



**MY Access! Writer's Workshop**  
**Elementary School Literary Analysis/Response to Literature**  
**Prompt: "Grandpa's Garden"**

## **"Grandpa's Garden"**

Read the selection "Grandpa's Garden." What does Jimmy learn about gardening from Grandpa? Use details from the story to support your answer.

As you write your essay, think about these questions:

- did you state your main idea clearly?
- did you include details and examples to support your main idea?
- did you restate information from the story in your own words?
- did you organize your essay clearly with an introduction, body, and conclusion?
- did you use a variety of words and well-written sentences?
- did you use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation?

### **Attack the Prompt:**

- Underline what the prompt is asking you to DO.
- How will you do this?

## Teaching Ideas for “Grandpa’s Garden”

### Pre-Reading: Into the Text

- Put students into small groups and project the “Can We Learn From Nature?” handout. Assign one scenario to each group and have them discuss for five minutes (another idea is to find photographs of powerful natural events, and then ask students what we can learn from each one). Then, share answers as a whole class and have a discussion about what nature teaches us.
- Tell students that we are going to read a short story about a boy who visits his grandparents who love to garden. Let’s see what lessons he learns from them.

### Reading: Through the Text

- Teacher reads the story out loud to the students. Have them highlight anything that strikes them as important. They can also write their questions in the margin.
- Discuss students’ initial reactions/questions to the story.
- As a whole class go back to the story and read it one paragraph at a time. Students should record the lessons that can be learned from each paragraph in the box on the right. An example is included for the teacher, but these certainly aren’t the only answers and please don’t distribute this copy to the students. Try to get your students to come up with their own answers (but note that this will probably need to be guided instruction).

### Post Reading: Beyond the Text (writing the essay)

- Carefully read the prompt and “attack it” with students.
- Help students complete the first “Organizing Your Essay” handout. Complete the “Thesis Statement Scavenger Hunt” handout with students.
- The second “Organizing Your Essay” handout will help students support their thesis with examples.
- Have students write their essay—you choose if they do their first draft in MY Access! or on paper.
- After students have written their essay, complete the “Revising Your Essay” handout in addition to helping them use the “MY Tutor” feedback.

## “Grandpa's Garden”

## LESSON(S) LEARNED

From the first time I remember seeing Grandpa, I could picture him in his garden. He loved that place. "Jimmy", he would say, "even though it's difficult, I would rather work all day in the garden than do much of anything else. It doesn't matter if it is summer, winter, or spring. This place is my pride and joy." I cannot tell you how many times I heard him say that. He had quite a feeling for nature.

Well, I had the chance to go visit Grandpa this past weekend, and not much has changed. Grandma and Grandpa still live off of the land. They harvest everything from cucumbers to peaches. It is truly amazing that, even at their age, they do not have to rely on anyone else.

Every time I visit, the first thing we do is walk out to the garden as soon as the sun comes up. Each of us grabs a bucket and a pair of leather gloves. We walk down to the far side of the garden by the peach tree. We pick peaches that are a little pink, but not too soft. Grandpa likes to let them ripen inside the house in brown paper bags. It gives them a chance to get sweet and stops insects from getting to them first.

Our next stop is the tomatoes. We pick every color except green. These, too, can be ripened inside a brown bag. It is important to pick tomatoes for several reasons. First, the raccoons love to eat ripe tomatoes right off the vine. And, since they grow on a vine, they're always on the ground near the home of many insects. Finally, tomatoes can be used at different stages of ripeness. If they are placed inside bags in the house, you can quickly decide what you want to do with them. The ripe ones can be made into a sauce, while the less ripe ones can be made into a relish.

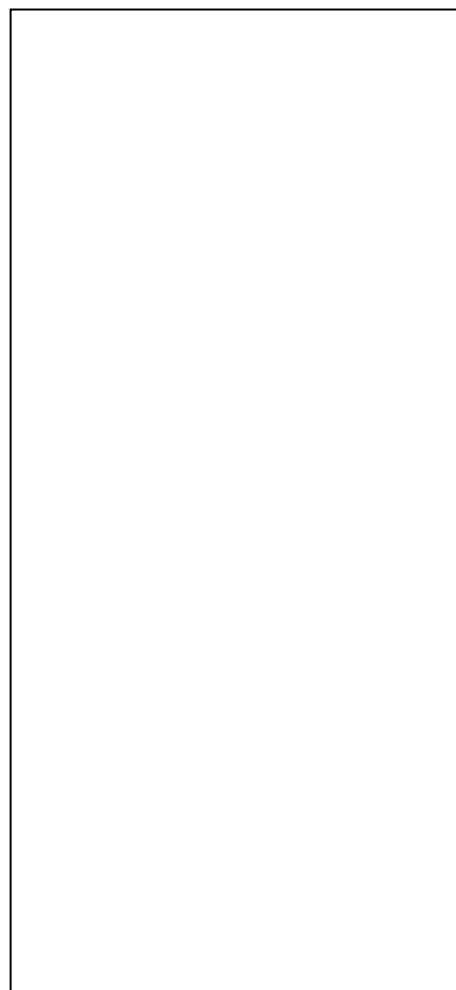
We slowly make our way through the prickly okra (the reason for the gloves), cucumbers, potatoes, peppers, green beans, and corn. All of these can be canned in jars. Then, we select the fruit that is "in season." That includes the watermelon, honeydew melon, and strawberries. Only the strawberries or peaches are good fruits for canning, though.

Grandma is a real pro at canning vegetables. She boils the vegetables, and then she "cans" the warm veggies directly into special jars called Mason jars. Mason jars help

everything stay fresh. She includes a teaspoon of salt in each jar (as a preservative) and tightly closes the lid. She then places the filled jars in a pressure cooker, and boils them as the extra air is sucked out of the jars. The canned vegetables can be kept in a cool location for up to five years.

Another vegetable that I find really interesting is the gourd. They are an odd-shaped vegetable that you cannot eat. At Grandpa's they grow on a metal chain-linked fence. They hang down from the top, and can grow to a length that is almost unbelievable. Grandpa has several gourds that are four feet long. Since you cannot eat these, they are used for other things. Grandpa cuts them off the vine, dries them out, and sands them smooth on the outside. Then, he paints each one and cuts out a small two-inch hole. He attaches a rope to the top and a small stick beneath the hole. He hangs it from a tree as a birdhouse. Mosquito-eating Martin birds quickly move into their new home.

Grandpa's garden is one place I will never forget. It is a place where I wish more people could visit. It is peaceful and full of life. I am glad that Grandpa and I have spent all of this time together. I sure have learned a lot from both Grandma and Grandpa.



## **Persuasive Writing**

### **Purpose:**

- To convince
- To state a problem and propose a solution
- To analyze cause/effect relationships
- To discuss controversial issues

### **Characteristics:**

- Logically supports a clear position or perspective with relevant evidence
- Provides convincing arguments and counterarguments
- Reflects analytical thinking and/or evaluation
- 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person point-of-view

### **Examples:**

- Persuasive essay
- Persuasive letter or letter to editor
- Editorial
- Compare/contrast essay
- Political speech
- Critical reviews
- Character analysis

## **Response to Literature**

Shares the same purpose and characteristics as above, but demonstrates an understanding and interpretation of literary work and supports viewpoint through specific references to text

## Can We Learn From Nature?

Event in Nature	What it Can Teach Us
The life cycle of a butterfly	
The food chain (i.e. polar bear eats the seal; seal eats the penguin; penguin eats the fish, etc.)	
A destructive storm	

A beautiful garden eaten by insects	
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## Grandpa's Garden (Teacher's Sample)

## LESSON(S) LEARNED

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We slowly make our way through the prickly okra (the reason for the gloves), cucumbers, potatoes, peppers, green beans, and corn. All of these can be canned in jars. Then, we select the fruit that is "in season." That includes the watermelon, honeydew melon, and strawberries. Only the strawberries or peaches are good fruits for canning, though.

Grandma is a real pro at canning vegetables. She boils the vegetables, and then she "cans" the warm veggies directly into special jars called Mason jars. Mason jars help

He isn't stopped by something difficult.

He takes joy in his work.

They live off the land and have been able to do so for a long time (unchanging quality of nature)  
They don't have to rely on anybody else.

They work hard (up with the sun).

They plan ahead (pick peaches to keep insects from getting them).

More planning--if they don't keep working, the tomatoes will be destroyed.

They need to be consistent to outsmart raccoons and insects.

Planning yields fruit all year long! Their hard work pays off.

everything stay fresh. She includes a teaspoon of salt in each jar (as a preservative) and tightly closes the lid. She then places the filled jars in a pressure cooker, and boils them as the extra air is sucked out of the jars. The canned vegetables can be kept in a cool location for up to five years.

Another vegetable that I find really interesting is the gourd. They are an odd-shaped vegetable that you cannot eat. At Grandpa's they grow on a metal chain-linked fence. They hang down from the top, and can grow to a length that is almost unbelievable. Grandpa has several gourds that are four feet long. Since you cannot eat these, they are used for other things. Grandpa cuts them off the vine, dries them out, and sands them smooth on the outside. Then, he paints each one and cuts out a small two-inch hole. He attaches a rope to the top and a small stick beneath the hole. He hangs it from a tree as a birdhouse. Mosquito-eating Martin birds quickly move into their new home.

Grandpa's garden is one place I will never forget. It is a place where I wish more people could visit. It is peaceful and full of life. I am glad that Grandpa and I have spent all of this time together. I sure have learned a lot from both Grandma and Grandpa.

Their hard work will yield food for five years.

Everything has a use, and everything in their garden is used.

The garden is LIFE!

# Organizing Your Essay

## I. Thesis/Controlling Idea:

*Jimmy learns* \_\_\_\_\_  
*and* \_\_\_\_\_  
*from Grandpa.*

## II. Introduction: Your introduction needs to do these things:

- ❑ Introduce the title of the story
- ❑ Give the reader some background information about the story or about the theme of the story (you can learn a lot about nature).
- ❑ Present (usually at the end) your thesis statement.
- ❑ Try to catch the reader's attention!

## III. Body: The body of your essay contains at least two paragraphs that illustrate and support your thesis statement. For this essay, try these body paragraphs:

- ❑ Discuss the first thing Jimmy learns from Grandpa (as mentioned in your thesis statement). Provide at least **two** examples (but try for more) from the story to show how this is true. Explain why this learned event is important.
- ❑ Discuss the second thing Jimmy learns from Grandpa (as mentioned in your thesis statement). Provide at least **two** examples (but try for more) from the story to show how this is true. Explain why this learned event is important.

## IV. Conclusion: The conclusion often restates the thesis and offers the reader some final thoughts about your essay. Try to think up a way to push your reader's thinking about your topic even deeper.

## Thesis Statement Scavenger Hunt

1. What is a thesis statement? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where do you typically find a thesis statement? \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** The following essay shows that the writer has great ideas, but it is difficult to read because the thesis statement is buried in the middle. Read the essay and underline or highlight sentences that could make a strong thesis. Then write a thesis for the essay.

This story is called "Grandpa's Garden". The author is unknown, and the setting is in Grandpa's garden. The main character is Jimmy and his grandparents. Jimmy learned about gardening from his grandpa.

Jimmy likes to go to his Grandpa's garden. The past weekend, he had the chance to go there. When he went there, he saw that not much had changed. Whenever he goes there, the first thing he and his grandpa does is grab a bucket and a pair of leather gloves. They then go out to the fields of peaches. They pick the peaches that have a little color, but aren't too soft. Grandpa then lets them (the peaches) ripen in paper bags at home.

Their next stop is the tomatoes. They pick every color except green. The ripe tomatoes are made into sauce, while the less ripe ones are being chopped into relish. They have other fruits and vegetables to pick, while the morning goes by, and enters the afternoon. During the afternoon, Grandma cans fruits and veggies. Grandpa is carving a gourd, a type of vegetable that you can't eat, into a birdhouse, while Jimmy watches.

After 2 days of fun at the farm, Jimmy returns home.

The lesson of this story is that hard work can be hard, but it can also be fun and rewarding. Grandma and Grandpa both say that this farm is their pride and joy. In the story, canning vegetables you planted costs you absolutely nothing, and can be good for up to 5 years in a cool location. Farming can help your life. Farming can help your life because you will become more responsible by remembering to care for your plants. You can also save a lot of money, and can exercise everyday.

The lesson is that hard work can pay off. The title is "Grandpa's Garden", and the author is unknown. This story is recommended by me because it teaches some good gardening tips, and teaches a good lesson. All in all, this is a great story.

*Jimmy learns* \_\_\_\_\_

*and* \_\_\_\_\_ *from Grandpa.*

## ORGANIZING YOUR ESSAY

### Thesis Statement

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### Support for Thesis/Topic Sentence

### Examples from Text as Evidence

1.	
2.	
3.	

## Revising Your Essay

Revision means to “re-see” your writing. Before you “re-see” it, however, you need to re-read it! Use the following suggestions to help you determine what you need to do to improve your essay.

### Introduction (must include first three bullet points):

- Highlight background information about the topic in YELLOW.
- Underline your thesis statement in BLUE.
- Circle the title of the story.
- Is your introduction interesting? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

### Body (for each paragraph):

- Highlight your topic sentence (the sentence that tells your reader what the paragraph is about) in BLUE.
  - If you don't have a topic sentence check here—you need to write one!
  - Does your topic sentence support your thesis statement?

Paragraph 1	___yes	___no
Paragraph 2	___yes	___no
Paragraph 3	___yes	___no
  
- Highlight the examples *from the story* you use to support your topic sentence in GREEN.
  - If you don't have any examples check here—you need to add some in!
  
- Highlight your own thoughts and commentary in RED. This is the part of your paragraph that explains why your examples are important.
  - If you don't have any commentary check here—you need to add your own thoughts in!

### Conclusion

Does it restate the thesis or your main argument in a new way? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Does it push your reader's thinking deeper? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

## MY Access! Writing Domains

Type of Writing: \_\_\_\_\_

Your writing will be evaluated on the basis of five domains or trains of writing. Study each domain on the rubric and USE BULLET POINTS to take notes so that you can define each one. The feedback you receive will use the language on this chart.

Focus & Purpose	Content & Development	Organization	Language Use & Style	Grammar & Mechanics
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Piece is paragraphed</li><li>• Grammar errors do not interfere with the message</li><li>• Uses proper punctuation</li><li>• Excellent spelling</li></ul>