

Purpose & Audience

RAFTS

RAFTS ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

RAFTS is an acronym (a word formed from the first letters of several words) which helps you focus your writing.

R	ROLE	From whose point of view am I writing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My own? • Someone else's?
A	AUDIENCE	To whom am I writing? What is my relationship to this audience? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I need to be formal or casual in my writing?
F	FORMAT	What particular writing form is appropriate or assigned? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • story? • expository? • essay? • business letter . . . ?
T	TOPIC	What am I writing about?
S	STRONG VERB	What is my purpose? What exactly am I seeking to achieve in my writing? Sometimes a piece of writing has two or more related purposes. Each related purpose should be specified.

Completing a **RAFTS** is a valuable pre-writing activity. It reminds you about what is required in your writing. Whenever a **RAFTS** element is not assigned, you should **choose**. For instance, if only the purpose, form and topic are assigned, you should **choose** an appropriate role and should identify your audience. If you have choice in the assignment, for example, the option of writing a story or an expository essay, use the **RAFTS** to indicate your choice. Completing a **RAFTS** has two major benefits:

1. It helps you focus your writing so that you do not wander off topic.
2. It helps you discover ideas for your writing.

RAFTS CONSIDERATION

NAME: _____ CLASS: _____

DATE: _____ ASSIGNMENT: _____

RAFTS: Carefully consider the assignment. If **RAFTS** elements are given as part of the assignment, note them below. Otherwise, choose them and note them below.

MY ROLE: _____

MY AUDIENCE: _____

MY FORMAT: _____

MY TOPIC: _____

MY STRONG
VERB (PURPOSE) _____

TOPIC: WHAT I AM WRITING ABOUT

EXAMPLES OF ROLES	EXAMPLES OF AUDIENCES	EXAMPLES OF FORMAT	EXAMPLES OF STRONG VERBS
self parent character in book detective friend teacher historical figure	self parents friends pen pals employer politician author	article journal entry diary entry poem editorial short story essay	demand narrate plead persuade remind support

SAMPLE VARIABLES FOR RAFTS

ROLE	AUDIENCE	FORMAT	TOPIC	STRONG VERB
self	self	diary	accident	denying
cat	mother	cartoon	conservation	inquiring
friend	coach	letter		appealing
alien	babysitter	interview	importance of	analyzing
hunter	girlfriend	script	sportsmanship	persuading
secretary	tv set	obituary		appreciating
policeman	architect	pamphlet	undone homework	coaxng
grandmother	bigot	bumper sticker		questioning
machine	feminist	recipe	job qualifications	complaining
travel agent	principal	code	unleashed dogs	justifying
fur coat	banker	report	being great	pleading
jogger	editor	sonnet	pioneer life	dreaming
reporter	employer	note in bottle	hockey game	inviting
sports writer	owner	parchment scroll	junk food	asserting
microwave oven	fans	funeral oration	eviction	arguing
robot	hockey star	invitation		bragging
Romeo	dog owners	dialogue	first public	apologizing
sea monster		travelogue	performance	imagining
	complaint	resumé		promoting
Anne of Green	department	news report	treasure location	warning
Gables		ballad	neglect	condemning
	arcade manager	song		thanking
historian	classmates	tall tale	strange creatures	advising
scientist	S.P.C.A.	postcard	on a distant planet	honouring
astronaut	cartoonist	fairy tale		whining
pioneer	bicycle	newspaper ad	haunting a house	enticing
ghost	tooth fairy	commercial		describing
detective	ghost		used car	teaching
princess	earthlings	letter of	mouse for lunch	announcing
Wayne Gretzky	kidnapper	resignation	granting a wish	complimenting
Old Inuit	department store		persecution	disbelieving
Pac Man	rock band	memo		demanding
taxpayer	immigrant	editorial	pipeline harming	
Czar Nicholas	former friend	friendly letter	wildlife	
Edgar Allen Poe	publisher	soliloquy		
			character portrayal	
			saving energy	
			story ending	
			magic	
			rights of a nine	
			year old	

EXERCISE

Complete RAFTS for the following assignments.

1. As Mary Jones, treasurer of the Student Council for St. Elmo School, write to Ms. Sally Smith, Marketing Director of Royal Rings, to request a catalogue which includes graduation rings.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

2. Write about actions which can be taken to help someone who has recently experienced the death of a loved one. Your response should be in the form of a story or essay.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

3. Write about some of the ways that individuals can unselfishly celebrate Christmas. Your response should be in the form of a story or essay.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

4. As Steven Smith, President of the Foothills School Chess Club, write a letter to Ms. Henrietta Hornblaster to complain that the five chess sets ordered for the club are all missing two pawns.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

5. Write about intelligent ways of dealing with being teased or tormented by schoolmates. Your response may take the form of a story or essay.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

6. You are Violet Blossom, a concerned citizen. Write a letter to the editor of *The Mountain Gazette* to express your concern about your city council's plan to allow rock concerts in the Mountain Valley City Park.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

7. You are Mr. Michael Henry, president of your school's student council. Write a letter to author, Ms. Wilma Wordy to attend a young writer's festival at Rockyhill School on May 10, 2000 at 2:00 p.m. Request that Ms. Wordy reply by May 1, 2000.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

8. Write an essay to explain how you have changed or become a better person because of someone's inspiration; identify the person who inspired you.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

9. Write about what teenagers learn by being faced with a personal challenge such as developing athletic ability, learning new skills or being employed. Your response may take the form of a story or essay.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

10. You are Sam Smith, a sixteen year old interested in a part-time job with Castle Computing Company. Write a business letter to Ms. Tamara Tough, Personnel Director. Inquire about summer work possibilities for students as assistant computer programmers. Request permission to forward your resumé if positions are available.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong Verb / Purpose: _____

Pre-Writing Instructional Strategies

From: Modifying The Four Blocks For Upper Grades by Cheryl Mahaffey Sigmon

Mental Planning

Sometimes the prewriting activity is a mental exercise, rather than any written plan, especially for informal writing or journaling.

Job Lists/Brainstorming

Often the planning consists of free-flowing list of items for inclusion in the composition, often followed by prioritizing or narrowing the list to those things that might be best suited for the composition.

Graphic Organizers

Quite often, people who are visual learners might choose to get organized for writing using some structural map for where they're going.

Outline for Writing

One of the trusty old methods used through the decades to organize for writing is the outline.

A teacher will offer various ways of organizing only to provide a menu from which students will choose the one that might be best for their style of writing.

During Writing

Writing Workshop with Self-Selected Topics OR Focused Writing With Teacher-Guided Topics OR a Combination

Suggested there is a balance between self-selected writing and focused writing. Focused writing demands usually increase with the grades. Students who have free reign of writing topics, modes and formats may find it difficult to deal with a sudden switch to the confines of assessment with defined topics, time frames, and requirements of the type of pre-writing, writing and final draft that must be produced. However, there still needs to be opportunity for personal writing if a student is to have the opportunity to explore and become instilled with the desire to communicate what is of importance personally. Students can understand the difference.

For lengthy pieces (ex. research), modeling of all the steps is critical. Although mini-lessons divided into small chunks may draw out the lesson over many days, it is time well spent.

Focused Writing in the Upper Grades

P137

Teacher's Role

Explicit instruction occurs during modeling and focused writing. It is critical that it also occur in personal writing while students are engaged in the writing process.

This can be accomplished through individual interviews while students are writing.

Post-Writing

In the upper grades, students still write several pieces before choosing to publish one that is good enough to carry through the whole writing process, one that shows potential as a published piece.

Setting personal goals

Applying focused editing criteria

Editing makes the writing cleaner and "prettier." Revising makes in better!
Teachers should instruct and support both.

Teacher/student conferences

Self-evaluation

Peer-evaluation

Sharing Writing

Author's Chair

Podium

Peer Sharing

Peer Group Sharing

Directed Peer/Peer Group Sharing

Display Sharing

Adult Response

Writing Graphic Organizers



PLANNING A BUSINESS LETTER

R **ROLE**

A **AUDIENCE**

F **FORMAT**

T **TOPIC**

S **STRONG
VERB**

Business Letter

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER



**REMEMBER !
B. P. D O G**

OPENING PARAGRAPH

BACKGROUND
AND
PURPOSE

B

P

BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

DETAILS
AND
OPERATIONS

D

O

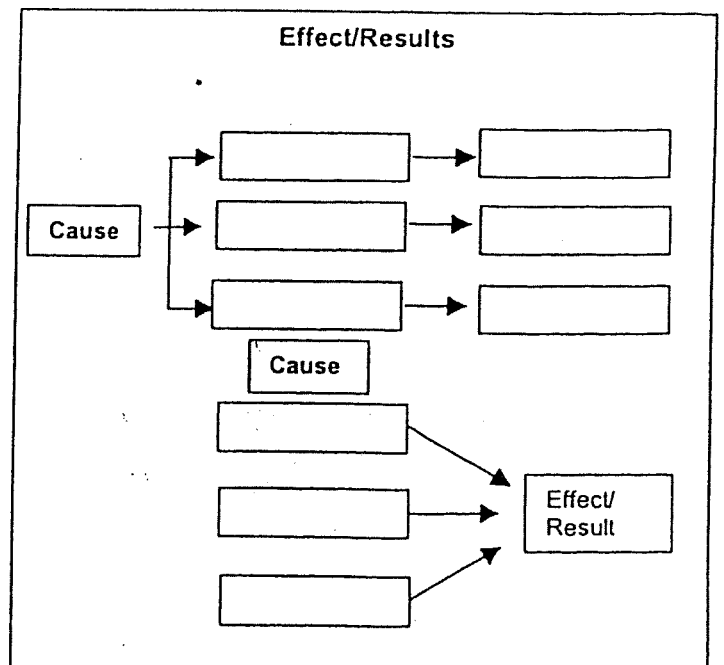
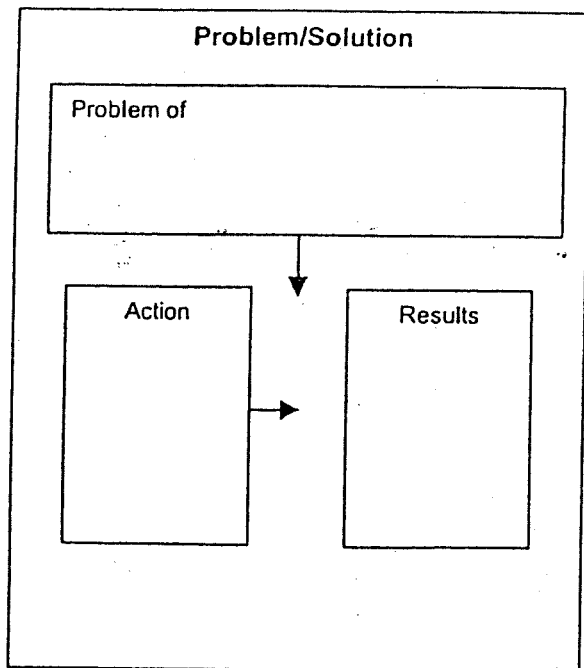
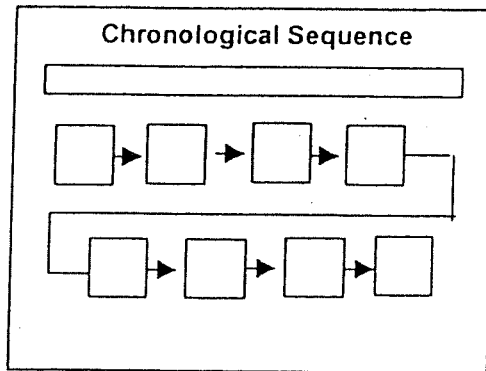
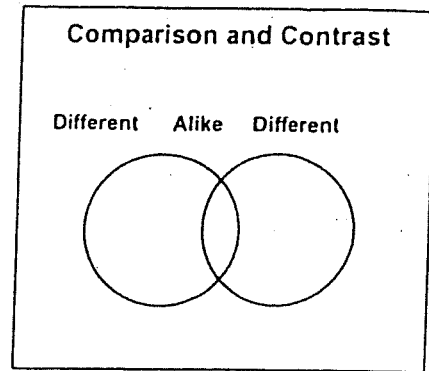
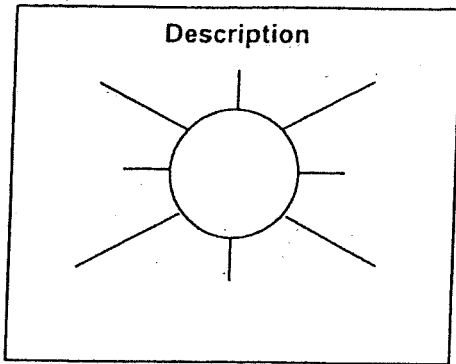
CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

GOODWILL CLOSING

G



TEXT STRUCTURES

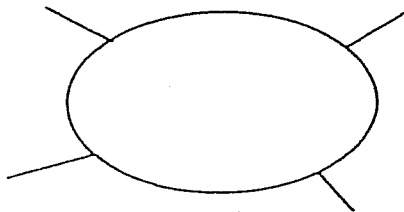


Strategy Spotlight: Graphic Organizers

How do you keep track of ideas and details? Try using a graphic organizer! You can use any of the graphic organizers shown here, or change them to suit your needs. You can even invent your own organizer! Some common uses are given, but each organizer can be adapted for other uses.

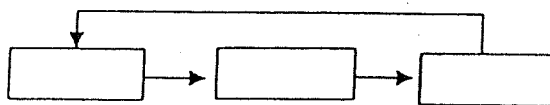
1. Web

Discover how ideas connect.



2. Flow Chart

Show steps or procedures.



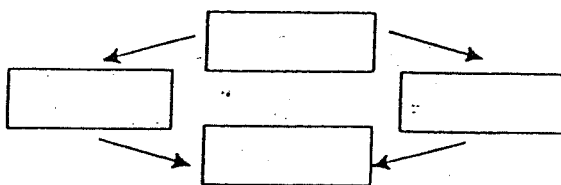
3. Timeline

Display a sequence of events.



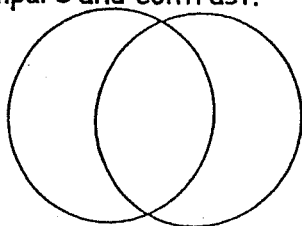
4. Events

Decide how events connect.



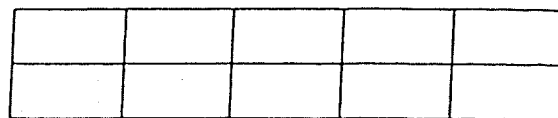
5. Venn Diagram

Compare and contrast.



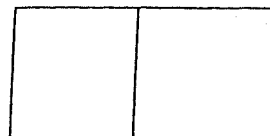
6. Storyboard

Show scenes from a video or screens on a Web site.



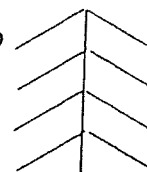
7. Two-Column Chart

Collect and organize information.



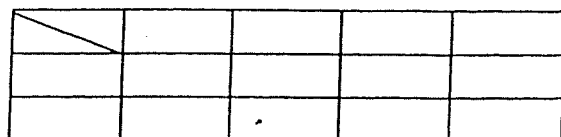
8. Herringbone Chart

Divide one topic into many subtopics.



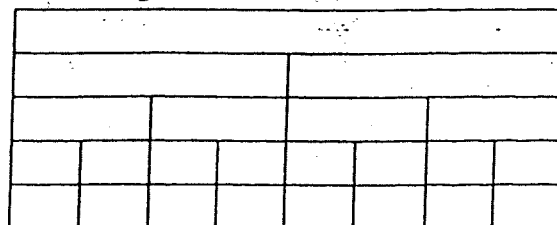
9. Classification Chart

Sort facts into categories and compare data.



10. Tree Diagrams

Break a large topic into several categories.



A PRE-WRITING STRATEGY FOR EXPOSITORY WRITING

Point _____

Details

•

•

•

A rectangular box with four legs, representing a central concept or topic. A line points from the first bullet point under 'Details' to the top-left corner of the box.

R _____

A _____

F _____

T _____

S _____

Point _____ Point _____

Details

•

•

•

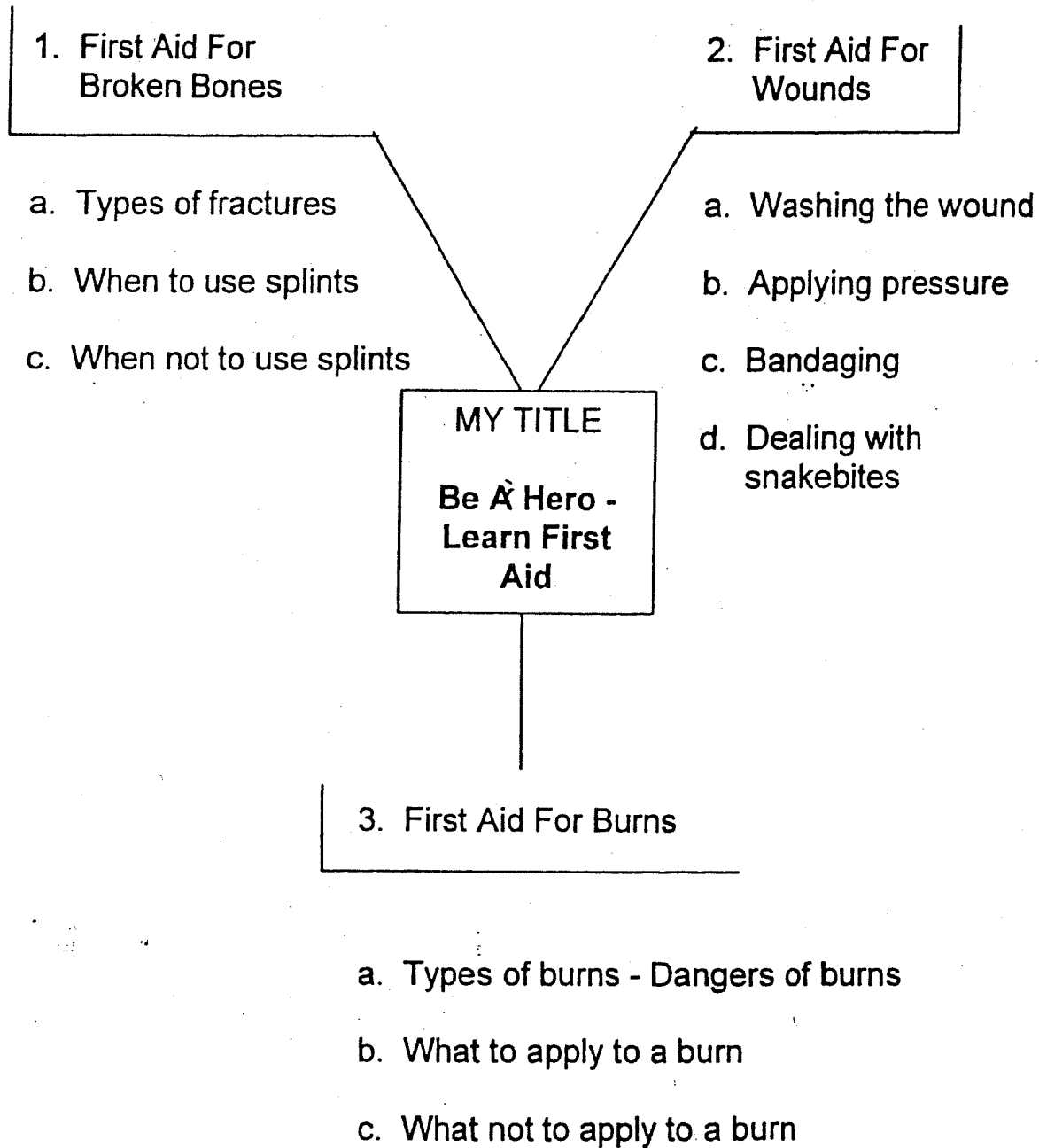
Details

•

•

•

EXAMPLE



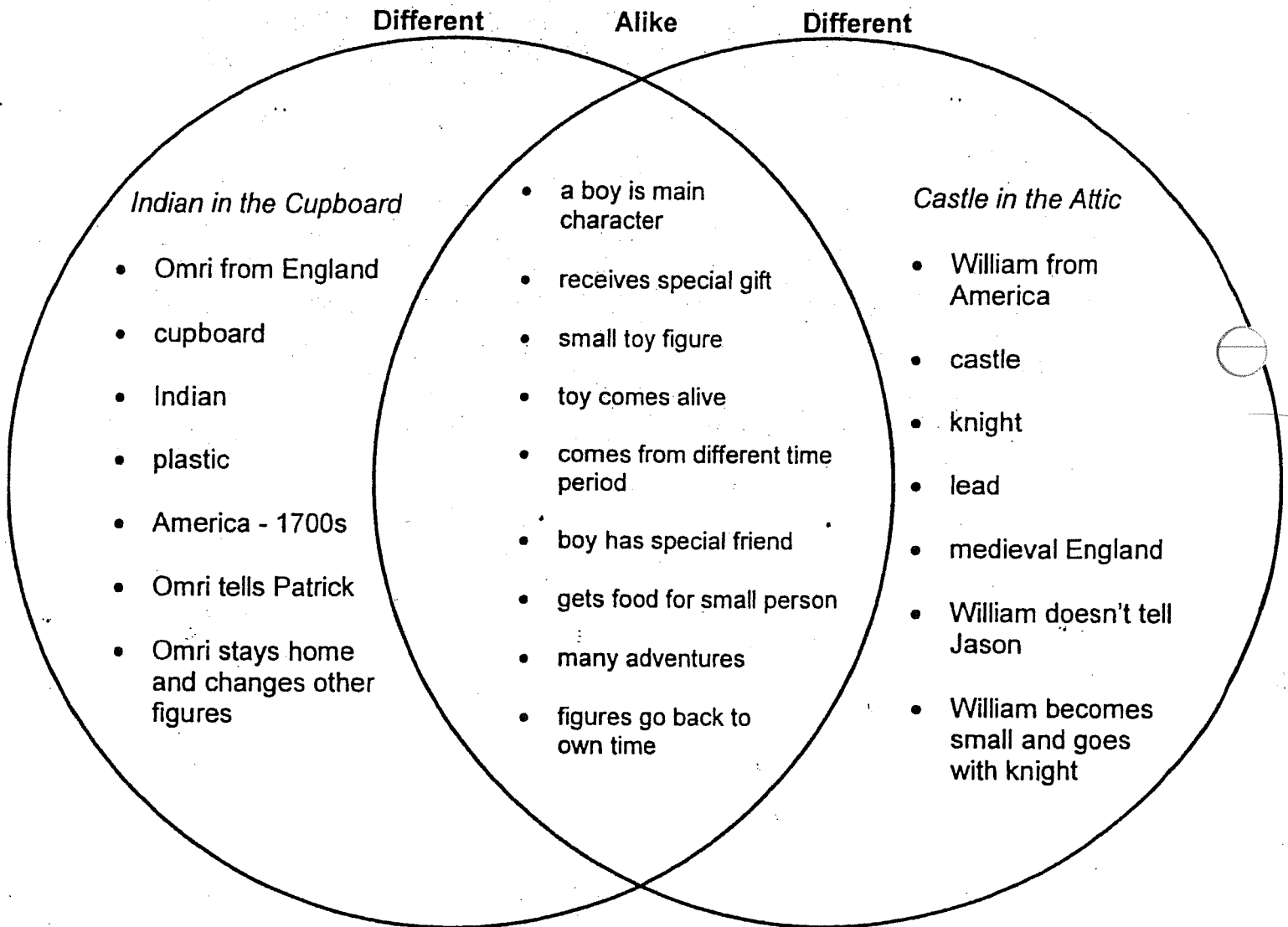
COMPARE / CONTRAST CHART (VENN DIAGRAM)

Purpose: To enable students to increase their comprehension of a story by analyzing likenesses and differences in characters, events, and outcomes, or to compare/contrast several similar stories.

Grade Levels: Suitable for all levels, K-8. In primary grades, the teacher helps students develop a Venn Diagram by eliciting ideas from them and placing their information on a chart. The teacher would also function as facilitator in working with less prepared students. In grades 4-8, students could work individually or in cooperative learning groups.

Description: In a Compare/contrast Chart, students know that they compare things for likenesses and contrast things for differences. In completing the Venn diagram, primary and less prepared students will do the thinking and the teacher will write down their responses. In grades 4-8, the class can work as individuals or in cooperative learning groups, and complete the diagram accordingly. charts can then be shared through discussion, placed on large pieces of butcher paper, or put on transparencies for additional comparisons. In addition, the teacher may draw a large Venn Diagram on the chalkboard or butcher paper and ask students to fill in their information (no duplications). Once these data are in place, the teacher has a quantity of information for further discussions or writing assignments.

**SAMPLE COMPARE/CONTRAST CHART FOR
THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD, by Lynn Reid Banks,
and THE CASTLE IN THE ATTIC, by Elizabeth Winthrop**



Comparison Organizer A

Topic:		Topic:
Different	Same / Alike	Different

Strong Words: same, the same as, different, on the other hand, but, both, although, alike

Comparison Organizer B

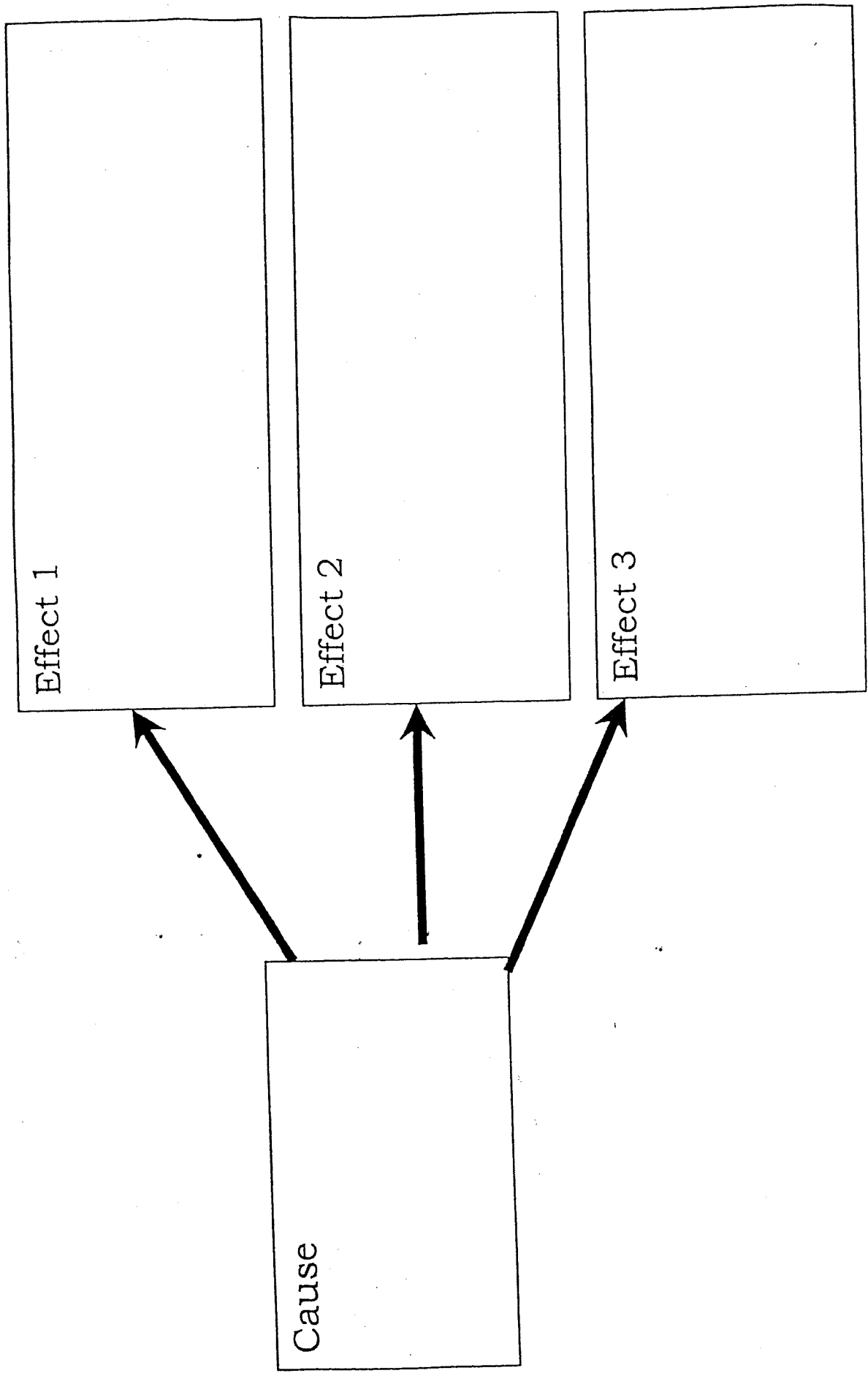
Topic: _____
Different

Topic: _____
Different

Same / Alike

Strong Words: same, the same as, different, on the other hand, but, both, although, alike

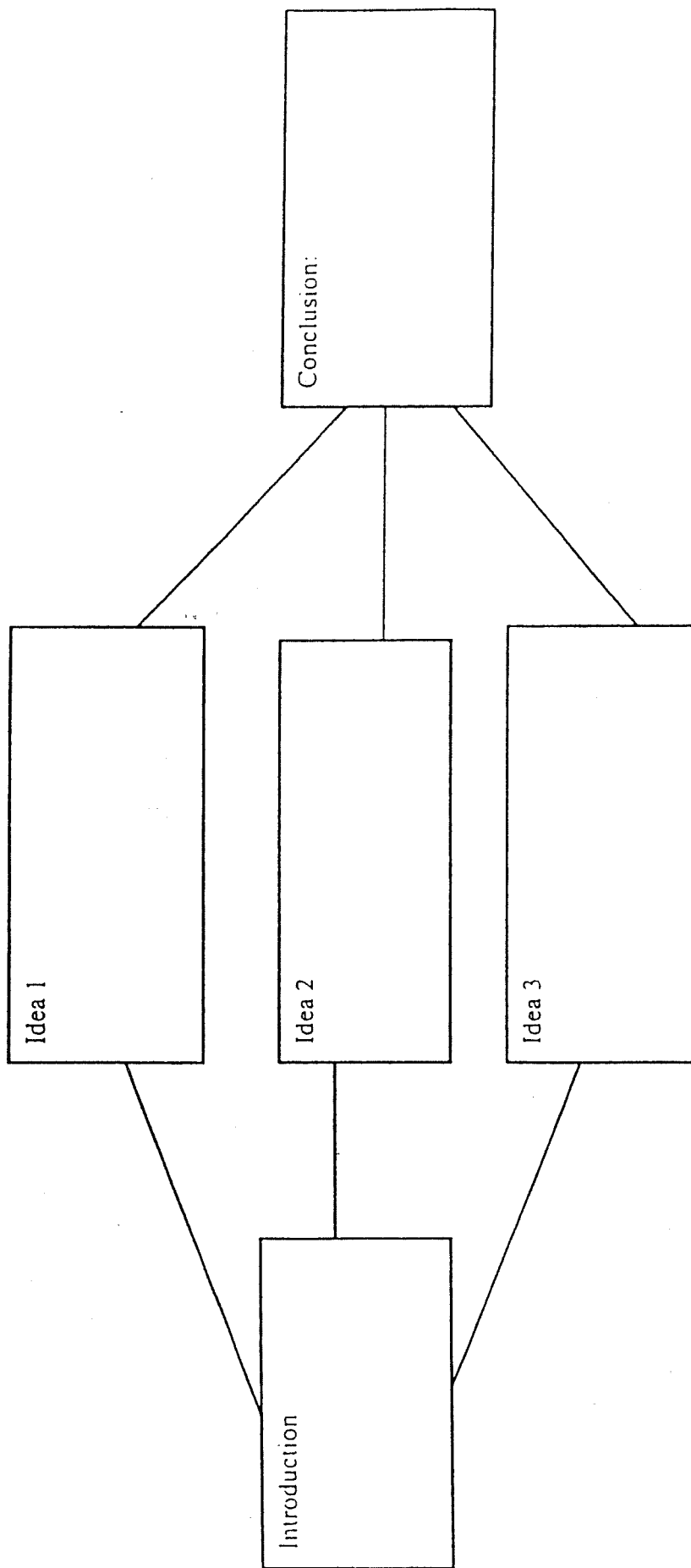
Cause and Effect Organizer



Strong Words: reasons why, as a result, because



Paragraph



Name _____

Date _____

Student master # 53

Paragraph Planner Follow-Up



Key Words

Title: _____

Introductory sentence (Tell what you are going to write about.

Grab reader's attention.) _____

1st detail sentence _____

Follow-up sentence (more information about the first detail) _____

2nd detail sentence _____

Follow-up sentence (more information about the second detail) _____

3rd detail sentence _____

Follow-up sentence (more information about the third detail) _____

Wrap-up (Restate your introductory sentence another way.) _____

Name _____

Date _____



Student master # 4

K-W-L Chart

Topic _____		
K	W	L
(List what you already know about the topic.)	(List questions about what you want to know about the topic.)	(Using your questions as a guide, write all the information you have learned in this column. Use the back of this page if necessary.)

Descriptive Organizer A: paragraph

Introduction: Opening Sentence (general statement about the topic)
Fact 1
Fact 2
Fact 3
Fact 4
Conclusion: Closing Sentence (summary statement about the topic)

Descriptive Organizer B: paragraph

Introduction: Opening Sentence (general statement about the topic)

Fact 1

Fact 2

Fact 3

Fact 4

Fact 5

Fact 6

Conclusion: Closing Sentence (summary statement about the topic)

Descriptive Organizer C: report

Introduction: General statements that introduces the "big topic."

Sub Topic 1		Sub Topic 2		Sub Topic 3	
Introduction: Opening Sentence		Introduction: Opening Sentence		Introduction: Opening Sentence	
Closing/Linking Idea		Closing/Linking Idea		Closing/Linking Idea	

Conclusion: Summary / viewpoint / opinion about the "big topic."

Name _____

Date _____

Student master # 55

Persuasive Writing Frame

Topic: _____

State your position or opinion:

Reason 1

Reason 2

Reason 3

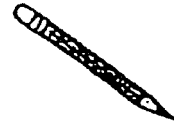
Explain your conclusion using a personal statement, a prediction or a summary.

Name _____

Date _____

Student master # 56

Prove Your Point



State your position or opinion:

Reason 1

Reason 2

Reason 3

Counter arguments

Some people might say ...

But I say ...

Others might say ...

However ...

Explain your conclusion using a personal statement, a prediction or a summary.

Persuasion Organizer A

State Argument: What is your viewpoint?

Reason 1

Reason 2

Reason 3

Reason 4

Summary of argument:

Strong Words: please, persuade, appeal, convince, request, beg, because, the reasons are . . .

Persuasion Organizer B

State Argument: What is your viewpoint?

Reason 1

Reason 2

Reason 3

Reason 4

Summary of argument:

Strong Words: please, persuade, appeal, convince, request, beg, because, the reasons are . . .

Friendly Letter Organizer A

Dear _____,

Strong Words: Your friend, Good wishes, Love



Story Chart

Title	Author
-------	--------

Setting	Characters
---------	------------

The problem(s) or challenge(s) facing the main characters:

	Events
	1. _____
	2. _____
	3. _____
	4. _____
5. _____	

Ending *(How did the main character(s) solve the problem or meet their goal(s)?)*

Student master # 47

Story Planner # 1

Setting
 - Where?
 - When?

Where?

When?

Characters
 - Main
 - Other

Main:

Other:

Problem
 What happens to get the story going?

Events
 How do the characters solve the problem?

Ending
 What happens after the problem is solved?

Story Organizer A

Characters:	Setting(s):
Problem:	
Events: 1. 2. 3.	
Solving the Problem:	

7



Name _____

Date _____



Student master # 49

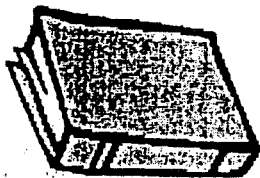
Story Board

<p>beginning</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>middle</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>end</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Name _____

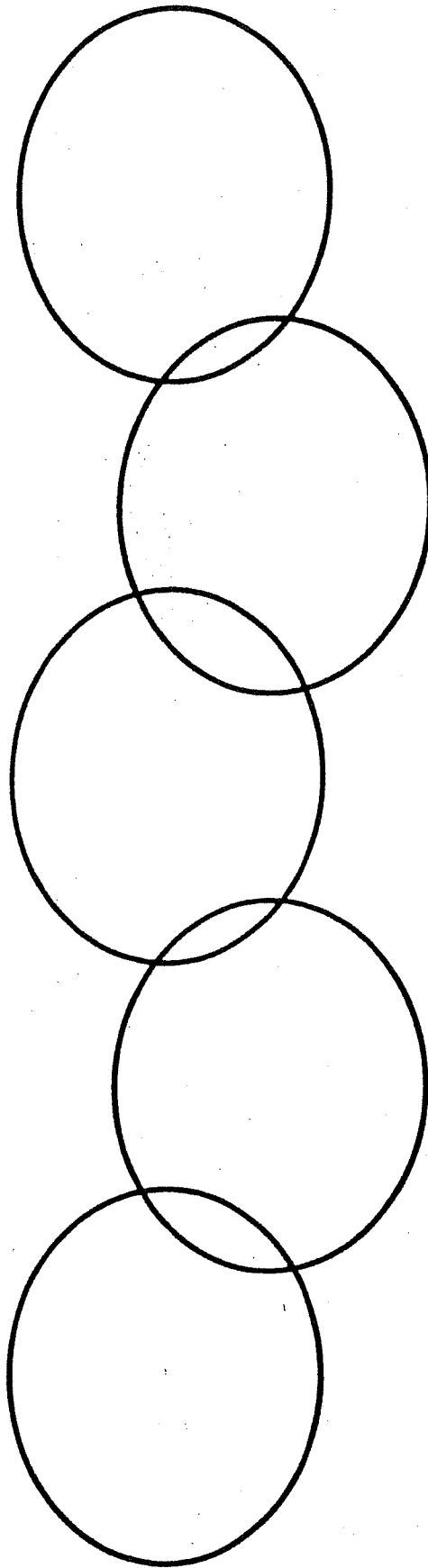
Date _____

Student master # 50



Story Chain

Title _____



Name _____

Date _____

Student master # 29

Character Trait Map



Trait: _____

Quote from book: _____

Page: _____

Think about:

- *physical appearance*
- *relationships to others*
- *personality*
- *actions*

Trait: _____

Quote from book: _____

Page: _____

Character

Book Title

Trait: _____

Quote from book: _____

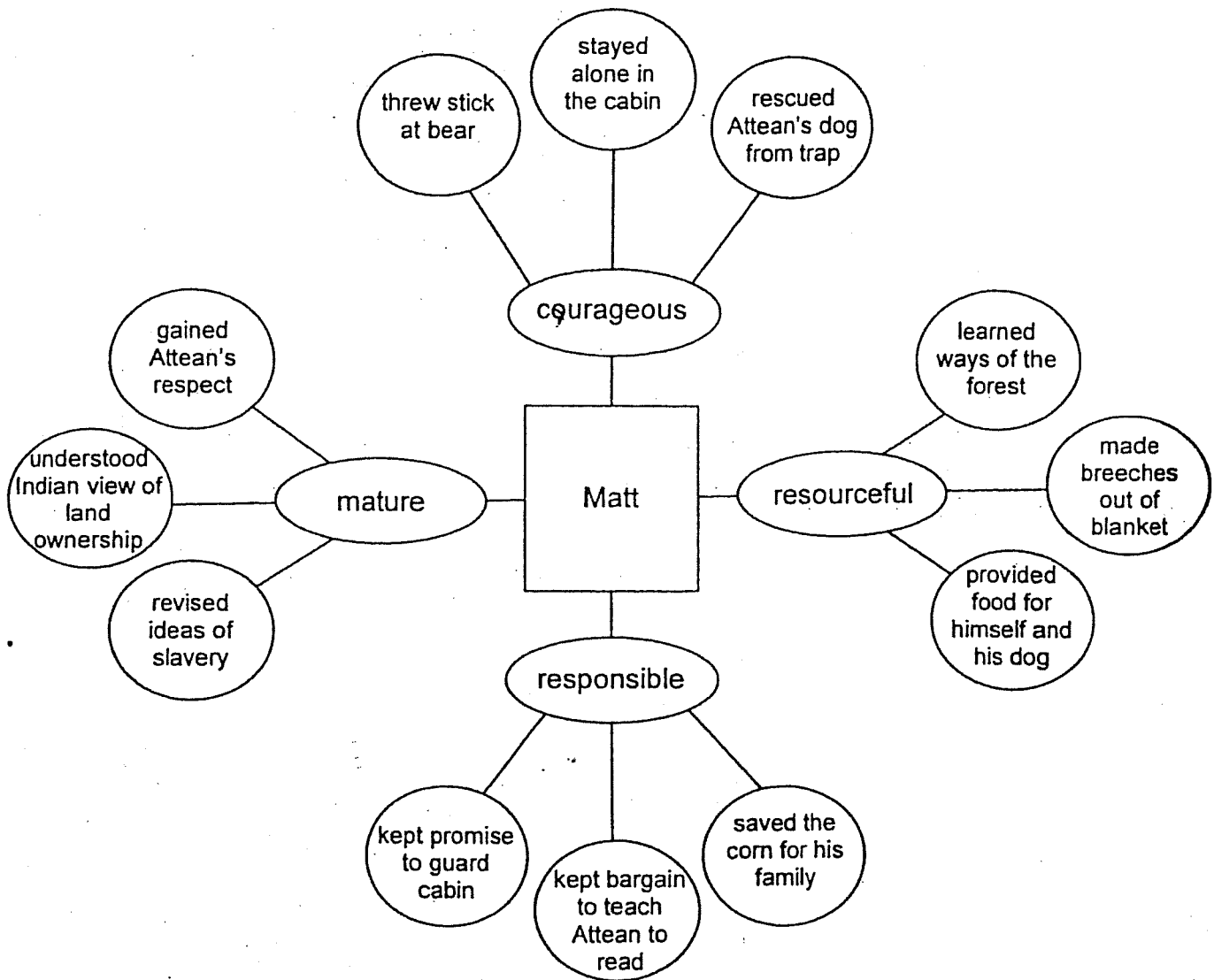
Page: _____

Trait: _____

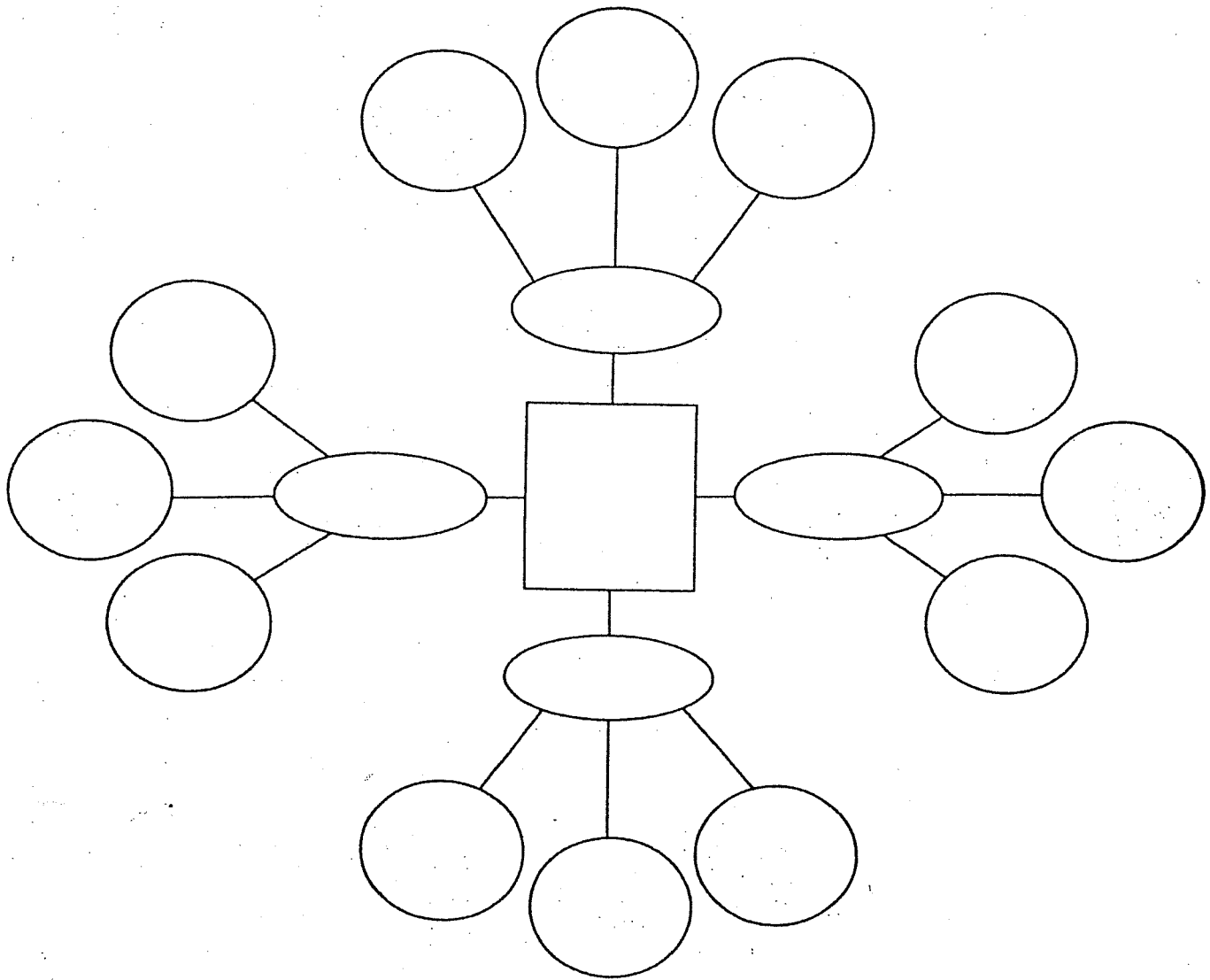
Quote from book: _____

Page: _____

SAMPLE CHARACTER MAP FOR *THE SIGN OF THE BEAVER*
by Elizabeth George Speare



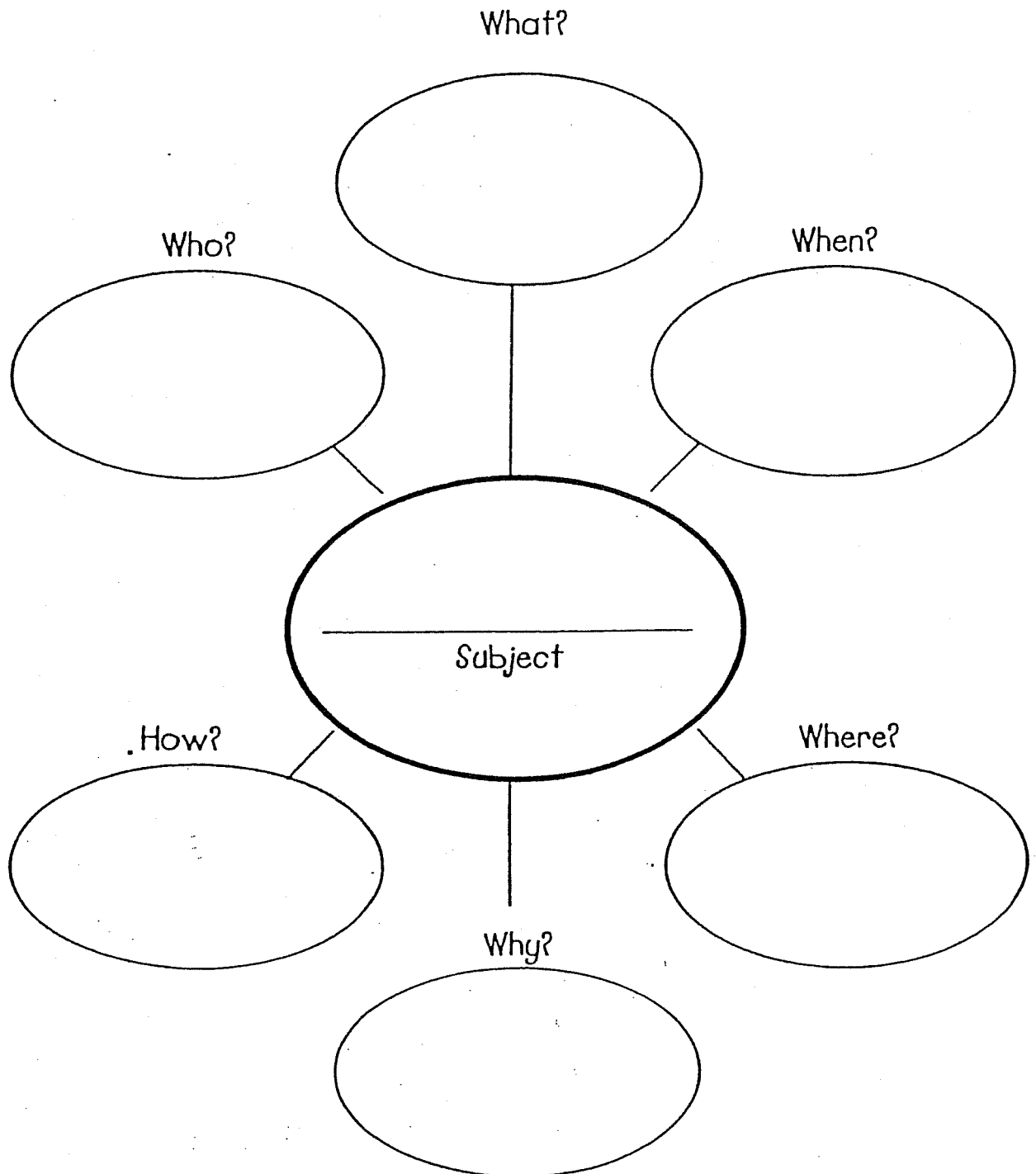
CHARACTER MAP



Multi-Use Master #1: Planning Web

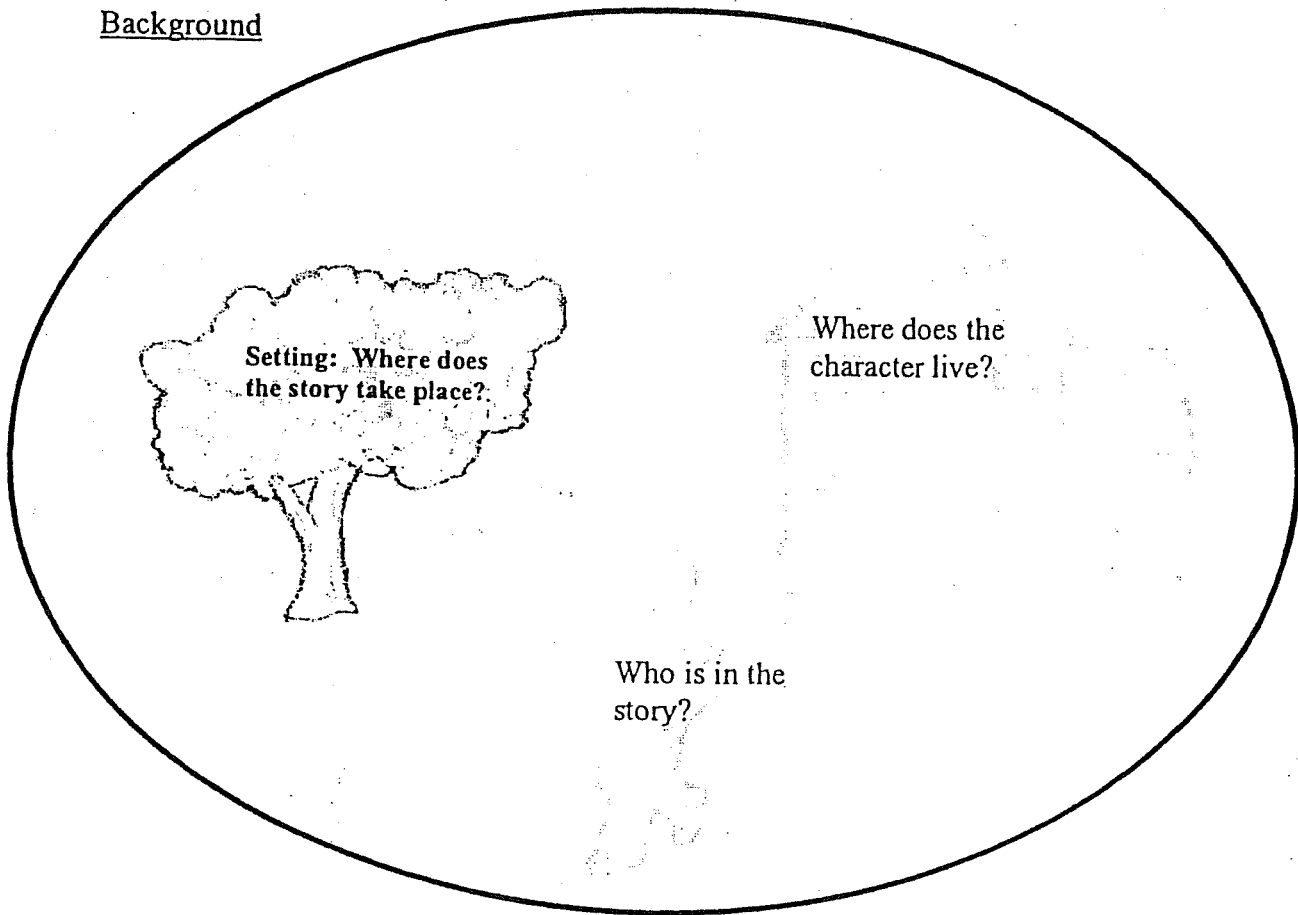
Name: _____

Date: _____



Story Map

Background



Setting: Where does the story take place?

Where does the character live?

Who is in the story?

Problem: (Beginning)		
Event 1 (fails)	Event 2 (fails)	Event 3 (ending)

STORY CLOZE

At the beginning of the story, _____

A problem starts when _____

_____ tries to solve the problem by

At the end of the story, _____

Adapted from:

Fowler, G.L. (1982). Developing comprehension skills with primary and remedial readers through the use of story frames. Reading Teacher, 36, 176-179.

Story Chart for _____

Written by _____

Where the story takes place:

Characters in the story:

What happened:

The problem:

The solution:

Mystery Planner

Setting



Main characters	Minor characters
-----------------	------------------



Problem or mystery to be solved

Action to solve the mystery

Clue #1	What happens or what character finds out
---------	--



Clue #2	What happens or what character finds out
---------	--



Clue #3	What happens or what character finds out
---------	--



How mystery is solved

Check your writing

In my mystery story...	Excellent	Okay	Needs work
1. My setting is interesting..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I introduce the main character and tell about the problem or mystery early in the story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. My mystery is believable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I create suspense and readers want to know what will happen next.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The clues help the reader to discover the mystery's solution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. My ending is satisfying and the solution makes sense.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Suspenseful words I could use...



Story Map

Title																																
Elements																																
<p>Who?</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">Main characters</td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>	Main characters							<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">Other characters</td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>	Other characters																							
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<p>Where? When?</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Setting</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;"> </td></tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Problem</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Resolution</td> </tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table> <p>What?</p>			Setting				Problem	Resolution																								
Setting																																
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