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17 Response to Literature

Some writing asks you to tell about stories, plays, or poems you have read. This is called **response to literature**. This writing is different from writing to give an opinion or information.

You need to think about these things.

- **Who the characters are and what they are like.** Think about how they relate to one another and why they do the things they do.
- The **setting**. Where and when do the events take place? How does the setting help create the feeling of the story, play, or poem?
- The **structure**. Pay attention to the order of events. Note what happens in the beginning, middle, and end.
- The **plot**. What events or actions take place? Is there a problem or conflict? How is the problem solved?
- The **theme**. What lesson does it teach?
- The **language**. How does the author use words to create images in your mind?





Guided Practice

Read the poem and the writing prompt. Then answer the questions.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

- 5 My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

- He gives his harness bells a shake
10 To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

- The woods are lovely, dark, and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
15 And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.



Poets use elements like rhyme, repetition, setting, word choice, and point of view to create a mood, tone, or feeling. Read the poem again, and look for these elements.

Write an essay for your teacher about the use of these elements in the poem.

Be sure to:

- follow the five steps of the writing process
- write a topic sentence
- include details and examples from the poem



Step 1: Prewrite

Read the writing assignment again. Make sure you understand exactly what the writing assignment is asking. Underline key words. This helps you understand the subject, the type of writing you will do, and your audience.

What words or phrases help you to know what type of writing you will do?



Look for words that tell you what you need to include in your essay.



The next step is to plan what to write. You are being asked to write about the elements of poetry that you notice in the poem. The first step is to organize your ideas and plan your writing. Use a graphic organizer to plan your writing.

Here is how one student, Vita, plans what she will write.

Elements of Poetry	Examples from the Poem
Rhyme	though, know, snow (end rhyme) lines 1, 2, and 4
Repetition	“And miles to go before I sleep” the last two lines are repeated also the word <i>woods</i> is repeated
Setting	the setting is the woods, it’s snowing, it’s dark and quiet; there’s no one else there
Word Choice	words like <i>lake, darkest, sweep, wind, downy, lovely, dark, and deep</i> are words that paint a picture
Point of View	the speaker is telling the poem from first-person point of view
Mood or Feeling	peaceful, soothing, lonely

Which words in the poem tell you that first-person point of view is used?



First-person pronouns are *I* and *me*. Look for them in the poem.

What mood or feeling does the speaker create with the choice of words?



The words can create positive or negative feelings, or both.

The next step is to write the draft.

Step 2: Draft

Read Vita's draft. Then answer the questions.

In the poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," the poet uses different elements of poetry. Rhyme is used in every first, second, and fourth line. The rhyme is end rhyme. An example of this is in lines 1, 2, and 4 where the words *though*, *know*, and *snow* rhyme. Another element the author uses is repetition. The most obvious is in the last two lines of the poem. The last two lines are exactly the same. The speaker says, "And miles to go before I sleep" twice. The other thing I noticed was the word *woods* repeated. In fact the word *woods* tells the main setting of the poem. The entire setting takes place in the woods. The woods are quiet, dark, and snowy. The speaker uses specific words to create a feeling. Words and phrases like *easy wind*, *downy flake*, and *lovely* seem positive, soothing, and peaceful. However, phrases like *darkest evening*, *some*

mistake, dark, and deep sound more negative, scary, and lonely

The speaker uses first-person point of view by using the

Pronouns I and me.

What is the topic sentence?



The topic sentence tells what the essay will be about.

Which words does Vita use to describe the mood, tone, or feeling of the poem?



Look at the end of her essay where she talks about the use of specific words.

The next step is to revise the draft.

Step 3: Revise

Read Vita's revised draft. Then answer the questions.

In the poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," the poet uses different elements of poetry. Rhyme is used, which means the words at the end of those lines rhyme in every first, second, and fourth line. The rhyme is end rhyme.

An example of this is in lines 1, 2, and 4 where the words *though*, *know*, and *snow* rhyme. Another element the author uses is repetition. The most obvious is in the last two lines of the poem.

The last two lines are exactly the same. The speaker says, "And miles to go before I sleep" twice. The other thing I noticed

is in the title and then repeated throughout the poem. was the word *woods* repeated. In fact the word *woods* tells the

main setting of the poem. The entire setting takes place in the woods. The woods are quiet, dark, and snowy. The speaker

uses specific words to create a feeling. Words and phrases like *easy wind*, *downy flake*, and *lovely* seem positive, soothing, and peaceful. However, phrases like *darkest evening*, *some*

mistake, *dark*, and *deep* sound more negative, scary, and lonely

The speaker uses first-person point of view by using the

Pronouns *I* and *me*. Overall, the word choice is simple, yet beautiful.

Why does Vita add the phrase “which means the words at the end of those lines rhyme”?

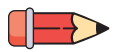


Do the words help to explain a detail about the poem?

What information does Vita add about the use of repetition?



How does she interpret the use of repeated ideas?



Peer Review

Use the rubric on the next page to review Vita’s writing and give it a score. This is called **peer review**. A number is assigned to tell how well the question was answered. The rubric tells what is needed for the highest score. It also tells why some of the writing might receive lower scores.

Rubric for Writing a Response to Literature

Score 3

- The writing answers all parts of the question.
- The opening sentence clearly conveys the topic.
- The writing tells about the elements of poetry.
- Details from the poem are included.
- Words are used correctly and well.
- Capitalization and punctuation are correct.

Score 2

- The writing answers almost all parts of the question.
- The opening sentence conveys the topic.
- The writing tells some of the elements of poetry.
- Some details from the poem are included.
- Most of the words are used correctly, but some are not.
- There are some mistakes in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Score 1

- The writing answers only part of the question.
- The opening sentence does not relate to the topic.
- The essay does not tell about the elements of poetry.
- The writer does not include details from the poem.
- Many words are used incorrectly.
- There are many mistakes in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

What score would Vita's draft receive?

Score: _____



How does Vita's draft compare to the rubric?

Why do you think it would receive this score?



Are there any mistakes?

The next step is to edit the draft.

Step 4: Edit

Vita made the big changes to her draft. The next step is to edit the draft. Vita will read her draft again. She will check for mistakes in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. She will use proofreading symbols to mark changes to be made.

Proofreading Chart

Symbol	Example
^ Add letters or words.	The dolphins ^{were} beautiful.
⦿ Add a period.	I heard them whistle ⦿
≡ Capitalize a letter.	Then <u>i</u> was scared.
○ Close up space.	They swam under water.
↗ Add a comma.	He wanted to play, but the dolphin didn't.
/ Lowercase a letter.	He wanted to play, but the D olphin didn't.
¶ Begin a new paragraph.	¶ The diver was all alone.
✂ Delete letters or words.	The diver was all af alone.
↺ Switch the position of letters or words.	They <u>played</u> <u>also</u> music.

Read Vita's draft. Find and correct any mistakes. Use proofreading symbols to show changes.

In the poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," the poet uses different elements of poetry. Rhyme is used in every first, second, and forth line. The rhyme is end rhyme, which means the words at the end of those lines rhyme. An

example of this is in lines 1, 2, and 4 where the words *though*, *know*, and *snow* rhyme. another element the author uses is repetition. The most obvious is in the last two lines of the poem. The last two lines are exactly the same. The speaker says, "And miles to go before I sleep" twice. It seems that repetition is used here to emphasize the idea that the speaker must leave the woods. The other thing I noticed was the word *woods* repeated. It is in the title and then repeated throughout the poem. In fact the word *woods* tells the main setting of the poem. The entire setting takes place in the woods. The woods are quiet, dark, and snowy. The speaker uses specific words to create a feeling. Words and phrases like *easy wind*, *downy flake*, and *lovely* seem positive, soothing, and peaceful. However, phrases like *darkest evening*, *some mistake*, *dark*, and *deep sound* more negative, scary, and lonely. The speaker uses first-person point of view by using the Pronouns *I* and *me*. Overall, the word choice is simple, yet beautiful.

How many mistakes did you find?



Are there any mistakes in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, or spelling?

Step 5: Publish

All mistakes have been fixed. The final step is for Vita to publish her writing. She will turn in her writing to her teacher.

SAMPLE



Independent Practice

Read the excerpt from a memoir. Then answer the questions.

Step 1: Prewrite

All we could hear were crickets chirping and water rushing in the distance. It was the middle of the night, and we were in a tent in the wilderness. The campfire had died out hours ago. We remained snuggled inside our sleeping bags to stay warm for the night. Our backpacks, right next to us, were filled with provisions for the rest of the trip. We constantly guarded them. Without these supplies, we might not have the strength to find our way back to the path. This camping trip was supposed to be fun, but we were so far off-grid it was frightening. Somewhere, we had made a wrong turn. We were no longer on the marked path. We tried to rely on instinct and navigate during the day by the position of the sun. But we were amazingly disoriented. A few weeks ago, we were four roommates happily sharing a dorm room. We planned our adventure, or so we thought. We did not anticipate getting lost. I felt responsible. This trip was my idea, and I regretted it. I had to figure out a way to get us all home safely.



A memoir tells a real-life story. The person telling the story is recalling things that happened to him. It's like reading a journal of events.

Write an essay to describe the setting of the story and how the narrator feels about the events. Predict what will happen next.

Be sure to:

- follow the five steps of the writing process
- write a topic sentence
- include details and examples from the story
- predict what will happen next

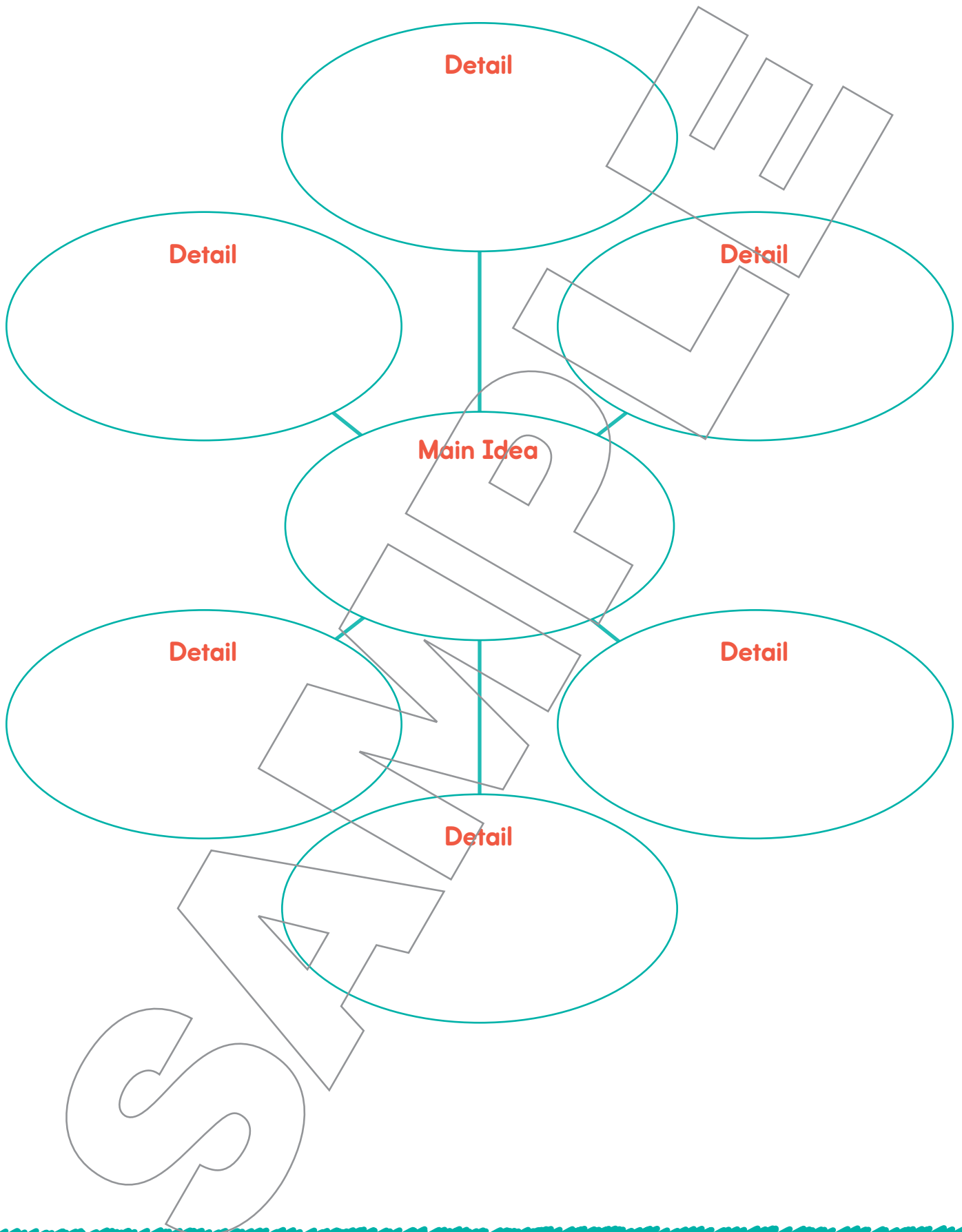


1. Who is your audience?

2. What kind of writing are you being asked to do?

SAMPLE

3. Fill in the graphic organizer to plan your writing.



Step 2: Draft

4. Write your draft below. Use the graphic organizer on the previous page to help you write your draft. Be sure to include a topic sentence. Then use details and examples to support your main idea. Include your prediction about what you think will happen next.

Step 3: Revise

Step 4: Edit

5. When you have finished your draft, go back over it. Make your revisions on this page. Then edit your revised draft. Use the rubric on page 225 and the proofreading chart on page 227 to review your writing. Ask a peer to review your writing, too.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 horizontal lines. A large, faint watermark reading 'DRAFT' is oriented diagonally across the page.

Step 5: Publish

6. Write or type your final answer on a separate sheet of paper. Publish your writing by turning it in to your teacher or sharing it with the class.