

## GRADE 4 English Language Arts Writing Lesson 2

Read aloud to the students the material that is printed in **boldface type** inside the boxes. Information in regular type inside the boxes and all information outside the boxes should **not** be read to students. Possible student responses are included in parentheses after the questions.

Any directions that ask you to do something, such as to turn to a page or to hand out materials to students, will have an arrow symbol ( $\Rightarrow$ ) by them.

### *Purpose of Lesson 2:*

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- examine the English Language Arts Writer’s Checklist,
- practice prewriting techniques, and
- use clustering as a prewriting technique.

### *Equipment/Materials Needed:*

- Student Worksheets Writing Lesson 2 – 1
- Pencils
- English Language Arts Writer’s Checklist (one per student)

## LESSON 2: Writing

After your introductory remarks to students, say:

**Writing is an important skill. Today we are going to practice communicating through writing. Communicating through writing can sometimes be difficult.**

**We will use the English Language Arts Writer’s Checklist. It can help you to be a better writer. It has the step by step instructions of what to do when you are writing.**

⇒ Distribute the English Language Arts Writer’s Checklist to students.

Say:

**Turn to the side that says “Directions for Writing.” We are going to read and talk about these directions.**

Pause. Check to see that everyone is on the correct side of the card.

**This card gives us three steps to follow. Let’s read the three steps together.** Pause and be sure everyone has found the three steps.

**Read with me, please.**

**Step 1: Planning and Drafting; Step 2: Revising; and Step 3: Proofreading.**

**This plan is an easy three-step plan to help you remember what to do when you start to write.**

**I want us to focus on Step 1 right now, Planning and Drafting. This step takes a lot of time. If you plan well, then it will be easier when you go to write your rough draft. Some boys and girls don’t spend the time and energy thinking about what they will write. They just start writing and sometimes they don’t have enough ideas. Let’s be sure that you know how to get lots of ideas.**

Say:

**Sometimes your teacher gives you a writing prompt for a composition. What is a writing prompt? Pause.**

(Response: An assignment tells you what to write about; it gives you a problem, or an idea of what to write about.)

If no one answers, tell students the answer.

**That writing prompt also has some clues in it so you will know what kind of writing to do. Sometimes you may tell a story. Other times you may be describing someone or something. Once you find the clues, use them to help you think of something to write about for the composition.**

**Let's practice with a writing prompt and find some of the clues. This strategy will help you to plan and then draft or write your composition.**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 2 – 1. Be sure each student has a pencil.

Then say:

**This assignment is a writing prompt. It will give you some hints or clues to get you started writing. You might need to read it more than once to be sure you find all the clues.**

**Look at your paper as I read aloud.**

**“Suppose the principal walks into your classroom and places a box on the teacher’s desk. Without saying a word, the principal turns around and leaves. Then the box begins to move. Write a story for your classmates about what happened next.”**

Pause.

**Are you already beginning to think about what could be in that box? I hope so! Let's finish reading the directions and then we will practice thinking up some ideas.**

**I will continue reading. You follow along.**  
**“Before you begin to write, think about the box. Imagine what could be inside and what might happen in the classroom next.**

**Now write a story for your classmates about what happened in the classroom with that box. Include specific details so that the reader will understand what happened.”**

Then say:

**It is very, very important to understand what to do with this prompt. What are you supposed to write? Pause.**

(Response: a story)

**Yes, a story. Circle the word *story*. I see that the word *story* is in the writing prompt two times. That must mean the word *story* is important. Circle it both times.**

Pause to allow time for students to circle.

**What will this story be about? Pause.**

(Response: what happened with that box on the teacher’s desk)

**Yes, you will tell a story about what happened with this box. Who is going to read this story? Who will your audience be? Pause.**

(Response: classmates)

**Circle the word *classmates*. I see that the word *classmates* is in the writing prompt two times, so circle it both times. Circling the word *classmates* will help you remember who your audience is.**

**Let’s keep looking for clues that tell you what to do before you write this story. What should you do before you begin to write? Pause.**

(Response: think and imagine)

If no one responds, tell students the answer.

**A good writer needs to think and imagine. Circle *think* and *imagine*. Pause. Thinking and imagining will make it easier for you to tell this story. I see one more important clue in the writing prompt.**

Say:

**Do you have any ideas what that last clue might be? Pause.**

(Response: specific details)

If no one answers, tell students the answer.

**Specific details will help your reader know exactly what that box did and what happened in your classroom that day! Circle *specific details*.**

Pause.

**Those words or phrases you circled are important hints or clues. They will help you as you continue thinking and planning your story.**

Now say:

**Once you understand what you are to write about, you then start getting your ideas on paper. Understanding the assignment and thinking of ideas are all part of prewriting. What does the prefix *pre-* mean? Pause. (Response: before)**

**So, prewriting is all the things I do *before* I write. Your teacher may call this step brainstorming. It doesn't really matter what you call it. Just don't leave out this part!**

**Some students like to make a list of their ideas for the story. Some students like to draw clusters or webs. Just be sure you do your brainstorming. Either way is okay!**

**Think about that box. Pause. Think about what might be inside of it. Pause. Think about what color it is. Pause. Think about the size of the box. Pause.**

**Now let's make a list of ideas or things about this box. We will make our list at the bottom of your worksheet.**

(Possible responses: big; wrapped in newspaper; has a bow on it; a dog; an alligator; it cries; it barks; smells funny; too little for a pony.)

There is no right or wrong answer.

Say:

**You have done your prewriting. You have some ideas to use in your story. It is so important that you follow this step-by-step approach.**

**Get your English Language Arts Writer’s Checklist again. Look under Step 1: Planning and Drafting. Under step one, the first instruction says: “Read the writing topic in your test booklet.” Did we read the writing prompt/topic? (Response: yes)**

**Put a check mark by that step.**

**Next step: “Think about what you will write before you begin.” Did we think about what we will write? (Response: yes)**

**Put a check mark by that step.**

**Look at the next one: “Use the space provided in your test booklet for planning your composition and writing your rough draft.” Go ahead and put a check there, since we are pretending this worksheet is a test booklet.**

**Look at the last one. “Remember that your planning notes and rough draft will not be scored. The only thing that is scored is the final draft.” However, you have to plan before you can draft. Put a check mark by that step.**

**Think of the English Language Arts Writer’s Checklist as a guide, or maybe a map. It will help you to write your story. It will help you to remember all the little steps a writer must make before writing.**

Say:

**Turn the card over and let’s look at another way to use it. Pause to be sure everyone is on the correct side.**

**This side of the card reminds you of some important points when you are writing your composition. Let’s read the four items under Composing. Read with me please.**

Say:

**“Write on the assigned topic.”**

**“Present a clear main idea.”**

**“Give enough details to support and elaborate your main idea.”**

**“Present your ideas in a logical order.”**

**What does the expression *logical order* mean?**

(Response: reasonable)

**These four tips will help you when you are writing.**

## Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 2 – 1

Suppose the principal walks into your classroom and places a box on the teacher's desk. Without saying a word, the principal turns around and leaves. Then the box begins to move. Write a story for your classmates about what happened next.

Before you begin to write, think about the box. Imagine what could be inside and what might happen in the classroom next.

Now write a story for your classmates about what happened in the classroom with that box. Include specific details so that the reader will understand what happened.