

## GRADE 4 English Language Arts Writing Lesson 4

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 4:*

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- practice finding key words in a writing prompt,
- practice clustering, and
- practice revising sentences.

### *Equipment/Materials Needed:*

- Student Worksheets Writing Lesson 4 – 1 and 4 – 2.
- Pencils
- A board (such as a chalkboard, dry erase board, or even poster board)
- Chalk, dry erase marker, or magic marker

*LESSON 4: Writing*

Following your introductory remarks to students, say:

**Writing is hard work! We have to think of ideas. We have to figure out exactly which words to use. We have to put our words together to make sentences and then to make paragraphs. There's just a lot to think about when we write.**

**Today we will practice using some techniques or tricks to help you be a better writer. Let's begin with an activity called Sentence Stretchers.**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 4 – 1. Be sure every student has a pencil.

Then say:

**Look at the example. “The baby cried.” We will rewrite this sentence together.**

**First let's stretch this sentence and add some details.**

**The baby cried. When did the baby cry?** (Possible responses: last night; this morning; all night)

Encourage everyone to respond. Have the student repeat the entire sentence each time, not just the *stretch*. For example: The baby cried last night.

**Write the new and improved sentence on your paper.**  
Allow time to complete the task.

**We are going to stretch this sentence some more. Where did the baby cry?** (Possible responses: in his crib; in the restaurant; at the doctor's office)

**Now, add your new detail to the sentence and write it.**  
Allow time to complete the task.

**We are going to stretch this sentence one more time. What size is this baby?** (Possible responses: tiny; small)

**Add this latest detail to your sentence. Write it on your paper.**  
Allow time to complete the task.

**Your sentence is now full of details and it gives the reader a lot more information.**

**Please work on number one by yourself now. Each time you stretch the sentence, be sure to rewrite it in your best handwriting.**

Allow time to complete the task.

Ask for volunteers to share their final sentence in the pattern.

If students are struggling, give a hint or clue.

The sentence is growing each time as they add details.

Write some of the stretched sentences on the board.

**We will do one more sentence stretcher. Look at this one with me first. “The teacher laughed.” The first time you are going to add when. When did the teacher laugh? Then you will tell us where the teacher laughed. Now this next time, you add a name. You will write in a specific teacher’s name. Then you will add why she laughed. Start writing!**

Allow time to complete the task.

Allow time to share sentences.

Write some of the stretched sentences on the board.

Then say:

**Sometimes you are asked to write in response to a writing prompt. The prompt tells you what to write about.**

**One of the first things you have to do, though, is to have lots and lots of ideas. Brainstorming is one way to get lots of ideas. You can use different techniques or tricks to brainstorm.**

**Some writers like to make a cluster. *Clustering* means you concentrate on one subject or topic. Then you write down all the details that pop into your mind.**

**Here is an example of what one student did for a cluster. The teacher had assigned the topic of SPORTS.**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 4 – 2.

Then say:

**Look at the example. Pause. The student began with the topic Sports. He wrote the word *SPORTS* in the center of his paper, then drew a box around that word. As other words or ideas related to sports came to his mind, he wrote those words down. Then he drew a box around each one and connected them back to the word *Sports*.**

**It is important for you to think of lots of ideas! You may not use them all, but it really helps you to write if you have lots of ideas!**

**Look at the writing prompt below your Sports Cluster. Pause. Follow along as I read aloud. “The local mall is sponsoring a contest to design the perfect room. You decide to enter. You can design and decorate any room: a bedroom, a computer room, or a classroom. Use your imagination. Think about for what reasons the room would be used. Use specific details about size, shape, colors and furniture. Describe the room in such detail that someone else will be able to visualize it.”**

Then say:

**When you have a writing prompt, it is a good idea to pick out the key words or phrases. This trick will help you to know what to write. You also have to know who your audience is: the reader or readers for whom the composition is written.**

**Who is the audience for this composition?**

(Response: the mall people)

**Yes, the managers or some people from the mall will probably be the judges. Do you think they will be adults?**

(Response: yes)

**I agree. Therefore, you want to write for adults. I see a few other clues that will be helpful in completing this assignment.**

**What clues might help you plan and write this composition?**  
(Possible responses: imagination; specific details; size; shape; colors; furniture)

If students circle too many words in the prompt, then the concept of locating the key words is lost on the students.

Students do not respond orally in this next dialogue. The purpose of this activity is to generate ideas. There should be no talking or discussing at this point in the writing process. You might suggest they close their eyes in order to focus on this room.

**Next you have to decide on a room. What kind of room are you going to design? Pause. Think about the most perfect room you could have. Pause. Visualize it – get a picture of it in your mind. Pause. Think about the shape of this room. Pause. Does it have a lot of windows? Are they big windows or small windows? Pause. Imagine the furniture in this room. How is it arranged? Pause. What kind of furniture is it? Pause. Are the walls painted or do they have wallpaper? Pause.**

**You need lots and lots of details. You may not use them all, but you surely do need to have them available to use!**

**Now let's do a cluster for this writing prompt. Do your work in the space under the prompt. Write down the name of the room that you are going to design. Pause. Draw a circle around it. Pause.**

**Think about this room. Write down words that describe your room in detail. Draw circles around those words and use lines to connect these words to the name of your room.**

Allow time for students to complete their clusters.

If a student is struggling, help by asking a question: are there any pictures on the walls? what color is the carpet?

There is no right or wrong way to draw a cluster.

Ask for volunteers to share their clusters.

Say:

**Now you have finished brainstorming. You are ready to begin drafting or writing your composition.**

**It is a good idea to go back and read the writing prompt one more time before you begin writing the composition. This step is to be sure that you don't leave out something.**

**You want to be sure to write the best possible composition!**

Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 4 – 1

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Example: The baby cried.

When? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Size? \_\_\_\_\_

1. The book fell.

When? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Size or color?  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. The teacher laughed.

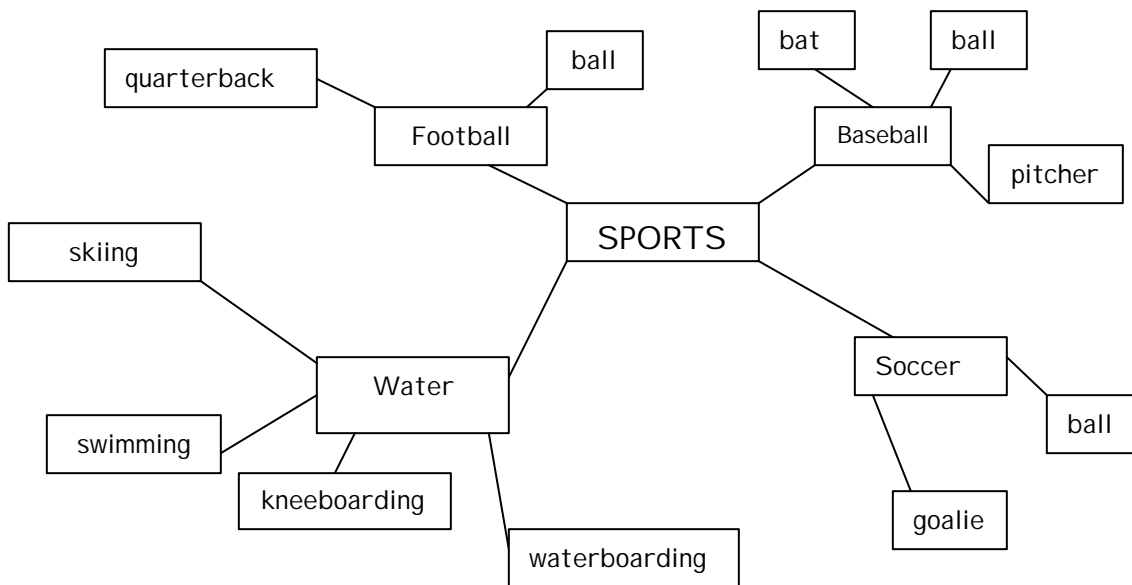
When? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Add a name  
\_\_\_\_\_

Add why  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student Worksheet Writing Lesson 4 – 2



**The local mall is sponsoring a contest to design the perfect room. It can be any room: a bedroom, a computer room, or a classroom. Use your imagination. Think about for what reasons the room would be used. Use specific details about size, shape, colors, and furniture. Describe the room in such detail that someone else will be able to visualize it.**