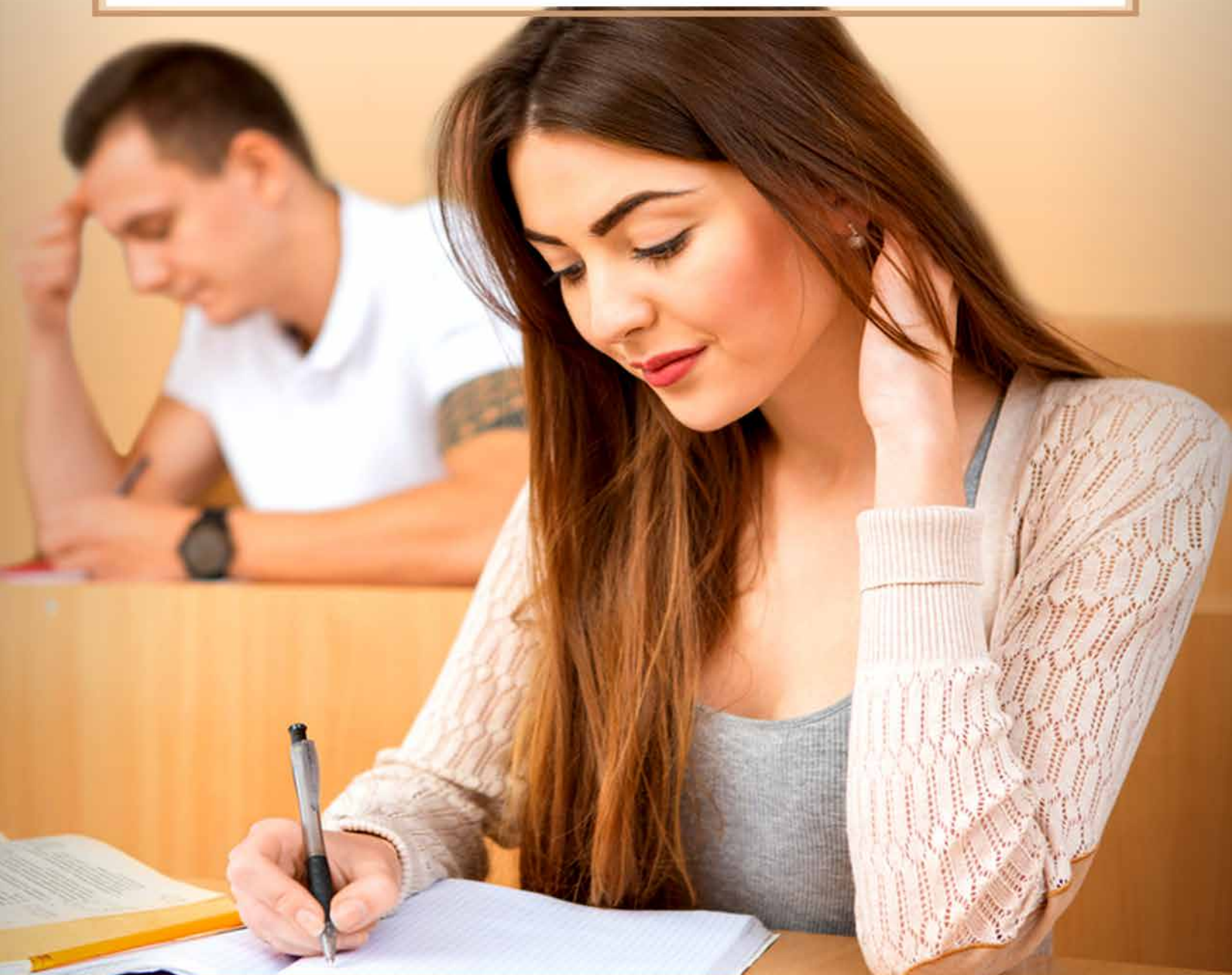


TEACH WRITING THINKINGLY

20 CLASSROOM READY LESSONS



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6. UFO Story



20-40
min



Storyboard 1



sentence fluency, organisation

Lesson 5 before starting this creative writing assignment, so that students remember how to write a complex sentence.

What is it?

It's a creative writing activity that demands attention to detail and a good deal of imagination. This activity builds on writing and thinking skills developed in the two previous lessons.

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- identify information gaps in the story by using the questioning strategy outlined in Lesson 4;
- demonstrate elements of writing style by using complex sentences as reviewed in Lesson 5;
- create a strong sense of place by vividly describing the inside of a UFO.

Flow

Step 1 Introduction

Copy or display Storyboard 1.

Explain objectives of exercise. Students will write a creative story based on a picture prompt.

Step 2 Review Complex Sentences

Optional:

- review some of the Exhibits in

Step 3 Introduce Prompt

Students will write creative story about a boy, a UFO and a journey.

In my experience, the first draft produced by students tends to be light on details when describing the inside of the UFO.

To avoid that problem, point out that students can write a much more interesting story if they fill in the gaps by using a questioning strategy.

They might, for example, ask these questions:

- Why did the boy go inside?
- What does the interior look like?
- Who or what is inside the UFO?
- What did the boy do inside the space ship?
- How did the boy react?

Step 4 Writing

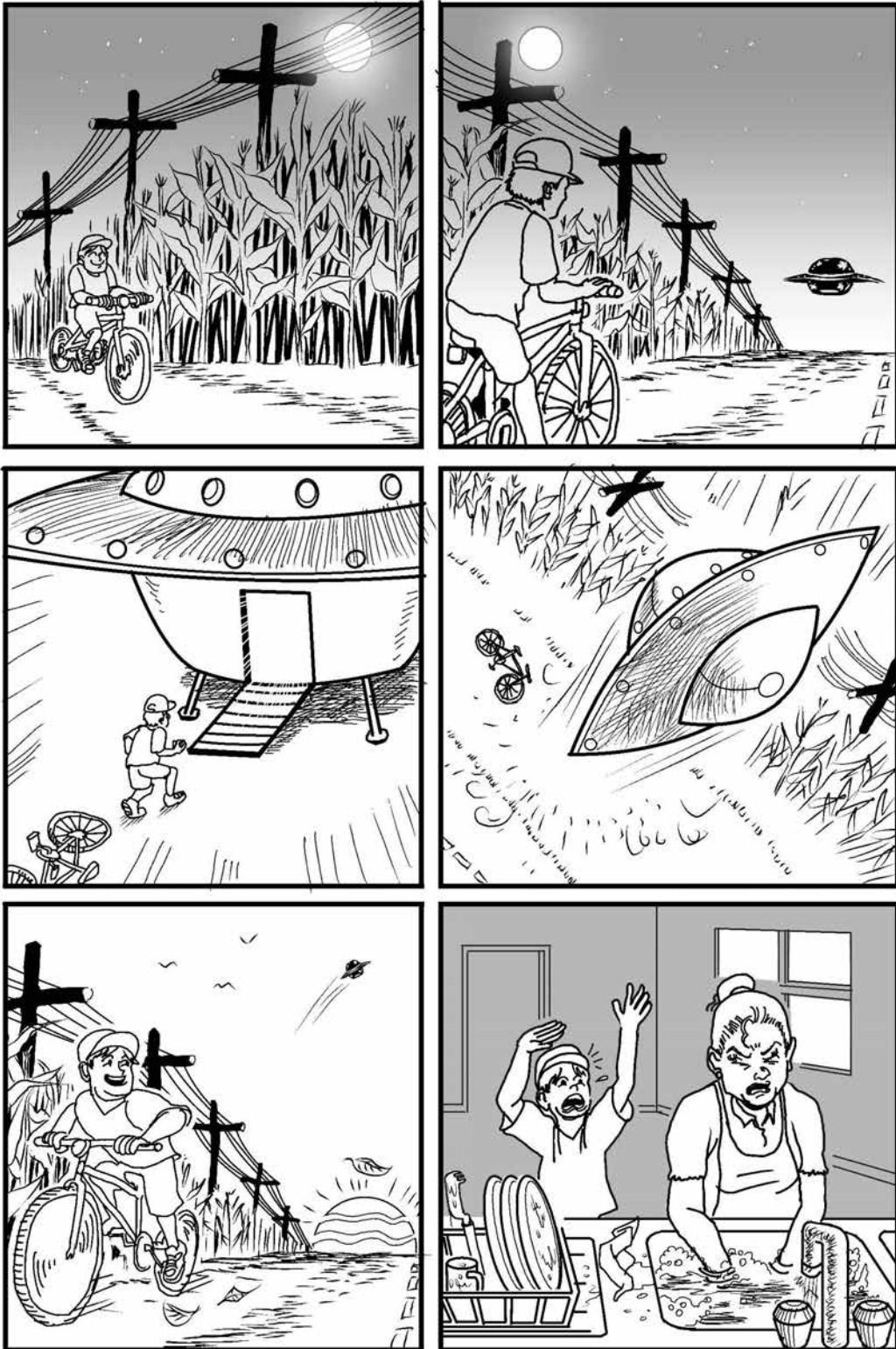
Students write a 1 to 2 page creative story with a strong beginning, middle and end.

Optional:

- require students to write at least one complex sentence per picture in the storyboard.

Storyboard 1

The Ride



17. Thinking About Life



20-60
min



Exhibits 17-1 to 17-3



cubing, summarise, evaluate

What is it?

Is life a journey, or something else? That's the question students will tackle with a simple framework to develop a thoughtful answer.

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- demonstrate an ability to listen for gist by answering comprehension questions about an oral presentation;
- organize ideas by changing an analogy into an argument;
- develop a thoughtful understanding of a presentation's message by using a cubing framework.
- write an effective summary by filtering out unnecessary information;
- compose a well organized report by integrating various kinds of information into a text that summarizes, analyzes and evaluates an argument.

Flow

Step 1 Assign Homework

One week before running this lesson in class, assign homework:

- watch a video (about 3 minutes)
- answer questions on Exhibit 17-1

Student success in this lesson depends on their ability to understand the argument. I assign homework because they usually need to listen to the video several times in order to get it.

► Point Out

The video is called "Alan Watts & David Lindberg - Why Your Life Is Not A Journey."

It's hosted on Vimeo and YouTube. The Vimeo url is:

- <https://vimeo.com/176370337>.

The video's background images are not relevant. The spoken words are important. The video has closed captions.

Step 2 Comprehension Check

One week later, copy or display Exhibits 17-1 and 17-2. Review answers on Exhibit 17-1 in class. Suggested answers are on Exhibit 17-2.

Step 3 Writing

Copy or display Exhibit 17-3. It provides students with a writing guide. The guide is based on the Cubing framework presented in Lesson 7.

Students should write a 1 to 2 page report that:

- summarises the speaker's main ideas
- analyzes the argument
- evaluates the ideas

► Point Out

The report includes a summary, so students should avoid retelling the whole story. Filtering unnecessary information is a key component of this challenge.

Exhibit 17-1
Is Life a Journey or Something Else?

Instructions

Use this Exhibit to deepen your understanding of the speaker's story in the video, Alan Watts & David Lindberg - Why Your Life Is Not A Journey.

- <https://vimeo.com/176370337>

Part 1. Vocabulary

Before watching the video, write a brief definition for these words and phrases.

1. physical universe
2. necessity
3. destination
4. an analogy with music
5. composer
6. a racket
7. a quota
8. senior citizens' community

Part 2. Comprehension

While listening to the speaker, take notes and answer these questions.

1. Why or how is the universe playful?
2. How are music and dance different from travel?
3. Summarize the speaker's description of the way education works.
4. What does the speaker mean when he says, "I've arrived"?
5. What does the speaker mean when he says, "We simply cheated ourselves the whole way down the line"?
6. Explain the meaning of this sentence: "It was a musical thing, and you were supposed to sing or to dance while the music was being played."

Exhibit 17-2
Is Life a Journey or Something Else? - Suggested Answers

Part 1. Vocabulary

1. physical universe - everything in space
2. necessity - something required, must have
3. destination - the place you want to be or go
4. an analogy with music - understand the idea by comparing it with music
5. composer - the person who writes or creates music
6. a racket - a dishonest business to make money
7. a quota - a target that must be achieved, usually in sales
8. senior citizens' community - an apartment building where retired people live

Part 2. Comprehension

1. Why or how is the universe playful?
 - The universe isn't necessary. It doesn't have a specific purpose or final destination.
2. How are music and dance different from travel?
 - They are playful and the end is not the most important part. In contrast, the end is the most important part of travel.
3. Summarize the speaker's description of the way education works.
 - Schools push students to a future destination through a series of steps. It's a journey with grades and tests from kindergarten to university.
4. What does the speaker mean when he says, "I've arrived"?
 - After years of work, a person notices that he/she has reached the final destination, usually defined by some level of success or achievement.
5. What does the speaker mean when he says, "We simply cheated ourselves the whole way down the line"?
 - We forgot to enjoy ourselves. We were told work and sacrifice would produce a big benefit later in life, but that benefit doesn't actually exist. We sacrificed happiness and joy today for some future benefit.
6. Explain the meaning of this sentence: "It was a musical thing, and you were supposed to sing or to dance while the music was being played."
 - Life has a beginning and an end, like music. For the short time we are alive we are supposed to enjoy ourselves. When the music is over, life is over and there is no chance to experience joy.

Exhibit 17-3
The Analogy of Life: Write a Report

Instructions

Write a report which summarizes, analyzes and evaluates the argument presented in the video, *Why Your Life Is Not A Journey*.

Here are some general suggestions to guide your thinking and writing. These questions use a cubing framework which helps us understand something by asking many different kinds of questions.

1. DESCRIBE: What is the speaker's main argument?
2. COMPARE: Is it similar to another idea or thing?
3. CONTRAST: How is it different from others? What makes it unique?
4. ANALYZE: Divide his argument into smaller parts so that it's easier to understand.
5. APPLY: What can we learn from the speaker's message?
6. ARGUE: What do you think about it? What are the consequences of living a life suggested by the speaker. Is it possible? Is it a good idea? Explain your decision with reasons.