

WRITING WITH EASE, REVISED EDITION

Level Two

part of *The Complete Writer*

INSTRUCTOR SECTION

By

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READING SELECTIONS

- Week 1:** “The Owl and the Grasshopper”
by Aesop and “The Fox and the Stork”
by Aesop
- Week 2:** *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* by L. Frank Baum
- Week 3:** *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* by Betty MacDonald
- Week 4:** *Doctor Dolittle* by Hugh Lofting
- Week 5:** *Misty of Chincoteague* by Marguerite Henry
- Week 6:** “My Shadow” by Robert Louis Stevenson and “The Owl and the Pussycat” by Edward Lear
- Week 7:** *Ginger Pye* by Eleanor Estes
- Week 8:** *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling
- Week 9:** *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren
- Week 10:** *Nurse Matilda* by Christianna Brand
- Week 11:** *The Hundred and One Dalmatians* by Dodie Smith
- Week 12:** *Pilgrim’s Progress* by John Bunyan
- Week 13:** *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton
- Week 14:** *The Boxcar Children*
by Gertrude Chandler Warner
- Week 15:** *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*
by Robert C. O’Brien
- Week 16:** “The Young Man and the Cat” from
The Crimson Fairy Book by Andrew Lang
- Week 17:** “The Pied Piper of Hamelin”
by Robert Browning
- Week 18:** “The Midnight Ride” from *Fifty Famous People* by James Baldwin
- Week 19:** *Five Children and It* by Edith Nesbit
- Week 20:** “Alexander the Great and His Horse”
from *Tales from Far and Near* by Arthur Guy Terry and *The Story of the World, Volume One*
by Susan Wise Bauer
- Week 21:** *Nurse Matilda* by Christianna Brand
and “The Horse That Aroused the Town”
from *Junior Classics: Animal and Nature Stories* by Lillian M. Gask, abridged by Susan Wise Bauer
- Week 22:** “The Hare That Ran Away” from
Eastern Stories and Legends by Marie L. Shedlock
- Week 23:** *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
and *Invincible Louisa* by Cornelia Meigs
- Week 24:** *The Plant That Ate Dirty Socks*
by Nancy McArthur
- Week 25:** “The Elephant’s Child” by Rudyard Kipling
- Week 26:** *Moominland Midwinter* by Tove Jansson
- Week 27:** “The Real Princess” by Hans Christian Andersen and “The Brave Tin Soldier”
by Hans Christian Andersen
- Week 28:** *The Magic of Oz* by L. Frank Baum
- Week 29:** *The Story of Mankind* by Hendrik Van Loon
- Week 30:** *The Story of the Greeks*
by H. A. Guerber
- Week 31:** “The Duel” by Eugene Field and
“Rebecca, Who Slammed Doors for Fun and Perished Miserably” by Hilaire Belloc
- Week 32:** *A Child’s Geography of the World*
by V. M. Hillyer
- Week 33:** *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien
- Week 34:** *Bunnacula: A Rabbit-Tale of Mystery*
by Deborah and James Howe
- Week 35:** *Doctor Dolittle* by Hugh Lofting
- Week 36:** *Peter Pan* by J. M. Barrie

NOTE TO THE REVISED EDITION: HOW TO USE THE NEW CREATIVE WRITING LESSONS

At the end of each week, there is a bonus lesson. These lessons provide fun prompts to spark a young writer's imagination. They will satisfy the needs of students who could benefit from a creative writing outlet, while reinforcing concepts and skills students have practiced throughout the week.

These lessons are completely optional! If you skipped each one, your child would not be at all behind. The first four lessons each week cover everything students need to develop their writing skills.

In this second edition, we want to account for the fact that children think and learn in different ways. At this age, some students are not ready for creative writing, and there is nothing to be gained in forcing them to do it. Meanwhile, other students crave opportunities to practice their new skills in a creative way. You know your child best, and can decide whether or not your student will benefit from this extra practice.

If you decide to use the bonus lessons, be sure to read these parameters first:

The creative writing lessons typically consist of a single writing prompt (exceptions are noted within the lessons). There are three steps to use the prompts:

- 1. Verbal Narration:** Read the prompt and have your student narrate their answer to you.
- 2. Model Sentence:** Write down the first sentence of their narration (modifying when necessary to simplify or shorten).
- 3. Copywork/Dictation:** For weeks 1–28, have your student carefully copy the model sentence onto their Student Page. For weeks 28 on, follow these steps: (1) read the student's sentence back to her and (2) have her repeat it back to you. Then (3) have her write the sentence down on her own, without access to the written model. Repeat steps 1–2 if necessary until the student has written the full sentence.

The prompts in these lessons are designed to awaken a student's creativity. After completing the model sentence, some students may want to draw a picture or write additional sentences on their own. Encourage this, but do not require it. While the model sentence should be checked and edited for grammar and spelling, do not require students to correct or edit any additional writing. Just encourage them!

WEEK 10

DAY ONE: Narration Exercise

Student Page 64

Focus: Identifying the central idea or theme in a passage

Pull out Student Page 64. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Read the following passage out loud to the student. After reading this passage, you will help the student identify the central idea.

Tell the student that this passage is from *Nurse Matilda* by Christianna Brand. Nurse Matilda is a magical nanny who can make disobedient children good. (If the child has seen the movie *Nanny McPhee*, you can tell her that the movie was based on the Nurse Matilda books.)

You may need to explain that “barley sugar” and “demerara sugar” are golden-brown kinds of sugar that are more often used in Great Britain than in the United States.

Once upon a time there was a huge family of children; and they were terribly, terribly naughty.

In those days, mothers and fathers used to have much larger families than they do now; and these families often *were* naughty. The mothers and fathers had to have all sorts of nurses and nannies and governesses

This family I’m telling you about seemed to have more children, and naughtier children, than any other. There were so many of them that I shan’t even tell you their names but leave you to sort them out as you go along, and add up how many there were. But even their parents had to think of them in groups—there were the Big Ones and the Middling Ones and the Little Ones; and the Baby. The baby was really a splendid character. It had fat, bent legs and its nappy was always falling down round its fat, pink knees; but it kept up with the children to the last ounce of its strength. It talked a curious language all of its own.

There was also the Tiny Baby, but it was so small that it *couldn’t* be naughty, so it was very dull and we needn’t count it.

The children had two dogs, who were dachshunds. One was a goldeny brown and he was called Brown Sugar or Barley Sugar or sometimes even Demerara Sugar, but anyway, Sugar for short. The other was tiny and black and as sleek as a little seal and she was called Spice.

And the naughtiness of these children was almost past believing.

—From *Nurse Matilda*
by Christianna Brand

Ask the following questions to test the student’s listening ability. Remind the student to answer in complete sentences; if she answers in a fragment, put the answer in the form of a sentence and then require the student to repeat it back to you.

Instructor: What was the problem with the huge family of children?

Student: *They were terribly naughty.*

Instructor: The parents thought about them in four groups. Can you remember three of the groups?

Student: *The parents thought of them as Big Ones, Middling Ones, Little Ones, and the Baby.*

Instructor: Could the baby talk?

Student: *Yes, but it talked its own language.*

Instructor: What about the Tiny Baby?

Student: *No, the Tiny Baby couldn't talk (or be naughty).*

Instructor: What kind of dogs did the family have?

Student: *They had two dachshunds.*

Instructor: What were their names? (You only need to list one name per dog!)

Student: *One was called Brown Sugar, Barley Sugar, or Sugar; the other was Spice.*

You will now continue to teach the student to sum up the description in the passage. In order to do this, say to the student:

Instructor: The family was so huge that the parents thought of the children in groups. What were the four groups?

Student: *They were the Big Ones, Middling Ones, Little Ones, and the Baby.*

Instructor: What was the huge family like?

Student: *The huge family was very naughty.*

Instructor: How bad was their naughtiness?

Student: *Their naughtiness was almost past believing.*

Now say to the student, "Tell me about the family of naughty children in two sentences." The student's answer should resemble one of the following.

"The family was so large that the children had to be divided into Big Ones, Middling Ones, Little Ones, and Baby. They were unbelievably naughty."

"The family was so huge that the parents had to divide the children into groups. They were terribly naughty."

"The family was huge and naughty. It was so big that the children were known as Big Ones, Middling Ones, Little Ones, and Baby."

Write the student's narration down on Student Page 64 while she watches.

DAY TWO: Copywork Exercise

Student Page 65

Focus: *Commas in a series*

Pull out Student Page 65. Ask the student to write her name and the date. The following model sentence is already printed on it:

I shall give you half an hour to be up, dressed, washed, teeth cleaned, pajamas folded, windows opened, and beds turned back.

This is a sentence from *Nurse Matilda*. Nurse Matilda is telling the naughty children in the big family to get up and get dressed. Do you think they'll be obedient?

Ask the student to put her finger on each of the tasks Nurse Matilda asks the children to do: be up, dressed, washed, teeth cleaned, pajamas folded, windows opened, beds turned back. Ask the student how many tasks there are (seven). Then ask her to find each comma. There is a comma after each task (except for the last). Remind the student of the rule: Whenever you write things in a series (whether they are actions, nouns, adjectives, or other words), use commas to separate them.

Now ask the student to copy the sentence. Remember to watch her write, and to correct her at once if she begins to make errors in spelling or format.

DAY THREE: Dictation Exercise

Student Page 66

Pull out Student Page 66. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Dictate the following sentence to the student:

I shall give you half an hour to be up, dressed, washed, teeth cleaned, pajamas folded, windows opened, and beds turned back.

Before she begins to write, remind her that commas separate items in a series. Read the sentence twice, pausing for the silent count of three at each comma. Then ask the student to repeat the sentence back to you. If she cannot remember it, repeat the sentence together until she can.

DAY FOUR: Narration Exercise and Dictation

Student Pages 67–68

Focus: *Identifying central details in a description*

Pull out Student Pages 67–68. Ask the student to write her name and the date on Student Page 68.

Today's exercise will combine narration and dictation. Tell the student that you will read the following passage to her, ask her a few questions about it, and then help her to sum up the description. After you write these summary sentences down (while the student watches), you will dictate one or two of them back to her.

Read the following passage out loud to the student. Tell her that this is also from *Nurse Matilda*. Nurse Matilda has arrived to take care of the naughty large family.

She was very ugly—the ugliest person you ever saw in your life! Her hair was scraped into a bun, sticking straight out at the back of her head like a teapot handle; and her face was very round and wrinkly, and she had eyes like two little black boot-buttons. And her nose!—she had a nose like two potatoes. She wore a rusty black dress right up to the top of her neck and right down to her button boots, and a rusty black jacket and a rusty black bonnet, all trimmed with trembly black jet, with her teapot-handle of a bun sticking out at the back. And she carried a small brown case and a large black stick, and she had a very fierce expression indeed on her wrinkly, round, brown face.

But what you noticed most of all was that she had one huge front Tooth, sticking right out like a tombstone over her lower lip. You never, in the whole of your life, ever saw such a Tooth!

Mrs. Brown was quite aghast at the sight of the Tooth. Her poor, dear, darling blameless angels! She faltered: “I’m not sure that . . . Well, I mean . . . I don’t really know that we need you after all,” and, politely but firmly, she started to close the door.

“Oh, yes, you do,” said Nurse Matilda, and she tapped at the door with her big black stick.

—From *Nurse Matilda*
by Christianna Brand

Ask the following questions to test the student's listening ability. Remind the student to answer in complete sentences; if she answers in a fragment, put the answer in the form of a sentence and then require the student to repeat it back to you.

Instructor: What did Nurse Matilda's hair look like?

Student: *It looked like a teapot handle.*

Instructor: What did her face look like?

Student: *It was round and wrinkly.*

Instructor: What were her eyes like?

Student: *They were like boot-buttons.*

Instructor: What did her nose look like?

Student: *Her nose looked like two potatoes.*

Instructor: What color was she wearing?

Student: *She was wearing all black.*

Instructor: What was the strangest thing about her whole face?

Student: *She had a huge front tooth.*

Instructor: When Mrs. Brown saw her, what did she say?

Student: *She said, "We don't really need you after all."*

Instructor: What did Nurse Matilda do when Mrs. Brown tried to close the door?

Student: *She tapped on it with her big black stick.*

You will now continue to teach the student to sum up the description of Nurse Matilda. In order to do this, say to the student:

Instructor: Overall, was Nurse Matilda beautiful or ugly?

Student: *She was ugly.*

Instructor: What are two things that were ugly about her?

Student: *She had hair like a teapot handle, a round wrinkly face, eyes like buttons, a nose like potatoes, and a huge front tooth.*

Instructor: How did Mrs. Brown react to the sight of her?

Student: *Mrs. Brown tried to send her away.*

Now ask the student, "Can you tell me in two sentences what Nurse Matilda was like?" The student's answer should resemble one of the following:

"Nurse Matilda was so ugly that Mrs. Brown tried to send her away. She had a nose like two potatoes and a huge front tooth."

"Nurse Matilda had a wrinkly face and a huge front tooth. When Mrs. Brown saw how ugly she was, Mrs. Brown tried to send her away."

"Mrs. Brown tried to send Nurse Matilda away. Nurse Matilda was horribly ugly—she wore all black and had a nose like two potatoes."

Write down the student's narration on Student Page 67 as she watches. Then, choose one of the sentences from the narration to use as a dictation exercise (Student Page 68). Follow the same dictation techniques as above.

DAY FIVE (optional): Creative Writing

Student Pages 69–70

Pull out Student Pages 69–70. Write the student's name and the date for her as she watches, or ask her to write the name and date independently.

Instructor: Can you draw a picture of Nurse Matilda based on the description that I will read to you now? If you would rather write than draw, write a sentence about what would happen if Nurse Matilda came to live with your family. What is the first thing Nurse Matilda would teach you?

If the student chooses to answer the drawing prompt, read aloud to her the first two paragraphs of Nurse Matilda's description on page 55 of your book, from "She was very ugly" to "such a Tooth!"

If the student chooses to answer the written prompt, write her answer down on the "Instructor" lines of Student Page 70 as she watches. Then have her copy the sentence onto the "Student" lines.

WEEK 30

DAY ONE: Narration Exercise*Student Page 203**Focus: Identifying the central details in a description*

Pull out Student Page 203. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Read the following passage out loud to the student. Tell her that this is from another history of the Greeks, written a few years before *The Story of Mankind* (which you read from in the last lesson). This history was written by Helene Guerber, a historian from America. She is describing life in one particular Greek city—the city of Sparta.

You may need to explain that a “lyre” is a stringed instrument like a small harp. Rushes are thick, long, grass-like plants.

The Spartan children stayed under their father’s roof and in their mother’s care until they were seven years old. While in the nursery, they were taught all the beautiful old Greek legends, and listened with delight to the stories of the ancient heroes, and especially to the poems of Homer telling about the war of Troy and the adventures of Ulysses.

As soon as the children had reached seven years of age, they were given over to the care of the state, and allowed to visit their parents but seldom. The boys were put in charge of chosen men, who trained them to become strong and brave; while the girls were placed under some good and wise woman, who not only taught them all they needed to know to keep house well, but also trained them to be as strong and fearless as their brothers. All Spartan boys were allowed but one rough woolen garment, which served as their sole covering by night and by day, and was of the same material in summer as in winter.

They were taught very little reading, writing, and arithmetic, but were carefully trained to recite the poems of Homer, the patriotic songs, and to accompany themselves skillfully on the lyre. They were also obliged to sing in the public chorus, and to dance gracefully at all the religious feasts.

As the Spartans were very anxious that their boys should be strong and fearless, they were taught to stand pain and fatigue without a murmur; and, to make sure that they could do so, their teachers made them go through a very severe training.

Led by one of the older boys, the little lads were often sent out for long tramps over rough and stony roads, under the hot sun; and the best boy was the one who kept up longest, in spite of bleeding feet, burning thirst, and great fatigue.

Spartan boys were allowed no beds to sleep in, lest they should become lazy and hard to please. Their only couch was a heap of rushes, which they picked on the banks of the Eurotas, a river near Sparta; and in winter they were allowed to cover these with a layer of cat-tail down to make them softer and warmer.

—From *The Story of the Greeks*
by H. A. Guerber

Ask the student the following comprehension questions. These are designed to guide the student towards recognizing the need to give you important details about Greek life, rather than tell you what *happens* in the passage.

Instructor: How old were the children when they were taken away from their parents?

Student: *They were seven years old.*

Instructor: What were the boys given to wear?

Student: *They were given one garment made out of wool.*

Instructor: Did they learn reading, writing, and math?

Student: *No, they did not learn very much reading, writing, or math.*

Instructor: Can you remember three things that they *were* taught to do?

Student: *They were taught to recite Homer's poems, to recite patriotic poems, to play the lyre, to sing, and to dance.*

Instructor: The boys were supposed to be strong and fearless, without complaining. Can you tell me two ways that they were trained to be strong and uncomplaining?

Student: *They were sent out for long marches on rough, stony roads; they weren't allowed to sleep in beds, only on heaps of rushes.*

Instructor: Would you have enjoyed being a Spartan child?

Student: *Let the student express an opinion!*

Now ask the student the general question “Can you give me a brief summary of this passage?” The answer should focus on the details in the passage; if she can't remember the details, read part of the paragraph to her again. Her answer should contain at least one detail about the Spartan boys' schooling, and at least one detail about the boys' training to be strong and uncomplaining. It should not be more than three sentences long and should resemble one of the following:

“Spartan children left home when they were seven. The boys were taught to sing, dance, and recite poems. They went on long, hard marches so they could learn to be strong and not complain.”

“Boys from Sparta went away to school when they were seven. They learned Homer's poems. They were also taught how to be fearless and uncomplaining.”

“Spartan boys learned to recite Homer’s poems and patriotic songs. They were supposed to be brave and fearless. They were sent on long marches and were forced to sleep on piles of grass instead of beds.”

Write the student’s narration down on Student Page 203 while she watches.

DAY TWO: Dictation Exercise

Student Page 204

Focus: Prepositions

Pull out Student Page 204. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Dictate the following sentences to the student three times. Tell the student to listen for the period, and then pause for a silent count of five when you reach the period.

Spartan boys were not allowed to sleep in beds. Their teachers did not want them to become lazy and hard to please.

Now read the following sentence one more time, emphasizing the bolded word.

Spartan boys were not allowed to sleep in beds.

Tell the student that the word “in” is a *preposition*. A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between two other words. Where did the boys *not* sleep? They did not sleep *in beds*.

Watch the student as she writes, and correct her at once if she begins to make a mistake. Give all necessary spelling help.

DAY THREE: Dictation Exercise

Student Page 205

Pull out Student Page 205. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Dictate the following sentence to the student three times. Tell the student that there are *seven* commas in this sentence! Pause for a silent count of three at each comma.

The Spartan girls, who were brought up by the women, were, like the boys, taught to wrestle, run, and swim, and to take part in gymnastics of all kinds.

You may need to dictate this sentence a few additional times, so that the student can remember the placement of all of the commas. Ask the student to repeat the sentence back to you. When she can repeat it, ask her to write.

Watch the student as she writes, and correct her at once if she begins to make a mistake. Give all necessary spelling help. You may need to remind the student to capitalize “Spartan” (“Sparta” is the proper name of a town, so words referring to that town such as “Spartan” are also capitalized).

DAY FOUR: Narration Exercise and Dictation

Student Pages 206–207

Focus: *Identifying the central details in a description*

Pull out Student Pages 206–207. Ask the student to write her name and the date on Student Page 207.

Today’s exercise will combine narration and dictation. Read the following passage out loud to the student. Tell the student that this is another passage from Helene Guerber’s history of the Greeks.

The Spartan girls, who were brought up by the women, were, like the boys, taught to wrestle, run, and swim, and to take part in gymnastics of all kinds, until they too became very strong and supple, and could stand almost any fatigue.

They were also taught to read, write, count, sing, play, and dance; to spin, weave, and dye; and to do all kinds of woman’s work. In short, they were expected to be strong, intelligent, and capable, so that when they married they might help their husbands, and bring up their children sensibly. At some public festivals the girls strove with one another in various games, which were witnessed only by their fathers and mothers and the other married people of the city. The winners in these contests were given beautiful prizes, which were much coveted.

Although the women and girls were not often allowed to appear in public, or to witness certain of the Olympic games, there were special days held sacred to them, when the girls also strove for prizes. They too ran races. . . . One of these races was called the torch race, for each runner carried a lighted torch in her hand. All were allowed to try to put out each other’s light; and the prize was given to the maiden who first reached the goal with her torch aflame, or to the one who kept hers burning longest.

The prize for the girls was the same as that given to the boys; but the boys took part in more games, and were present in greater numbers, than the girls, and their victories were praised much more than those of their sisters.

—From *The Story of the Greeks*
by H. A. Guerber

Ask the student the following comprehension questions. These are designed to guide the student towards recognizing the need to give you important details about life in Sparta, rather than tell you what *happens* in the passage.

Instructor: What kinds of physical activities were girls taught to do? The passage lists four; can you tell me two or three?

Student: *The girls were taught to wrestle, run, swim, and do gymnastics.*

Instructor: The passage lists nine other specific things that girls were taught to do. Can you list five? (Note: Be sure to give the student help if necessary!)

Student: *They were also taught to read, write, count, sing, play, dance, spin, weave, and dye.*

Instructor: What were Spartan girls expected to do when they grew up? The passage lists two specific duties.

Student: *They were supposed to help their husbands and bring up their children.*

Instructor: Who was allowed to watch when the girls wrestled or ran races?

Student: *The fathers, mothers, and other married people watched.*

Instructor: In the torch race, what did the girls try to do to each other?

Student: *They tried to put out the torches.*

Instructor: Whose games were considered more important—the boys' or the girls'?

Student: *The boys' games were considered more important.*

Now ask the student the general question “Can you give me a brief summary of this passage?” The answer should focus on the details in the passage; if the student can't remember the details, read part of the paragraph to her again. Her answer should contain at least one detail about the physical skills the girls were taught to do and at least two details about the other specific skills they were taught. It should also mention the games that the girls competed in. Her answer should be no longer than three sentences and should resemble one of the following:

“Girls in Sparta were taught to wrestle, run, and do gymnastics. They were also taught to read, write, spin, and weave. They had their own games, like the Olympics, where they raced with torches and wrestled.”

“Spartan girls learned how to do gymnastics. They also learned how to do household jobs, like dyeing and spinning. They played games like the boys, but their games were not as important to the Spartans.”

“In Sparta, girls were taught how to run, swim, do gymnastics, read, write, and count. They were taught how to help their husbands and raise children. They played in games like their brothers, but only married people were allowed to watch.”

Write down the student's narration on Student Page 206, but do not allow her to watch. Then dictate one or two of the sentences back to her (Student Page 207). Be sure to indicate any unusual punctuation with your voice; give any necessary spelling help. Allow the student to compare her dictation with your written original.

DAY FIVE (optional): Creative Writing

Student Pages 208–209

Pull out Student Pages 208–209. Write the student’s name and the date for her as she watches, or ask her to write the name and date independently.

Instructor: After reading a little bit about the ancient Spartans, imagine you are a Spartan boy or girl. What would be your favorite part of the day? What would be your least favorite part?

Write the student’s answer down on a separate piece of paper. First, read the sentence back to her and then have her repeat it back to you. Finally, have her write the sentence down on her own, without access to the written model. Repeat steps 1–2 if necessary until the student has written the full sentence.

WEEK 31

DAY ONE: Narration Exercise

Student Page 210

Focus: Identifying the central narrative thread in a poem

Pull out Student Page 210. Ask the student to write his name and the date.

Read the following poem out loud to the student. You may want to explain that a “spat” is a fight.

The gingham dog and the calico cat
 Side by side on the table sat;
 ’Twas half-past twelve, and (what do you think!)
 Nor one nor t’other had slept a wink!
 The old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate
 Appeared to know as sure as fate
 There was going to be a terrible spat.
 (I wasn’t there; I simply state
 What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)

The gingham dog went “bow-wow-wow!”
 And the calico cat replied “mee-ow!”
 The air was littered, an hour or so,
 With bits of gingham and calico,
 While the old Dutch clock in the chimney-place
 Up with its hands before its face,
 For it always dreaded a family row!
 (Now mind: I’m only telling you
 What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)

The Chinese plate looked very blue,
 And wailed, “Oh, dear! what shall we do!”
 But the gingham dog and the calico cat
 Wallowed this way and tumbled that,
 Employing every tooth and claw
 In the awfulest way you ever saw—
 And, oh! how the gingham and calico flew!
 (Don’t fancy I exaggerate!
 I got my views from the Chinese plate!)

Next morning where the two had sat
 They found no trace of dog or cat;
 And some folks think unto this day

That burglars stole the pair away!
But the truth about the cat and pup
Is this: They ate each other up!
Now what do you really think of that!
(The old Dutch clock it told me so,
And that is how I came to know.)

—“The Duel”
by Eugene Field

Ask the student the following comprehension questions. These are designed to guide the student towards summarizing the story in the poem.

Instructor: The Dutch clock and the Chinese plate knew that something was going to happen. What did they know?

Student: *They knew that there was going to be a spat (a fight).*

Instructor: Who was going to fight?

Student: *The gingham dog and the calico cat were going to fight.*

Instructor: The poem says that the clock put its “hands before its face.” This is a “pun”—a phrase with two meanings. One of the meanings is that the hands of a clock go around its face. What is the other meaning? Can you show me?

Student: (The student should put his hands up in front of his face.)

Instructor: After the dog and the cat fought, what happened to them?

Student: *They disappeared OR They ate each other up.*

Instructor: What did people *say* had happened to them?

Student: *People said that burglars stole them.*

Instructor: Who told the narrator of the poem about the cat and the dog?

Student: *The Dutch clock and the Chinese plate told the narrator.*

Now say to the student, “Tell me in one or two sentences what happened in this poem.” The student’s answer should resemble one of the following:

“The gingham dog and the calico cat had a fight and ate each other up.”

“The gingham dog and the calico cat had a fight. People thought that they had been stolen by burglars, but they actually ate each other up.”

“The Dutch clock and the Chinese plate saw the dog and the cat fight. The dog and cat disappeared because they ate each other!”

Write the student’s narration down on Student Page 210 while he watches.

DAY TWO: Dictation Exercise*Student Page 211***Focus:** *Lines of poetry*

Pull out Student Page 211. Ask the student to write his name and the date.

Dictate the following two lines of poetry to the student three times:

Next morning where the two had sat
They found no trace of dog or cat.

Be sure to pause for a silent count of five at the end of the first line of poetry. Remind the student that each line of traditional poetry is indented from the margin (approximately five spaces; you can suggest that the student put his finger down at the margin and then begin writing on the other side of his finger). Also remind the student that each line of traditional poetry begins with a capital letter. Tell the student that there is no punctuation mark at the end of the first line (it will be impossible for him to tell, since you need to pause at the end of the line).

Watch the student as he writes, and correct him at once if he begins to make a mistake.

DAY THREE: Dictation Exercise*Student Page 212***Focus:** *Lines of poetry and prepositions*

Pull out Student Page 212. Ask the student to write his name and the date.

Dictate the following two lines of poetry to the student three times:

The gingham dog and the calico cat
Side by side on the table sat.

Be sure to pause for a silent count of five at the end of the first line of poetry. Remind the student that each line of traditional poetry is indented from the margin (approximately five spaces; you can suggest that the student put his finger down at the margin and then begin writing on the other side of his finger). Also remind the student that each line of traditional poetry begins with a capital letter. Tell the student that there is no punctuation mark at the end of the first line (it will be impossible for him to tell, since you need to pause at the end of the line).

Now read the following lines again, emphasizing the bolded word.

The gingham dog and the calico cat
Side by side **on** the table sat.

Tell the student that the word “on” is a *preposition*. A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between two other words. Where did the dog and cat sit? They sat *on* the table.

Watch the student as he writes, and correct him at once if he begins to make a mistake. Give all necessary spelling help.

DAY FOUR: Narration Exercise and Dictation

Student Pages 213–214

Focus: *Identifying the central narrative thread in a poem*

Pull out Student Pages 213–214. Ask the student to write his name and the date on Student Page 214.

Read the following poem out loud to the student. You may want to explain that “Palace Green” and “Bayswater” are places in England. “Abhors” means “hates.” A bust is a statue of someone’s head and shoulders.

A trick that everyone abhors
In Little Girls is slamming Doors.
A Wealthy Banker’s little Daughter
Who lived in Palace Green, Bayswater
(By name Rebecca Offendort),
Was given to this Furious Sport.
She would deliberately go
And Slam the door like Billy-Ho!
To make her Uncle Jacob start.
She was not really bad at heart,
But only rather rude and wild:
She was an aggravating child.

It happened that a Marble Bust
Of Abraham was standing just
Above the Door this little Lamb
Had carefully prepared to Slam,
And Down it came! It knocked her flat!
It laid her out! She looked like that!

Her funeral Sermon (which was long
And followed by a Sacred Song)
Mentioned her Virtues, it is true,
But dwelt upon her Vices too,
And showed the Dreadful End of One
Who goes and slams the door for Fun.

The children who were brought to hear
 The awful Tale from far and near
 Were much impressed, and inly swore
 They never more would slam the Door,
 As often they had done before.

—“Rebecca, Who Slammed Doors for
 Fun and Perished Miserably”
 by Hilaire Belloc

Ask the student the following comprehension questions. These are designed to guide the student towards summarizing the story in the poem.

Instructor: What obnoxious habit did Rebecca Offendort have?

Student: *She slammed doors.*

Instructor: A marble bust was standing above the door that she slammed. Who was portrayed by the bust?

Student: *It was a bust of Abraham.*

Instructor: What happened when Rebecca slammed the door?

Student: *The bust fell down and knocked her flat.*

Instructor: What was her funeral sermon about?

Student: *It was about children who slam doors, and what happens to them.*

Instructor: What did the children who heard the sermon decide?

Student: *They decided not to slam doors anymore.*

Now say to the student, “Tell me in two or three sentences what happened in this poem.” The student’s answer should resemble one of the following:

“Rebecca liked to slam doors for fun. One day, she slammed a door and a statue of Abraham fell down and smashed her.”

“A statue of Abraham fell down and smashed Rebecca. Her funeral sermon was about slamming doors for fun. The children who heard it decided not to slam doors anymore.”

“Rebecca was a little girl who slammed doors. She was smashed flat by a bust of Abraham. The children who came to her funeral swore that they wouldn’t slam doors anymore.”

Write down the student’s narration on Student Page 213, but do not allow him to watch. Then dictate one or two of the sentences back to him (Student Page 214). Be sure to indicate any unusual punctuation with your voice; give any necessary spelling help. Allow the student to compare his dictation with your written original.

DAY FIVE (optional): Creative Writing

Student Pages 215–216

Pull out Student Pages 215–216. Write the student’s name and the date for him as he watches, or ask him to write the name and date independently.

Instructor: Write a free form poem about one person in your family. I will write down your poem for you to copy into your student book. Make sure to capitalize the first letter of each line. The poem should describe something that you love about the person, or something unique and different that they do.

Write the student’s answer down on a separate piece of paper. First, read the poem back to him and then have him repeat it back to you. Finally, have him write the poem down on his own, without access to the written model. Repeat steps 1–2 if necessary until the student has written the full sentence.

Remind your student that for a free form poem, the lines can be any length and they do not have to rhyme. If your student worries that all poems must rhyme, read him some of your favorite non-rhyming poems as examples. Or show the student the following poem by Carl Sandburg:

The fog comes
on little cat feet.
It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

Date _____

Week 10
Day One

Name _____

Narration Exercise

From *Nurse Matilda* by Christianna Brand

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline, repeated 10 times.

Copywork Exercise

I shall give you half an hour to be up, dressed, washed, teeth cleaned, pajamas folded, windows opened, and beds turned back.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid) for copying the text above.



Handwriting practice lines consisting of four horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid) for copying the text above.

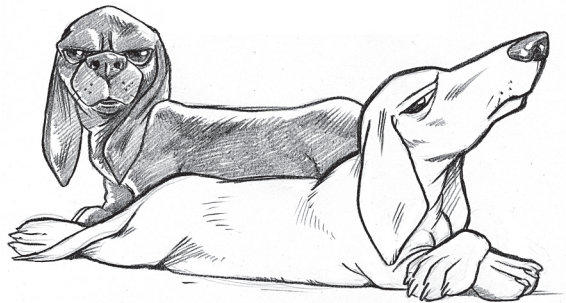
Date _____

Week 10
Day Three

Name _____

Dictation Exercise

Handwriting practice area consisting of 10 sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid top line, a dashed midline, and a solid bottom line.



Instructor _____

Date _____

Week 10
Day Four

Narration Exercise and Dictation

From *Nurse Matilda* by Christianna Brand

Handwriting practice area consisting of 10 sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid top line, a dashed midline, and a solid bottom line.

Narration Exercise and Dictation

From *Nurse Matilda* by Christianna Brand

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline. There are 10 sets of these lines for writing.

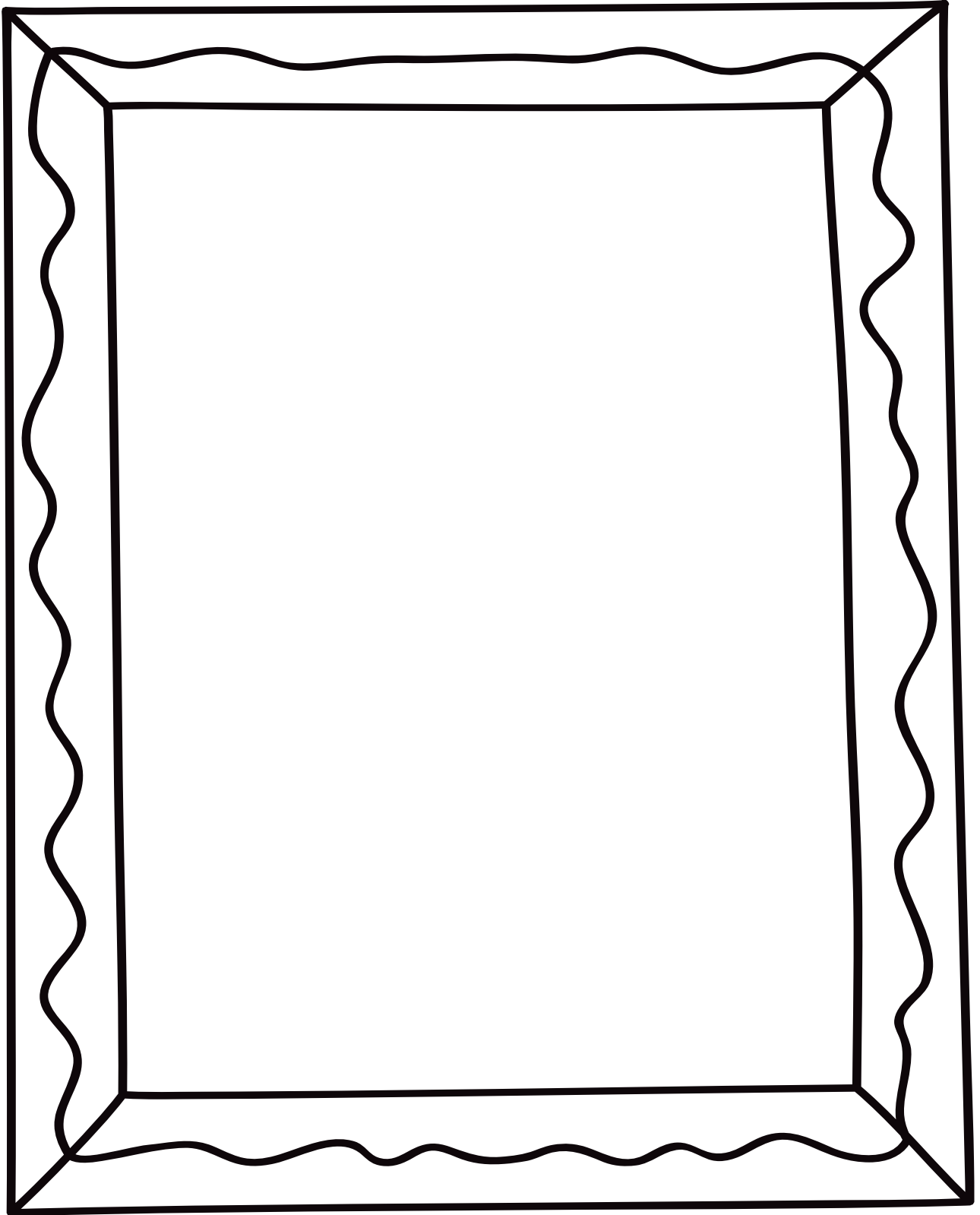


Date _____

Week 10
Day Five

Name _____

Creative Writing



Date _____

Week 10
Day Five

Name _____

Creative Writing

Instructor

Handwriting practice lines for the Instructor section, consisting of multiple sets of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline.

Student

Handwriting practice lines for the Student section, consisting of multiple sets of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline.

Date _____

Week 30
Day One

Name _____

Narration Exercise

From *The Story of the Greeks* by H. A. Guerber

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline, repeated 10 times.

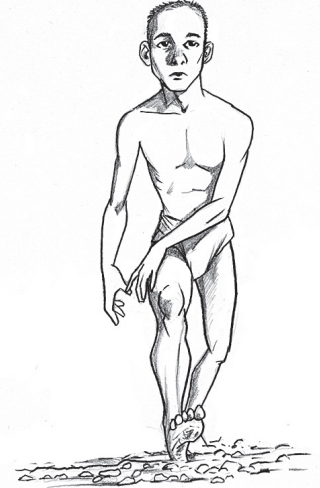
Date _____

Week 30
Day Two

Name _____

Dictation Exercise

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. This set includes the first three lines of the page.



Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. This set includes the remaining seven lines of the page.

Date _____

Week 30
Day Three

Name _____

Dictation Exercise

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 10 sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).

Instructor _____

Date _____

Week 30
Day Four

Narration Exercise and Dictation

From *The Story of the Greeks* by H. A. Guerber

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 10 sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).

Narration Exercise and Dictation

From *The Story of the Greeks* by H. A. Guerber

Handwriting practice area consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top, middle dashed, bottom) for writing.



Handwriting practice area consisting of three horizontal lines (top, middle dashed, bottom) for writing.

Date _____

Week 30
Day Five

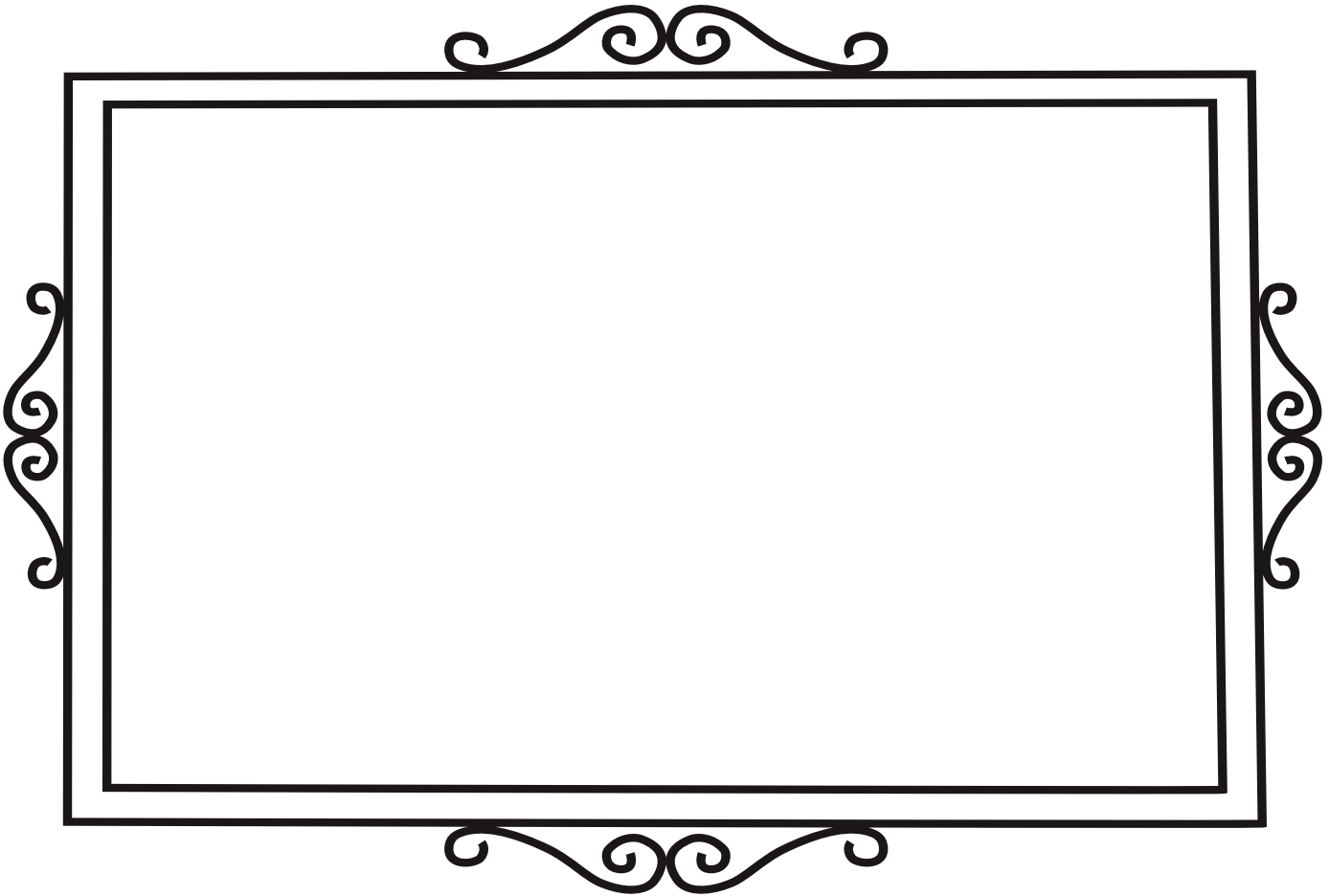
Name _____

Creative Writing

Student

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline, repeated 10 times down the page.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of ten sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).



Date _____

Week 31
Day One

Name _____

Narration Exercise

“The Duel” by Eugene Field

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline, repeated 10 times.

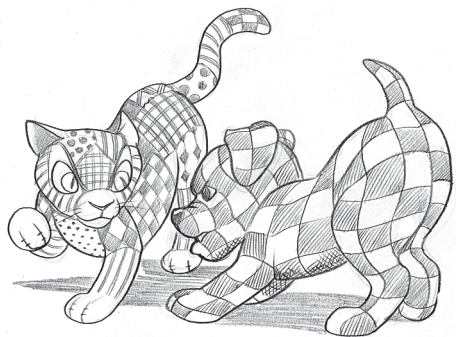
Date _____

Week 31
Day Two

Name _____

Dictation Exercise

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 10 sets of three horizontal lines (top, middle dashed, bottom) for writing practice.



Date _____

Week 31
Day Three

Name _____

Dictation Exercise

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline, repeated 10 times.

Instructor _____

Date _____

Week 31
Day Four

Narration Exercise and Dictation

“Rebecca, Who Slammed Doors for Fun and Perished Miserably”

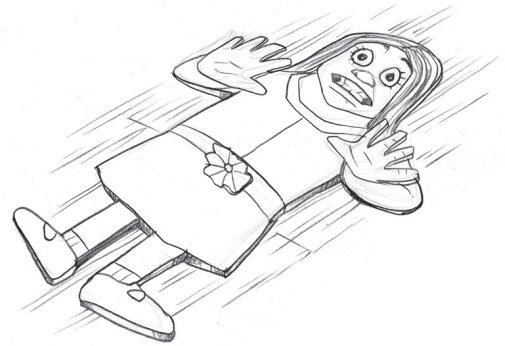
by Hilaire Belloc

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline, repeated 10 times.

Narration Exercise and Dictation

“Rebecca, Who Slammed Doors for Fun and Perished Miserably”

by Hilaire Belloc



Date _____

Week 31
Day Five

Name _____

Creative Writing

Student

Handwriting practice area with multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top, middle dashed, bottom) for writing.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of ten sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).

