

How to Use This Book 4

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Choosing a Strong Idea

Refer to pages 6 and 7 to introduce or review the writing trait.

DAY 1

Read the rule aloud. Then say: *A strong idea is specific. That means it is clear-cut and exact. Imagine that you will write a story. Which of these ideas is more specific? 1) autumn; or 2) playing in piles of crunchy, colorful leaves.* (idea 2, because it tells about a specific happening in autumn) Then guide students through the activities.

- **Activity A:** Read aloud John’s story ideas. Ask: *Which idea is more specific? (b) Why?* (It is a specific story about the bear.) Repeat the process for Brianna’s story ideas, having students choose an answer. Ask them to explain their choices.
- **Activity B:** Read aloud the three ideas. Then use the first one to model thinking of a more specific idea. Say: *What could you tell about bike riding? What about learning to ride? Or where you like to ride?* Invite students to voice ideas, making sure they are specific. Have them choose an idea to complete the activity.
- **Activity C (Convention):** Read the sentences and point out that they are statements. Ask: *What punctuation mark does a statement end with? (a period)* Say: *Always proofread your writing to make sure you’ve ended each statement with a period.* Then have students complete the activity.

DAY 2

Read the rule aloud. Then guide students through the activities.


- **Activity A:** Have a volunteer read the ideas given for the first photo. Discuss what makes the second idea clearer. (“Riding a horse for the first time” is better than just “riding” because it clearly describes what’s happening in the picture.) Guide students through items 2–4. Remind them to write their answers in complete sentences. Encourage students to write as “Julia,” using the pronoun I.
- **Activity B (Convention):** You may want to have students exchange papers with a partner and check each other’s sentences.

Name: _____ **Week 1 • Day 1**

Ideas Choose a strong idea. Make your idea specific.

A. Read each student’s story ideas. Underline the one that is stronger and more specific.

1. John’s story ideas:
 a. My sister’s teddy bear
 b. Finding my sister’s lost teddy bear



2. Brianna’s story ideas:
 a. Why I like Grandmother’s house in Mexico City
 b. Visiting Mexico

B. Read the three ideas below. Choose one to make more specific. Circle it and write the specific idea.

Ideas: bike riding
 movies
 baking cookies **Sample Answers:**

A more specific idea: the day I finally learned to ride my bike; the scariest movie I’ve ever seen; making oatmeal cookies for the bake sale

C. Read the sentences. Circle the periods.


Rocky wrote about seeing a bridge in Oakland. The bridge is called the Bay Bridge. It is 43,500 feet long.

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Name: _____ **Week 1 • Day 2**

Ideas Choose a strong idea. Make your idea clear.


A. Julia is making a scrapbook with photos of a camping trip. Help her write a clear idea about each photo. Write the idea in a complete sentence. The first one is done as an example.



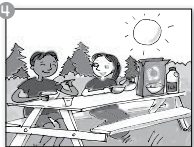
Idea: Riding **Sample Answers:**
 Clearer Idea: Here I am riding a horse for the first time.



Idea: Camping
 Clearer Idea: It rained on our first day of camping.



Idea: Swimming
 Clearer Idea: We had fun jumping off the dock.




Idea: Eating
 Clearer Idea: We ate breakfast outside every morning.

B. Proofread each sentence you wrote.


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Name: _____ **Week 1 • Day 3**

 **Ideas** Choose a strong idea. Tell about something that is important to you.

A. Hunter races BMX bikes with his family. Which ideas do you think Hunter would probably want to write about the most? Write an X by them.

_____ 1. How to play baseball
 2. Bike-racing gear
 3. What my dad and I do on race day
 _____ 4. Training your dog
 5. The first BMX race I won



B. Think about what you like to do on the weekends. Choose one thing and write it on the line. Then think of three specific ideas you could write about it. Write your ideas in complete sentences with periods.

Sample Answers:
 I like to go to concerts in the park.


Specific Ideas:
 1. My brother and I dance to the music.

 2. I like to watch the drummers.

 3. My favorite concert was on the 4th of July.

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Name: _____ **Week 1 • Day 4**

 **Ideas** Choose a strong idea. Narrow it down.

Think about fun things you like to do with friends. Complete the triangle. Narrow down your ideas into one specific idea.

Start with a general idea.
 fun with friends

Narrow it down.
Sample Answers:
 parties

Make it more specific.
 my friend's party
 at the Pizza Shack

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DAY 3

Read the rule aloud. Then say: *Each one of us is an expert on what we like and what we know. So, if you choose to write about something you know, you are choosing a strong idea that you can say a lot about.* Then guide students through the activities.

- **Activity A:** Read aloud the directions. Ask: *Do you think BMX riding is something that is important to Hunter?* (yes) Then read aloud each answer choice and have students complete the activity. Review the answers as a class.

- **Activity B:** Help students brainstorm things they like to do on weekends. (e.g., playing sports, taking a class, going to a favorite place) Have students choose one of those activities and write it on the first line. Then model listing specific ideas. Say: *I like to spend time outdoors, but three specific things I do are taking care of my flower garden, walking my dog, and going to the park.*

Convention: Model writing one idea as a complete sentence with a period. (e.g., “I like to take care of my garden.”) Then have students complete the activity independently.

DAY 4

Read the rule aloud. Then guide students through the activity.

- Read the directions. Say: *We can use this triangle to narrow down our ideas. “Fun with friends” is the general idea, so it goes at the top.* Then model completing the triangle. For example, say: *In the next box, we can write one way to have fun with friends. Let’s write **parties**. Can we make that idea even more specific? How about “my friend’s party at the Pizza Shack”?*
- Have students brainstorm other ways to have fun with friends. Then have students complete their triangles independently.

DAY 5 Writing Prompt 

- Write about something you like to do with friends. Use the idea you wrote on Day 4. Make sure your idea is specific and clear.
- Be sure that each statement ends with a period.

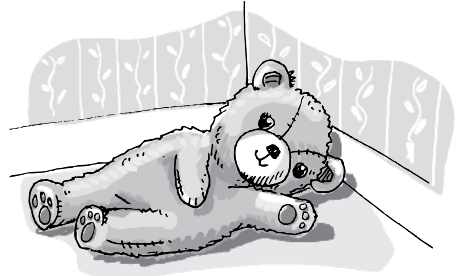


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Ideas: bike riding

movies

baking cookies

A more specific idea: _____

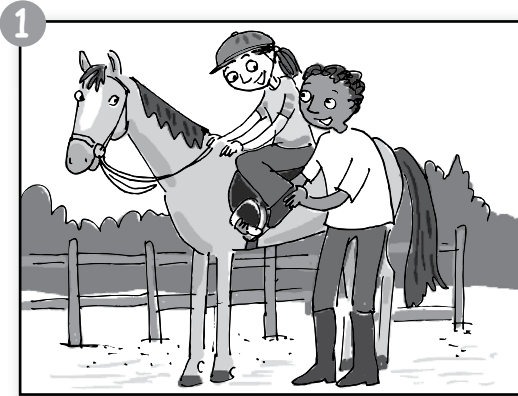
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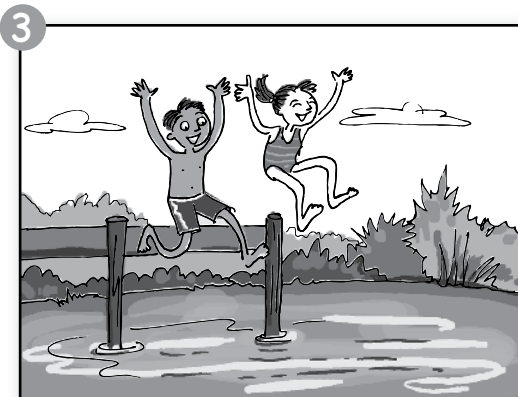
Idea: Riding

Clearer Idea: Here I am riding
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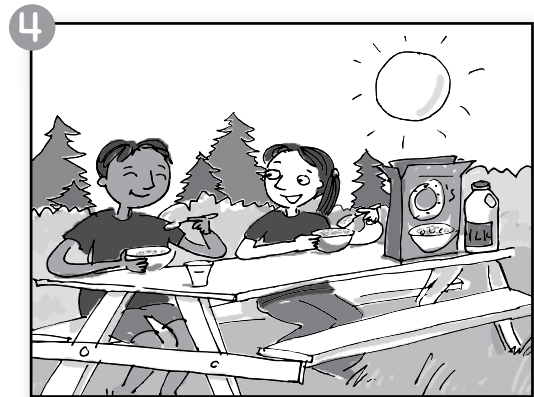
Idea: Camping

Clearer Idea: _____



Idea: Swimming

Clearer Idea: _____



Idea: Eating

Clearer Idea: _____

B. Proofread each sentence you wrote.



Choose a strong idea. Tell about something that is important to you.

A. Hunter races BMX bikes with his family. Which ideas do you think Hunter would probably want to write about the most? Write an X by them.

- _____ 1. How to play baseball
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- _____ 3. What my dad and I do on race day
- _____ 4. Training your dog
- _____ 5. The first BMX race I won



B. Think about what you like to do on the weekends. Choose one thing and write it on the line. Then think of three specific ideas you could write about it. Write your ideas in complete sentences with periods.

I like to _____

Specific Ideas:

- 1. _____

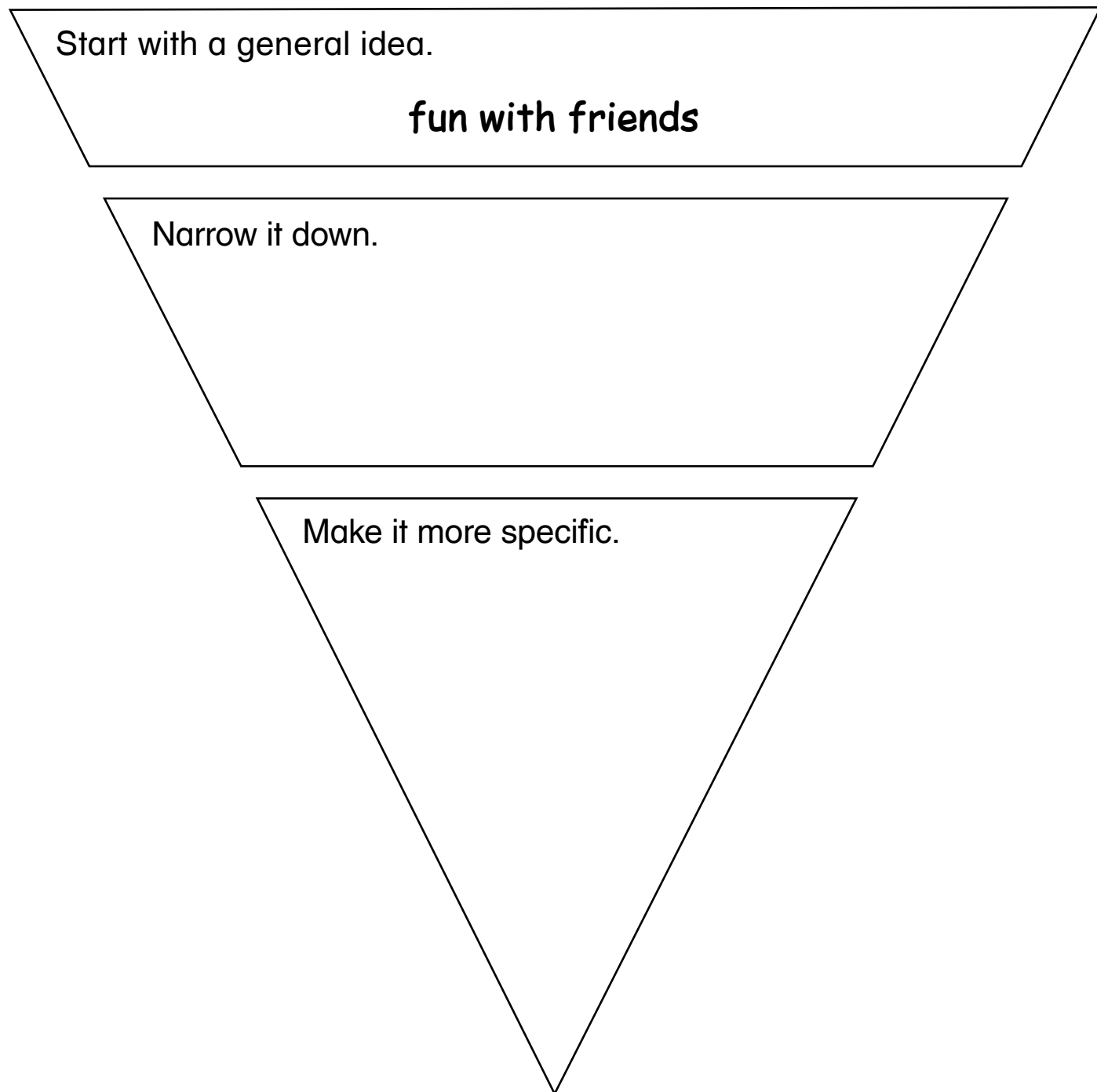
- 2. _____

- 3. _____



Choose a strong idea. Narrow it down.

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Start with a general idea.

fun with friends

Narrow it down.

Make it more specific.