

***Primary Writing:  
A Three-Part Series***

**Seminar 1  
Teacher's Packet**

A KET professional development workshop for educators approved for Professional Development Training by the Kentucky Department of Education.

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# ***Primary Writing***

## **A Three-Part Series**

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### **Overview of the Series**

**Targeted Audience:** Primary teachers

*Primary Writing* offers teachers strategies for helping their students develop as writers. The programs focus on the nature of primary students and their writing and how to use the writing workshop in the primary classroom. The series offers primary teaching strategies in two specific writing genres: personal and informative. The extensive classroom footage featured in the series was videotaped over the course of a school year to allow viewers to see young authors develop over time.

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#### **About This Teacher Packet**

In addition to the overview of the series, this packet includes a summary of Seminar 1, an agenda for the program, brief biographies of the host and presenters, and specific materials related to seminar content. You'll find more details in the table of contents on page 4.

**Please note: The blackline masters for Donna Vincent's train analogy are included in a separate appendix. If you are obtaining these print materials electronically, it may take a considerable amount of time to download the appendix to your computer and/or to print the appendix out. Should you find this impractical, please call KET professional development at 1-800-432-0951 and we will mail you a copy of the train materials.**

#### **Series Format**

Each 90-minute program in the *Primary Writing* series includes classroom footage of students and teachers engaged in the writing process. Materials and information needed for participation in the seminars are provided in the videotape and/or included in the teacher packets.

## **Professional Development Credit**

**Stage of Participant Development:** Practice/Application

**The Kentucky Department of Education has approved all KET Star Channels Seminars for professional development credit if schools or districts choose to include them in their professional development plans. Districts or schools may choose to include preparation and/or follow-up time as part of professional development. For example, if a teacher participates in one 90-minute program and spends an additional 30 minutes in related activities, he or she could be awarded a total of two hours professional development credit.**

**Individual teachers who wish to use these videotapes for professional development credit should check with their school professional development chair or with their district professional development coordinator.**

**Professional development can also be used to satisfy requirements for the fifth year program. Contact your local university or the Division of Teacher Education and Certification at 502-564-4606 for more information.**

## **Seminar 1:**

The first seminar in the series focuses on two primary classrooms: an upper primary and a lower primary. Topics covered include using reading samples, idea development and support, leads and transitions, prewriting activities, drafting, and revision with a focus on personal writing pieces.

### **Packet Contents**

• Seminar Host and Presenters	5
• Seminar Agenda	6
• Face for “What’s Going On?”	7
• Chart for “What’s Going On?”	8
• Whole Language: Going from Whole to Part and Back Again	9
• Mini-Lesson for Going from Whole to Part and Back Again	10
• Blackline Masters for Going from Whole to Part and Back Again	11
• Graphic Organizer for Personal Narratives	13
• Sample Student Personal Narratives	14
• The Train Analogy	18
• Personal Narrative Revision Checklist	19
• Blackline Master for Thoughtshots and Snapshots	20
• Personal Narrative Bibliography	21
• Acknowledgments	22

## About the Seminar Host and Presenters

Host **Starr Lewis** is currently the director of the Kentucky Writing Program. She has also served as a writing portfolio consultant for the Kentucky Department of Education and as a regional writing resource teacher. Starr's background includes 17 years of experience teaching high school English and psychology in Bullitt County, Kentucky. She has a degree in secondary education from the University of Kentucky and a master's in education from the University of Louisville.

Joining Starr is **Donna Vincent**, district-wide writing consultant for Muhlenberg County Schools. For the past five years, she also has served as co-director of the National Writing Project at Western Kentucky University. Before taking her job with Muhlenberg County, Donna was a statewide primary writing consultant. She has 16 years experience in elementary schools and is a KERA Fellow and a Writing Fellow. Donna has a Rank I from Western Kentucky University with a reading specialist endorsement.

Appearing on videotape during the first seminar are **Dianne Bowles** and **Constance Meriwether**. Dianne teaches in the primary program at Greenville Elementary in Muhlenberg County. She has taught in Kentucky public schools for 22 years. Dianne has been chosen for *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* and was nominated for Ashland Oil's Outstanding Teacher Award. Dianne has her bachelor's and master's degrees from Western Kentucky University and is presently working on her Rank I.

**Connie** also teaches primary at Greenville Elementary. For the past six years, she has taught in a multi-age classroom of four- to seven-year-olds. Connie has an M.A. in elementary education and is working on her Rank I in elementary guidance. She also participated in the Western Kentucky University Writing Project X.

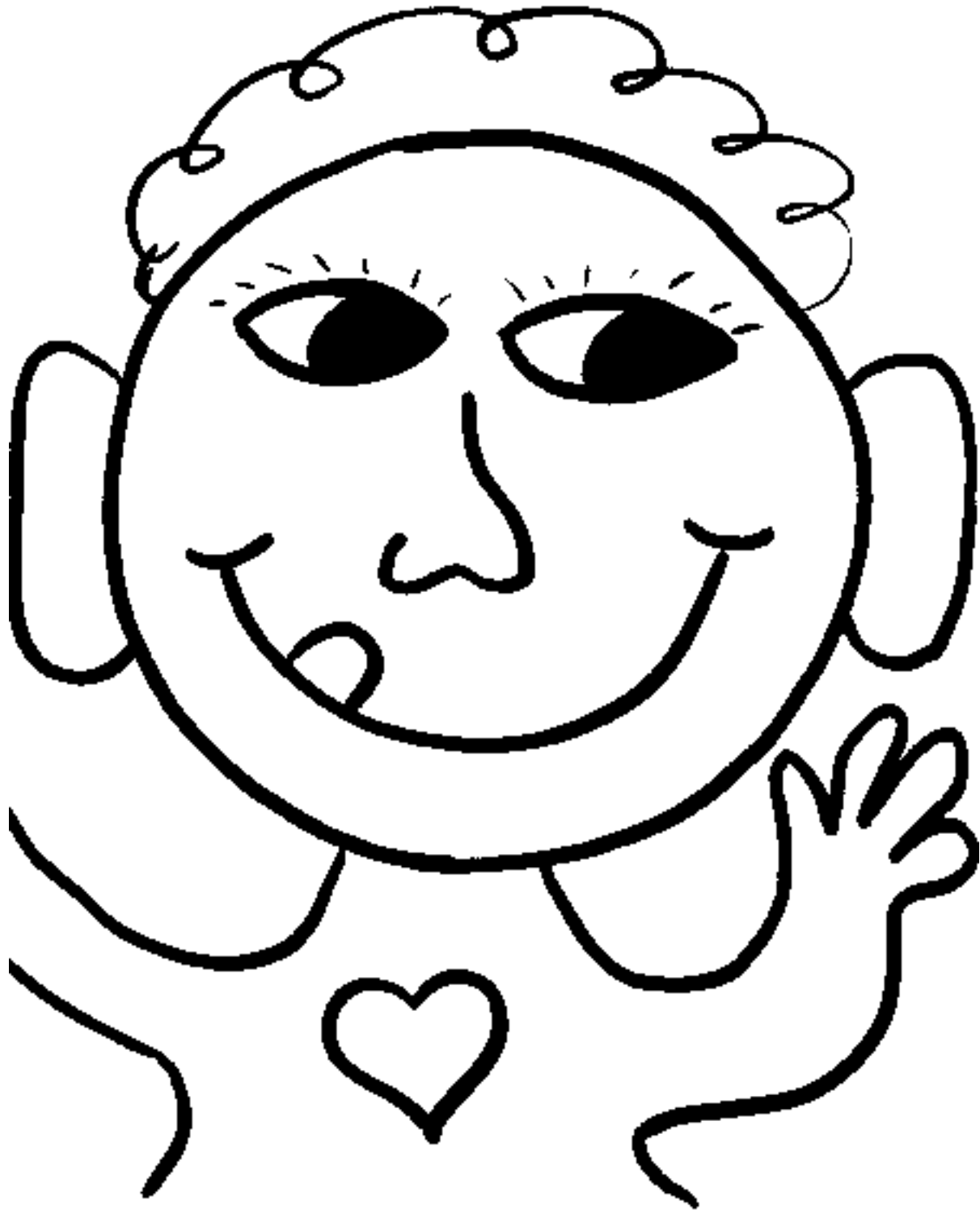
## Seminar Agenda

<b>Welcome</b>	Starr Lewis, Host
<b>Preview of series</b>	Starr Lewis and Donna Vincent, Presenter
<b>Prewriting in the upper primary: Classroom video</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading samples</li><li>• Idea development and support</li><li>• Leads and transitions</li></ul>	Donna Vincent
<b>Description of work stations</b>	
<b>Prewriting in the lower primary: Classroom video</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focusing on purpose</li><li>• Meeting the needs of the audience</li></ul>	
<b>Drafting in the lower primary: Classroom videotape</b>	
<b>Revising in the upper primary: Classroom videotape</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Snapshots</li></ul>	
<b>Wrap-up discussion</b>	Donna Vincent and Starr Lewis
<b>Concluding remarks</b>	Starr Lewis

### Materials Needed for Participation in the Seminar

Please have the following items with you when you watch the videotape:

- Your copy of this packet
- Pencil
- Paper



# What's Going On?



**I see**



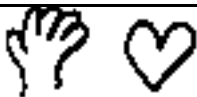
**I hear**



**I smell**



**I taste**



**I feel**

**It's**

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## **Whole Language: Going from Whole to Part and Back Again**

**Donna Vincent, Muhlenberg County Schools**

A whole lot of us misunderstand whole language. Yes, most of us now start with the whole, but I'm afraid that some now neglect the parts. Both are essential for good reading and writing.

Traditionally, we started with the parts: letters, sounds, words, sentences, etc. It took us a long time to get to stories. With whole language, we start with stories first—whole, meaningful stories so that emergent readers can focus on comprehension. When we start with the parts (letters and sounds) we send the message that reading is simply bringing words to a pronounceable level. The first message must be that there IS a message: an idea for readers to think about, to be entertained by, etc.

Rewriting predictable texts, then reading and reading the innovation until it's memorized is only the first step. The reason we do that is to give context to the parts we want to focus on. From this meaningful context we pull parts to study: capitalization, punctuation, tense, initial sound, etc. Isolating these only after they've been attached to whole, meaningful pieces allows students to see these parts differently. Inserting them back into the meaningful whole and using them in context again completes the cycle and gives relevancy to both the whole and the parts.

Emergent readers and writers will not remember every word used in the lesson; but if we model our written language instruction after oral language acquisition, we'll see that good is definitely gained from the experience.

When babies begin to attempt to use language, they certainly make approximations. We accept them with enthusiasm, while naturally using "whole" language in their presence. We don't expect babies immediately to be able to use every word and sentence that we do, but that doesn't stop us from using them (thank goodness).

Writing and reading instruction should be treated the same way. Letting them watch (and help) us create text exposes them to sound/symbol relationships, left to right directionality, and mechanics as well as focused purpose and idea development. We now have a whole, meaningful context from which to learn about the parts of language.

As far as the criteria on the holistic scoring guides, we were attempting to help lower primary students understand audience and purpose. With this lesson, the purpose is to give clues which are so focused that the audience will be able to figure out *What's Going On?* Don't expect many of the independent pages to be proficiently focused at first. They're at different developmental stages. As the kids share their pieces with their class, the unfocused ones will get a real lesson in audience awareness when no one can figure out their event.

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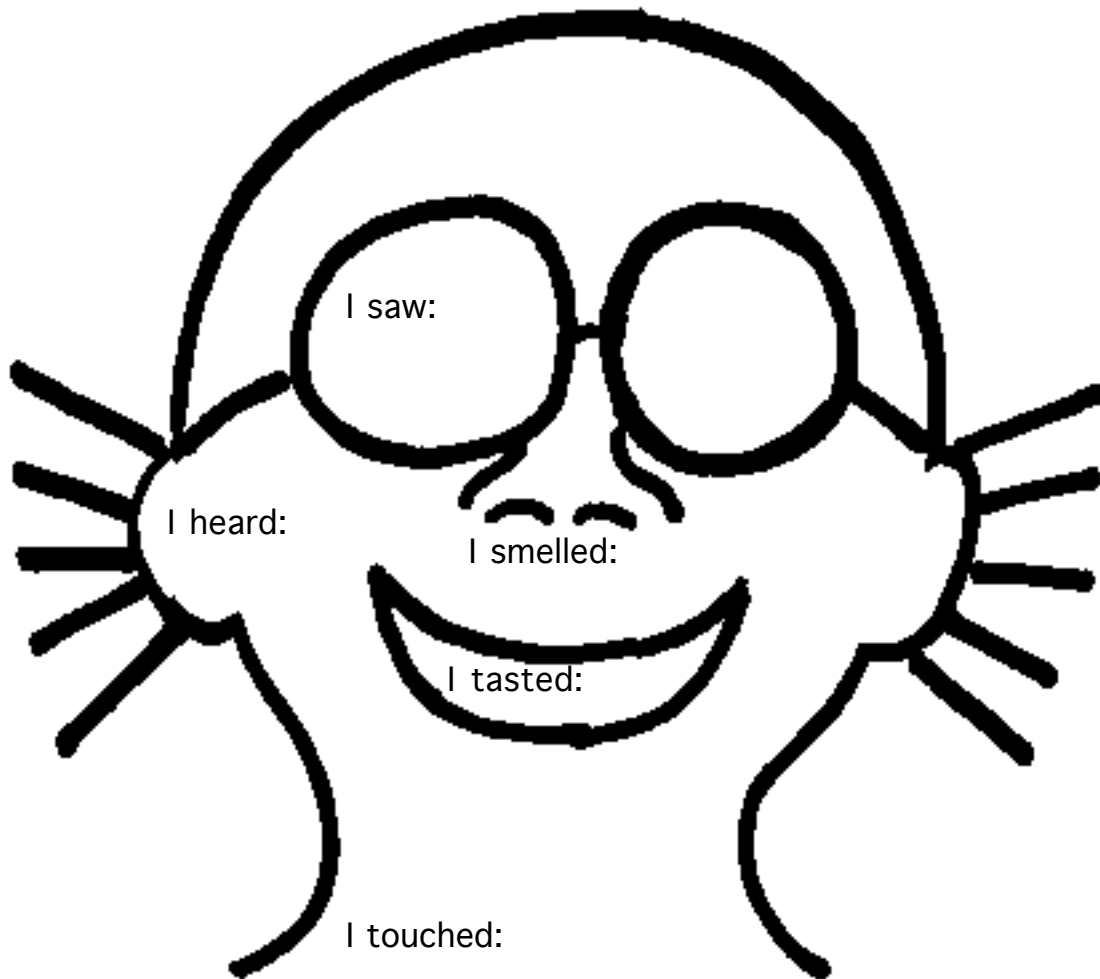
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## **Mini-Lesson for Going from Whole to Part and Back Again**

- Read *What's Going On?* by Roxanne Williams. Discuss the senses and how they help us figure out what's going on.
- Collaboratively rewrite the text to focus on a different event: recess, morning, bedtime. Write each sentence on a different colored sentence strip. (Will use color-coding later.) Discuss the focus and encourage ideas which meet the needs of the audience.
- Call someone else in to read and see if they can figure out what's going on. If they can't, discuss why and revise.
- Read, read, read, and memorize the new text.
- Cut the sentence strips apart so that each card has one word on it. The end punctuation has its own separate card. Pass out a card to each student.
- Let students hold their cards throughout the "parts" activity, as you call for one color at a time. (For youngers, you might even have the sentence written twice. Cut apart the one on top. Leave one in the chart which is whole. Let them do the activity, then match their words as they replace them in the chart at the end, by simply covering the matching word with their word.)
- Count how many words are in the title. Line up that many chairs in the front of the room (side by side). Include a chair for the end punctuation mark.
- Talk about capital letters in titles and at the beginning of sentences. Choose a person to hold the first word in the sentence and have that person put on a cap to remind everyone about "cap"italization. (With the title, everyone wears a cap.)
- Each time call up the people who have the \_\_\_\_\_ colored cards.
- Line them up in the correct order, or if they're developmentally ready, let them organize themselves. Have each person hold a card and sit in a chair. You may need to tell kids what their cards say just before we start.
- As each person says the word on his card, have him stand up, hold up the card, and sit down.
- The one with the end punctuation will do one of three things depending upon what kind of mark he's holding. with a period, he will just squat down (because your voice goes down) and make himself into a ball. With a question mark, he will stand up (because your voice goes up) and form a question mark with his body. With an exclamation mark, he will stand up (because your voice goes up) and move his body in an excited way, then form an exclamation mark with his body.
- Do this with each sentence, then put the parts back on the chart in the right order to return to the whole.
- Try the independent page. Give choices. Share to see if they're focused.

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Why I Felt \_\_\_\_\_



**Building the Foundation the Write Way**  
Donna Vincent/Susan Miller

**Personal Narrative**  
Blackline master #1

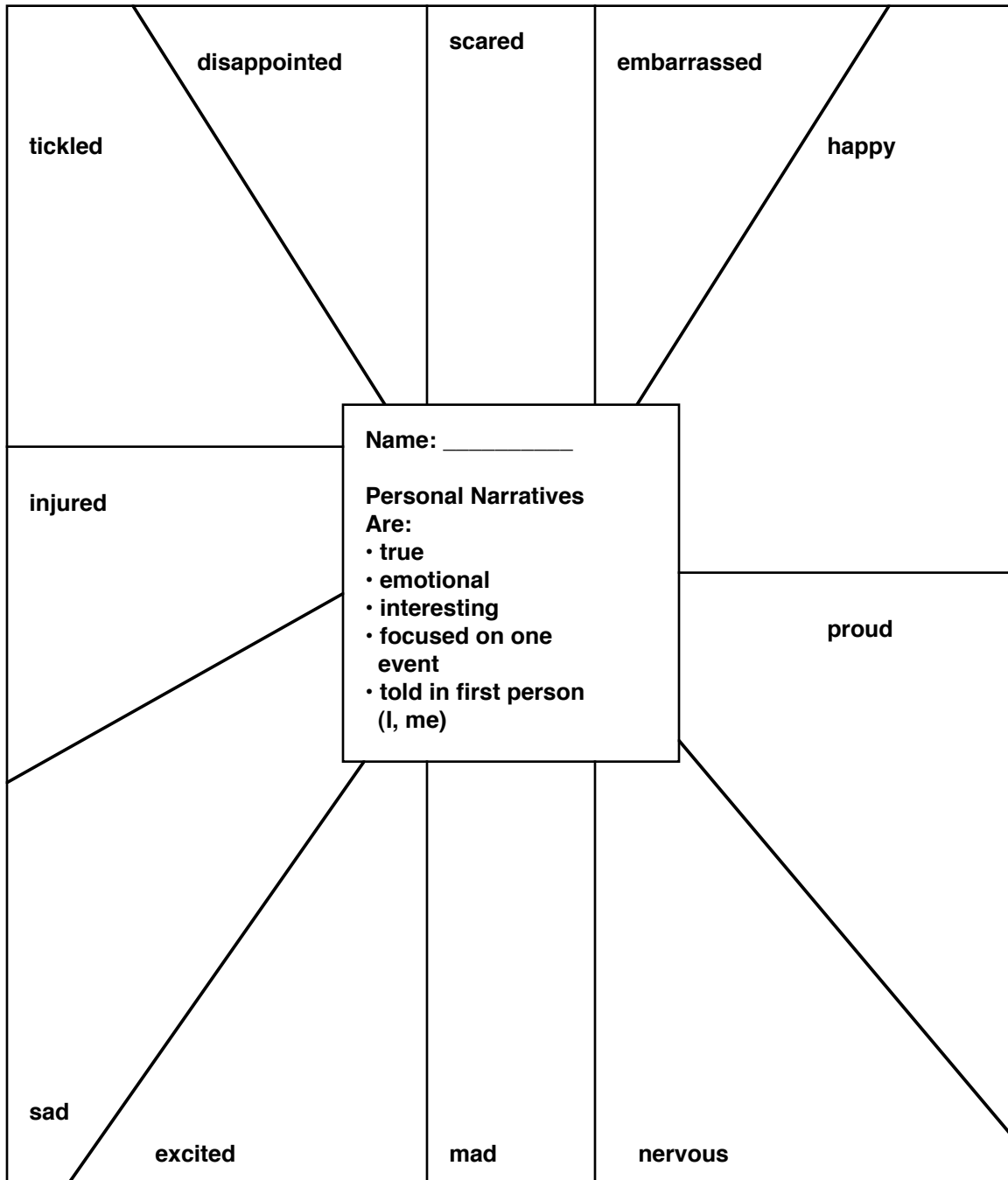


I thought:

I said:

I acted and looked:

How I Showed I Felt \_\_\_\_\_.



## Sample Student Personal Narratives

### My Dog Dusty

Drip drip the sound went on as I poured more and more water in the bucket. Dusty slurped it all up. “You must be thirsty,” I said.

As I walked up the steps I heard my mom and dad talking about Dusty. They said that Dusty would have to go out to my uncle’s because he was sick. When I heard that I rushed into the room. “No I said Dusty is my baby.” But my big mouth didn’t help. Dusty still had to go to the farm.

As I rode out with my dad to my uncle’s house I thought, “What if there’s a tornado and Dusty is caught in it. He wouldn’t know what to do.” When we got there my dad started talking to me saying “OK we’re here. Let’s get out.” treating me like a baby. I got out of the car. We put Dusty in a great big fenced in field where he could run.

Later on that day I went to visit Dusty. “Hey boy I said.” tears started to roll down my eyes like a stream. I went in the house to see my uncle. “Promise you’ll take care of him.” “I promise he said”. I got into the car and we went down the gravel road. The sun shined on me. I couldn’t believe it was still such a beautiful day. I was so sad I had to leave Dusty.

When we got home I went to Dusty’s empty cage. Slowly I went up the steps. I heard the birds cheeping. I saw the wind blow and felt it rubbing my cheek. It reminded me of Dusty’s fur. I remembered the very first time I touched his fur when he was a puppy. It was soft and warm. I thought about him all day I could here his bark in my mind.

Later on in my room I thought about Dusty. He had been a good friend to me and where ever I go he will be in my heart.

## **When I Was Nervous**

On Sat. the church choir practices. My mom directs my choir. When she told me I had a solo I didn't think it would be bad. It would only be my church. On my way to church I was ready to go. My sister said, "Why are you so happy?" "I can't wait to sing," I told her . When we got to the church it looked like there were thousands of people. My stomach started to bubble and I said, "I can't do this." I was in the choir stand and it was my turn to sing. The music was starting and I was thinking of all those people and me messing up in front of them. They would laugh specially my friends that had to sing to. Right before I had to sing I told my mom I couldn't do this. But my mom said, "You can do it." I saw my eyes move back and felt my teeth chattering and then I had to start. I said my words which was "Don't you know my God. I can feel his presence". Once I was done I felt like singing again. I learned that you should never be afraid to sing even if there are a lot of people.

## The Hat

“No Molly” I screamed as Molly jerked my hat off my head pulling my hair pins out of my head. “What” Molly said looking puzzled. “What did I do?” “Oh this is just great now my hat will fall off on stage” I said furiously. When we got inside the room for waiting our turn I kept looking in the mirror that was on a table to feel my nose. It felt rough where the paint was still on so I knew it was ok and I could see that my hat was still on. I sat on a beanbag and I sat at a table and read the program but I still felt worried. They would not let us play with the toys so some groups practiced and some sat around and talked. But me I paced around the room and worried about my hat. Soon it was our turn to go. When I got on stage I dropped my hat. I looked behind me it was not there. I looked in front of me. There it was. I picked it up and got on stage. I was very embarrassed. For the rest of the show I was great. When we got off they said, “We were goo” so I was not worried any more.

## My Baby's Gone

As the sun spied from the window I awoke from my big water bed and tucked my favorite baby doll to my chest. I swept my feet outside to catch some fresh air and smell the fresh cut grass. I took my baby doll to my pretend car which was the golf cart, I squelched her up to my side, and drove down the street with the air brushing itself through my hair, giving me a breeze.

All of a sudden I heard a yell. It came from my house so I turned around and went home. It was just Josh and Kirby wanting on, so I said "Hop in" and drove some more. We drove around for a long time. I had been driving so long that my hands were sore but I still had to drive to the garage. Before I did I noticed that I didn't have my baby doll beside me. Instead of hearing the next door neighbors dog barking I heard **POP!!!!**

I jumped so high you couldn't imagine. I turned around and saw MY baby doll on the ground with her head missing. Memories of her came to haunt me in my heart. I could see her from the time I walked towards the Christmas tree only reaching for my baby to the time I took a bat with her getting water in her mouth, and yelling for mom to come help. I grabbed her gently trying to put her head back on. But it was no use. She was gone forever. As I rushed to the door I stopped and drifted in the kitchen where Mom had been cooking breakfast. I told Mom what had happened but just then Josh came in saying the doll fell off and I ran over her! It wasn't true. Josh was lying and mom believed him. I was so mad I thought I wanted to go and break everything that Josh had, but instead I held my tears and my anger in and walked into my room.

When I got there tears were bursting out onto the covers of my bed then I heard mom say "Breakfast is ready". As I walked into the kitchen I thought, "Why would mom do this to me? Why would she believe Josh and not me? Josh is the weird one here. I said to my self it's mostly my fault if I hadn't taken the doll outside she wouldn't be hurt, now she's gone forever, but she will always stay in my heart. Now I'll remember never to take my doll outside again.

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## **The Train Analogy**

In order to help young writers understand how to generate whole pieces of writing, it is necessary to break the whole into parts. This module uses a train analogy to help new authors see the parts more clearly. Regardless of the genre, the train graphics will enable young writers to begin to understand paragraphing, focusing on the purpose, meeting the needs of the audience, developing and organizing ideas, etc.

The engine is the lead of the piece. Be it a feature article or a fiction story, use the engine graphic for drafting the lead. Notice the window of the engine graphic lists several possibilities for types of leads writers might use. Have students pick and try two or three different leads which could prove to be appropriate for the purposes, audiences, and forms being written. Next, write the audience on one wheel, the form on the other, and the purpose on the smoke cloud. Now, draft by writing (or drawing for emergent writers) right on the engine. To connect the lead to the next car, write a transition on the connector behind the engine. *Sometimes I write my leads **after** I've drafted the middle of the piece.*

Tanks, boxcars, hoppers, etc. are used for drafting the middle of the piece. Each car holds a paragraph when students are drafting letters, articles, or memoirs. Since fiction and personal narrative are paragraphed in a different way (due to dialogue), they must be handled differently. Fiction pieces would be drafted by developing one event on each car. (The first event goes on the engine. The last event goes on the caboose.) Personal narratives might have the middle drafted on just one car. (If one car isn't enough, use multiple copies of the same car, since each car will hold more than one paragraph.) Notice there's a place to write a transition between each car.

The caboose is for the closing. Encourage students to check themselves by looking at the two questions on this graphic to see if they've done the closing correctly.

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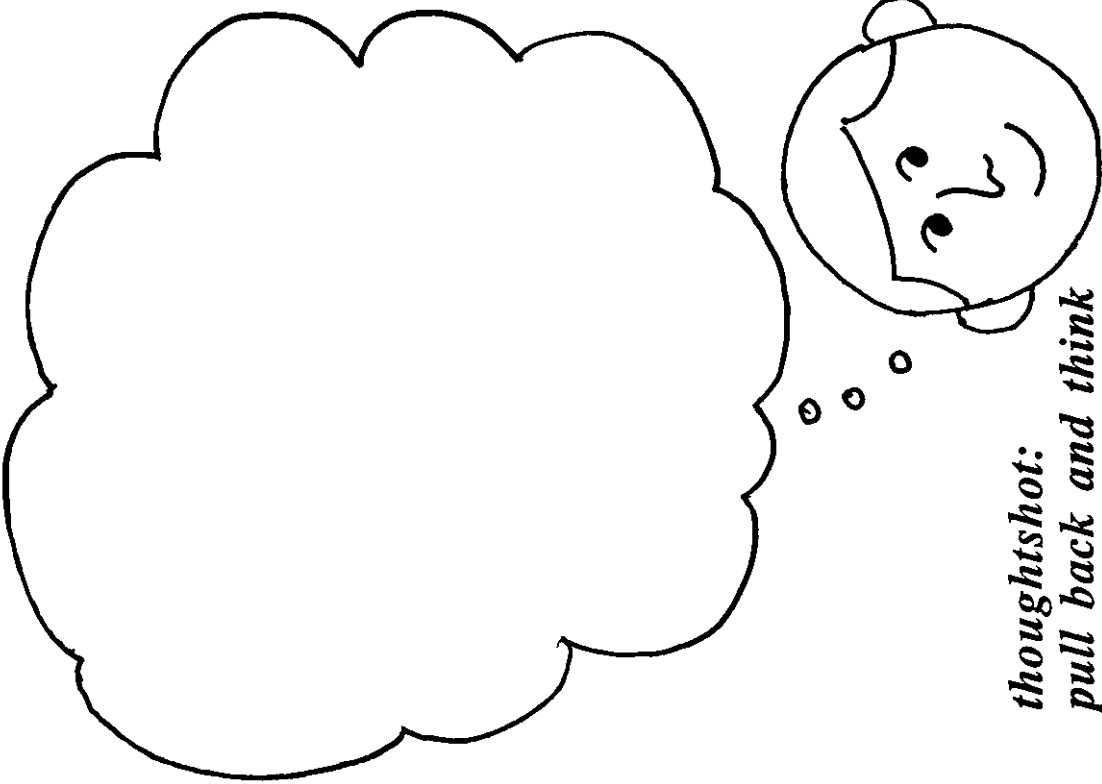
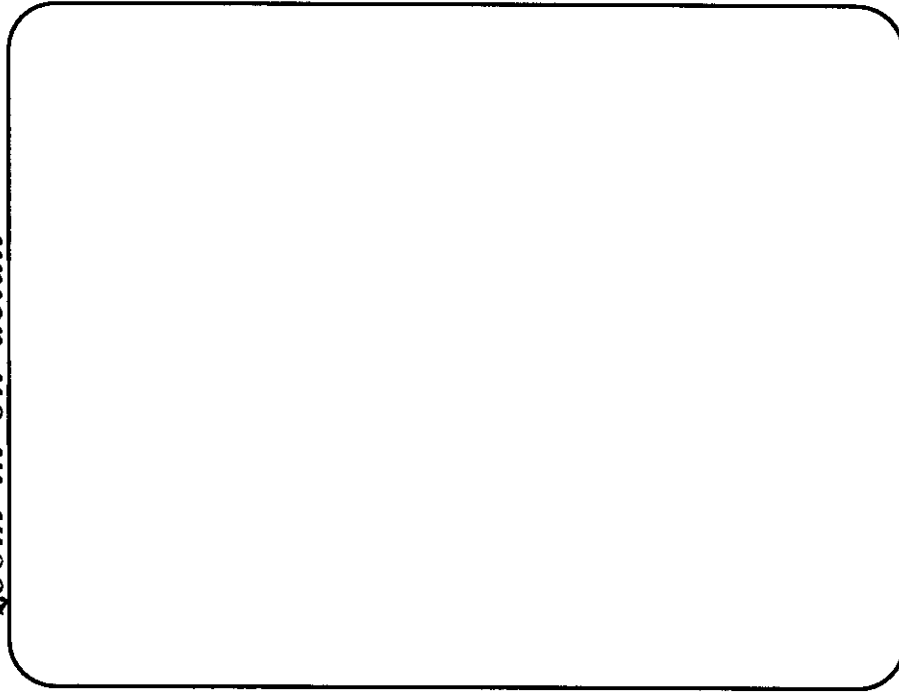
**Editor's Note:** The blackline masters for Donna's train analogy are in the Appendix file. **Please note** that these graphics take up a large amount of computer space. As a result, they may take a long time to download and to print. If obtaining these materials electronically is not feasible for you, please contact the professional development team at 1-800-432-0951 and we will mail you a set.

# **Personal Narrative**

## **Revision Checklist**

- My story is focused on one memory.**
- I stirred strong feelings in my reader.**
- I described what I saw, heard, smelled, tasted, touched which made me feel.**
- My story is easy to follow.**
- My lead and ending are engaging.**
- I used snapshots in my piece.**
- I am in the story.**

*snapshot:  
zoom in on detail*



*thoughtshot:  
pull back and think  
-Barry Lane*

## Personal Narrative Bibliography

Cowling, Joy. *The Screaming Mean Machine*. New York: Scholastic, 1995.

Fox, Mem. *Wilford Gordon McDonald Partridge*. New York: Holt & Co., 1985.

Keichenmeister, Cheryl. *On Monday When It Rained*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989.

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