

## PART 1

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*“Warm skies and  
gulf blue streams  
are in my blood”*

—Margaret Walker,  
“Sorrow Home”



UNIT

# 1

## Personal Writing

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## Writing in the Real World

Photos of the the family store in San Francisco helped Yep recall memories of his childhood.



### Drafting Fitting the Pieces Together

Simple memories provide rich details for personal writing. While drafting his memoir, Yep focused on writing about daily life. Yep says, “Really the best writing is bringing out the specialness of ordinary things.”

Yep compares the drafting stage to solving a puzzle. The pieces of the puzzle are his collection of memories. While drafting, he has to find a way to fit all those pieces together. Like most puzzle solving, the process can be both fun and frustrating.

To help organize his draft, Yep makes an informal outline, which he uses as a guide. He accepts the fact that he may have to go back and start a scene again.

He says, “You realize that you’ve got to redesign the puzzle, that an outline is only a scaffolding inside of which you’ve got to build a ship. And sometimes you get the ship almost built, and you realize that this darned thing isn’t going to float, and so you have to tear it down, and

bring it down to the keel, and begin again.”

Yep doesn’t get discouraged about starting over. He realizes that rewriting is an essential part of the writing process.

### Revising Testing the Fit

A chief quality that Yep looks for in his own work is *authenticity*, the characteristic of being real or true. He revises to make certain that he has described events as accurately as possible in his own voice, or unique style. He makes sure that the feelings behind the scenes have a ring of truth.

By asking friends or relatives for their feedback, a writer can see how well his or her point of view has been communicated. But, finally, the writing is whatever the writer wants it to be. Yep says, “You have to write for yourself.”

He tells students, “Writing is a way of exploring other selves and other worlds inside yourself. I think it can be very satisfying, whether you get a good mark on it or not.”



Yep’s memoir *The Lost Garden* includes many photos from his life.





## Examining Writing in the Real World

### Analyzing the Media Connection

Discuss these questions about the article on page 4.

1. What are some sensory details in Yep's excerpt that appeal to the sense of smell?
  2. In the second paragraph, to what does Yep compare a small grocery store? What are some details that he uses to support the comparison?
  3. What detail does Yep use to help the reader visualize the darkness of the "unlit backstairs" that his mother navigated each morning?
  4. What other details does Yep use that appeal to the sense of sight?
  5. What details help the reader understand that Yep's parents are hard-working shopkeepers?
3. During drafting, does Yep always follow his outline, or does he tend to try new ideas and approaches? Explain why.
  4. What chief criteria does Yep use to evaluate his writing?
  5. When revising, how can a writer test whether he or she has succeeded in communicating the intended point of view?

### Analyzing a Writer's Process

Discuss these questions about Laurence Yep's writing process.

1. How does Yep use various senses to recall locations and personal experiences?
2. What graphic aids does Yep look at or create to help him gather his memories?

### GrammarLink

Use appositives to make your writing clearer and more interesting.

An appositive is a noun or a noun phrase placed next to another noun to identify it or add information about it.

*Laurence Yep, award-winning writer of fantasies, went in a totally new direction. . . .*

Write each sentence, adding an appositive to each italicized noun.

1. In this photo are my *cousins*.
2. I clearly remember the *scene*.
3. We used to live in *Burton*.
4. These *items* helped me gather details.
5. The memory sparked two *feelings*.

See Lesson 9.6, pages 391–392.



## LESSON

# 1.1

# Writing for Yourself

*In personal writing you express your own thoughts and feelings. Sometimes you write to share with others. At other times, you write just for yourself.*

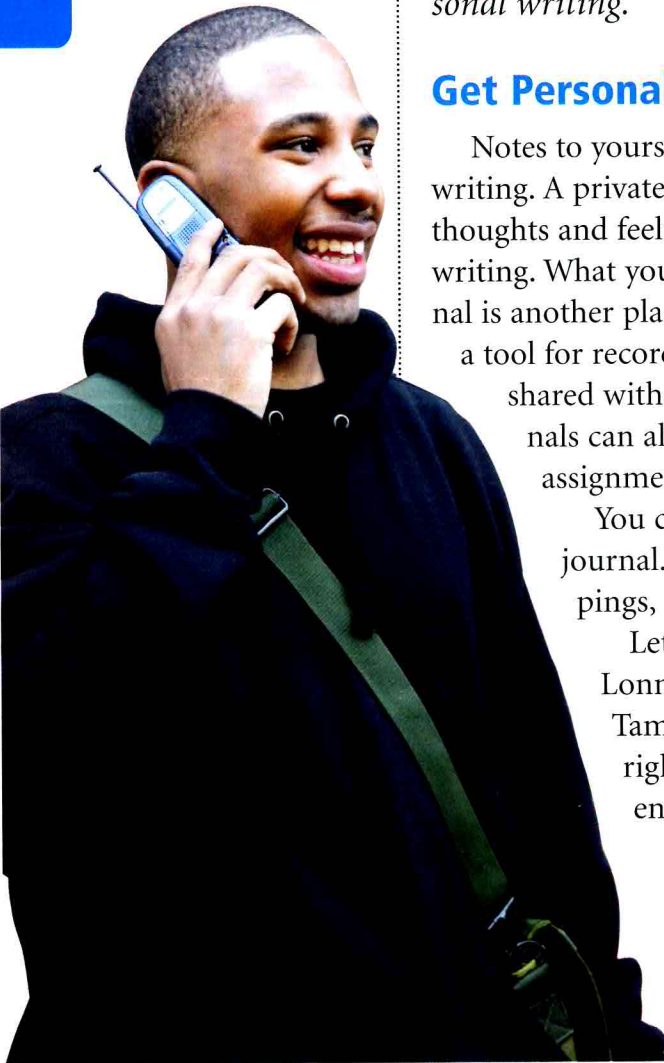
*You can't wait to tell someone. It's such great news. You grab the phone and call a friend. "I have a brand-new baby sister!" you brag. In a brief note you tell another friend how excited you are about your new sister. These are personal thoughts and feelings, and your note is an example of personal writing.*

## Get Personal

Notes to yourself or letters to friends and family are personal writing. A private journal—a book for your most personal thoughts and feelings—is one of the best places for personal writing. What you write there is only for you. A classroom journal is another place for personal writing. Classroom journals are a tool for recording ideas and information, and they are often shared with classmates or teachers. Your classroom journals can also be an excellent source of ideas for writing assignments.

You can include more than just your writing in a journal. You might add photographs, magazine clippings, drawings, or even doodles.

Letters are another form of personal writing. Lonnel wrote the following letter to his sister Tamika, and he included the photograph on the right. Read the letter to see what personal experience Lonnel wanted to share.



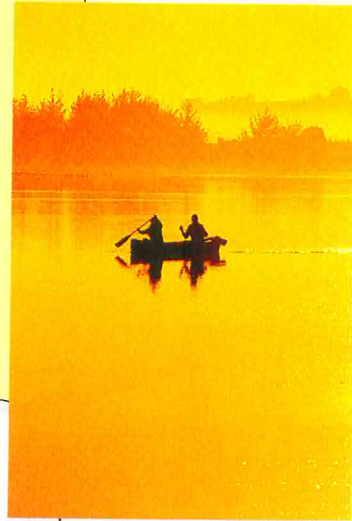


Dear Tamika,

It's a really nice day here at Bowen Lake. It's almost noon, and the woods and the lake are warm in the sun. I'm sitting on a rock on the top of a kind of hill—as much like a hill as anything they have around here. I haven't seen anyone for over an hour. Earlier two people in a canoe drifted by. They were far away, and I could hardly see them. I could hear their voices, though. It's quiet now. There's a kind of magic in being all alone with nature.

How's the family? Is Jason back from training camp? What's Mom's job like now that she's back at work? Send me news!

Your brother,  
Lonnell



## Journal Writing

Jot down the names of friends or family members to whom you might write a letter. Then list ideas of what to tell them. You can include both experiences and thoughts.



## Keep a Journal

Writing in a journal can help you explore and remember your private thoughts without worrying about what anyone else thinks. Once you've begun your journal, you'll get more out of it if you write in it regularly. The following journal entry was written by author Louisa May Alcott as a girl.

Her writing here sounds like a conversation with a close friend.

Do you think this writing could appear in a letter to a friend? Why?

### Literature Model

I am in the garret with my papers round me, and a pile of apples to eat while I write my journal, plan stories, and enjoy the patter of rain on the roof, in peace and quiet. . . . Being behind-hand, as usual, I'll make note of the main events up to date, for I don't waste ink in poetry and pages of rubbish now. I've begun to *live*, and have no time for sentimental musing. . . .

Norma Johnston, editor, *Louisa May: The World and Works of Louisa May Alcott*

Below are some journal entries and a postcard. The writer used a private journal to record thoughts and experiences. Some of them were shared in a postcard to a friend. Read both and see how alike and how different they are.



April 3  
Dear Wai-Ming,  
Florida is great! My cousin David wants to meet you when he visits us in July. The weather's been fine except for Wednesday when it rained. Aunt Sandra drove us into town though. We had lunch at an old-fashioned diner. I liked it.

Wai-Ming Chou  
538 Bedford Ave.  
Columbus, Ohio  
43212

April 3  
I'm really enjoying our visit to Aunt Sandra's. My cousins have all changed - David is almost as tall as I am.

I didn't think it would be so different down here: palm trees, amazing plants and insects, blue-green ocean - and warm sand everywhere!

It's raining today, so Aunt Sandra drove us into town. We had lunch at an old-fashioned diner.

April 4

The sun's out again, and it's warm. Lee says they practically live on the beach when the weather is this nice. The rest of us have to go to school.

We rented bicycles today and rode up the coast. Along one stretch of beach there's a bike path for cyclists and joggers. Dave said he thought he saw dolphins, but no one else saw them.

April 5

Went back to the beach. David's cousin came with us, and we

# 1.1

# Writing Activities

## Write a Letter

You can write to a friend who is distant or to one whom you see often. Write about some experience you have had recently or about anything that's on your mind. Write as though you're talking to your friend.

**PURPOSE** To write a personal letter

**AUDIENCE** A good friend

**LENGTH** 1 page

**WRITING RUBRICS** To write your letter effectively, you should

- express your thoughts and feelings.
- include a doodle or drawing.

## Listening and Speaking

In a small group, discuss your thoughts about sending and receiving personal letters. Have one group member act as a discussion leader, asking questions such as: Do you write many personal letters? Do you

receive many? What do you like most about writing or receiving personal letters? Why? What do you like least?



Artist unknown, Pompeii, *Portrait of a Young Woman*, first century A.D.

Summarize your group's discussion for the class.

## Cross-Curricular Activity

**HISTORY** The image on this page is from a wall painting found in the ruins of the ancient city of Pompeii. That city and its people were buried when Mount Vesuvius suddenly erupted in A.D. 79. Look at the young woman in this painting. Write the entry she might have written in her personal journal the day of the catastrophe. Remember, life was going on peacefully. What might she have done on that day?

## GrammarLink

Use the possessive pronoun *its* and the contraction *it's* correctly.

*The tree lost its leaves.*

*It's getting colder every week.*

Complete each sentence with the correct word: *it's* or *its*.

1. It rained this morning, but \_\_\_\_\_ a beautiful afternoon.
2. My dog has injured \_\_\_\_\_ paw.
3. As I look at our house, I see \_\_\_\_\_ paint is cracking.
4. When \_\_\_\_\_ my turn to recite, I have to be ready.
5. Do you know \_\_\_\_\_ title?

See Lesson 11.4, pages 441–442.





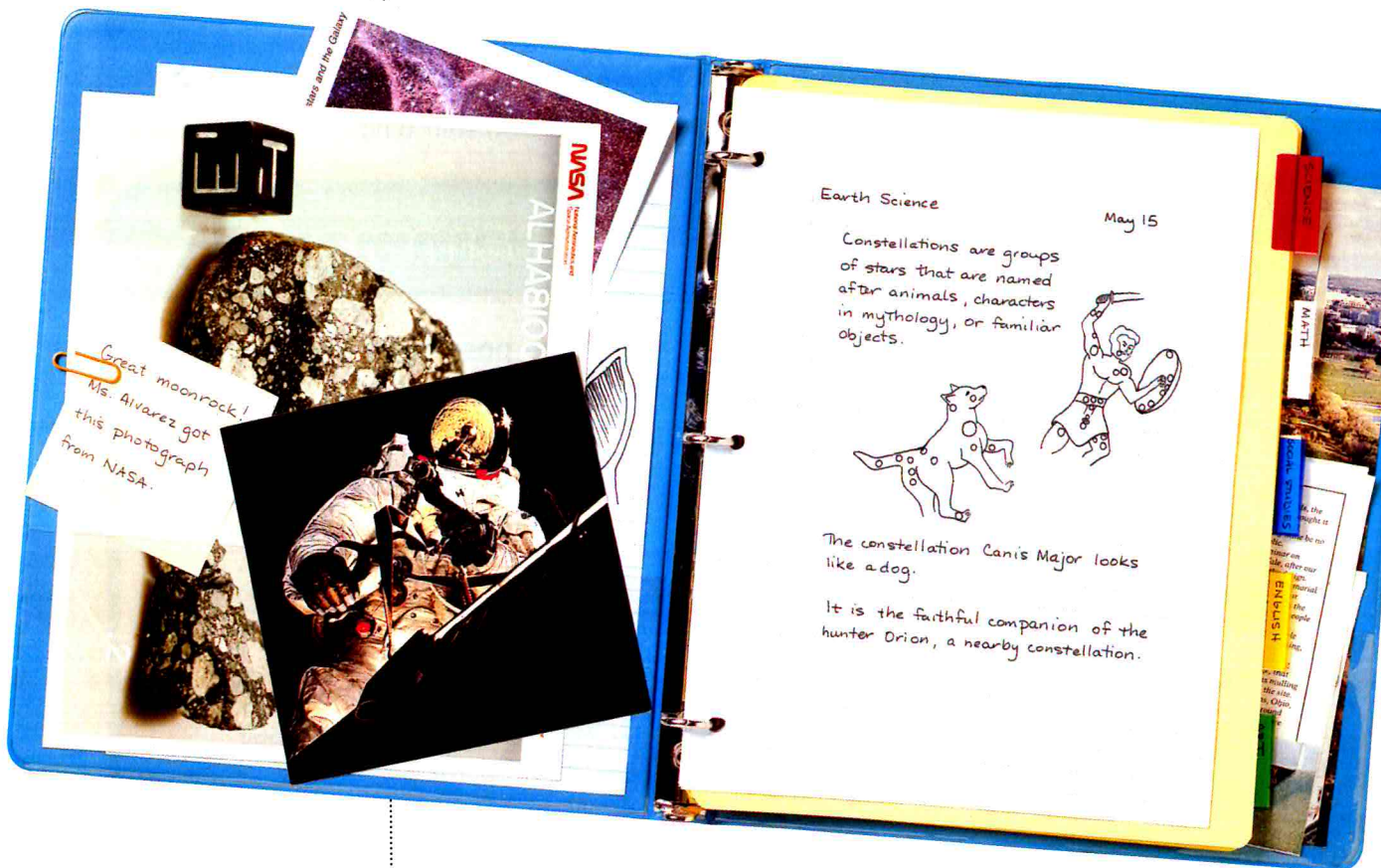
LESSON

1.2

# Writing to Learn

Personal Writing

A learning log is another type of journal. In it you can keep a record of new facts or ideas you have learned in a class, as well as your thoughts and reactions to what you've learned. The example below was written after a science class. Read the entry and notice the clippings the writer included with it.



## Record Your Progress

A learning log is a form of personal writing. It's for you. Writing in a log is an opportunity to become more involved in your learning and more aware of the progress you're making. For example, after reading a passage in your textbook, you can record your questions and thoughts in your learning log. Perhaps you'll raise these questions during your next class discussion. The chart below shows the kinds of entries you might put in your log. The goal is to make the information you study make sense to you.

### Summarizing Tip

Briefly state the main points in your own words. Focus on key details that support the points. Use key words and phrases.

Keeping a Learning Log	
Purpose	Entry
Summarize content.	Very hot stars are blue-white; cooler stars are orange or red.
Identify main ideas.	Sunspots are dark areas on the sun's surface that are cooler than surrounding areas.
Define problems, and ask questions.	I'm still not clear why our sun is called an average star.
Evaluate schoolwork.	The information on planets seemed easier than that on stars (because of the unit review?).

## Journal Writing

What questions do you have about something you're learning now? Begin a learning log by writing down one or two of these questions.



## Write and Think

Below is an example of how a learning log can be used. A student took the notes on the left as she read a textbook chapter on exploration of Mars. Then she wrote in her learning log. After a class discussion of this topic, she reread the textbook passage and looked over her notes. Then she used her learning log to rewrite the passage in her own words.

*Distance to Mars—  
many millions of  
kilometers  
Length of Mars trip—  
maybe three years  
Danger—lowered  
calcium in bones due  
to near-zero gravity;  
weak bones might  
break once astronauts  
land on Mars or  
return to Earth.*

Notes

Scientists are currently developing plans to further explore Mars. Because the distance between Earth and Mars is many millions of kilometers, it could take about three years to get to Mars and back. Because of the long duration of the flight, astronauts would face much more danger than they do in space shuttle missions.

Text

How does the question help the student focus on things to learn?

What are some of the problems astronauts will face in exploring Mars?

One of the main problems is the length of the flight. Mars and Earth are many millions of kilometers apart. Traveling to the planet and back could take about three years. On the flight, astronauts' bones will lose calcium because of zero gravity. Once the crew reaches Mars or returns to Earth, their weak bones might fracture easily.

Learning Log

# 1.2

# Writing Activities

## Write a Learning Log Entry

Choose a difficult paragraph, page, or chapter from a homework assignment for another class. Then choose one of the options in the chart on page 13 and write a learning log entry.

**PURPOSE** To clarify a difficult section of a book

**AUDIENCE** Yourself

**LENGTH** 1 paragraph

**WRITING RUBRICS** To use your learning log entry effectively, you should

- use the entry you have created to make sense out of the information
- during the next class of the subject for which you wrote the learning log entry, ask any question raised by the assignment.



### Using Computers

Try keeping your learning log on the computer. You can underline or boldface key ideas. You can also keep an index or glossary of important words or ideas.

## Viewing and Representing

Choose three images you like from magazines. Describe in a paragraph why you find these images interesting or useful. What does a graphic image show

that words alone cannot express? Would you use graphics in a learning log? Explain. Share your ideas with the class.

## GrammarLink

**Use the correct verb form when the subject of a sentence is an indefinite pronoun.**

Some indefinite pronouns—*all, any, most, none, and some*—can be either singular or plural, depending on the phrase that follows.

*What are some of the problems astronauts will face? . . .*

**Complete each sentence with the correct choice of verb.**

1. All of the water (is, are) crucial.
2. None of the other planets (is, are) hospitable to human life.
3. Most of the problems (has, have) been anticipated.
4. Some of the constellations (is, are) difficult to spot.
5. Any of this (is, are) suitable.
6. None of it (is, are) complete.
7. Any of these questions (is, are) worthy of further research.
8. All of my notes (is, are) here.
9. Most of the work (requires, require) special skills.
10. Some of the confusion (is, are) due to the difficult terminology.

See Lesson 16.4, pages 547–548.





LESSON

1.3

# Writing About Wishes and Dreams

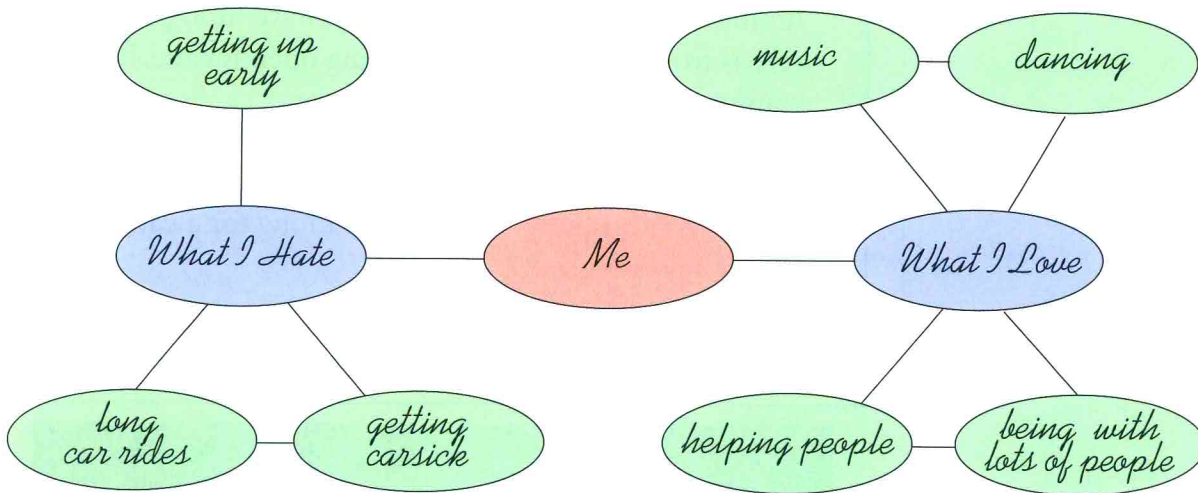


*If I had a photograph of myself ten years from now, this is what I'd see. I am a tall, sleepy-eyed medical student in a white coat. I'm studying to be a heart surgeon. My white coat is rumpled because I slept in it on my break. I'm at a patient's bedside listening to his heart. He had heart surgery yesterday, and I was there in the operating room. During the operation I was*

**J**ournal writing is a good way to explore and record your wishes or dreams. Can you see yourself ten years from now? What will you look like? How will you have changed? What will you be doing? Where will you be? Read the journal entry at the left to see what one student wrote.

## Look at Yourself

To imagine the future, it could be helpful to look at yourself as you are now. One way to do that is to use a cluster diagram like the one below. In your diagram you can record your interests, successes, failures, feelings, and reactions. You can even indicate how they relate to one another. Making connections may help you uncover interests you can combine as you begin to think about your future.



## Journal Writing

In your journal make a *me* diagram—a cluster of magazine pictures that illustrates your interests. Below your diagram, write a paragraph entry explaining how the pictures show who you are.



## Shape Your Future

You can explore your wishes and dreams in a number of ways. You could write a letter to a friend, relative, or favorite teacher. You could privately explore this topic in your journal. You might draw a picture of yourself as you want to be and include a few sentences describing your picture.

In the diary excerpt below, the poet Sylvia Plath reflects, at seventeen, on the future.

### Literature Model

**W**hat is the best for me? What do I want? I do not know. I love freedom. I deplore constrictions and limitations. . . . I am not as wise as I have thought. I can see, as from a valley, the roads lying open for me, but I cannot see the end—the consequences. . . .

Oh, I love *now*, with all my fears and forebodings, for now I still am not completely molded. My life is still just beginning. I am strong. I long for a cause to devote my energies to. . . .

Sylvia Plath,  
*Letters Home*



# 1.3

# Writing Activities

## Write a Journal Entry

In your journal describe a childhood dream that has come true.

**PURPOSE** To describe a childhood dream

**AUDIENCE** Yourself

**LENGTH** 2 paragraphs

**WRITING RUBRICS** To write your journal entry effectively, you should

- give details to make images clear
- tell how you feel now and how you felt before
- explain what the fulfillment of this dream means to you

## Cross-Curricular Activity

**ART** Suppose that someone were to photograph you in the future. Your appearance and an object you are holding will reflect the career dreams you have achieved. Write a paragraph in which you describe the photo and tell how it represents the future you.

## Listening and Speaking

Think again about your future photo. Write a dialogue between the you of the photo and the you of today. What would you like to ask the future you? What answers might you get? Present the dialogue to a partner to get feedback on its effectiveness.

### GrammarLink

#### Avoid sentence fragments in formal writing.

Sentence fragments are acceptable in your personal journal. When you write for others, however, use complete sentences.

*I am a tall sleepy-eyed medical student in a white coat.*

Revise each fragment below into a sentence by adding either a subject or a predicate.

1. My career in art.
2. Have enrolled in a pottery class.
3. Jennifer DuBerry, the instructor.
4. The wheel and the kiln.
5. Created an odd-looking vase.

See Lesson 8.2, pages 361–362.



## LESSON

# 1.4

## Writing One's Own Story

*An autobiography is the story of a person's life written by that person. The passage below is autobiographical. Maya Angelou describes her first meeting with Martin Luther King Jr. Read it and see what her reaction was.*

### Literature Model



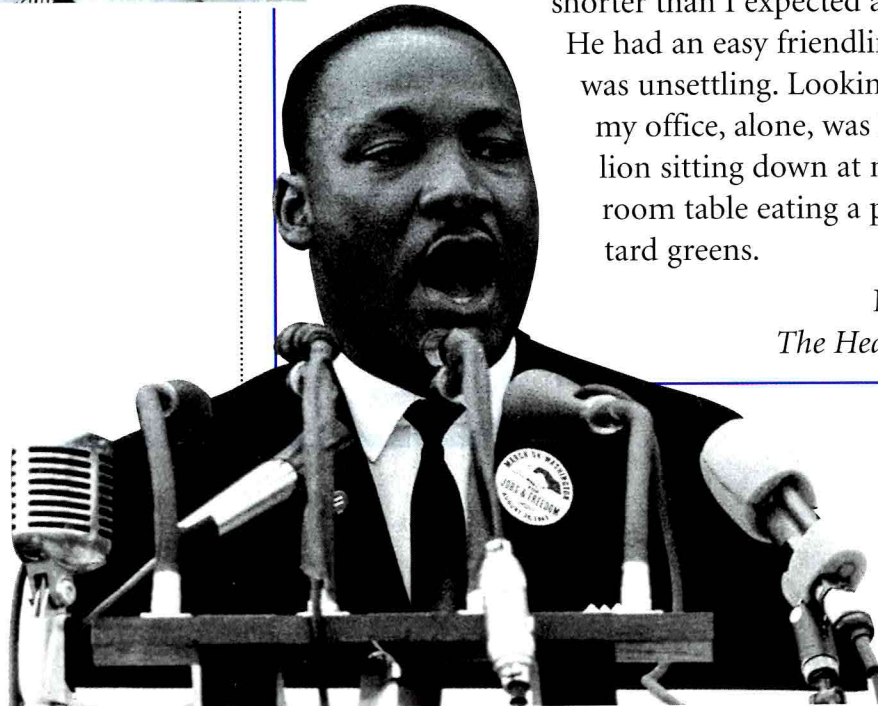
I walked into my office and a man sitting at my desk, with his back turned, spun around, stood up and smiled. Martin King said, "Good afternoon, Miss Angelou. You are right on time."

The surprise was so total that it took me a moment to react to his outstretched hand.

I had worked two months for the SCLC, sent out tens of thousands of letters and invitations signed by Rev. King, made hundreds of statements in his name,

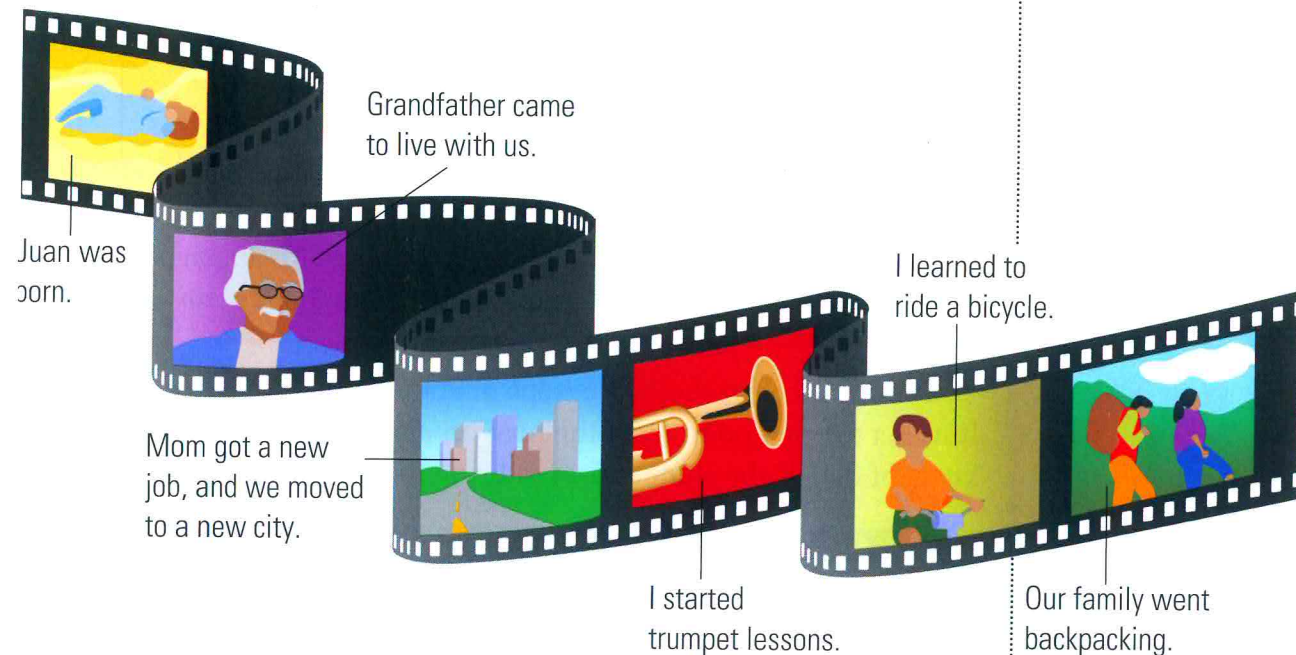
but I had never seen him up close. He was shorter than I expected and so young. He had an easy friendliness, which was unsettling. Looking at him in my office, alone, was like seeing a lion sitting down at my dining-room table eating a plate of mustard greens.

Maya Angelou,  
*The Heart of a Woman*



## Identify Turning Points

You have had important moments, turning points, in your own life. Some may have even changed the course of your life. The diagram below shows turning-point events in one student's life. Study the diagram and its entries. Make a similar map for yourself. Put the important events in chronological order, the order in which they happened. If you need help recalling either the event or the timing, ask someone in your family. Save your diagram to use as you plan your own autobiographical writing.



## Journal Writing

Look at the events in your diagram. Choose the one that is the most meaningful to you. Write about it in your personal journal.



Which details show that Rosenberg's life has changed for the better?

## Write About Your Life

Choose a turning point in your life, and think about how you felt before and after that time. Consider which details would bring this event to life for someone else. A student wrote the journal entry below. Read it and notice the details he used to make clear how he felt.

### Student Model

During cold, snowy days, I love to cuddle up with Shelly. As she lies against me, I feel as though I had just drunk a cup of hot chocolate. Whenever I walk into the room, her eyes light up brighter than the sun as she recognizes me. Then, she smiles her toothless grin and tries to say, "Barrwie." At those times, I love my little Shellster a lot. Since she was born, nothing has been the same; it's been better.

Barry Rosenberg, Southfield, Michigan  
First appeared in *Stone Soup*

The chart below shows the steps in autobiographical writing. It uses a turning point from the map on page 21. Notice the kinds of details the student uses to bring the experience to life.



### Writing About Turning Points

#### Steps in the Process

Choosing an event  
Noting feelings about event  
  
Writing about event

#### Examples

start of trumpet lessons  
  
was happy about taking lessons  
admired the golden surface of the trumpet  
loved the bold trumpet sound  
  
*Excited, I lifted the glittering trumpet to my lips. A thundering note marched out. I was sold on the trumpet for life.*

# 1.4

# Writing Activities

## Write About an Event

Choose an event from your life, and write an autobiographical composition. To plan and draft your composition, follow the steps outlined on page 22.

**PURPOSE** To describe a turning point in your life

**AUDIENCE** Your teacher and classmates

**LENGTH** 1 page

**WRITING RUBRICS** To write your autobiographical composition effectively, you should

- tell what happened
- explain how you felt before and after
- use details that make the event come to life for a reader

## Viewing and Representing

You have often seen paintings or photographs of people that seemed to capture the subject's personality. What kind of picture would best represent you? Does such a picture exist? Describe a picture of yourself, whether it exists or may someday exist. Write your description. Share it with a partner or small group. If the picture exists, share it also.

## Cross-Curricular Activity

**HEALTH** One way to feel good about yourself is to review events in your life that you feel positive about. In your journal complete the following sentence to help you identify these events: "I felt really proud of myself when. . ." Write a one-page description of the incident or event.

### GrammarLink

Use object pronouns—*me, us, him, her, them*—as the object of a verb or a preposition.

. . . I had never seen *him* up close.  
Looking at *him* in my office . . .  
. . . at Jane and *him*.

Write each sentence correctly.

1. The gift from Jem and she is here.
2. Jarmila chose he.
3. The news about Su and I is false.
4. Rodrigo met they at school.
5. The boys were kind to we.
6. Tino walked she to the door.
7. Tara wrote a thank-you letter to he.
8. The storm woke I last night.
9. The test was easy for she.
10. Don't call they too early tomorrow.

See Lesson 11.1, pages 435–436, and Lesson 11.3, pages 439–440.



LESSON  
**1.5**

WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

# Responding in a Journal

Poems are often a form of personal writing, and people's reactions to poetry can be very personal. What is your response to the poem below?

### Literature Model



Ray Vinella, *Aspen Grove*, 1960

### *The Clouds Pass*

The clouds pass in a blue sky  
Too white to be true  
Before winter sets in  
The trees are spending all their money

I lie in gold  
Above a green valley  
Gold falls on my chest  
I am a rich man.

Richard Garcia

A journal is a good place for responding to literature. Which images did you see most clearly in the poem? Record these in your journal. Also tell how you liked the poem.

### Respond to Literature

The way you react to a poem can take many forms. Your response may be a quiet smile, a hearty laugh, or a flood of memories. Compare the following journal responses to Richard Garcia's poem to your own response.

### Student Model

In the poem “The Clouds Pass,” Richard Garcia explains a great gift of nature. In autumn time nature gives the trees’ leaves a beautiful golden color. Now these leaves are the money which the trees are dropping—spending.

Sarah Fisher, Solomon Schechter Day School,  
Skokie, Illinois

This reader reacts to Garcia’s poem with an explanation and with appreciation.

What aspects of the poem does this reader highlight?

This reader responds to Garcia’s poem with sensory descriptions.

What feelings does Garcia’s poem raise for this reader?

Personal Writing

*An autumn afternoon. The air is crisp and cool, a hint of the frosty weather to come. But the sun is warm on my skin. Like the trees in Garcia’s poem, I want to spend my “money” before winter arrives and sends me indoors. The warm, gold days of Indian summer make everyone feel rich. Garcia’s poem celebrates Indian summer. It makes me feel lucky to be alive to enjoy this glorious time of year.*

## Journal Writing

In your journal jot down the name of a poem that you’ve enjoyed. Close your eyes, and try to remember what you thought and felt as you read the poem. Record your answers in your journal.



## Vary Your Responses

Writing is one way to respond to literature or to explore your reactions to what you've read. You can express your thoughts and feelings in many ways. You could create an illustration, research and write about a topic contained in your reading, or write what one character might say to another. Which way is best for you? Begin by asking questions about the literature and how you felt about it. Look at some of the questions below to help you get started.

### Questions to Help You Get Started

1. What did the literature make you think about?
2. How did it make you feel?
3. Which words brought pictures to mind?
4. What would you change about it?

### Forms of Response

Write about how the literature makes you feel.

Write a poem expressing your feelings about the work.

Draw a picture of an image from the work.

Write a letter to the author.

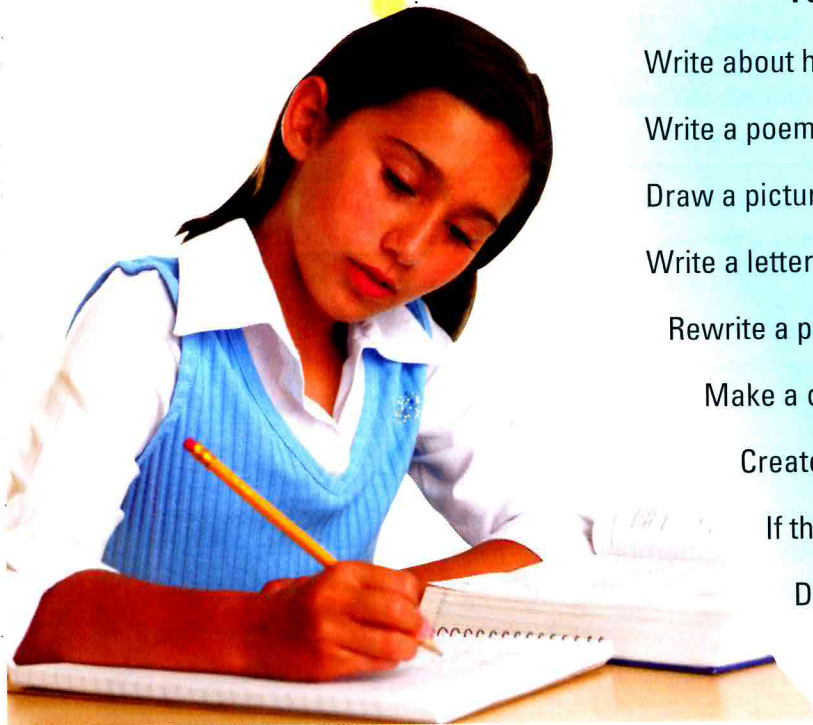
Rewrite a passage with your own changes.

Make a cartoon based on the work.

Create a magazine ad for the work.

If the work is a poem, set it to music.

Dramatize a scene from the work.



# 1.5

# Writing Activities

## Write a Response to Literature

Read a poem of your choice, and write an entry about it in your journal.

**PURPOSE** To respond to a poem

**AUDIENCE** Yourself

**LENGTH** 2–3 paragraphs

**WRITING RUBRICS** To write your response effectively, you should

- explain what you like best about the poem in general: its subject, its sound, its setting, the pictures it created in your mind
- think about whether the poem tells you anything new or says something you haven't heard before



### Using Computers

On the computer, write a poem of your own that responds to the one you chose or that is similar to it in form or subject. If you correspond with someone on e-mail, send that person your poem and ask for a response.

## Listening and Speaking

Think about the difference between silent and oral reading of poems. With a partner, take turns selecting a poem and reading it aloud. Discuss the meaning of each poem. Then write your own journal response to both poems and to the experience of reading aloud and hearing a poem read aloud.

### GrammarLink

#### Use vivid adjectives in your writing.

Vivid adjectives help crystallize images in your reader's mind and make your meaning very precise.

*The air is crisp and cool, a hint of the frosty weather to come.*

Revise the sentences below, replacing the underlined adjectives with stronger, more vivid ones.

"The Clouds Pass" praises the yellow leaves of fall. The color of the leaves makes the speaker feel rich and happy.

When I read the poem, I shared the speaker's happy emotions. At the same time, the falling leaves make me sad. The poem is a good one.

See Lesson 3.3, pages 122–125.





## UNIT 1


# Writing Process in Action

## Personal Writing

In preceding lessons you've learned how to gather and organize your ideas to describe the events in an important personal experience. You've learned how to describe the feelings you had because of that experience. You've also had the chance to write journal entries about your personal experiences. Now, in this lesson you will write about an experience you shared with someone else.

### Assignment

<b>Context</b>	You have decided to contribute to <i>America, America</i> , a publication of personal reflections and images from across the United States. Write about an experience you have shared with someone else.
<b>Purpose</b>	To share, in writing, a personal experience
<b>Audience</b>	A general audience of all ages
<b>Length</b>	2 paragraphs

LOG ON  **Writing Online**

For prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing tools, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and enter QuickPass code WC87703p1.



### Planning to Write

The following pages can help you plan and write your personal experience composition. Read through them, and then refer to them as you need to. But don't be tied down by them. You're in charge of your own writing process. Before you start, set a time frame for completing the assignment so that you can pace yourself as you move through each step of the writing process. Keep in mind the controlling idea: to write about an experience you shared with someone else.



# Writing Process in Action

## Prewriting

To come up with possible topics for this assignment, try to recall shared experiences that taught you something about life, another person, or yourself. This may help you focus on the people who are close to you and whom you see every day.

The options graphic below offers ways to tap into memories for ideas. The notebook gives an example of freewriting to generate ideas.

## Drafting

Exploring your ideas thoroughly during prewriting helps drafting go smoothly. As you review your notes, consider details that will help the reader understand what happened. Write down your ideas just as they come to you. You can polish the good ones later.

Your writing may be clearest if you time-order events. Notice how Gary Soto uses time transitions:

### Option A

Review journal entries.

### Option B

Brainstorm with a friend.

### Option C

Freewrite for ideas.



## Literature Model

The next day I woke tired and started picking tired. The grapes rained into the pan, slowly filling like a belly, until I had my first tray and started my second. So it went all day, and the next, and all through the following week, so that by the end of the thirteen days the foreman counted out, in tens mostly, my pay of fifty-three dollars.

Gary Soto, *Living up the Street*



# Writing Process in Action

## Drafting Tip

For more information about putting events in order, see Lesson 1.4, pages 20–23.

## Question A

Have I put events in time order?

## Question B

Have I elaborated with interesting details?

## Question C

Have I shared my feelings about the experience and done so in my own voice?

Remember to focus on the shared experience and your own feelings. At this stage, don't edit—just write. You may find it helpful to review pages 4–8 and 16–19.

## Revising

To begin revising, read over your draft to make sure that what you've written fits your purpose and audience. Think about whether the writing reflects your voice—the values, beliefs, and attitudes that make you unique. Then have a **writing conference**. Read your draft to a partner or small group. Use your audience's reactions to help you evaluate your work.

Mrs. Magnino lived down the street from  
○ us for as many years as I could remember.  
Her husband died several years ago. I hardly  
remember him. ~~She's been alone ever since and~~  
Now she <sup>s</sup> has depended on neighbors for favors and help  
whenever possible. ~~My parents thought it would~~  
○ ~~be a good idea if I offered to help her around~~  
the house. ~~One day she asked Mom if I~~  
Mom thought it was a good idea.  
We started by painting her lawn furniture.  
It hadn't been painted in years, but it was still  
in decent shape.

# Writing Process in Action

## Editing/Proofreading

You must complete one more step before you share your writing with others. In the editing stage carefully look over every sentence and word. Don't make your readers struggle through incorrect grammar or misspellings. **Proofread** for these errors, and use the standard proofreading symbols.

Use the editing checklist on the right to help you edit your writing. If certain grammar or punctuation rules give you problems, add them to the checklist. Then read through your work several times, looking for only one or two kinds of errors each time.

### Editing/Proofreading Checklist

1. Have I corrected any sentence fragments?
2. Do my verbs agree with their subjects?
3. Are all personal pronouns in the correct form?
4. Have I used standard spelling, capitalization, and punctuation?

## Publishing/Presenting

Before you turn in your assignment, think of some suggestions you could give to the editors of *America*, *America* for the published version of your article. For example, you might suggest some footnotes to help readers with unfamiliar words or names. Maybe you have ideas for illustrations or photographs that could accompany your story. Turn your suggestions in with your writing.

### Proofreading Tip

For proofreading symbols, see pages 79 and 863.

## Journal Writing: Write to Learn

Reflect on your writing process experience. Answer these questions in your journal: What do you like best about your personal experience writing? What was the hardest part of writing it? What did you learn in your writing conference? What new things have you learned as a writer?



UNIT 1

# Literature Model

Personal Writing

FROM

## Living up the Street



by Gary Soto

*In Living up the Street, Gary Soto writes about his growing-up years in Fresno, California. In the excerpt below, Soto describes the experience and feelings he had on his first job, picking grapes alongside his mother. As you read, pay special attention to the details Soto uses to make his experiences and feelings clear. Then try the Linking Writing and Literature activities on page 38.*



## Literature Model

I cut another bunch, then another, fighting the snap and whip of vines. After ten minutes of groping for grapes, my first pan brimmed with bunches. I poured them on the paper tray, which was bordered by a

wooden frame that kept the grapes from rolling off, and they spilled like jewels from a pirate's chest. The tray was only half filled, so I hurried to jump under the vines and begin groping, cutting, and tugging at the



Susan Moore, *With No Visible Sign*, 1988



## Literature Model

grapes again. I emptied the pan, raked the grapes with my hands to make them look like they filled the tray, and jumped back under the vine on my knees. I tried to cut faster because Mother, in the next row, was slowly moving ahead. I peeked into her row and saw five trays gleaming in the early morning. I cut, pulled hard, and stopped to gather the grapes that missed the pan; already bored, I spat on a few to wash them before tossing them like popcorn into my mouth.

*I had to daydream and keep my mind busy because boredom was a terror almost as awful as the work itself.*

So it went. Two pans equaled one tray—or six cents. By lunchtime I had a trail of thirty-seven trays behind me while Mother had sixty or more. We met about halfway from our last trays, and I sat down with a grunt, knees wet from kneeling on dropped grapes. I washed my hands with the water from the jug, drying them on the inside of my shirt sleeve before I opened the paper bag for the first sandwich, which I gave to Mother. I dipped my hand in again to unwrap a sandwich without looking at it. I took a first bite and chewed it slowly for the tang of mustard. Eating in silence I looked straight ahead at the vines, and only when we were finished with cookies did we talk.

“Are you tired?” she asked.

“No, but I got a sliver from the frame,” I told her. I showed her the web of skin between my thumb and index finger. She wrinkled her forehead but said it was nothing.

“How many trays did you do?”

I looked straight ahead, not answering at first. I recounted in my mind the whole morning of bend, cut, pour again and again, before answering a feeble “thirty-seven.” No elaboration,<sup>1</sup> no detail. Without looking at me she told me how she had done field work in Texas and Michigan as a child. But I had a difficult time listening to her stories. I played with my grape knife, stabbing it into the ground, but stopped when Mother reminded me that I had better not lose it. I left the knife sticking up like a small, leafless plant. She then talked about school, the junior high I would be going to that fall, and then about Rick and Debra, how sorry they would be that they hadn’t come out to pick grapes because they’d have no new clothes for the school year. She stopped talking when she peeked at her watch, a bandless one she kept in her pocket. She got up with an “Ay, Dios,” and told me that we’d work until three,

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**1 elaboration** (i lab' ə rā' shən) giving more details



## Literature Model



Anthony Ortega, *Farmworkers de Califas*, 1990

leaving me cutting figures in the sand with my knife and dreading the return to work.

Finally I rose and walked slowly back to where I had left off, again kneeling under the vine and fixing the pan under bunches of grapes. By that time, 11:30, the sun was over my shoulder and made me squint and think of the pool at the Y.M.C.A. where I was a summer member. I saw myself diving face first into the

water and loving it. I saw myself gleaming like something new, at the edge of the pool. I had to daydream and keep my mind busy because boredom was a terror almost as awful as the work itself. My mind went dumb with stupid things, and I had to keep it moving with dreams of baseball and would-be girlfriends. I even sang, however softly, to keep my mind moving, my hands moving.



## Literature Model

I worked less hurriedly and with less vision. I no longer saw that copper pot sitting squat<sup>2</sup> on our stove or Mother waiting for it to whistle. The wardrobe that I imagined, crisp and bright in the closet, numbered only one pair of jeans and two shirts because, in half a day, six cents times thirty-seven trays was two dollars and twenty-two cents. It became clear to me. If I worked eight hours, I might make four dollars. I'd take this, even gladly, and walk downtown to look into store windows on the mall and long for bright madras<sup>3</sup> shirts from Walter Smith or Coffee's, but settling for two imitation ones from Penney's.

### *If I worked eight hours, I might make four dollars.*

That first day I laid down seventy-three trays while Mother had a hundred and twenty behind her. On the back of an old envelope, she wrote out our numbers and hours. We washed at the pump behind the farm house and walked slowly back to our car for the drive back to town in the afternoon heat. That evening

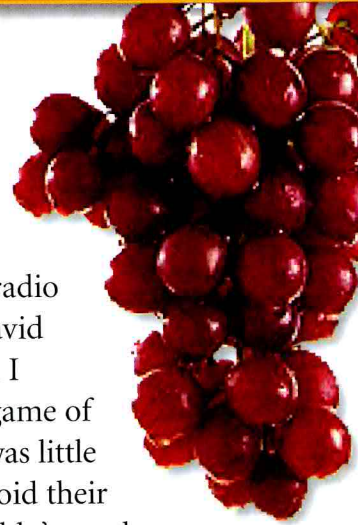
**2 squat** (skwot) short and thick; low and broad

**3 madras** (mad' rəs) a fine, striped or plaid cotton cloth

after dinner I sat in a lawn chair listening to music from a transistor radio while Rick and David King played catch. I joined them in a game of pickle, but there was little joy in trying to avoid their tags because I couldn't get the fields out of my mind: I saw myself dropping on my knees under a vine to tug at a branch that wouldn't come off. In bed, when I closed my eyes, I saw the fields, yellow with kicked up dust, and a crooked trail of trays rotting behind me.

The next day I woke tired and started picking tired. The grapes rained into the pan, slowly filling like a belly, until I had my first tray and started my second. So it went all day, and the next, and all through the following week, so that by the end of thirteen days the foreman counted out, in tens mostly, my pay of fifty-three dollars. Mother earned one hundred and forty-eight dollars. She wrote this on her envelope, with a message I didn't bother to ask her about.

The next day I walked with my friend Scott to the downtown mall where we drooled over the clothes behind fancy windows, bought popcorn, and sat at a tier of outside fountains to talk about

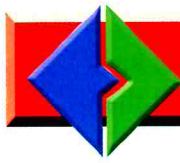


## *Literature Model*

girls. Finally we went into Penney's for more popcorn, which we ate walking around, before we returned home without buying anything. It wasn't until a few days before school that I let my fifty-three dollars slip quietly from my hands, buying a pair of pants, two

shirts, and a maroon T-shirt, the kind that was in style. At home I tried them on while Rick looked on enviously; later, the day before school started, I tried them on again wondering not so much if they were worth it as who would see me first in those clothes.





## Linking Writing and Literature

### Learning to Learn

Jot down some notes that explain why Soto is working in the vineyard with his mother. In your notes, tell how his experience is similar to or different from ways you prepare for the school year. Then jot down what else you learn about the author's childhood from this excerpt.

### Talk About Reading

Discuss with your classmates the excerpt from *Living up the Street*. Choose one person to lead the discussion and another person to take notes. Use the following questions to guide your discussion.

- 1. Connect to Your Life** In what ways are you and young Gary Soto alike? What traits, feelings, and opinions do you share?
- 2. Critical Thinking: Evaluate** What kind of person is the narrator's mother? Mention some specific details from the excerpt that support your answer.
- 3. 6+1 Trait®: Word Choice** How would you describe Gary Soto's use of language? Give examples to support your description.
- 4. Connect to Your Writing** *Living up the Street* is a memoir, a retelling of some part of the author's life. Why would you want to read someone's memoir? List what you think are the traits of a successful memoir.
- 5. Active Reading Strategies: Summarize** In your own words, briefly summarize the main idea of this excerpt.

### Write About Reading

**Memoir** Write a brief memoir that retells an experience that added to your understanding of yourself or your world. Try to model your own memoir after *Living up the Street*. As you write, remember what you and your classmates decided makes a memoir interesting and successful.

**Focus on Word Choice** Try to choose rich, colorful, precise language that will make places, people, feelings, and situations seem real. Include strong action verbs, vivid modifiers, and literary devices such as metaphors, similes, and alliteration.

For more information on word choice and the 6+1Trait® model, see **Writing and Research Handbook**, pages 838–840.

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# UNIT 1 Review

## Reflecting on the Unit: Summarize What You Learned

Focus on the following questions to help summarize what you learned in this unit.

- 1 What is personal writing?
- 2 Why is a journal a good place to develop your writing voice?
- 3 What is a learning log?
- 4 How can you explore the future through personal writing?
- 5 What kinds of events might you describe or explore in an autobiography?
- 6 In what ways can you respond to a piece of literature?



### Adding to Your Portfolio

**CHOOSE A SELECTION FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO** Look over the writing you did for this unit. Select a piece of writing for your portfolio. The piece you choose should reflect your unique voice. It should be about one or more of the following:

- your personal experiences: ideas, thoughts, feelings, activities, and memories
- discoveries you have made about yourself and the world in which you live
- your wishes or dreams for the future
- important events or turning points that have changed the direction of your life
- a personal response to a poem or other piece of literature


**REFLECT ON YOUR CHOICE** Attach a note to the piece you chose, explaining why you chose it and what you learned from writing it.

**SET GOALS** How can you improve your writing? What will you focus on the next time you write?

### Writing Across the Curriculum

**MAKE A SCIENCE CONNECTION** Select a personal experience that happened in the natural world. To think of ideas, list places where you have contact with nature. Then write a journal entry describing an experience. Use sensory details to create a picture of the setting.





*“The night had warmed  
and the rain had  
stopped, leaving  
puddles at the curbs.”*

—Walter Dean Myers,  
*The Treasure of Lemon Brown*