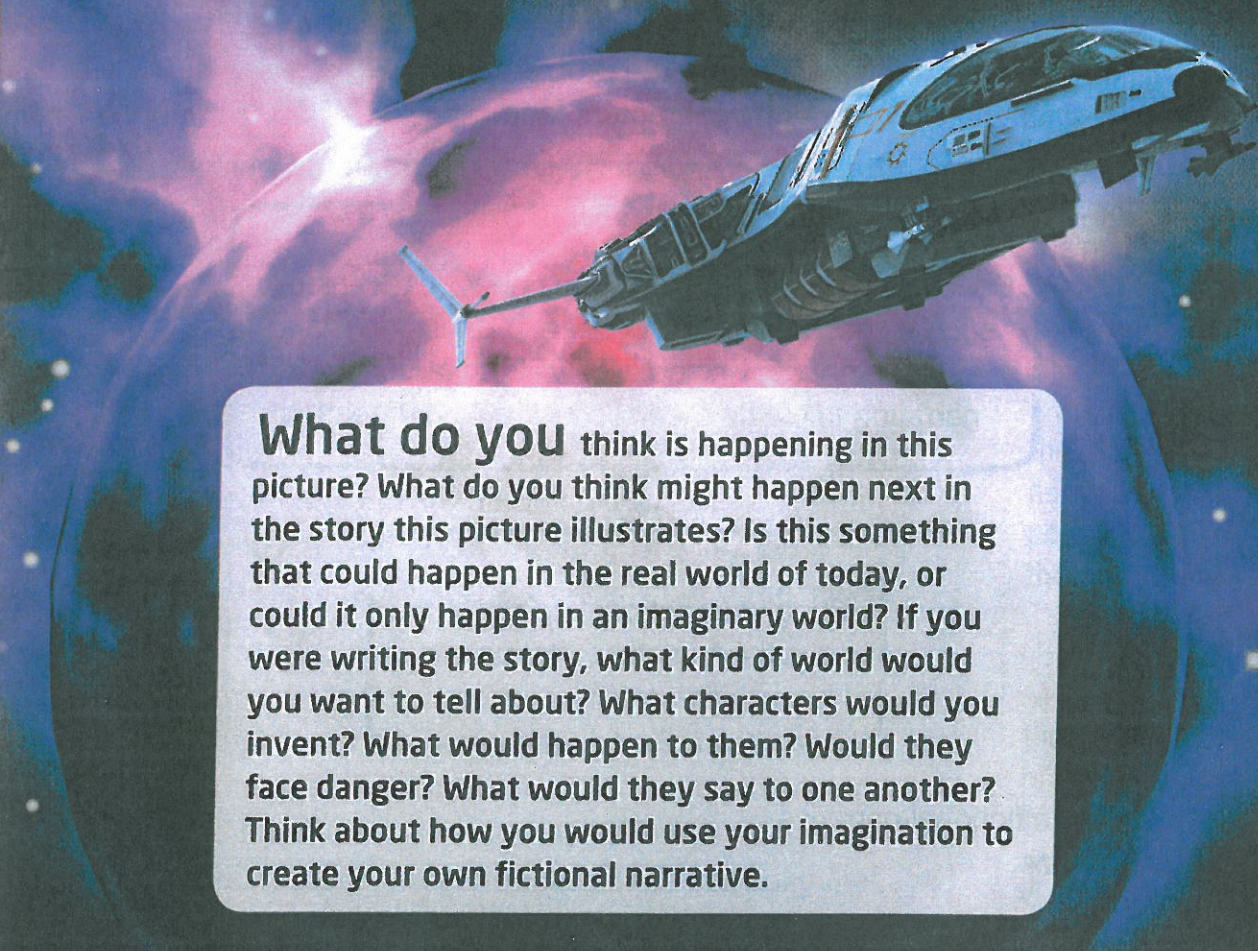


Writing Fictional Narratives

A futuristic spaceship with a large antenna is flying over a planet with a vibrant pink and purple atmosphere. The scene is set in space, with stars visible in the background.

What do you think is happening in this picture? What do you think might happen next in the story this picture illustrates? Is this something that could happen in the real world of today, or could it only happen in an imaginary world? If you were writing the story, what kind of world would you want to tell about? What characters would you invent? What would happen to them? Would they face danger? What would they say to one another? Think about how you would use your imagination to create your own fictional narrative.

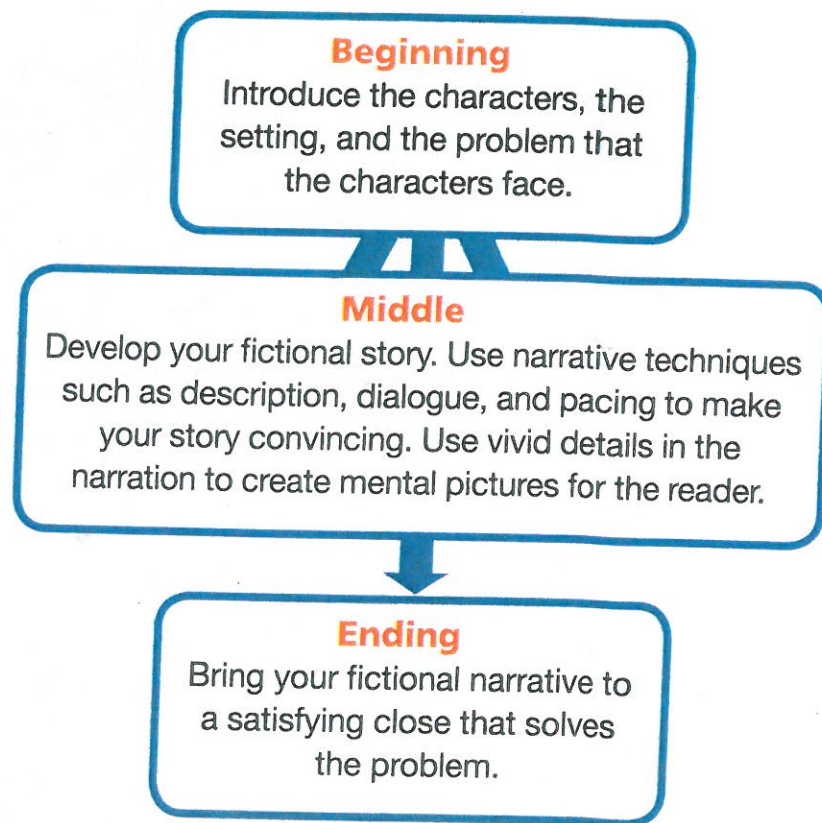
ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What makes a fictional narrative interesting?

What's a Fictional Narrative?

Think about exciting stories or novels you have read. Some of them may have included imaginary creatures or extinct animals that come back to life. Some of them may have taken place in an unfamiliar setting, like outer space or under the sea. Any of these possibilities, and many more, could happen in a fictional narrative.

In a **fictional narrative**, you tell a story that you make up. The flow chart below describes some ways to make your fictional narrative interesting.



Let's look at a fictional narrative.

Analyze a Mentor Text

This is an example of an interesting fifth-grade fictional narrative. Read it and then complete the activities in the boxes as a class.

Simon and the Spaceship

Clang! Crash! Cr-r-r-ack! Simon looked around him as the dozens of metal pieces littering the floor spoke to him. *No one can say I have a quiet job, he thought. Restoring spaceships is a noisy business. And what should I do about that letter I found? Should I tell someone, or keep it a secret?*

Simon worked for the Wyrrium Planet Museum. He restored spaceships from other planets that had crashed onto Wyrrium. He loved walking slowly through the big main hall of the museum. There were old spaceships from as far back as 2250 and shiny new ones, like the one he was restoring now. The old spaceships told him stories from the history of star exploration, and Simon loved to learn from them.

But the ship he was working on now was no ordinary spaceship. It was from the Battle of the Brown Hills, from just six months ago. For three days, pilots from Wyrrium had fought off invaders from an unknown galaxy. The invading force had been a raging storm. Although it was a close fight, in the end, the invaders lost and were all killed. The pilots of Wyrrium were heroes!

Simon wanted to do an excellent job on this spaceship, to honor the pilots who had shot it down. Before he put the spaceship back together, he polished each piece until it shone like a sun. But yesterday he had found something strange. As he was polishing the spaceship's control panel, he had found a piece of paper stuck behind it.

Simon had unfolded the paper and was surprised to see that the writing on it was in his own language. As he read the scribbled note, his heart grew heavy as lead. "To the people of your planet," it began. "I am writing this in haste. Your planes are shooting at us, and I am certain we will all die. But we come in peace."

BEGINNING The writer captures the reader's interest by describing the sounds that the metal pieces make. The beginning also introduces the problem the main character faces. Underline the main character's thoughts about the problem.

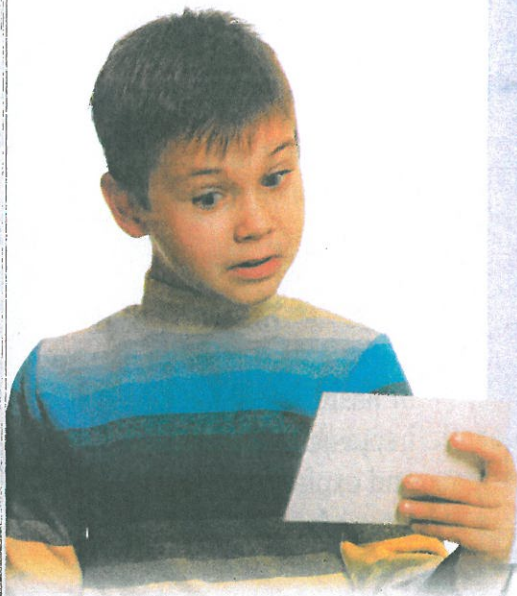
MIDDLE The writer uses vivid description to help the reader picture the narrative. Circle words in paragraph 2 that bring the narrative to life.

MIDDLE The writer uses the narrative technique of flashback to tell what happened the day before and explain the problem Simon faces. Underline the sentences that tell what happened the day before.



MIDDLE The writer tells part of the story through the words of a letter. The author also uses dialogue, or the words characters speak, to add interest and explain the resolution of the story.

ENDING Writers make sure the ending of the narrative solves the problem that the characters face in a satisfying way. Underline sentences in the narrative that give a satisfying ending.



"We seek your help, for the people of our planet have run out of food and are starving. Even if we die, please help them so they may live." The note was signed "Captain Rosario Garcia."

Simon hadn't known what to do. Should he tell someone about the note? If he did, the pilots of Wyrrium would no longer be heroes. But if he kept the note to himself, people in a faraway galaxy could die. Now, as he thought again about the letter, Simon felt numb and cold like ice, but he was also sweating. The spaceship was no longer just a silent, battered vehicle. It was a messenger. It cried out to him. He had to act.

The museum director's office was on the first floor of the building. The director, Sandra Cooke, greeted him warmly, with a smile. "You should see this," he said. "I found it in one of the spaceships." His hand was shaking as he gave her the note.

He watched Ms. Cooke's face grow serious as she read. Then she glanced at him and picked up the phone. In a few minutes she hung up and said, "That was the director of national security. He is going to find out where this spaceship came from and prepare to send rockets with food to that planet."

"What about our pilot heroes?" Simon asked.

"This note changes the story of the Battle of the Brown Hills," Ms. Cooke said. "But if we're lucky, maybe we will all be heroes anyway."

Simon smiled. He was glad he had made the right decision.

Think About It ▶

What aspect of the narrative do you like best?

Do you think the reader is likely to find the narrative interesting? Why or why not?

Vocabulary Study: Figurative Language

Figurative language is language that makes writing more vivid by comparing one thing to another in a surprising way. Three important types of figurative language are simile, metaphor, and personification.

A **simile** compares two unlike things using the word *like* or *as*: *The sun was like a ball of fire*. A **metaphor** compares two things without using *like* or *as*: *The sun was a ball of fire*. **Personification** gives an object human qualities, such as feelings and actions: *The sun smiled on the earth*. Work with your class or a partner to complete the chart below.

Sentence	Type of Figurative Language
Her heartbeat was a hammer pounding.	Metaphor
The teakettle screamed from the stove.	
His hair was like soft moonlight.	
The dog's fur was a blanket he wore year-round.	
The rocks grumbled as they shifted.	
My face was red as a beet.	

Look back at the fictional narrative on pages 47–48. Find examples of each type of figurative language, and write the phrases or sentences in the chart.

Type of Figurative Language	Example
Simile	
Metaphor	
Personification	

Writing Process

Now that you have read and analyzed a fictional narrative, you are going to create your own by following these steps of the writing process.

1. Get Ready: Brainstorm Think about the main character and events. What does the main character look like? What problem will he or she face? Decide whether you want to write about things that could really happen or about things that could happen only in a fantasy.

2. Organize Use a graphic organizer to plan your fictional narrative.

3. Draft Create the first draft of your fictional narrative.

4. Peer Review Work with a partner to evaluate and improve your draft.

5. Revise Use suggestions from your peer review to revise your fictional narrative.

6. Edit Check your work carefully for spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors.

7. Publish Create a final version of your fictional narrative.

Writing Assignment

In this lesson, you will write your own fictional narrative. As you create this piece, remember the elements of the mentor text that were most interesting and effective. Read the following assignment.

Write a story about someone who learns something that totally changes his or her view of a situation.

1. Get Ready: Brainstorm

The first step in writing a fictional narrative is to choose your main character and setting.

Here's how the author of the mentor fictional narrative brainstormed character and setting.

Character	
Who is the main character?	Simon, a museum worker
What makes this character special?	He restores spaceships that tell the history of space exploration.
Setting	
Where and when does the narrative take place?	In a museum on the planet Wyrium, in the future.
What is unique about the setting of the story?	The people of Wyrium recently fought a battle against ships from another galaxy.

Try It!

Use a Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Now use the chart below to help brainstorm topics for your own fictional narrative.

Characters	
Who is the main character?	
How would you describe his or her personality?	
What makes this character special?	
Setting	
Where and when does the narrative take place?	
What is unique about this setting?	

Brainstorm Ideas for Your Narrative

Next, think of a problem your character will face in the narrative. You can use a graphic organizer to think about how the character and setting are related to the problem. Here is how the author of the mentor text used the graphic organizer.

PROBLEM Your character should face a problem. Make clear what the problem is and why it is a problem.

NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT Plan how the problem will be developed and how you will unfold the events of the plot to make the story interesting. Outline the use of narrative techniques, such as dialogue.

RESOLUTION Plan how the problem will be resolved and how to make the ending satisfying for the reader.

Problem

While restoring an enemy spaceship from a famous battle, Simon learns that the people in the spaceship were not attacking but seeking help for their starving people. Simon must decide whether to share this new information or keep it to himself. If he shares the information, his planet's pilots will no longer seem like heroes.

Narrative Development

Simon discovers a letter hidden in the spaceship. It tells him that the others were not really attacking.

Simon worries about what to do, but then shows the letter to the museum director. In their dialogue, she arranges to send help to the faraway planet.

Resolution

The museum director says that perhaps they will all be heroes of a different kind.

Try It!

Use a Graphic Organizer for Brainstorming

Now use the graphic organizer below to brainstorm the problem and how you will develop the narrative and resolution of your fictional piece.

Problem

Narrative Development

Resolution

2. Organize

You are almost ready to begin a draft of your fictional narrative. Create a story map by extending the graphic organizer you used during brainstorming. Add details about how you will develop the narrative. You can then refer to the story map as you work through your draft. The writer of the mentor text completed this story map.

BEGINNING Begin by introducing the setting, the main character, and the problem.

Character

Simon: worker who restores spaceships in the museum

Setting

The Wyrrium Planet Museum
The future

Problem

While restoring a spaceship from a famous battle, Simon learns that the people in the spaceship were not attacking but seeking help for their starving people. Simon must decide whether to share this new information or keep it to himself.

MIDDLE Include events that show how the problem developed and how the character deals with the problem. Include vivid details and dialogue to make your writing interesting.

Narrative Development

If Simon shares the information he has discovered, the heroic pilots of his planet will look bad. He tries to go back to work, but he can't ignore the note he found. He decides to share it with the director, Ms. Cooke. As part of their dialogue, Ms. Cooke calls the director of national security, who makes a plan to ship food to the planet that sent the spaceships.

ENDING Think of an ending that will resolve the problem and be satisfying for the reader.

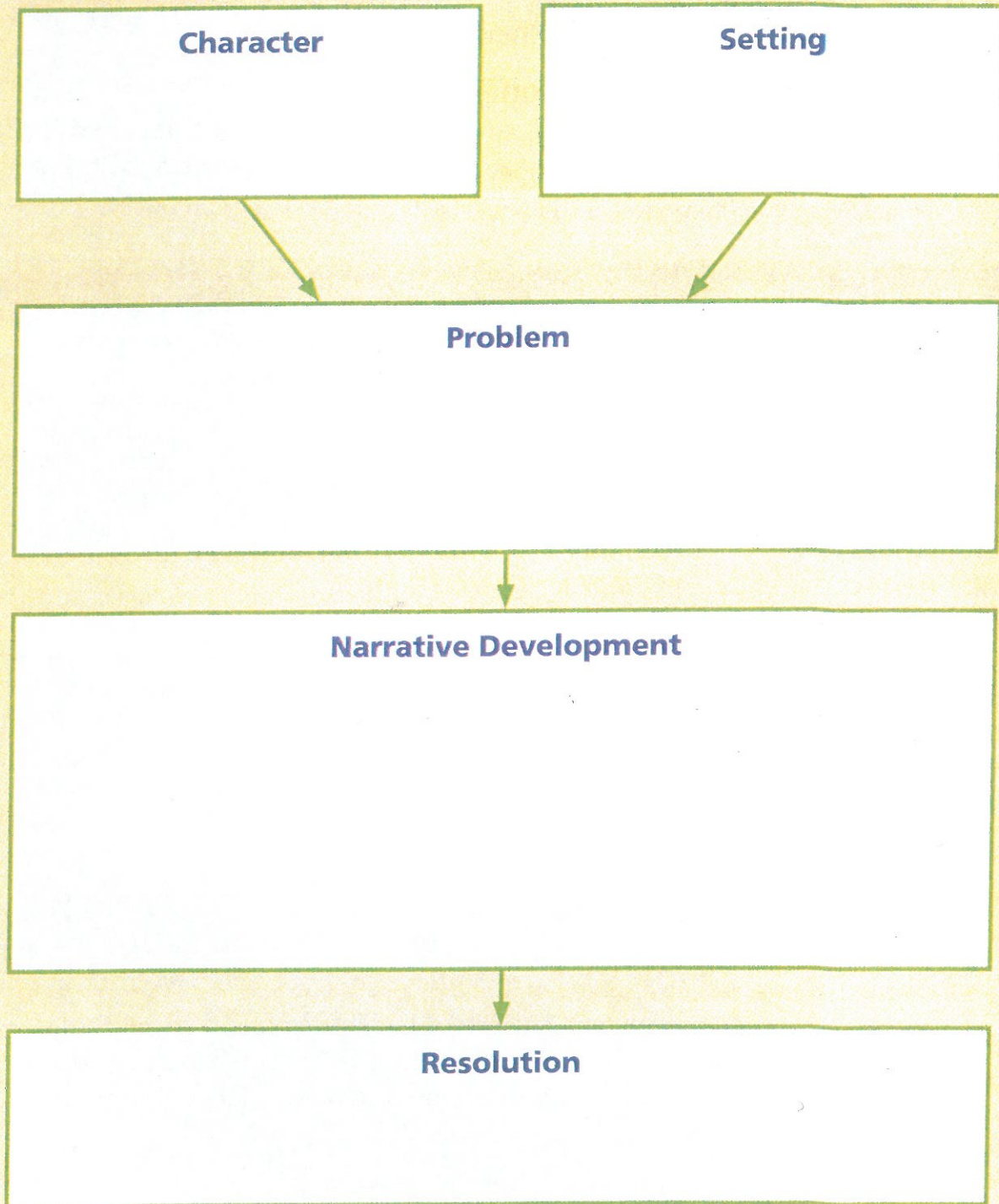
Resolution

Simon asks Ms. Cooke what will happen to the pilot heroes. She tells him they will all be heroes if the plan to feed the starving people succeeds.

Try It!

Organize Your Fictional Narrative

Now use the graphic organizer below to organize the narration and resolution for your draft.



3. Draft

Now it is time to begin the first draft of your fictional narrative. Remember, your draft does not have to be perfect! This is the time to use your notes, get your story down in some sort of organized way, and have fun. You will have time to revise your writing later. Start by drafting your fictional narrative on a computer or on a separate sheet of paper. Make your characters come to life!

Writer's Craft: Using Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitional words and phrases tie together the sentences and paragraphs of your writing. Transitional words and phrases can show time order, causes and effects, place, similarities and differences, additional ideas, and degree of importance.

Type of Transition	Examples
Time clues	after, afterward, at last, before, finally, last week, meanwhile, next, since, soon, when
Causes and effects	as a result, because, due to, so that, therefore, thus
Place clues	above, around, beside, down, over, there, under
Similarities and differences	like, similarly, although, but, however, nevertheless, in contrast, instead, unlike
Additional ideas	also, another, furthermore, in addition, too
Degree of importance	above all, better, best, equally important, most important, strongest, worse, worst

The author of the mentor text uses transitional words and phrases in paragraph 3.

TRANSITIONAL WORDS AND PHRASES

Read this section of the mentor text. Underline the transitional words and phrases.

But the ship he was working on now was no ordinary spaceship. It was from the Battle of the Brown Hills, from just six months ago. For three days, pilots from Wyrium had fought off invaders from an unknown galaxy. The invading force had been a raging storm. Although it was a close fight, in the end, the invaders lost and were all killed. The pilots of Wyrium were heroes!

Try It!

Write Your First Draft

On a computer or a separate sheet of paper, continue the draft of your fictional narrative. Remember to use transitional words and phrases to tie your writing together. Use this drafting checklist to help you as you write.

- ✓ A good beginning gets your reader's attention. You can begin with dialogue, a dramatic statement, or a compelling action.
- ✓ Introduce the main character and setting at the beginning of the narrative.
- ✓ Develop the narrative around the problem the main character faces.
- ✓ Show how your character deals with the problem in the middle of your story.
- ✓ Show how the problem is resolved in the ending.
- ✓ Use transitional words and phrases to tie the events together.

Tips for Writing Your First Draft

- Write down key descriptions and pieces of dialogue before you begin writing. Sometimes this is a great warm-up to get you started.
- Think about a difficult situation that you have been in. And remember, in your narrative, *anything* can happen!
- Sometimes visualizing helps writers understand their characters. If you get stuck, try drawing a picture.