

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# There vs. Their

*There* and *their* are often confused and misused. Here's what you need to know to use them correctly:

## THERE

- Use **there** to refer to a place or to the existence of something.

*Anna found her dropped book over **there**, behind the oak tree.*

*Ted promised that **there** will be free ice cream at the Scoop Shop's grand opening.*

## THEIR

- Use **their** to indicate that something belongs to certain people, animals, or things.

*The Kroebers brought **their** new baby home today.*

*The dogs fought over **their** tennis balls for the whole car ride.*

**Directions:** Write the correct word—*there* or *their*—in each blank below.

1. Megan already left for the party. Priscilla is meeting her \_\_\_\_\_ after dinner.
2. Samuel carried the twins' birthday cake, and I carried \_\_\_\_\_ presents.
3. The Barrett boys explained that \_\_\_\_\_ parrot flew away when they opened the window.
4. Allen said \_\_\_\_\_ are four kittens sleeping in a box under the porch.
5. My brothers told me that \_\_\_\_\_ new room was off limits.
6. When the loud concert finally ended, I was more than ready to get out of \_\_\_\_\_.
7. We set up the board game on the dining-room table, removing Princess, our cat that likes to sleep \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The art students proudly hung \_\_\_\_\_ self-portraits in the hallway.
9. "I put your necklace over \_\_\_\_\_," said my mom.

**Directions:** Write one sentence using *there* and one sentence using *their*.

10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Find the Text Evidence

**Directions:** Read "Call of Duty," then read the questions below carefully. Some will ask you to select or find pieces of text evidence—that is, details in the article—that support a statement we provide. Others will ask you to support your own statement with text evidence.

## 1. Choose the **THREE** pieces of text evidence that best support the statement below.

**Sangin is an extremely dangerous place.**

- Ⓐ "Zenit was a military working dog, specially trained to sniff out explosives."
- Ⓑ "The area was teeming with enemy fighters."
- Ⓒ "Jose was eager to prove that he and Zenit were up to the task."
- Ⓓ "IEDs are among the Taliban's most brutally effective weapons against U.S. troops, and Sangin was littered with them."
- Ⓔ "Zenit was finding bomb after bomb now."
- Ⓕ "As Zenit's handler, Jose had plenty to keep him busy."

.....

## 2. Choose one piece of evidence that **BEST** supports the statement below. Then complete the sentence to explain why you made your choice.

**Dogs play an important role in the military.**

- Ⓐ "He attended to the dog's every need, from grooming to making sure Zenit didn't get dehydrated."
- Ⓑ "At the height of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. military had a force of roughly 2,500 military working dogs."
- Ⓒ "And Zenit, recognizing his former handler immediately, covered Jose in slobbery kisses."

I chose \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Below are a statement and two pieces of supporting evidence. Find one more piece of evidence and write it on the blank lines.**

**Jose has shown remarkable resilience.**

Ⓐ "Sometimes when he is out for dinner, a kid may see his plastic-and-metal legs and ask if he's a Transformer. 'Nah, man,' Jose will answer, 'this is what happens when you don't eat your vegetables!'"

Ⓑ "He's learned to sail and ski."

Ⓒ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

.....

**4. Read the lines from the article below. Write a statement that they support.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ⓐ "Man and dog bonded right away, like they were made for each other."

Ⓑ "... Jose was intent on getting Zenit back."

Ⓒ "'I couldn't stop smiling,' says Jose. 'I'm still smiling. It felt like the beginning to this new life.'"

.....

**5. Now it's your turn. Make a statement based on the article and find three pieces of text evidence to support it.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ⓐ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ⓑ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ⓒ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Exploring Text Features

Authors use text features to bring attention to important details. In a nonfiction article, text features include titles, subheadings, photos, captions, charts, and maps.

**Directions:** Answer the questions below to help you explore the text features in "Call of Duty."

1. What effect do the size and placement of the headline and subhead on pages 4-5 create?

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2. Examine the photos of Jose and Zenit on pages 4-5, 6, and 9. Which lines from the main story do these photos best illustrate?

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3. Reread "Who Are the Taliban?" on page 6. If this information had been included in the main story, where should it have gone? Why do you think the information was presented as a sidebar instead?

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4. How does the photo at the top of page 8 add to the story?

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5. Reread the section "Coming to Terms." What is another subheading that would be appropriate for this section?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Read, Think, Explain

## Identifying Nonfiction Elements

Use this activity sheet with "Call of Duty." See *Scope's* "Glossary of Nonfiction Terms" and "Glossary of Literary Terms" for definitions of the words that appear in bold.

### Before Reading Text Features

1. Study the photograph on pages 4-5, and read the **headline** and **subhead** of the article. Describe the photograph. Whose "call of duty" do you think the headline refers to?

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2. Examine the images throughout the article. In general, what do they show?

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3. Look at the map on page 6. What does it show?

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4. Read the **subheads** throughout the article. Based on your preview of the article, write one sentence predicting what you think it is mainly about.

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## During Reading

### Inference, Mood, Vocabulary, Text Structure, and Tone

5. Reread the first paragraph of the article. What can you infer about Jose from the description of his job?

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6. Compare the **moods** of the first and last sections of the article. Briefly explain how the author establishes both moods.

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7. Consider this sentence from page 6:

"The region had been a graveyard for many American soldiers, and a place where many others had received disfiguring injuries."

A. What does *disfiguring* mean in this sentence? (Use context clues to help you. Then check a dictionary.)

B. The author could have used the word *serious* instead of *disfiguring*. How does his choice of *disfiguring* affect the meaning of the sentence?

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8. Check ( ✓ ) the statement that best describes the **text structure**, or how the author organizes information, in the section "Coming to Terms."

The author compares and contrasts Jose's experiences with those of other military dog handlers.

The author describes what happened to Jose through a series of flashbacks.

The author describes a series of problems Jose faced and steps that were taken to solve them.

9. What is the **tone** of the section "Coming to Terms"? What are some words and phrases that establish the tone?

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## After Reading

### Central Ideas and Objective Summary

10. Below is a **central idea** of "Call of Duty" and two pieces of **evidence** that support it. In the box provided, write a third piece of evidence that supports the central idea.

<b>Central Idea</b> Jose and Zenit formed a strong bond.		
<b>Evidence #1</b> "Zenit lay beside his master, ears pinned to his head, chin resting on his paws." (p. 8)	<b>Evidence #2</b> "Nothing felt right without him," Jose says." (p. 8)	<b>Evidence #3</b>

11. Below are three pieces of **supporting evidence** for another central idea of "Call of Duty." In the space provided, write a **central idea** that this evidence supports.

<b>Central Idea</b>		
<b>Evidence #1</b> "Here in Sangin—one of the most dangerous places in Afghanistan (and the world)—Jose had a deadly serious job to do." (p. 5)	<b>Evidence #2</b> "Out in front of the other Marines, Jose and Zenit were the first targets." (p. 5)	<b>Evidence #3</b> "The region had been a graveyard for many American soldiers, and a place where many others had received disfiguring injuries." (p. 6)

12. Write a four- to five-sentence **objective summary** of "Call of Duty." (Hint: Think about what you would say to a friend who asks, "What is this article about?")

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Read, Think, Explain

## Identifying Nonfiction Elements

Use this activity sheet with "Call of Duty." See *Scope's* "Glossary of Nonfiction Terms" and "Glossary of Literary Terms" for definitions of the words that appear in bold.

### Before Reading Text Features

1. Study the photograph on pages 4-5, and read the **headline** and **subhead** of the article. Describe the photograph. Whose "call of duty" do you think the headline refers to?

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2. Examine the images on pages 6 and 7. What do they show?

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3. Describe the images on pages 8 and 9.

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4. Look at the map on page 6. What does it show?

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5. What do you think this article will be mostly about?

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## During Reading

### Inference, Mood, Vocabulary, Text Structure, and Tone

6. Reread the first paragraph of the article. What can you infer about Jose from the description of his job?

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7. The **mood** of the first section of the article is mainly tense and suspenseful: It describes Jose and Zenit on a dangerous mission searching for hidden IEDs in the hot, uncomfortable desert of Afghanistan. What is the mood of the last section of the article? How does the author create this mood?

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8. Consider this sentence from page 6: "The region had been a graveyard for many American soldiers, and a place where many others had received disfiguring injuries."

A. Check ( ✓ ) the box with the correct definition of *disfiguring* as it is used in the sentence from the article. (Check a dictionary if you're not sure.)

having a large number of

terrible and deadly

spoiling the appearance of

B. The author could have used the word *serious* instead of *disfiguring*. How does his choice of *disfiguring* affect the meaning of the sentence? What information does it provide that *serious* does not?

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9. The author structures the section "Coming to Terms" by describing a series of problems and solutions.

A. Read the following problem. State its solution on the lines provided.

**Problem:** Jose needed to learn how to stand on what remained of his legs.

**Solution:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Read the following solution. Write the problem it solved on the lines provided.

**Solution:** Jose made phone calls and filled out paperwork.

**Problem:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. The **tone** of "Coming to Terms" is sympathetic. What are some words and phrases that establish that tone?

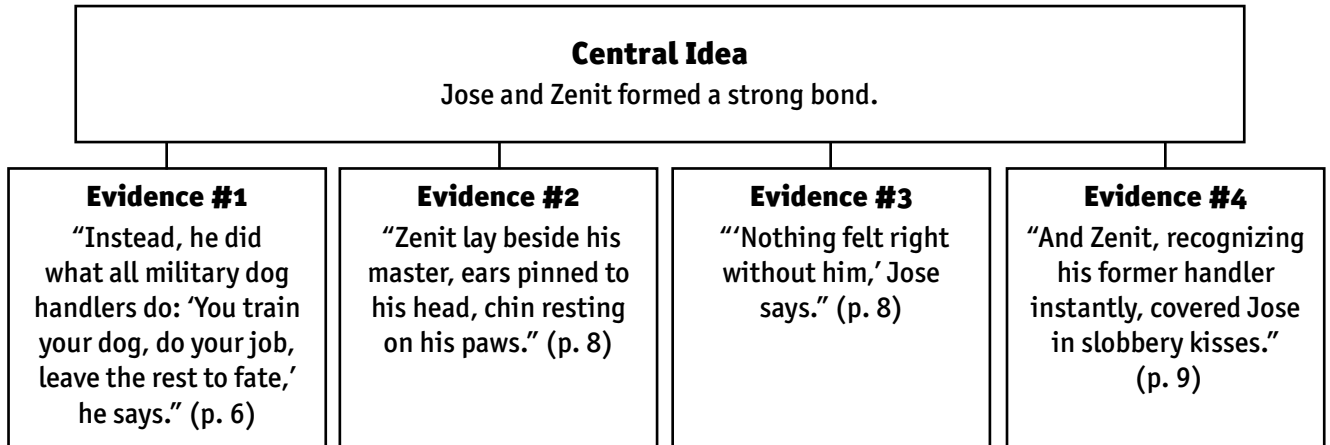
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## After Reading

### Central Idea and Objective Summary

11. Below is a **central idea** of "Call of Duty." Three of the pieces of evidence listed support it, but one of them does not. Cross out the one that does not.



12. An **objective summary** is a short statement or paragraph that tells what an article is about. An objective summary does not include minor details or the opinions of the person writing it. Draw a line through the details below that should NOT be included in an objective summary of "Call of Duty."

1. Jose was a Marine Corporal stationed in Sanjin, Afghanistan.
2. Jose and Zenit were specially trained to find buried explosives.
3. German shepherds make the best working dogs.
4. The Taliban don't allow people to listen to music or watch television.
5. Jose was eager to find an IED because he and Zenit had not found any yet.
6. Jose stepped on an IED and had to have parts of both legs amputated.
7. Jose's recovery was extremely difficult.
8. Jose missed Zenit and spent a long time trying to adopt him.
9. Zenit has helped Jose feel complete in his life again.
10. It is really good that Jose and Zenit are together.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Write to Congress

Now that you've read the article "Call of Duty" and watched the video "Beyond the Story: Into the World of Military Working Dogs," it's time to write your letter to Congress. Follow the guidelines below to write an outstanding letter.

## ► Take Notes

Answer the questions below, which will help you think of what points to make in your letter. Use ideas from the article and the video, and support your claims with evidence. Include your own ideas as well.

1. Why might it be important to a veteran to be able to adopt the military dog he or she worked with?

2. How could it benefit a handler to adopt the dog he or she worked with?

3. How might it benefit a military working dog to be reunited with its handler?

4. What do military dog handlers and their dogs do for the United States?

5. What are some challenges or obstacles that might exist in creating a formal program that gives veterans the chance to adopt the dogs they worked with?

➤ **Consider Your Reader**

To write an effective persuasive letter, you need to get inside your reader's mind. Ask yourself what points would be **MOST** effective in persuading that particular person to take the action you desire. How could the action you desire benefit that person? What concerns might he or she have?

In this case, your reader is a member of Congress, the law-making branch of our federal government. Congress decides how the taxes that Americans pay are spent. Remember, your congressperson's job is to represent *you*.

➤ **Write As If the Reader Is on Your Side**

When writing a persuasive letter, don't treat the reader like an enemy. Your letter will be much more effective if you assume that you and your congressperson have the same goals.

➤ **Be Polite**

Not only is a less-than-polite letter likely to be ignored, it could even work against you!



## Here is how you can format your letter:

At the top of the page, write your full name and address.

Kelly Billings  
1439 Hopper Street  
Portland, ME 04101

Write the date.

October 17, 2014

Write the name and address of your reader—your senator or representative. Be sure to include your congressperson's proper title.

Representative Chellie Pingree  
1318 Longworth  
House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Use the appropriate salutation.

Dear Representative Pingree:

First paragraph: Explain what it is that you want.

Second paragraph: Explain why it's a good idea to make this decision. Support your ideas with evidence. (If you use evidence from *Scope* or somewhere else, don't forget to name your source.)

Third paragraph: Acknowledge any concerns you think your congressperson might have, and explain why giving all veterans the chance to adopt the dogs they worked with is still a good idea.

Fourth paragraph: Conclude with a call to action. Tell your congressperson (politely) what to do and when to do it. Then thank him or her for considering your request.

Close your letter with "Sincerely," followed by your signature and your printed name.

Sincerely,  
*Kelly Billings*  
Kelly Billings

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Close-Reading Questions

## "Call of Duty"

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1. In the first section, what sensory details does the author use to help the reader understand Jose's experience searching for IEDs in the desert? (author's craft/descriptive language)
2. What is the purpose of the sidebar "Who Are the Taliban?" (author's purpose/text features)
3. Compare and contrast the settings in the first and last sections of the article. How does the setting of each section affect the section's mood? (setting/mood)
4. On page 9, the author describes Jose's response when a child asks if he is a Transformer. What does this paragraph reveal about Jose? How does it support the idea that Jose has come a long way? (inference/key ideas and details)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Critical-Thinking Questions

## "Call of Duty"

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1. According to the author, the military regards military working dogs as pieces of equipment. In what ways *are* military dogs like pieces of equipment? Why did Jose think of Zenit as much more than that?
2. Why was reuniting with Zenit so important to Jose?
3. Do you think veterans should be given the opportunity to adopt the dogs they worked with? Why or why not?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary:

## "Call of Duty"

**Directions:** Read the following definitions and example sentences.

- 1. deploy (dih-PLOY)** *verb*; to move, spread out, or place in position for some purpose
  - **example:** The company deployed two exterminators to rid my house of bedbugs.
- 2. dispatcher (dis-PATCH-ur)** *noun*; someone who is responsible for receiving and transmitting information, often via radio. Police and fire departments, emergency medical services, and transportation services use dispatchers to relay information and coordinate operations.
  - **example:** The dispatcher sent Fire Chief Sandra Middlebrook to the site of the blaze.
- 3. elite (ih-LEET)** 1. *noun*; the part or group having the highest quality or importance; 2. *noun*; a small group of powerful people; 3. *adjective*; representing the best; superior
  - **example 1:** At the movie premiere, I found myself among the elite of the entertainment industry.
  - **example 2:** The country's elite owns and controls most of the wealth and power.
  - **example 3:** The Olympic Games bring together elite athletes from around the world.
- 4. improvise (IM-pruh-vize)** *verb*; 1. to compose, create, perform, etc. without preparation; 2. to make out of whatever happens to be on hand
  - **example 1:** Keri doesn't like to learn choreography; she prefers to improvise.
  - **example 2:** The stranded sailor improvised a shelter using mud, sticks, and his life vest.
- 5. patter (PAT-ur)** *verb*; 1. to make light, quick sounds; 2. *noun*; fast talk
  - **example 1:** I love to listen to the rain patter against the window.
  - **example 2:** The magician kept up a steady patter while he performed his tricks.
- 6. prosthesis (pros-THEE-sis)** *noun*; an artificial device that replaces a missing part of the body
  - **example:** Two years ago, my brother lost his lower left leg in a car accident. Thanks to his new prosthesis, he has been able to return to snowboarding.
- 7. sable (SAY-buhl)** *noun*; 1. a small weasel-like animal with dark brown fur; 2. *adjective*; black or very dark brown
  - **example 1:** While hiking in China, we spotted a sable climbing a tree.
  - **example 2:** When I was a kid, I loved to brush and braid my older sister's silky sable hair.
- 8. teeming (TEEM-ing)** *adjective*; overly full or swarming with people or things
  - **example:** It was pointless to go home because our city was teeming with zombies.

# Vocabulary Practice:

## "Call of Duty"

**Directions:** For each pair of words below, write S if the words are synonyms (have the same or nearly the same meanings) or A if the words are antonyms (have opposite meanings).

- |               |                 |       |
|---------------|-----------------|-------|
| 1. dispatcher | receiver        | _____ |
| 2. improvised | rehearsed       | _____ |
| 3. patter     | chatter         | _____ |
| 4. elite      | ordinary        | _____ |
| 5. prosthesis | artificial limb | _____ |
| 6. teeming    | lacking         | _____ |

**Directions:** In each row of words, place an X on the word that does not belong.

- |     |            |          |          |              |
|-----|------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| 7.  | best       | elite    | inferior | select       |
| 8.  | white      | ivory    | sable    | cream        |
| 9.  | improvised | prepared | planned  | premeditated |
| 10. | brimming   | filled   | empty    | teeming      |

**Directions:** Choose two of the vocabulary words listed on the first page of this activity. Write an example sentence using each one.

11. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## “Call of Duty” Quiz

**Directions:** Read “Call of Duty.” Then answer the questions below.

**1. Which line expresses a central idea of the article?**

- (A) “Jose and Zenit had been in Sangin for three months, stationed at Patrol Base Alcatraz.”
- (B) “That change in behavior was an alert: Zenit had found an IED.”
- (C) “But Jose would come to realize that Zenit was far more than a piece of gear.”
- (D) “He can now walk on his prosthetic legs.”

**2. Reread these lines from page 6: “[Jose] knew he needed to stay calm, though, to keep Zenit focused; dog trainers say that emotion runs through the leash.” These lines suggest that**

- (A) Jose feels emotional about Zenit.
- (B) Zenit can be affected by Jose’s emotions.
- (C) Jose was not concerned about the danger he faced in Afghanistan.
- (D) Jose believes that he and Zenit are a great team.

**3. How does the section “Coming to Terms” help develop the idea that military dogs and their handlers build strong bonds?**

- (A) by stating that Zenit was still on active duty
- (B) by describing Jose’s injuries
- (C) by explaining that Zenit belonged to the military and not to Jose
- (D) by showing how persistent Jose was in his quest to adopt Zenit

**4. Which quote best supports your answer to question 3?**

- (A) “For Jose, there were calls, paperwork, agonizing months of waiting.”
- (B) “He underwent 12 operations . . .”
- (C) “Jose’s wife . . . remembers some very dark days when Jose, 24, sat in a wheelchair . . . trying to come to terms with his new life.”
- (D) “Jose, in his wheelchair, approached Zenit.”

**5. Consider this sentence from page 8: “He woke thrashing, calling for Zenit, only to learn that ‘N103’ had been assigned to a new handler in Afghanistan.” Why does the author refer to Zenit as “N103”?**

- (A) to remind the reader of Zenit’s real name
- (B) to show that the dog was happy to work with a new handler
- (C) to emphasize that the military considered Zenit a piece of equipment
- (D) to explain what happened to Zenit

**6. What is the purpose of the photograph and caption at the top of page 8?**

- (A) to evoke sympathy for military dogs
- (B) to explain why military dogs are necessary to win wars
- (C) to give a brief history of dogs in the military
- (D) to make the reader smile

### Constructed-Response Questions

**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

- 7. What does the information in the section “Tradition and Ritual” add to the article? Why might the author have included this information? Support your answer with details from the article.
- 8. The wildlife photographer Roger Caras once said, “Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole.” Explain what you think he meant and apply it to Jose and Zenit. Use details from the article to support your answer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## “Call of Duty” Quiz

**Directions:** Read “Call of Duty.” Then answer the questions below.

**1. Which of the following best expresses a central idea of the article?**

- (A) Military dogs and their handlers develop close bonds.
- (B) Dogs have been used in war for thousands of years.
- (C) Dogs have amazing noses.
- (D) Sangin is one of the most dangerous places on Earth.

**2. Which line from the article supports your answer to question 1?**

- (A) “Jose and Zenit had been in Sangin for three months, stationed at Patrol Base Alcatraz.”
- (B) “That change in behavior was an alert: Zenit had found an IED.”
- (C) “But Jose would come to realize that Zenit was far more than a piece of gear.”
- (D) “The region had been a graveyard for many soldiers . . .”

**3. What is the purpose of the photograph and caption at the top of page 8?**

- (A) to evoke sympathy for military dogs
- (B) to explain why military dogs are necessary to win wars
- (C) to give a brief history of dogs in the military
- (D) to make the reader smile

**4. Reread this line from page 6: “Dog trainers say that emotion runs through the leash.” What does it mean?**

- (A) Handlers feel emotional about their dogs.
- (B) A dog will sense whatever its handler is feeling.
- (C) Dogs are not supposed to feel excitement.
- (D) Training a dog involves many different feelings.

**5. What other line from the article conveys a similar idea?**

- (A) “The dog knew something had gone terribly wrong.”
- (B) “But Jose was eager to prove that he and Zenit were up to the task.”
- (C) “He attended to the dog’s every need, from grooming to making sure Zenit didn’t get dehydrated.”
- (D) “Out in front of the other Marines, Jose and Zenit were the first targets.”

**6. Jose says that Zenit “bridges three worlds: the person I was before Afghanistan, the one I was there, and the one I became after.” What is another way to say *bridges* in that sentence?**

- (A) arches over
- (B) connects
- (C) provides structure in
- (D) time-travels through

### Constructed-Response Questions

**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

**7.** What does the information about Jose’s childhood add to the article? Why might the author have included the information? Use details from the article to support your response.

**8.** The wildlife photographer Roger Caras once said, “Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole.” Explain what you think he meant and apply it to Jose and Zenit. Use details from the article to support your answer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Video Discussion Questions

## ***Scope Beyond the Story: Into the World of Military Working Dogs***

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1. Describe the three main duties that military working dogs perform today, according to the video.
2. The narrator says that preparing a dog for the military takes a lot of work. What evidence does she give to support this claim?
3. What is the mood of the video during the section about training? Consider the music, narration, and visuals. How do these elements contribute to the mood?
4. According to the narrator, "unbreakable bonds" form between military working dogs and their handlers. Why might this be? Use information from the video to support your answer.



# Zenit Contest

Write a letter to Congress arguing that veterans should be given the chance to adopt the military dogs they worked with. Use information in the article to support your ideas. Five winners will get *Dogs of War* by Sheila Keenan and Nathan Fox.

## Entries will be judged on:

- ⇒ a clearly stated central idea
- ⇒ use of supporting evidence
- ⇒ good organization and transitions
- ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

My home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ My grade: \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher's name : \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher's e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My parent or legal guardian consents  
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Include this sheet with your written entry and send both to: [scopemag@scholastic.com](mailto:scopemag@scholastic.com)  
Or mail to: Zenit Contest, c/o Scope, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY November 15, 2014!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Exploring Mood

Mood is the feeling the reader gets from reading a piece of writing. Another way to describe mood is *atmosphere*. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a story, it too has an atmosphere that creates a feeling. Writers create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot.

1. Below are some positive and negative words that you might use to describe the mood of *The Giver* in various scenes. Read the lists, then add your own words in the empty spaces.

POSITIVE	
contemplative	surprised
determined	touched
enlightened	_____
exhilarated	_____
hopeful	_____

NEGATIVE	
apprehensive	suspenseful
detached	threatening
discontented	_____
haunting	_____
infuriated	_____

2. The mood of Scenes 1 and 2 is uneasy and detached.

A. What details about the setting create this mood?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. What details about the dialogue help create this mood?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. In Scene 4, what details does the author use to create a surprised mood?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4.** How does Mother's line "His name is 'Uncertain'" change the mood of Scene 5?

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**5.** The Giver introduces love and heartache to Jonas in Scene 7. How do these memories affect the mood?

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**6.** How does the mood shift from the beginning of Scene 8 to the end of the scene?

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**7.** What does Jonas learn in Scene 10? How does this information affect the mood in the rest of the play?

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**8.** How does the author create suspense in the play?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Summarizing

An objective summary is a short statement or paragraph that tells what an article or story is about.  
It does not include irrelevant details or the opinions of the person writing it.

**Directions:** Follow the prompts in the margins to complete the summary below.

## Summary of *The Giver*

*The Giver* is about \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is happening in the society where the story takes place?

2. What choices do the Elders make about the future of every 16-year-old?

\_\_\_\_\_. In the Community, the Elders decide

Jonas is named Receiver of Memory, which means \_\_\_\_\_

3. What does the Receiver of Memory do?

4. What does Jonas learn about what life used to be like?

During his training, Jonas discovers \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Jonas begins to feel that \_\_\_\_\_

5. How does Jonas's training affect him?

And so Jonas decides to \_\_\_\_\_

6. What does Jonas set off to do near the end of the play?

The Chief Elder tries to stop him, but \_\_\_\_\_

7. What does Jonas accomplish?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Making Inferences

Making an inference means using clues from the text to reach a conclusion.

**Directions:** Read *The Giver*, then make inferences to answer the questions below. We answered the first question for you.

1. What can you infer is the Community's attitude toward Release?

*I can infer that the community has a matter-of-fact attitude about Release.*

Explain how you know. *I know because Release is not looked upon as either good or bad. It is merely something that is done. For example, Jonas's father expresses no remorse when Releasing the smaller of the twins.*

2. In Scene 5, Father says, "Be strong, Gabriel, or we'll have to Release you." What does this reveal about Father's feelings toward Garbriel?

Why does Father whisper when he says the above? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why don't the Elders want Jonas to question Sameness? \_\_\_\_\_

Explain how you know. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Thinking About Theme

## Section 1: What is Theme?

The theme of a story is its big idea. It's a message, lesson, or universal truth that goes beyond the literal events of the story. In other words, it's an idea that applies to people in general—not just the characters in the story.

An author doesn't usually come right out and tell you what the theme is; as a reader, you need to infer it. A story can have more than one theme.

.....

Fables can be useful when you are learning about theme. They have a special kind of theme called a moral, which is a short, clear lesson. Unlike other kinds of themes, morals *are* often directly stated, usually at the end of a story, either by one of the characters or by the narrator.

---

**Directions:** Read the following fable by Aesop. Its moral, or theme, appears at the end.

### THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

One day, a hare was bragging about how fast he could run. He bragged and bragged and bragged. While he was bragging, he laughed at the tortoise, who was very slow. In response, the tortoise challenged the hare to a race, which made the hare laugh even harder. But the hare agreed, and the forest animals got together and mapped out a course. The race began and the hare, being a swift runner, soon left the tortoise behind. About halfway through the course, it occurred to the hare that he had plenty of time to beat the slow tortoise. So the hare decided to play in the meadow for a while. When he finished playing, he decided he had time to take a nap. He curled up under a tree and fell asleep. The tortoise, meanwhile, continued to plod on, taking one slow step after another. Finally, the hare woke up from his nap. "Time to get going!" he thought. And off he went, faster than he had ever run before, until he reached the finish line, where he met the tortoise, who was patiently awaiting his arrival.

**Moral:** *Slow and steady wins the race.*

## Section 2: Matching

**Directions:** Read the themes below, and the Aesop's fables below and on the next page. Decide which theme goes with each fable and write the theme in the box provided.

### THEMES/MORALS

*A liar will not be believed, even when he speaks the truth.*

*There is strength in numbers.*

*Don't let your words be larger than your deeds.*

### THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF

There was once a boy who tended his sheep near a dark forest. Alone all day, he was rather bored, so he thought up a plan to get a little company and some excitement. He ran toward the village calling out, "Wolf! Wolf!" The villagers rushed out to meet him. This pleased the boy so much that a few days later he tried the same trick—and again the villagers hurried out to help him. A few days after that, a wolf actually did come out from the forest. The boy of course cried, "Wolf! Wolf!" and ran to the village. But the villagers, who had been fooled twice before, thought the boy was again deceiving them, and nobody came to help. So the wolf made a good meal off the boy's flock.

Moral:

### THE BUNDLE OF STICKS

An old man on his deathbed gave his sons some final advice. He presented them with a bundle of sticks, and said to his eldest son, "Break it." The eldest son strained and strained, but with all his strength was unable to break the bundle. The other sons also tried, but none of them was successful. "Now untie the bundle," said the father, "and each of you take a stick." When the sons had done as instructed, the father said, "Now each of you break your stick." Each stick was easily broken.

Moral:

## **THE BOASTING TRAVELER**

Upon returning home, a man who had traveled in foreign lands boasted of the many wonderful and heroic feats he had performed in the different places he had visited. Among other things, he said that when he was on the island of Rhodes, he had leaped such a distance that no man could leap anywhere near as far. There were, he said, many people in Rhodes who saw him do it and whom he could call as witnesses. One of the bystanders said, "Now, my good man, if this be all true, there is no need of witnesses. Suppose this to be Rhodes, and leap for us."

**Moral:**



# Close-Reading Questions

## *The Giver*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Critical-Thinking Questions

## *The Giver*

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1. Why are the Giver and Jonas the only ones who understand what it means to kill someone?  
What does memory have to do with it?

2. What can we do to prevent our society from becoming like the Community?

## ***The Giver* and “Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?”**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary:

## *The Giver* and “Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?”

**Directions:** Read the following definitions and example sentences. Then add two more words from the play or essay.

- 1. awash (uh-WASH)** *adjective*; 1. flooded with or covered with water or another liquid; 2. floating about; 3. filled, covered, or completely overrun all at once
  - **example 1:** After the downpour last week, Main Street was awash. Nearly 2 inches of water covered the pavement.
  - **example 2:** We spotted an empty rowboat awash about 50 feet from the shore.
  - **example 3:** The streets of New York City are awash with shoppers during the holiday season.
- 2. chaos (KAY-oss)** *noun*; complete confusion and disorder
  - **example:** The parade was not well-organized. In fact, it was utter chaos as hundreds of people arrived and had no idea what to do or where to go.
- 3. corrupt (kuh-RUPT)** *verb*; 1. to cause someone or something to become bad, dishonest, or immoral; 2. to alter from the original or correct form of something; 3. *adjective*; guilty of dishonest practices
  - **example 1:** In the 1950s, many parents believed that rock 'n' roll was corrupting their children.
  - **example 2:** I can no longer open the file on my computer because the file has been corrupted.
  - **example 3:** Everyone in town knows that the mayor is corrupt; he takes bribes.
- 4. debilitating (de-BILL-ih-tay-ting)** *adjective*; tending to weaken or make feeble
  - **example:** My cousin was not able to join us for the picnic. She suffers from a debilitating disease that often keeps her home in bed.
- 5. emanate (EM-uh-nate)** *verb*; to come out from a source
  - **example:** The scent of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies emanated from my grandmother's kitchen.
- 6. manicure (MAN-i-cure)** *verb*; 1. to trim neatly; 2. *noun*; the cleaning, shaping, and polishing of the fingernails
  - **example 1:** My dad spent all day Saturday manicuring the bushes in our front yard. They look so perfect that they almost look fake!
  - **example 2:** My older sister's nails always look nice; she gets a manicure once a week.

**7. penetrate (PEN-uh-trate)** *verb*; 1. to go inside or through something; 2. to come to understand

- **example 1:** My car's headlights couldn't penetrate the dense fog.
- **example 2:** "Don't worry," said Sherlock Holmes, "I will penetrate this mystery."

**8. transmit (trans-MIT)** *verb*; 1. to send or pass something from one place or person to another; 2. to send out radio or television signals

- **example 1:** Mosquitoes transmit the disease known as malaria.
- **example 2:** The radio station my mom listens to, WNYC, is transmitted on 93.9.

**9. traumatic (traw-MAT-ik)** *adjective*; 1. shocking and very upsetting; psychologically painful

- **example:** The earthquake was traumatic for many residents.

**10.** \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

• **example:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**11.** \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

• **example:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary Practice:

## *The Giver* and "Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?"

**Directions:** In each line, cross out the word that does not belong.

- |    |               |              |            |            |
|----|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1. | strengthening | debilitating | fortifying | energizing |
| 2. | corrupt       | noble        | crooked    | dishonest  |
| 3. | disorder      | harmony      | chaos      | disarray   |
| 4. | drenched      | awash        | doused     | dry        |
| 5. | exit          | pierce       | access     | penetrate  |
| 6. | calming       | pleasing     | traumatic  | comforting |

**Directions:** Complete the sentences using a form of the vocabulary words listed in the Word Bank.

### WORD BANK

manicure	chaos	transmit	penetrate	emanate
corrupt	awash	traumatic	debilitating	

7. My sister's law school graduation was \_\_\_\_\_ with emotion.
8. A wonderful warmth \_\_\_\_\_ from the fireplace.
9. Even the strongest knights could not \_\_\_\_\_ the stone walls of the castle.
10. My injury was so \_\_\_\_\_ that I was sidelined for the rest of the season.
11. Power can \_\_\_\_\_ people in positions of authority and cause them to make poor and immoral decisions.
12. Sam had a \_\_\_\_\_ experience when he was little: He got separated from his parents in a store.
13. It is unclear how the rebels are \_\_\_\_\_ messages to their allies in other countries.
14. My mom hired someone to carefully \_\_\_\_\_ the lawn before the barbecue.
15. Complete \_\_\_\_\_ broke out in the mall parking lot when Selena Gomez showed up.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***The Giver Quiz***

**Directions:** Read *The Giver* and “Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?” Then answer the questions below.

**1. How do the memories Jonas receives affect him?**

- (A) They cause him great suffering and he wishes he had never received them.
- (B) They make his life more meaningful by allowing him to experience deeper emotions.
- (C) They make him depressed and he stops caring what happens to himself and everyone else.
- (D) They make him wish that he lived in the past.

**2. Which of the following best supports your answer to question 1?**

- (A) JONAS: People need the memories so they can understand. Because if you can't feel, what's the point of life? (pp. 16-17)
- (B) JONAS: How can people be so cruel? (p. 16)
- (C) JONAS: What are those things?  
GIVER: We got rid of them when we embraced Sameness. (p. 14)
- (D) JONAS: Do you ever wonder what Elsewhere is like? (p. 14)

**3. The Chief Elder would most likely agree with which of the following?**

- (A) Society runs smoothly when people's lives are bland and easy.
- (B) It's important to follow your dreams.
- (C) Failure is important to success.
- (D) Freedom is worth the pain you pay for it.

**4. In Scene 4, the Giver says, “We got rid of them when we embraced Sameness.” As used in that sentence, *embraced* most closely means \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (A) clasped arms around; hugged
- (B) included; treated as part of a larger whole
- (C) enclosed; formed a wall around
- (D) received gladly; eagerly came to believe in

**5. Why does Jonas's father “Release” the baby?**

- (A) The baby had an incurable disease and was going to die soon; Jonas's father wanted to end the baby's suffering.
- (B) Jonas's father knew that Jonas was watching and wanted Jonas to know the truth about Release.
- (C) The baby weighed slightly less than his twin, so he was considered inferior.
- (D) Jonas's father did not want the baby to grow up in the horrible world of the Community.

**6. In “Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?” which of the following does the writer NOT name as a possible problem with memory-erasing drugs?**

- (A) Losing a memory means losing wisdom too.
- (B) Criminals could use the drugs for evil purposes.
- (C) When a memory is erased, other memories could accidentally be erased as well.
- (D) People might change their minds after using the drugs, but it would be too late.

## **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

**7.** At the end of the play, Lily begins to hum and Fiona begins to dance. What can you infer is the reason for this? Use two details from the play to support your answer.

**8.** How can bad memories be both harmful and helpful? Use ideas from both the play and the essay in your answer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***The Giver Quiz***

**Directions:** Read *The Giver* and “Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?” Then answer the questions below.

**1. How do the memories Jonas receives affect him?**

- (A) They cause him great suffering and he wishes he had never received them.
- (B) They make his life more meaningful by allowing him to experience deeper emotions.
- (C) They make him depressed and he stops caring what happens to himself and everyone else.
- (D) They make him wish that he lived in the past.

**2. Which of the following best supports your answer to question 1?**

- (A) JONAS: People need the memories so they can understand. Because if you can't feel, what's the point of life? (pp. 16-17)
- (B) JONAS: How can people be so cruel? (p. 16)
- (C) JONAS: What are those things?  
GIVER: We got rid of them when we embraced Sameness. (p. 14)
- (D) JONAS: Do you ever wonder what Elsewhere is like? (p. 14)

**3. The Chief Elder would most likely DISAGREE with which of the following?**

- (A) Society runs smoothly when people's lives are bland and easy.
- (B) People cannot be trusted to make good decisions about their own lives.
- (C) Failure is important to success.
- (D) Freedom leads to unhappiness.

**4. In Scene 4, the Giver says, “We got rid of them when we embraced Sameness.” As used in that sentence, *embraced* most closely means \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (A) clasped arms around; hugged
- (B) included; treated as part of a larger whole
- (C) enclosed; formed a wall around
- (D) received gladly; eagerly came to believe in

**5. In Scene 5, Mother explains that newchildren—that is, babies—do not receive names until they are placed with a Family Unit. What can you infer is the most likely reason for this?**

- (A) to allow a Family Unit to choose its baby's name
- (B) to save Birth Mothers time
- (C) to help the babies thrive
- (D) to discourage anyone from becoming attached to a baby while it is still possible that the baby will be killed

**6. Which best describes Jennifer Dignan's point of view about memory-erasing drugs?**

- (A) She is excited about their development.
- (B) She has mixed feelings; she sees the good they could do, but also has concerns about them.
- (C) She is completely against their development; she sees them as scary.
- (D) She does not believe scientists will actually be able to develop such drugs.

## **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

- 7.** *Surveillance* is a close watch kept over someone or something, especially to prevent or detect crime. What kind of surveillance is conducted in *The Giver*? What can you infer is the reason it is conducted? Include two details from the play in your response.

- 8.** Compare the memory-erasing drugs that scientists are now developing with memory-erasing in *The Giver*. For each, explain what kind of memories would be/are erased and why. Include details from both the play and the essay.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Literary Elements and Devices

Identifying the basic elements of a literary work can help you understand it better. Use this activity to help you understand *The Giver*. See *Scope's* "Glossary of Literary Terms" for definitions of the words that appear in bold.

## Section 1: Characters

1. For the characters of Jonas and the Giver, and one other character of your choice: (1) decide whether the character is **major** or **minor**; (2) briefly describe the character, including his or her appearance, personality, and background; and (3) decide whether the character is **static** or **dynamic** and explain why.

A. JONAS is a ☐ **major** ☐ **minor** (check one) character.

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

He is a ☐ **static** ☐ **dynamic** (check one) character. I think so because \_\_\_\_\_

B. THE GIVER is a ☐ **major** ☐ **minor** (check one) character.

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

He is a ☐ **static** ☐ **dynamic** (check one) character. I think so because \_\_\_\_\_

C.  is a ☐ **major** ☐ **minor** (check one) character.

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

He/She is a ☐ **static** ☐ **dynamic** (check one) character. I think so because \_\_\_\_\_

2. Consider the **characterization** of Jonas.

A. Give an example of something Jonas says. What does this line reveal about his character?

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B. Give an example of something Jonas does. What does this action reveal about his character?

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3. Who is the **protagonist** of this story? How do you know? In other words, what makes him/her the protagonist?

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4. Who is the **antagonist** of this story? How do you know?

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## Section 2: Setting

5. Where and when does the play take place? Is the setting a real or a fictional place?

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6. What are some details from the play that help you figure out when and where it takes place? Explain.

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## Section 3: Plot and Structure

7. Consider the roles of Seeing Beyond and Hearing Beyond.

A. What is the purpose of Seeing Beyond and Hearing Beyond? What kinds of information do they convey?

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B. How do Seeing Beyond and Hearing Beyond differ from the Narrators?

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## Section 4: Genre

8. The word *dystopia* comes from the Greek roots *dys-* (bad, difficult) and *-topos* (place). *The Giver* is considered a work of dystopian literature because it describes a dystopia: an imaginary place where the conditions of life are extremely bad. In the box below are some common characteristics of dystopian literature. Read them.

### Common Characteristics of Dystopian Literature

- The setting is a futuristic, imagined society.
- Freedom has been taken away.
- The past is kept secret from the general public.
- An important ceremony takes place.
- The protagonist is in a struggle against society.
- The protagonist is viewed as a rebel.
- The story contains violence.
- The public is under constant surveillance.
- People's emotions are controlled.
- People suffer from oppression (unjust or cruel use of power or authority).
- Individualism is not valued; rather, the good of the whole society is put above the good of individuals.

Choose three of the characteristics listed in the box and use them to write a paragraph supporting the following claim: ***The Giver* has several common characteristics of dystopian literature.** Use details from the play to support your ideas.

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# The Giver Contest

Imagine that Jonas has time-traveled to the present-day United States.

A memory-erasing drug has just been developed. Write a short editorial, as Jonas, explaining his opinion about this drug. Five winners will get *The Giver* by Lois Lowry.

## Entries will be judged on:

⇒ a clearly stated central idea

⇒ good organization and transitions

⇒ use of supporting evidence

⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

My home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ My grade: \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher's name : \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher's e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My parent or legal guardian consents  
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Include this sheet with your written entry and send both to: [scopemag@scholastic.com](mailto:scopemag@scholastic.com)  
Or mail to: Giver Contest, c/o Scope, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY November 15, 2014!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# What's the Tone?

Tone is the author's attitude toward the subject he or she is writing about, or toward the reader.  
Words that could describe tone include *doubtful*, *humorous*, *gleeful*, *serious*, and *questioning*.  
Tone is conveyed through the author's word choices and the details that he or she includes.

**Directions:** Read "Why I Keep My Letters" on page 21. Then answer the questions below to explore the tone of the essay.

## "Why I Keep My Letters" by Nina Sankovitch

1. In the box below, list words and phrases that Sankovitch uses to describe letters from her sister.  
We've listed one for you.

words and phrases the author uses to describe letters from her sister
"allow me to hold in my hand the substance of who she was"

2. In this box, list other words or phrases about letters included in the essay.

other words and phrases about letters

3. Based on your lists, how would you describe the author's attitude toward letters?

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4. Consider the following quote from the article:

**"Yes, I am getting texts from my son Peter off at college, short bursts of information: 'taking Swedish,' and the treasured 'love u.' But these 10-character messages are not enough to salve how much I miss him."**

What attitude toward modern communication does this quote reveal? Explain your answer.

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5. Circle TWO words in the following list that best describe the tone of "Why I Keep My Letters."

<b>delightful</b>	<b>optimistic</b>	<b>nostalgic</b>	<b>proud</b>	<b>hopeful</b>
<b>excited</b>	<b>regretful</b>	<b>concerned</b>	<b>upset</b>	<b>comforting</b>

Explain your choices. What words or details did the author use to create that tone?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Central Ideas and Details

A central idea of a story is one of the main points the author is making.  
(Sometimes "central idea" is called "main idea.")  
A central idea can always be supported with details from the text.

**Directions:** Follow the prompts below to explore the central ideas and supporting details in "Is It Time for Cursive to Die?"

1. Below is a central idea of "Is It Time for Cursive to Die?" Find three details that support it.

## Central idea:

**Writing in cursive was once a very important part of our society.**

Detail 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Detail 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Detail 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Look at the details below from the section "Who Needs It?" In your words, write the central idea that these details support.

## Central idea of "Who Needs It?"

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Detail 1:** "Today, we Skype, e-mail, and text instead of writing letters."

**Detail 2:** "Reading nonfiction? Vital. Writing in cursive? Eh—maybe not."

**Detail 3:** "After all, isn't it more useful to know how to code apps and websites than to write *app* and *website* without lifting your pen?"

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Synthesizing

**Directions:** Complete the chart below to synthesize information from "Is It Time for Cursive to Die?" and "Why I Keep My Letters."

	Cursive and other handwriting	Letter writing
Why it's disappearing		
Reasons to preserve it		
Reasons not to preserve it		

Based on her essay, what would Nina Sankovitch likely say about whether handwriting is still important? Support your answer with text evidence. (Write your answer on the back or on a separate sheet of paper.)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Close-Reading Questions

## "Is It Time for Cursive to Die?"

1. What is the purpose of the first paragraph under the subheading “A Sign of Growing Up”? How does this paragraph help develop the idea that cursive is a “link to the past”? (author’s craft)
2. Reread the caption at the bottom of page 20. What does *integrity* mean? What context clues help you understand its meaning? (word choice)
3. How is the section “Left Behind” structured? Why might the author have structured it this way? (author’s craft)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Close-Reading Questions

## "Why I Keep My Letters"

---

1. The second paragraph begins with "But." What does this word tell you about the relationship between the information in the first and second paragraphs? (structure)
2. How can a letter represent "the substance" of a person? (inference)
3. The author writes that texts aren't enough to "salve" how much she misses her son. What does she mean? (inference)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Critical-Thinking Questions

## **"Is It Time for Cursive to Die?" and "Why I Keep My Letters"**

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1. What is the difference between handwritten letters and digital forms of communication, such as Snapchat, texts, and tweets?
2. Today, we learn a lot about the past through letters. How will future generations learn about us? Will they have the same insights into our way of life as we have into our ancestors' way of life?
3. Should cursive be taught in school?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary:

## "Is It Time for Cursive to Die?" and "Why I Keep My Letters"

**Directions:** Read the following definitions and example sentences. Then add one more word from the article.

**1. balm (bahlm)** *noun*; 1. an ointment used to heal; 2. something that gives comfort or support

*example 1:* Her homemade balm, made out of herbs and oils, helped the wound heal faster.

*example 2:* Angie says that classical music is a balm to her soul. She listens to it whenever she is feeling stressed out or sad.

**2. efficient (uh-FISH-uhnt)** *adjective*; able to produce the desired results without waste

*example:* Our new air conditioner is so efficient. It uses far less electricity than our old one.

**3. elective (ih-LEK-tiv)** *adjective*; open to choice; optional; not required

*example:* I'm so excited about the elective courses at school this year—yearbook, newspaper, choir, gardening—how will I pick just one?

**4. eulogy (YOO-luh-jee)** *noun*; a speech that praises someone who has died

*example:* James gave a moving eulogy at his grandfather's funeral.

**5. quill (kwil)** *noun*; 1. a large, stiff feather from a bird's wing or tail; 2. one of the hollow, stiff spikes of a porcupine or hedgehog; 3. a pen made from a feather

*example 1:* Keith found a goose quill lying in the grass at the park.

*example 2:* We had to rush poor Scruffy to the vet last night. He got too close to a porcupine and ended up with quills stuck all over his head and chest.

*example 3:* Quills were popular until the mid-1800s, when people started using metal pens.

**6. relic (REL-ik)** *noun*; something (usually important) that has survived from the past

*example:* Our local museum has a fascinating collection of relics, including Roman coins and Greek vases.

**7. vividly (VIV-id-lee)** *adverb*; in a manner that is strong, bright, clear, or detailed

*example:* I usually can't remember my dreams, but I vividly recall the one I had last night.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

• *example:* \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary Practice:

## "Is It Time for Cursive to Die?" and "Why I Keep My Letters"

**Directions:** For each pair of words below, write S if the words are synonyms (have a similar or the same meaning) or A if the words are antonyms (have opposite meanings).

- |              |          |       |
|--------------|----------|-------|
| 1. vividly   | dully    | _____ |
| 2. relic     | artifact | _____ |
| 3. elective  | required | _____ |
| 4. eulogy    | tribute  | _____ |
| 5. efficient | lazy     | _____ |
| 6. balm      | comfort  | _____ |

**Directions:** In each row of words, place an X on the word that does not belong.

- |     |           |           |          |             |
|-----|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| 7.  | plume     | brush     | feather  | quill       |
| 8.  | unskilled | efficient | idle     | incompetent |
| 9.  | balm      | solace    | pain     | relief      |
| 10. | mandatory | voluntary | elective | optional    |

**Directions:** Write a sentence that includes **two** of the words from the list on page 1 of this activity.

11. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paired Texts Quiz

**Directions:** Read “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?” and “Why I Keep My Letters.” Then answer the questions below.

- Author Lauren Tarshis supports the idea that cursive is a link to the past in all of the following ways EXCEPT
  - by providing examples of historic documents that were written in cursive.
  - by informing the reader that 41 states no longer require students to learn cursive.
  - by explaining that cursive has been taught in America since the 18th century.
  - by naming examples of personal documents, like old love letters, that were written in cursive.
- Which of the following statements best describes a central idea of “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?”
  - Learning to write in cursive is easy.
  - Cursive is not part of our lives the way it used to be.
  - Cursive writing is more efficient than typing.
  - The ability to write in cursive is a rare skill.
- Which line from the text best supports your answer to question 2?
  - “It’s easy to see why this form of handwriting became so popular.”
  - “It’s less messy, too, or at least it used to be.”
  - “It is more efficient than printing because you don’t have to lift your pen off the page as often.”
  - “In fact, the ability to write in cursive may soon be the equivalent of playing a musical instrument: an elective art form rather than a required skill.”
- Which word is closest in meaning to *substance* as it is used in the following line?  
 “But it is the written words that she left me, postcards and birthday cards and letters exchanged over the 40-plus years of being her sister; that allow me to hold in my hand the substance of who she was.” (p. 21)
  - physical material
  - material possessions
  - essence
  - memory
- Sankovitch most likely refers to texts as “10-character messages” to
  - inform the reader how long the average text message is.
  - express her opinion that texts should always be short.
  - point out how hard texts are to read.
  - reinforce the idea that texts are not as deep and meaningful as letters.
- With which of the following statements would the authors of both essays most likely agree?
  - Cursive writing should no longer be taught in schools.
  - Writing by hand improves thinking skills.
  - Letters can preserve our life histories.
  - Sending text messages is better than writing letters.

## Constructed-Response Questions

**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

- In the personal essay, Sankovitch writes that the cards that her sister sent “still speak” to her. What does she mean? How can a letter “speak”?
- Lauren Tarshis asks, “As handwriting disappears, will we lose our connection to the past?” Answer this question using details from “Is It Time for Cursive to Die” and “Why I Keep My Letters.”

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paired Texts Quiz

**Directions:** Read “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?” and “Why I Keep My Letters.” Then answer the questions below.

**1. Which of the following details should be included in a summary of “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?”**

- (A) Cursive looks beautiful on the page.
- (B) Learning to write in cursive used to be part of growing up.
- (C) The Declaration of Independence is a famous document.
- (D) People once believed that having good handwriting was a sign of high morals.

**2. Which of the following statements best describes a central idea of “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?”**

- (A) Learning to write in cursive is easy.
- (B) Cursive is not part of our lives the way it was in the past.
- (C) Cursive writing is more efficient than typing.
- (D) Cursive is used more than printing.

**3. Which line from the text best supports your answer to question 2?**

- (A) “It’s easy to see why this form of handwriting became so popular.”
- (B) “It’s less messy, too, or at least it used to be.”
- (C) “It is more efficient than printing because you don’t have to lift your pen off the page as often.”
- (D) “In fact, the ability to write in cursive may soon be the equivalent of playing a musical instrument: an elective art form rather than a required skill.”

**4. “Why I Keep My Letters” suggests all of the following ideas EXCEPT**

- (A) letters keep us connected to people who have passed away.
- (B) postcards are more meaningful than letters.
- (C) letter writing is still relevant.
- (D) letters are a meaningful way to stay in touch with loved ones.

**5. Sankovitch most likely refers to texts as “10-character messages” to**

- (A) inform the reader how long the average text is.
- (B) express her opinion that texts should always be short.
- (C) point out how hard texts are to read.
- (D) reinforce the idea that texts are not as deep and meaningful as letters.

**6. With which of the following statements would the authors of both essays most likely agree?**

- (A) Cursive should no longer be taught in schools.
- (B) Writing by hand improves thinking skills.
- (C) Letters can preserve our life histories.
- (D) Texting is better than letter writing.

## Constructed-Response Questions

**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

**7.** In the personal essay, Sankovitch writes that the cards her sister sent “still speak” to her. What does she mean?

**8.** In her essay, author Lauren Tarshis poses this question: “As handwriting disappears, will we lose our connection to the past?” Respond to this question, using details from “Is It Time for Cursive to Die?”

# Letter Contest

Some say the letter writing and cursive writing are lost arts. Do these lost arts have value in today's society? Should they be preserved? Support your ideas with details from each text. Five winners will each get *A Corner of White* by Jaclyn Moriarty.

## Entries will be judged on:

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ⇒ a clearly stated central idea | ⇒ good organization and transitions  |
| ⇒ use of supporting evidence    | ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation |

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

My home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ My grade: \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher's name : \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher's e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My parent or legal guardian consents  
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Include this sheet with your written entry and send both to: [scopemag@scholastic.com](mailto:scopemag@scholastic.com)  
Or mail to: Letter Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY November 15, 2014!**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Exploring Text Structures

"Text structure" is the term for how an author organizes information. Authors use different text structures to achieve different purposes, and there might be several types of text structures in a piece of writing.

**Directions:** Common text structures are listed in the boxes on the right. Use the information in these boxes to help you answer the questions below about the text structures in "Do Sports Fans Go Too Far?"

1. What is the main purpose of the article?

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Throughout the article, what does the author compare and contrast?

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2. The author uses several types of text structures in his essay. What is an example of the author using description to communicate a point?

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3. Reread the first paragraph of "Matter of Life and Death." Which text structure does the author use? Explain your answer using examples.

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## **Description or List**

includes details to help you picture or get to know a person, a place, a thing, or an idea.

## **Cause and Effect**

explains *why* something happened (cause) and *what* happened as a result (effect).

## **Problem and Solution**

presents a problem and explains how it is solved.

## **Compare and Contrast**

presents the similarities and/or differences between two items, such as a pair of events, time periods, ideas, or places.

## **Sequence of Events**

describes events in the order in which they happen. This is also called chronological order.

4. In the section "Matter of Life and Death," reread the two paragraphs that begin "Some psychologists believe . . ." Identify the text structure used in these paragraphs.

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Why do you think the author uses this text structure?

---

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---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Write an Argument Essay

**Directions:** Read "Do Sports Fans Go Too Far?" Fill in the chart on page 12. Then follow the steps below to write an essay explaining your opinion on whether or not fans take sports too seriously.

## STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Do fans take sports too seriously? Consider what you read in the article, as well as your own viewpoints. **Check the box next to the point of view you will support in your essay. Or write your own opinion in the space provided.**

☐ Yes! It's just a game.

☐ No! It's so much more than a game.

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 2: FIND YOUR SUPPORT

Which of the items that you wrote in the "Yes" and "No" columns on page 12 support your opinion? What are other points that support your opinion? List three to five supporting items here:

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## STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think fans take sports too seriously, summarize the strongest arguments of those who disagree with you. Alternatively, if you think sports fans are justified, summarize the main reasons that some people think sports fans go too far.

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### STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR THESIS (CENTRAL CLAIM)

The thesis is where you tell readers what your essay is going to be about. The thesis should be a clear, strong statement of the opinion you stated in Step 1. The rest of your essay should support your thesis.

**Your thesis:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 5: WRITE YOUR HOOK

The very beginning of your essay is called the hook because it "hooks" your readers' attention. The hook should relate to the topic of your essay, but it can take many forms. It can be an anecdote (a very short story), a fact, a quote, or a rhetorical question (a question to which you don't expect an answer). **Choose one of the ideas below, or use your own idea, and write a hook on the lines provided (1-3 sentences).**

1. **ANECDOTE:** Describe a personal experience you had as a sports fan. Was it positive or negative?
2. **SURPRISING FACT:** Find a fact that will raise your readers' eyebrows. Several surprising facts are included in the article. You can also do some research to find one that is not included in the article.
3. **RHETORICAL QUESTION:** Ask your readers a question that reflects your point of view about sports fans. One way you could structure your question is like this: "Do sports fans *really* have to \_\_\_\_\_?"

**Your hook:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 6: SUMMARIZE THE ISSUE

Let readers know a little about the issue you will be writing about. This is not your point of view; it's a very brief summary of the issue—in this case, that some people think sports are taken too seriously.

**Your summary of the issue:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 7: START WRITING

Now that you have the key ingredients for your essay, you are ready to start writing. On the next page, you'll find guidelines for how to organize your ingredients, as well as hints about what else you'll need to add.

**Directions:** Follow the guidelines below to write a strong essay on whether or not fans take sports too seriously. You will use what you wrote on the first two pages of this activity.

## INTRODUCTION

Open with your hook from Step 5.



Write a transition sentence that relates your hook to the question of whether fans take sports too seriously. (See *Scope's* handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)



Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.



Finish with your thesis from Step 4.

## BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

Here's where you write your supporting points from Step 2. For each one, write 1-3 sentences that provide additional details. You can put your supporting points and detail sentences together in one paragraph, or you can break them into several paragraphs.

It depends on how much you want to write about each point. Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers tend to remember best the details that are presented last.

## ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument. Use what you wrote in Step 3. Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.

## CONCLUSION

Use 2-3 sentences to remind your readers of your main points.



Finish with a strong final sentence. Looking for an idea? Try referring to your hook, finding a quote, or inspiring your readers.

## READ AND REVISE

Use *Scope's* "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written. Make any necessary changes and write a second draft.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary:

## "Do Sports Fans Go Too Far?"

**Directions:** Read the following definitions and example sentences. Then add one more word from the article.

**1. delirious (dih-LEER-ee-us)** *adjective*; 1. not able to think or speak clearly, especially because of fever or other illness; 2. wildly excited

- **example 1:** As the child's fever went up, he became delirious and didn't know where he was.
- **example 2:** The team was delirious with joy after defeating the Cougars in the championship.

**2. evoke (e-VOHK)** *verb*; to call up, produce, summon (memories, feelings, etc.)

- **example:** These old photos evoke many happy memories.

**3. foster (FAHS-ter)** *verb*; 1. to promote the growth or development of; 2. to look after a child who is not your own without becoming the legal parent

- **example 1:** Working in the school garden fosters cooperation and responsibility.
- **example 2:** The boy Ellie's parents were fostering has gone back to live with his family.

**4. incense** 1. **(in-SENS)** *verb*; to cause extreme anger; 2. **(IN-sens)** *noun*; a substance that is burned to produce a fragrant odor

- **example 1:** Justin Bieber's failure to show up at his own concert incensed the crowd.
- **example 2:** My mother always burns incense after we clean the house to get rid of the smell of the cleaning products.

**5. injustice (in-JUS-tis)** *noun*; a violation of rights; unfairness

- **example:** "We must stop this injustice!" cried Sheila. "This man is being punished for a crime he did not commit!"

**6. linger (LING-gur)** *verb*; to stay or wait around beyond the usual or expected time

- **example:** A few students lingered in the classroom after the test to ask the teacher questions.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_  
• **example:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary Practice:

## "Do Sports Fans Go Too Far?"

**Directions:** Fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. An antonym for **foster** is \_\_\_\_\_.

- Ⓐ further
- Ⓑ block
- Ⓒ pretend
- Ⓓ promote

2. Which one of the following would most likely be described as an **injustice**?

- Ⓐ judging someone based on something their older sibling did
- Ⓑ failing a test
- Ⓒ winning a race
- Ⓓ lying to your friends

3. Which of the following would be most likely to **incense** a sports fan?

- Ⓐ the smell of the hot dogs being sold in the stadium
- Ⓑ a bad call made by the referee
- Ⓒ a winning goal in a soccer game
- Ⓓ a very exciting half-time show

4. A synonym of **linger** is \_\_\_\_\_.

- Ⓐ bolt
- Ⓑ hurry
- Ⓒ rush
- Ⓓ remain

**Directions:** Complete each unfinished sentence in a way that makes the meaning of the boldfaced word clear. Then write your own sentence using any of the words listed on the first page of this activity.

5. After spending days walking in the desert with no water, the man became **delirious**. He \_\_\_\_\_.

6. My older sister's graduation from high school **evoked** \_\_\_\_\_.

7. It **incensed** my father to learn that \_\_\_\_\_.

8. We were told not to **linger** in the hallway because \_\_\_\_\_.

9. \_\_\_\_\_.

SKILL: Essay Writing

# Great Transitions

Transitions are like bridges between your ideas—they help your readers move from one idea to the next. Here are some transition words and phrases you may wish to use in your essay. Keep in mind that they can be used at the beginning of a sentence or within a sentence.

## If you are adding information or showing similarity between ideas:

- additionally
- besides
- so too
- first of all/secondly/thirdly
- in addition
- also
- likewise
- to begin with
- as well as
- another
- furthermore
- finally

## If you are showing that one idea is different from another:

- however
- even though
- in contrast
- on the one hand/on the other hand
- yet
- despite
- still
- some people say/other people say
- but
- although
- in spite of
- regardless

## If you are showing that something is an example of what you just stated:

- for example
- to illustrate
- this can be seen
- for instance
- namely
- specifically

## If you want to show cause and effect:

- as a result
- consequently
- so
- it follows that
- therefore
- eventually

## If you want to add emphasis:

- in fact
- of course
- truly
- even
- indeed



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Parentheses Practice

Parentheses set off information that isn't critical but is still worth mentioning. You can think of the words inside parentheses as comments, clarifications, or afterthoughts. Here are a few rules (and some tips) to help you use parentheses correctly.

- 1. Parentheses always appear in pairs (one before the start of the comment and one after the end).**

*Example:* The fund-raising committee hopes to raise a lot of money (more than \$1,000) at the event.

- 2. Whatever is inside the parentheses is disposable. That is, the sentence should still make sense without it.**

*Example:* Mrs. Feldman (my friend's mom) took us to the amusement park.

*Now read that sentence without the text in the parentheses. The sentence still makes sense.*

- 3. Numbers (such as dates, page numbers, and prices) are often put inside parentheses.**

*Example:* The package arrived last Wednesday (April 16).

- 4. Parenthetical material can interrupt a sentence, or it can be written as a separate sentence. If parenthetical material interrupts a sentence, do not use a capital letter or period to punctuate it.**

*Example:* Kendra wants to go to Washington (the state, not the city) for vacation.

*Example:* I hope you like my gift (not that you will tell me if you don't).

**If the parenthetical material is written as a separate sentence, punctuate it inside the parentheses as a separate sentence.**

*Example:* I'm going to my fifth Taylor Swift concert on Saturday. (She's such a great performer!)

---

**Directions:** In each group of sentences, place a check ( ✓ ) next to the one in which parentheses are used and punctuated correctly.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> The movie set a box office record on its opening weekend. (Almost \$300 million)!</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grossing (almost \$300 million), the movie set a box office record.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The movie set a box office record (almost \$300 million) on its opening weekend.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The movie set a box office record on its opening weekend (almost \$300 million.)</p> | <p>3. <input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan was the all-time best basketball player. (But could Jordan pass like Lebron James?)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan was the all-time best basketball player (But could Jordan pass like Lebron James?).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan, was the all-time best basketball player (but could Jordan pass like Lebron James?)</p> |
| <p>2. <input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town in Alaska with a population (of 1,200).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town in Alaska (population 1,200.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town in Alaska (population 1,200).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town (Population 1,200) in Alaska.</p>   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan was the all-time best basketball player. (but could Jordan pass like Lebron James?)</p>  |

4. \_\_\_ Dr. Seuss—his real name was Theodor Geisel) added the "Dr." to his name because his father wanted him to become a medical doctor, not a writer.  
  
\_\_\_ Dr. Seuss (his real name was Theodor Geisel) added the "Dr." to his name because his father wanted him to become a medical doctor, not a writer.  
  
\_\_\_ Dr. Seuss (his real name was Theodor Geisel), added the "Dr." to his name because his father wanted him to become a medical doctor, not a writer.  
  
\_\_\_ Dr. Seuss added the "Dr." to his name because his father wanted him to become a medical doctor, not a writer (his real name was Theodor Geisel.)
5. \_\_\_ One of the birds escaped this morning from its cage. (Penny, not Twitter).  
  
\_\_\_ One of the birds Penny, not Twitter escaped this morning (from its cage).  
  
\_\_\_ One of the birds (Penny, not Twitter) escaped this morning from its cage.  
  
\_\_\_ Penny, not Twitter (one of the birds,) escaped this morning from its cage.
6. \_\_\_ Mrs. Martin couldn't believe how much her daughter spent on one tank top (\$55.)  
  
\_\_\_ Mrs. Martin couldn't believe how much her daughter spent on one tank top. (\$55)  
  
\_\_\_ Mrs. Martin couldn't believe how much her daughter spent on one tank top (\$55).  
  
\_\_\_ Mrs. Martin couldn't believe how much her daughter spent on one tank top. (it was \$55!)

---

**Directions:** Now write your own sentence that includes a set of parentheses.

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Unnecessary Commas

Consider the following sentence: *Laura is tall.*

You probably wouldn't think about placing a comma between *Laura* and *is*. And that is good—there should not be a comma there! *Laura* is the subject and *is* is the verb, and **a comma should never be placed between a subject and its verb.**

But when the subject of a sentence is long, it can be easy to get confused and place a comma where it doesn't belong. For example:

**Incorrect:** *The yellow shirt with the blue stripes that I bought last summer, has faded a lot.*

"The yellow shirt with the blue stripes that I bought last summer" is all part of the subject of this sentence and "has faded" is the verb. So there should NOT be a comma between *summer* and *has*.

**Incorrect:** *Anyone who arrives before the store opens, will have to wait outside, regardless of the weather.*  
Here, "Anyone who arrives before the store opens" is the subject and "will have to wait" is the verb. The comma after *opens* has got to go!

---

**Directions:** Read each pair of sentences. Place a ✓ in front of the one in which the commas are used correctly.

1. a. \_\_\_\_ Alisa is going to meet us at the restaurant.  
b. \_\_\_\_ Alisa, is going to meet us at the restaurant.
2. a. \_\_\_\_ Your story about the hairy, poisonous spiders gave me nightmares!  
b. \_\_\_\_ Your story about the hairy, poisonous spiders, gave me nightmares!
3. a. \_\_\_\_ The shop on Maple Street that you wanted to visit is closed today, but it's open tomorrow.  
b. \_\_\_\_ The shop on Maple Street that you wanted to visit, is closed today, but it's open tomorrow.
4. a. \_\_\_\_ All of Jared's friends from his old neighborhood, will be at the party.  
b. \_\_\_\_ All of Jared's friends from his old neighborhood will be at the party.
5. a. \_\_\_\_ According to Marc, the best time to go running is in the morning.  
b. \_\_\_\_ According to Marc, the best time to go running, is in the morning.

---

**Directions:** Cross out the commas that do not belong in the sentences below.

6. Zachary, put up his tent, climbed inside, and went to sleep.
7. My sister Sarah, stayed home with the flu four days last week, so she has a lot of catching up to do at school.
8. The movie that you're talking about, sounds familiar, but I'm not sure whether I saw it.
9. The best event at camp last summer, was the color war, followed by the boat building competition.
10. Everyone who was there, witnessed something very strange, but they are all afraid to talk about it.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Correct Capitalization

Capital letters are used to mark the beginnings of sentences, to distinguish proper nouns from common nouns, and to indicate other words that deserve special attention. Here are some rules to help you use capitals correctly:

**1. Capitalize the first word in every sentence.**

*Example:* Last weekend, we went to see an exhibit about frogs. Did you know that one tiny poison dart frog can contain enough poison to kill 10 adult humans?

**2. Capitalize the first word of a direct quotation.**

*Example 1:* Stacy asked, "When are we leaving for vacation?"

*Example 2:* Ethan said, "You know I don't like mushrooms,"

**3. Capitalize proper nouns. A proper noun names a *specific* person, place, thing, or idea.**

*Example 1:* I would love to travel to New Zealand, Hawaii, and Australia.

*Example 2:* Anne Frunk is someone you will read about when you study World War II.

*Example 3:* Jason went to the shoe store at the mall to buy Nike sneakers.

**4. Capitalize words that show family relationships IF you are using them as proper nouns—that is, as names.**

*Example 1:* I sent a birthday card to Aunt Kathy. She is my favorite aunt.

*Example 2:* "Please ask Dad to call me after he drops you off," said my mom.

*Example 3:* My grandmother just celebrated her 90th birthday. Go, Grandma!

---

**Directions:** Correct the capitalization in the sentences below. Draw three lines under any letters that should be capitalized, and draw a slash through any letters that should be lowercase. We did the first one for you.

1. my friend gary is an outstanding ~~/~~athlete who plays for the Indianapolis colts.
2. watching the rose parade on TV is a new year's day tradition for the Rossum family.
3. "i already have plans for halloween," said sam.
4. "Grandma and grandpa are coming over for dinner tonight," said dad.
5. sophie would love to explore every Mountain Range.
6. There are two special events I love to watch: the world series and the olympics.
7. Kennie o'Hara was not thrilled to be attending his new School in chester, Pennsylvania.
8. Selena's Mom is a doctor. she works at the big Hospital downtown.
9. several of my friends bought new adidas shoes at the Sporting Goods Store in the Mall.
10. I live on cherry street with my family and my dog, ranger.
11. parades require many hours of preparation.
12. Gabe is looking forward to his Ski trip to park City, utah.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Parentheses Practice

Parentheses set off information that isn't critical but is still worth mentioning. You can think of the words inside parentheses as comments, clarifications, or afterthoughts. Here are a few rules (and some tips) to help you use parentheses correctly.

- 1. Parentheses always appear in pairs (one before the start of the comment and one after the end).**

*Example:* The fund-raising committee hopes to raise a lot of money (more than \$1,000) at the event.

- 2. Whatever is inside the parentheses is disposable. That is, the sentence should still make sense without it.**

*Example:* Mrs. Feldman (my friend's mom) took us to the amusement park.

*Now read that sentence without the text in the parentheses. The sentence still makes sense.*

- 3. Numbers (such as dates, page numbers, and prices) are often put inside parentheses.**

*Example:* The package arrived last Wednesday (April 16).

- 4. Parenthetical material can interrupt a sentence, or it can be written as a separate sentence. If parenthetical material interrupts a sentence, do not use a capital letter or period to punctuate it.**

*Example:* Kendra wants to go to Washington (the state, not the city) for vacation.

*Example:* I hope you like my gift (not that you will tell me if you don't).

**If the parenthetical material is written as a separate sentence, punctuate it inside the parentheses as a separate sentence.**

*Example:* I'm going to my fifth Taylor Swift concert on Saturday. (She's such a great performer!)

---

**Directions:** In each group of sentences, place a check ( ✓ ) next to the one in which parentheses are used and punctuated correctly.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <input type="checkbox"/> The movie set a box office record on its opening weekend. (Almost \$300 million)!<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grossing (almost \$300 million), the movie set a box office record.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> The movie set a box office record (almost \$300 million) on its opening weekend.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> The movie set a box office record on its opening weekend (almost \$300 million.) </li> <li> <input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town in Alaska with a population (of 1,200).<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town in Alaska (population 1,200.)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town in Alaska (population 1,200).<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eliza moved to a small town (Population 1,200) in Alaska. </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan was the all-time best basketball player. (But could Jordan pass like Lebron James?)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan was the all-time best basketball player (But could Jordan pass like Lebron James?).<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan, was the all-time best basketball player (but could Jordan pass like Lebron James?)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> My dad says that Michael Jordan was the all-time best basketball player. (but could Jordan pass like Lebron James?) </li> </ol> |
|--|--|

4. \_\_\_ Dr. Seuss—his real name was Theodor Geisel) added the "Dr." to his name because his father wanted him to become a medical doctor, not a writer.  
  
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---

**Directions:** Now write your own sentence that includes a set of parentheses.

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Unnecessary Commas

Consider the following sentence: *Laura is tall.*

You probably wouldn't think about placing a comma between *Laura* and *is*. And that is good—there should not be a comma there! *Laura* is the subject and *is* is the verb, and **a comma should never be placed between a subject and its verb.**

But when the subject of a sentence is long, it can be easy to get confused and place a comma where it doesn't belong. For example:

**Incorrect:** *The yellow shirt with the blue stripes that I bought last summer, has faded a lot.*

"The yellow shirt with the blue stripes that I bought last summer" is all part of the subject of this sentence and "has faded" is the verb. So there should NOT be a comma between *summer* and *has*.

**Incorrect:** *Anyone who arrives before the store opens, will have to wait outside, regardless of the weather.*  
Here, "Anyone who arrives before the store opens" is the subject and "will have to wait" is the verb. The comma after *opens* has got to go!

---

**Directions:** Read each pair of sentences. Place a ✓ in front of the one in which the commas are used correctly.

1. a. \_\_\_\_ Alisa is going to meet us at the restaurant.  
b. \_\_\_\_ Alisa, is going to meet us at the restaurant.
2. a. \_\_\_\_ Your story about the hairy, poisonous spiders gave me nightmares!  
b. \_\_\_\_ Your story about the hairy, poisonous spiders, gave me nightmares!
3. a. \_\_\_\_ The shop on Maple Street that you wanted to visit is closed today, but it's open tomorrow.  
b. \_\_\_\_ The shop on Maple Street that you wanted to visit, is closed today, but it's open tomorrow.
4. a. \_\_\_\_ All of Jared's friends from his old neighborhood, will be at the party.  
b. \_\_\_\_ All of Jared's friends from his old neighborhood will be at the party.
5. a. \_\_\_\_ According to Marc, the best time to go running is in the morning.  
b. \_\_\_\_ According to Marc, the best time to go running, is in the morning.

---

**Directions:** Cross out the commas that do not belong in the sentences below.

6. Zachary, put up his tent, climbed inside, and went to sleep.
7. My sister Sarah, stayed home with the flu four days last week, so she has a lot of catching up to do at school.
8. The movie that you're talking about, sounds familiar, but I'm not sure whether I saw it.
9. The best event at camp last summer, was the color war, followed by the boat building competition.
10. Everyone who was there, witnessed something very strange, but they are all afraid to talk about it.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Master Your Modifiers

A *modifier* is a word or group of words that modifies, or describes, another word or group of words in a sentence. A modifier should always appear next to the word or words it modifies. If you misplace a modifier, it can completely change the intended meaning of the sentence. For example:

**Incorrect:** Covered in butter and jelly, Eva took a bite of her bagel.

*The modifier "covered in butter and jelly" is placed so that it modifies Eva. But was Eva covered in butter and jelly? Of course not! The bagel was.*

**Correct Option 1:** Eva took a bite of her bagel, which was covered in butter and jelly.

**Correct Option 2:** Eva took a bite of her butter-and-jelly-covered bagel.

---

**Directions:** Underline the misplaced modifier in each sentence. Then rewrite the sentence so that it is correct. You may need to add words or commas to some sentences. We helped with the first few sentences.

1. Sarah told me about her vacation in algebra class.

Correct: In algebra class, Sarah told me about her vacation.

2. Having spent all his money at the pizza place, Frankie's wallet was empty.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

3. We saw a movie about alien monkeys at the mall.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

4. The tap dancers rehearsed with the top hats on their heads they got yesterday.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Marissa reached eagerly for the cupcake, a fan of anything chocolate.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

6. I read that a famous Dutch painting was stolen in the newspaper.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Stained with spaghetti sauce, Ray put his white shirt in the laundry basket.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Topped with 12 blazing candles, Mr. Kaplan carried Rachel's birthday cake into the dining room.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Which Word Works?

Yes, the thesaurus is your friend. It can help you find all sorts of interesting words to spice up your writing. But be careful when you use it. Words that are listed as synonyms often have different shades of meaning. This exercise will help you choose words that make sense in context. For example:

**Consider this sentence:** *We always avoided the old, creepy house on Elm Street.*

Here are some synonyms our thesaurus gave us for *old*: aged, ancient, decrepit, elderly, tired, senior  
Do they all work with the sentence? Well, some do and some don't.

**Successful:** *We always avoided the decrepit, creepy house on Elm Street.* (That sounds good, right?)

**Unsuccessful:** *We always avoided the elderly, creepy house on Elm Street.* (Huh? The house is a senior citizen?)

---

**Directions:** Read the following paragraph and circle eight words that don't work in context. Write each word in a space below and then find a synonym that makes more sense. We've done the first one for you.

If you're looking for thrills, you may want to roam to the Wild West Theme Park in Texas. There you will find The Outlaw, a brisk roller coaster that takes you on a rollicking journey through an old-fashioned frontier town. Adhere yourself in and hold on rigidly as you accelerate to 100 miles per hour in 5 seconds. You'll inaugurate 100 feet into the air before flying through mind-boggling twists and turns. Watch out for the sheriff; he intellectualizes you robbed the bank and he wants justice. This is your likelihood to feel like a real outlaw of the Wild West! The ride is so fun, it's worth waiting in the extensive line.

	Word from above	More appropriate word
1.	roam	travel
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Directions:** Underline the misplaced modifier in each sentence. Then rewrite the sentence so that it is correct. You may need to add words or commas to some sentences. We helped with the first few sentences.

1. Sarah told me about her vacation in algebra class.

Correct: In algebra class, Sarah told me about her vacation.

2. Having spent all his money at the pizza place, Frankie's wallet was empty.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

3. We saw a movie about alien monkeys at the mall.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

4. The tap dancers rehearsed with the top hats on their heads they got yesterday.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Marissa reached eagerly for the cupcake, a fan of anything chocolate.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

6. I read that a famous Dutch painting was stolen in the newspaper.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Stained with spaghetti sauce, Ray put his white shirt in the laundry basket.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Topped with 12 blazing candles, Mr. Kaplan carried Rachel's birthday cake into the dining room.

Correct: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# You Write It

## Turning an Infographic Into a Paragraph

**Directions:** Read the infographic about packing for Mars. Then follow the steps below to turn the infographic into a persuasive blurb for a website.

- 1 As the directions at the bottom of page 24 tell you, your job is to write a blurb for your website convincing people to sign up for a trip to Mars. The blurb should explain how fun and safe the trip will be. Based on those directions, write a sentence that states the main idea of your blurb.

### MAIN IDEA

- 2 Use the information provided in the infographic to make a list of concerns potential clients of your travel agency might have about going to Mars. We wrote one for you.

### CONCERNS PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE ABOUT GOING TO MARS

Mars is extremely cold. The average temperature is -81 degrees Fahrenheit.

- 3 Use the information provided in the infographic to make a list of great things about visiting Mars. Then add at least one idea of your own about why it would be cool to go to Mars.

### GREAT THINGS ABOUT GOING TO MARS

- 4** Decide what your travel agency will provide for the trip. Will you provide some of the items on *Scope's* packing list? All of them? Anything else? List the things you will provide clients with in the box.

**ITEMS PROVIDED**

- 5** Choose a name for your travel agency and write it in the box.

**NAME OF YOUR AGENCY**

- 6** It's time to start crafting your blurb. **Use a separate piece of paper and follow these guidelines:**
- Beginning:**

- Your first sentence should be a hook—that is, it should grab the reader's attention and immediately interest him or her in signing up for the trip.
- Mention the name of your travel agency.
- Write a sentence that expresses your main idea. Keep your tone enthusiastic and conversational—remember, you are trying to convince people to sign up!

**Middle:**

- Provide some details about the trip. Mention some of the supplies that your company will provide.
- Address some of the concerns potential clients might have—reassure them that there is nothing to worry about.
- Write with a confident, enthusiastic tone.
- Use transition words to make your sentences flow smoothly from one to the next.
- Vary the lengths and structure of your sentences to keep your writing lively.
- Make sure the information you are providing supports your main idea.

**End:**

- Conclude your paragraph with a strong sentence that will give your reader something to think about.

Once you finish a draft of your paragraph, read it over carefully. Is there anything you could express more clearly or in a more interesting way? Write a second draft, then proofread it, checking for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

# "You Write It" Model Text

The title clearly states what the article is about. It also includes the central idea.

## Why Pigs Make Great Pets

The first sentence hooks the reader's attention. This is where you can have some fun. Be creative. Think about what type of hook would make you keep reading.

The second sentence is the thesis statement. It states the reasons pigs make great pets. The rest of the paragraph provides supporting evidence for the five reasons mentioned in the thesis.

An adorable potbellied pig may be the perfect pet for you! Not only are potbellied pigs incredibly intelligent, but these cute oinkers also have great personalities, are easy to care for, won't trigger allergies, and live a long time. Potbellied pigs are loyal, curious animals, and they are friendly and affectionate—qualities that make them beloved companions. One of the most amazing things about pigs is that they can be trained just like dogs. A pig can be taught to sit, roll over, and stay. (In fact, pigs are ranked among the top five smartest animals on the planet.) What's more, pigs are exceptionally clean (despite their reputations) and have very flexible diets. They can eat just about anything, from flies to burritos. Pigs also don't produce dander, so they are a great choice for anyone with dog or cat allergies. So find a breeder or rescue organization and adopt a potbellied pig today. Given that potbellied pigs live 12 to 18 years on average, you can expect to have a long and happy friendship with your new pal.

Transition words and phrases connect ideas.

Using different sentence lengths and structures makes the writing lively.

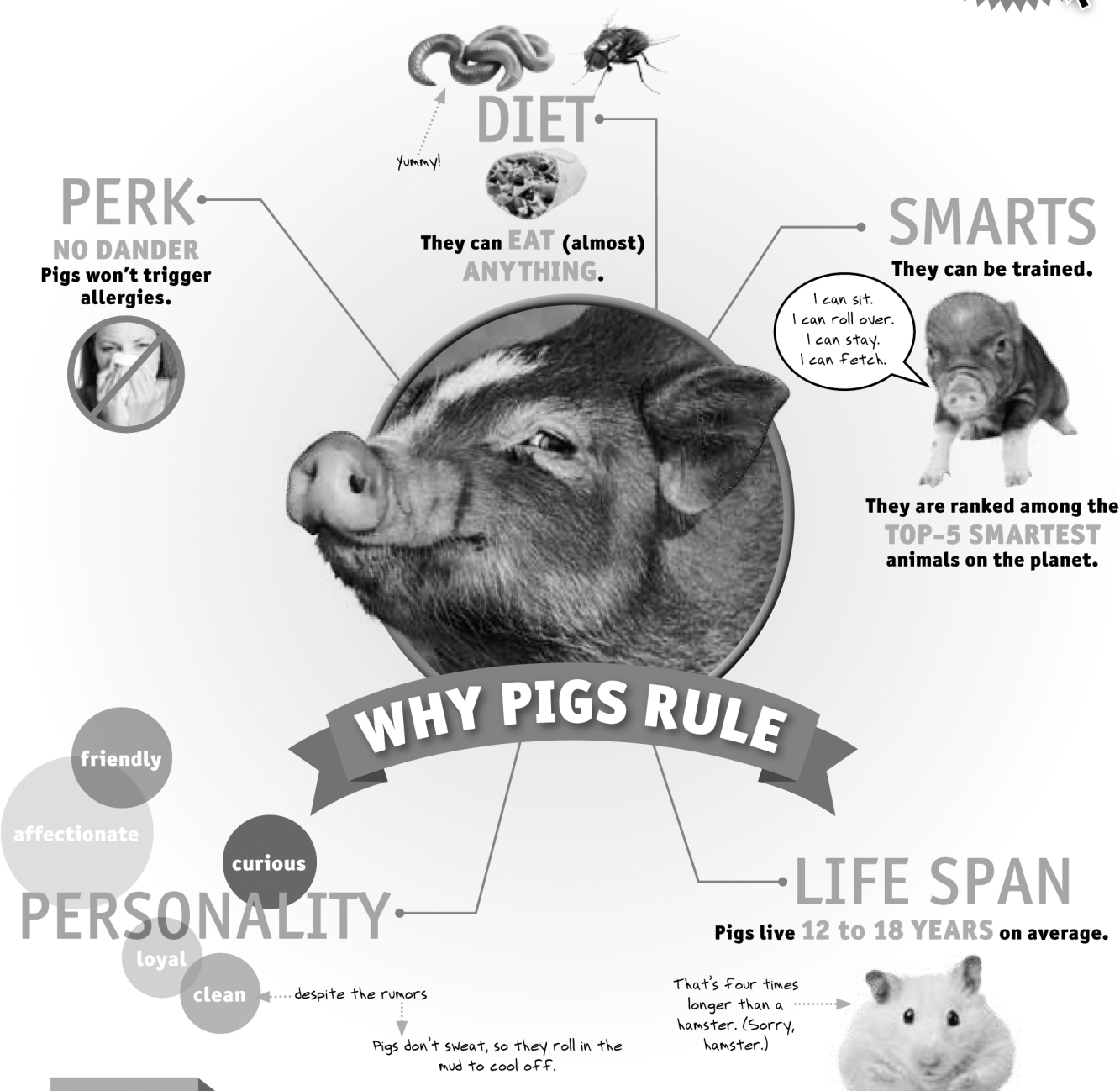
Ends with a call to action and a promise that the reader won't regret getting a pet pig.

# You Write It

We did the research.  
You write the story.

DON'T MISS OUR  
AWESOME GUIDED-  
WRITING ACTIVITY  
AND MODEL TEXT  
AT SCOPE ONLINE!

**HERE'S THE DEAL:** The Swiners Society is trying to make the case that potbellied pigs make great pets. But they need data to support their claim. This is what they found.



## CONTEST

**YOUR TASK:** The Swiners Society has asked YOU for help. Write a paragraph, using the information above, to make the case that potbellied pigs make good pets. Then send it to the **You Write It Contest**. Three winners will each get a **\$25 Visa gift card**. Entries will be judged on: **1. a clear central idea; 2. effective use of supporting evidence; 3. good organization and transitions; 4. originality; 5. grammar.**



# Mars Contest

You are a tour guide leading a trip to Mars. Write a blurb for your website convincing people to come. Explain how safe and fun the trip will be. Use details from the infographic. Three winners will get a \$25 Visa gift card.

## Entries will be judged on:

⇒ organization

⇒ originality

⇒ grammar

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

My home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ My grade: \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher's name : \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher's e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My parent or legal guardian consents  
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Include this sheet with your written entry and send both to: [scopemag@scholastic.com](mailto:scopemag@scholastic.com)  
Or mail to: Mars Contest, c/o Scope, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY November 15, 2014!**