



Writer:



WRITING SKILLS THAT GUARANTEE SUCCESS

1. ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are describing words that describe nouns. They are great for creating “mind movies” for your readers. Use lots of adjectives!

Antonio picked up the huge, juicy, cheesy hamburger and took a humongous bite.



2. ADVERBS

Adverbs describe verbs and adjectives. They answer the questions how? when? where? why? and to what extent? Adverbs are great for description.

Hallie is amazingly smart. She's coming over to my house tomorrow.

3. ALLITERATION

Alliteration means repeating the beginning sounds of a few words. It adds beauty.

A great big grasshopper jumped from the daisies down into the green grass.

4. ANADIPLOSIS

Anadiplosis is when we start a new thought or phrase with the noun that ended the thought or phrase right before it. Anadiplosis adds beauty to our writing.

I bought a new skateboard, a skateboard that will help me with the competition.

Practice leads to winning. Winning is what I want most in this world.



5. APPOSITIVES

An appositive sounds complicated, but it's not. An appositive is when you write a noun, then immediately rename the noun to make sure your reader knows who or what you are talking about.

My little brother, Dallas, gets into my stuff all the time. His favorite toy, my iPod, is what he wants.

6. DIALOGUE

Don't you just love it when characters are talking? That's called dialogue. Dialogue adds interest and maturity to your writing. Don't overdo it, though. Two lines of dialogue is plenty!

"Please start drying the dishes," Ana said. I thought about it. "I'll have to do it later," I said.

7. GRABBERS

Grabbers are sentences that capture the readers attention right away. The grabber is the first thing your reader will see. You can write the grabber at the beginning or wait until you've finished and go back to the beginning and add it. For examples, see the box on grabbers.

I heard the car door shut. Rats! My parents were home early! What was I going to do?

8. HYPERBOLE

We all love to exaggerate! Hyperbole means exaggerating in our writing to make a point.

This headache is killing me. I've been waiting a million years for the aspirin to kick in.

9. IDIOMS

Idioms are colorful expressions that make a point. Idioms add voice to our writing.

A little bird told me that our new teacher, Miss Sparks, is all bark and no bite.

(I heard)

(might raise her voice, but she won't punish you)



10. METAPHORS

Metaphors are when we make direct comparisons between two things to make a point. Many metaphors are common expressions. They add beauty and maturity to your writing.

Tyrell is Kobe Bryant when it comes to sinking baskets. He's 24 karat gold! What a slam-dunk maniac!

11. MINI-STORY

A mini-story is just what it sounds like: a tiny little story within a larger story or essay. A good mini-story can give your reader an example or help him picture what you want him to know.

No kid looks forward to going to the doctor's office. The last time I went, I had to get three shots! I had no clue, but there was the nurse, saying, "We need to update your shots." But, sometimes we need to go to the doctor to keep from getting sick or when we hurt ourselves. Good health is important.

12. ONOMATOPOEIA

This big old word means sound effects. Including sound effects in your writing helps recreate the experience for your reader to picture. It puts him in the middle of the action!

Toby and I were wrestling when I heard a CRACK! Dad's reading glasses are now in 100 pieces.

13. PERSONIFICATION

Personification means to give human-like qualities to things that are not human. Personification adds beauty and maturity to our writing.

The trees danced in the wind, tilting their heads back and raising their arms to the sky.



14. SIMILES

You know similes! That's when we compare two things and link them together with either the word "like" or the word "as." We do this to make a point and to add interest and color to our writing.

Grandpa snored like a buzz-saw. No kidding! It was as loud as a lion's roar.

15. SIZZLING VOCABULARY

Using great words is the best way to score high! Pick the BEST word for what you want to say.

Jayla's step dance routine was spectacular! That girl is an amazement, for sure!



16. SPECIFIC EMOTION WORD OR SENSORY WORD

When you describe the way you feel, or something you've experienced with your senses, be sure to use specific words so your reader knows EXACTLY what you're talking about. This is good!

I was petrified when Mr. Grim, our principal, called me to his office to ask me about skipping school.

I opened the door to the basement. It smelled dank and musty down there, maybe even a little sour.

17. STRONG VERBS

Don't be caught using a weak verb! Impress your readers with strong verbs, verbs you can picture or visualize in your mind. Strong verbs add beauty and impress your reader.

Mark slipped on the wet sidewalk and fell, bashing his head on the curb.



18. SUPPORTING WITH DETAILS AND REASONS

The best feeling in the world is to fill your writing with lots of vivid details. Don't skimp on examples and descriptions! List reasons, add a mini-story, and knock us over the head with details!

Why don't I want to stay home this weekend? Well, let's see. My dad wants me to help him rake the whole yard, which is ankle-deep in leaves and pine needles. My mom is hoping I'll take everything out of the garage and hose it out, which almost killed me the last time I did it. Oh, and let's not forget that my sister's Brownie troop is having a sleepover, so that means ten screaming seven-year-olds!

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MY SCORES				



This is the bottom half of Writing Skills That Improve Our Scores on green sheet #1. Tape the two sections together to form one long sheet.

SPARKLE WORDS

affirm - to agree with
 altercation - an angry argument
 anecdote - a short, entertaining story
 astound - amaze
 balk - to refuse to go ahead
 bedlam - a noisy, confusing environment
 behemoth - huge
 benevolent - kind, generous
 bliss - happiness
 brilliant - quite intelligent
 captivate - to gain everyone's attention
 cataclysmic - the absolute worst
 catastrophe - a sudden and total disaster
 catastrophic - utterly horrible
 complacent - willing to please
 culpable - deserving blame
 dilemma - in a troublesome situation
 discombobulated - confused, mixed up
 dolt - a stupid or dim-witted person
 doubt - to think something might not be true
 embellish - decorate by adding detail
 empathy - the ability to share another person's feelings
 enhance - to improve, to decorate, to embellish
 enthrall - to captivate, to fascinate
 epitome - a person or thing that shows typical qualities
 eradicate - wipe out, destroy
 exacerbate - make worse
 exuberant - over-the-top happy
 fetching - good looking, attractive
 flaunt - to show off your skills
 forlorn - hopeless, desperate
 fracas - a wild fight
 giddy - so happy you are silly
 grouse - complain
 grovel - to beg or be humble before someone
 hindsight - the ability to see what would have been the right thing to do
 hoard - to collect or stockpile
 impeccable - without fault or error
 laudable - worthy of praise
 maverick - a person who has his own viewpoint that others do not hold to
 mirage - something that seems real but is not
 monopolize - take too much of someone's time or to assume control of



DIALOGUE



Who doesn't like to listen to what other people have to say? Adding dialogue to your writing makes it more interesting for the reader. Be sure to use quotation marks.

Dialogue with "said" for a tag:

"I'm going to hit a home run," Alvin said.

Dialogue with a strong verb for a tag:

"Get a good grip on your bat," Coach reminded.

Dialogue without any tags:

"I've been practicing my grip."

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This My Scores box gets glued to the front of the My Scores Folder on green sheet #2.



nemesis - an enemy or opponent that can't be beaten
 pacify - to calm down
 personify - to have the qualities of
 phenomenal - unusually good
 pontificate - talk to convince someone
 pristine - completely clean
 reciprocate - to take turns doing something nice
 savvy - practical know-how
 scathing - fierce, angry
 scintillating - really good, stimulating
 skedaddle - leave quickly
 solace - comfort
 somber - gloomy
 sparkling - bright, happy
 sublime - impressive, majestic
 supercilious - an arrogant attitude
 superlative - outstanding
 tenacious - stubborn, doesn't let go of
 throng - a crowd
 tumultuous - wild and noisy
 turmoil - a confusing uproar
 utopia - a perfect environment
 vamoose - leave quickly
 vehement - marked by extreme feelings or convictions
 vendetta - a prolonged feud or fight
 verbose - wordy, talks too much
 winsome - agreeable, pleasant
 witty - cleverly amusing
 zany - silly, funny, crazy-but-likable
 zeal - showing great enthusiasm, working hard to achieve a goal
 zenith - the highest, the ultimate

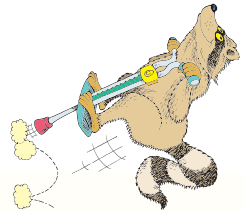


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This is the bottom half of Sparkle Words on pulsar pink sheet #3. Tape the two sections together to form one long sheet.

JUMP INTO SUCCESSFUL WRITING? JUST ASK YOURSELF THESE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR WRITING:



FOCUS - Are all of your sentences on the topic? Does everything focus in on the main idea?

ORGANIZATION - Do you have a beginning, a middle, and an ending? Are things in order?

SUPPORT - Did you support a main idea with juicy details your reader can picture? Does your writing feel complete?

CONVENTIONS - Did you use capital letters, end punctuation, and pretty good spelling? Did you invent spelling for words you don't know how to spell? Did you indent?

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FIVE PARTS OF YOUR WRITING:

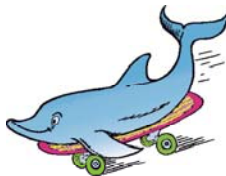
Grabber - This is a sentence or two that “hooks” your reader and makes him want to read more.

Beginning - This is a sentence that tells your reader what you are writing about. Be sure to include one or two important words from the prompt.

Middle - The middle is where you write details that go together and details that create “mind movies” for your reader. The middle should be orderly and organized. Be sure to include interesting facts, examples, reasons, mini-stories, and descriptions that help your reader picture what you are writing about. It is a good idea to indent when you change ideas or move on to a different time or location.

Ending - This is a sentence or two that wraps up your paper by telling the reader the most important thing you want to say.

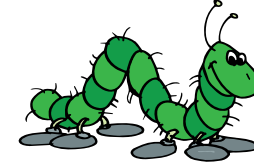
Zinger - The zinger is kind of like a grabber, only at the end of your paper. A zinger can be an idiom, a phrase, or a sentence that makes the reader laugh or think.



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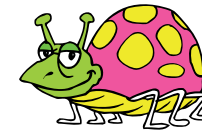
IDIOMS FOR “TERRIBLE” OR “TROUBLE”

train wreck
not pretty
pretty ugly
something you wouldn’t wish on your worst enemy
you’re in hot water
your goose is cooked
you’re toast
you’re in the dog house
the final straw
the last straw
the straw that broke the camel’s back
out of the frying pan into the fire
up the creek without a paddle
you’re asking for trouble
that spells trouble
you’re in deep water
you’re asking for it
you’re standing on my last nerve



IDIOMS FOR “EASY”

like taking candy from a baby
piece of cake
like falling off a log
easy breezy
easy as pie
as simple as pie
easy as 1, 2, 3



IDIOMS FOR “EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD”

out of this world
off the charts
off the chain
a little piece of heaven
heavenly
7th heaven
the be all and the end all
world class
the cat’s pajamas
the bee’s knees
the mack daddy
the gold standard
the top of the world
divine
creme de la creme
on cloud 9
crackerjack
beyond imagination
beyond your wildest dreams
apple of my eye



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GRABBER - A GRABBER IS AN OPENING SENTENCE OR TWO THAT CAPTURES THE READER'S ATTENTION. THE GRABBER CAN BE:

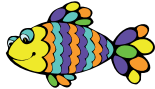
A HUMOROUS STATEMENT



When my friend Trekkie Omartian rings our doorbell, I say, "Uh oh. Here comes trouble!"

A SHOCKING STATEMENT

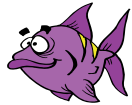
My Aunt Agatha has a beard, and I'm not kidding.



DIALOGUE

"If you do that again, you're in BIG TROUBLE," my teacher warned.

ONOMATOPOEIA



KABLONKERS!! My head hit the corner of the bunk bed frame.

A RHETORICAL QUESTION

Can you imagine if someone gave you a million dollars to give away?



A SCENARIO

Imagine this: You're home alone cooking doughnuts, and you set the kitchen on fire!

AN OPINION

My dog, Ogden, is the best friend a kid could ever have.



A COMPARISON

Indiana Jones is cool, but Iron Man has better gear and can even fly.

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BUILD YOUR WRITING WITH TRANSITIONAL PHRASES

After all...
 After what seemed like a long time...
 And guess what?
 At that point...
 At the same time...
 Because of this...
 But at the same time...
 Come with me and I'll show you...
 First of all...
 For instance...
 For that reason...
 Here's the best part.
 Here's the thing.
 I especially like...
 I must tell you...
 I wish I had more time to tell you about...
 I'd like to bring my explanation to an end by telling you...
 If you think that's bad, it gets worse.
 If you think that's scary, wait till you hear what happened next!
 In any case...
 In fact...
 In other words...
 In the first place...
 In the meantime...
 Later on...
 Let me begin.
 Let me end my story by saying...
 Let me give you an example.
 Let me remind you...
 Let me sum up my thoughts by saying...
 Let's start at the beginning.
 Moving on...
 My favorite part is...
 My story wouldn't be complete if I didn't tell you about...



Never again will I...
 Now comes the part that got me into trouble.
 Now that we've looked at that, let's move on to...
 Now you see ...
 Oh, and another thing...
 On the other hand...
 Once that happened...
 Right after that...
 Right away...
 Sooner or later...
 Step into my world and I'll tell you...
 The first step is a piece of cake.
 The first thing that happened was...
 The lesson I learned is...
 The most important thing is...
 The next thing that happened knocked my socks off.
 The thing I hate about it is...
 This happened because...
 This may be true, but...
 This next part is a doozie!
 To put it a different way...
 To put it differently...
 Until now...
 Until then...
 What happened next still gives me the willies!
 When all was said and done...
 When I found out the truth...
 When I realized what had actually happened...
 When she realized I was telling the truth...
 When we finally got home...
 When you hear what happened...
 You need to know that...
 You won't believe what happened next.

SCORING THE EASY WAY!

Beginning that introduces the topic to the reader and uses key words from the prompts

1 POINT

Middle that is filled with juicy details, descriptions, reasons, ideas, examples, and maybe a mini-story

1 POINT

Ending that tells the reader the most important thing you want him to know or a takeaway ending

1 POINT

A feeling of completeness, meaning the reader is satisfied

1 POINT

Individual Writing Skills

4-5 3rd Grade

5-7 4th Grade

7-9 5th Grade

1 POINT

If you get to a 5, you ask yourself this question: Is this paper outstanding?

1 POINT

If the conventions are there MOST of the time and you can easily read the paper, leave the score as it is. If the conventions are NOT THERE MOST of the time and you have difficulty reading the paper, you must take away one point

-1 POINT

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METAPHORS

A metaphor is a word picture that makes an unusual or fun comparison between two things. For instance, when we say, "My little brother was an angel during my piano recital," we don't actually mean that he has wings! What we mean is that his behavior was good.

When we say, "it's raining cats and dogs outside!" we are trying to paint a funny picture of just how hard its raining. We use metaphors when we write so our pieces will be creative and enjoyable for our readers.



This Metaphor box does not get glued onto the wings. Cut it out and glue it to the OUTSIDE of the Metaphor Wallet on pulsar pink on sheet #11.

"AS" SIMILES

As agile as monkey
As alike as two peas in a pod
As big as a bus
As big as an elephant
As black as midnight
As brave as a lion
As bright as day
As busy as a beaver
As busy as a bee
As clean as a whistle
As clear as a bell
As clear as crystal
As clear as mud
As cold as ice
As cool as a cucumber
As crazy as a bedbug
As crooked as a dog's hind leg
As cunning as a fox
As cute as a button
As dead as a doornail
As delicate as a flower
As different as night and day
As dry as a bone
As dry as dust
As dull as dishwater
As easy as A,B,C
As easy as pie
As fit as a fiddle
As flat as a pancake
As free as a bird
As fresh as a daisy
As gentle as a lamb
As happy as a lark
As happy as a pig in a mud puddle
As hard as nails
As hoarse as a crow
As hungry as a bear



As hungry as a wolf
As innocent as a lamb
As large as life
As light as a feather
As light as air
As mad as a hatter
As mad as a hornet
As neat as a pin
As nutty as a fruitcake
As old as the hills
As pale as death
As plain as day
As pleased as punch
As poor as a church mouse
As poor as dirt
As pretty as a picture
As proud as a peacock
As pure as the driven snow
As quick as a wink
As quick as lightning
As right as rain
As scarce as hen's teeth
As sensitive as a flower
As sharp as a tack
As sharp as a razor
As sick as a dog
As silly as a goose
As slippery as an eel
As slow as molasses
As slow as a snail
As slow as a tortoise
As smooth as silk
As snug as a bug in a rug
As soft as a baby's bottom
As solid as a rock
As tight as a drum
As ugly as a mud fence



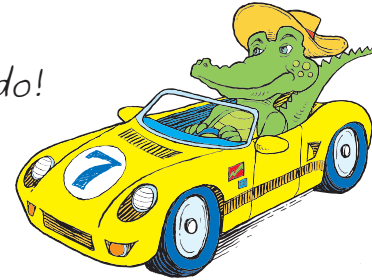
PUNCTUATION

Punctuation? Of course I use good punctuation. You won't get very far in this world without it. Writing is with us for a lifetime, and the best writers use it to help them become successful at whatever they do!

CAPITAL LETTERS
PERIODS
QUESTION MARKS

EXCLAMATION POINTS
QUOTATION MARKS
INDENTATION

COMMAS IN A SERIES

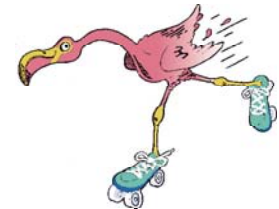


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TAKEAWAY ENDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, ZINGERS



We want you kids to know endings are important! They leave your reader feeling happy to have read your paper. You can choose from any of the endings below.



TAKEAWAY

A takeaway ending tells the reader what you learned or how your life has changed.

CONCLUSION

A conclusion is an ending that tells the reader the most important thing you want him to remember.

ZINGER

A zinger is that little “something extra” that touches the reader or makes him laugh or think!

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Be careful whose toes you step on.
 Don't beat around the bush.
 Get your ducks in a row.
 He had a heart of stone.
 She is the sunshine of my day.
 My mother is the light of my life.
 My little sister is a jumping bean.
 Now he's rolling in dough.
 Mom says I'm the apple of her eye.
 He's just a big old teddy bear.
 He is 24 karat gold.
 He will stab you in the back.
 He's such a motor mouth.
 Her ideas are over the top.
 I can be a headache sometimes.
 I gave her an earful.
 I got a slap on the wrist this time.
 I had a lot on my plate.
 I love her to death.
 I was a basket case.
 I was ticked off for sure.
 I was up the creek without a paddle.
 I'll get back on my feet soon.
 I'll have to burn the candle at both ends.
 I'm at the end of my rope.
 I'm burned out.
 I'm fired up.
 I'm not in love with that idea.
 I've been running a rat race all day.



It went in one ear and out the other.
 It's raining cats and dogs.
 Let's play ball.
 Let's put our minds together.
 My father has the heart of a lion.
 My lips are sealed.
 Now that's a home run of an idea.
 Our car turned out to be a lemon.
 Put the pedal to the metal.
 She can kill you with kindness.
 She's a living doll.
 She's clueless.
 Take a stab at it.
 That bugs me.
 That just blows me away.
 That's on the cutting edge.
 The ball's in your court.
 This will knock your socks off.
 Watch your back.
 We hit the ground running.
 We're swamped today.
 Well that's a no brainer
 Well, join the club.
 You can wait until the cows come home.
 You do the math.
 You need to raise the bar.
 You need to think outside of the box.
 You're in deep trouble.
 You're in over your head.
 You're missing a piece of the puzzle.



"LIKE" SIMILES

chatters like a monkey
 cooks like a chef
 cries like a baby
 cuts like a knife
 draws like an artist
 dresses like a model
 drives like a maniac
 drives like an old lady
 eats like a bird
 eats like a horse
 eyes like a hawk
 feels like velvet
 fits like a glove
 flies like a bird
 floats like a boat
 gossips like an old biddy
 grows like a weed
 irritates like sandpaper
 jumps like a frog
 keeps a secret like a vault
 know it like the back of your hand
 laughs like a hyena
 like finding a needle in a haystack
 looks like a giant
 love is like a red rose
 plays guitar like a rock star
 plays like an athlete
 reads like a bookworm
 roars like a lion
 runs like a rocket
 runs like the wind
 searches like a bloodhound
 shimmers like a diamond
 sings like an angel
 sits around like a couch potato
 sleeps like a baby
 smells like a wet goat

smells like money
 smells like rain
 smokes like a chimney
 smooth like silk
 snores like a buzz saw
 soars like an eagle
 sounds like trouble
 sparkles like fireworks
 spends money like it grows on trees
 stretches like a rubber band
 studies like a fiend
 swims like a fish
 talks like a parrot
 talks like a house a'fire
 tastes like ambrosia
 works like a dog
 works like there's no tomorrow
 works like a horse

*Take it from me,
 Lex Lizard:
 Similes add beauty and
 maturity to your
 writing...Use them when
 you want to impress
 your reader!"*



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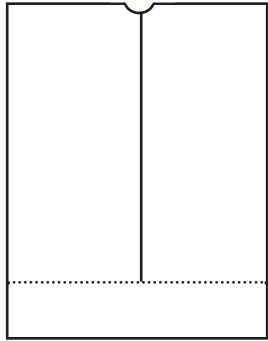


Metaphor Wallet

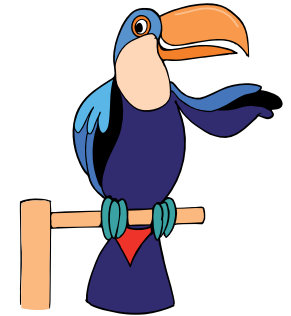
This metaphor wallet does not get glued onto the wings of the writing satchel. Cut it out, fold the words to the inside. Place one-half Velcro dot under the flap to hold it closed. Glue the Metaphor Wallet title to the front of the outside. It is on orange sheet #8. Place this in the drawer of your writing satchel.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING THE WRITING SATCHEL

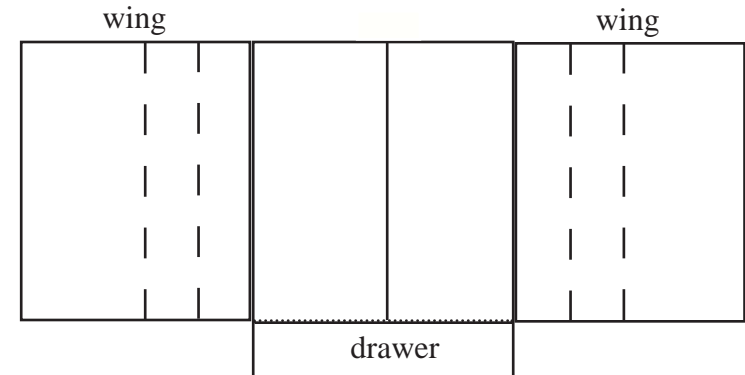
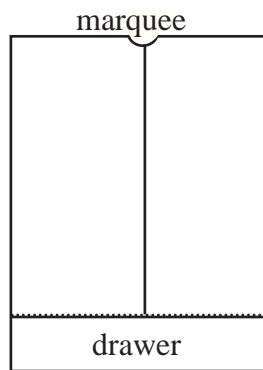
1. Open large paper bag. At the top, locate the side that is scooped out in the middle.
2. Make one long cut from the center of the back down to the last crease, 4" from the bottom of the bag.



3. Cut along the last crease 4" from the bottom of the bag along the front and sides. **DO NOT CUT THE BACK OF THE BAG.**
4. The bag should now have a "drawer" at the bottom and two "wings."

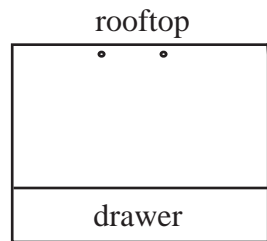


5. Put a 12" strip of clear duct tape along the joint that holds the drawer to the bag in the **INSIDE** and the **OUTSIDE**. This will reinforce the drawer so that it does not tear. You will appreciate this, later!



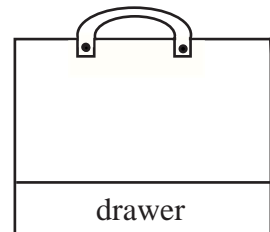
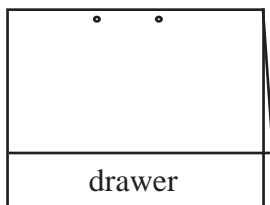
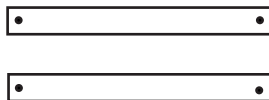
6. Fold the wings in to their natural position. I call this position the "marquee."

7. Fold the marquee down--in half--so that it now meets the drawer. Crease this fold. I call the top of this fold the "rooftop."



8. On either side of the fold I call, "the rooftop," put two dots, about 2 or 3 inches apart.

9. Use a pen or pencil to poke a little hole through all four dots on the rooftop.



10. Poke brass brads through the ends of the craft foam handles, about a half-inch from the end.
11. Push the brass brads through the holes you have poked on the rooftop. The handles don't lap over the top. One handle is on each side of the rooftop. Open the prongs of the brads.
12. On the inside, put one small craft foam square over each brass brad. This means you'll have to close the prongs again, push on the craft foam, and open the prongs once more. Now your handles are on and reinforced with craft foam.
13. Cut out the individual pieces of the Writer's Toolbox Writing Satchel HANDOUT SHEETS. I recommend cutting out one or two pieces, gluing them on, and then continuing to the next one or two pieces. That way you won't get them mixed up.

...INSTRUCTIONS

14. Glue stick the back of the pieces. Place them on the satchel according to the MASTER PLAN.

15. Tape around the edges of the glued-on pieces. This is an important step to the success of the writing satchel. Don't skip!

16. When you have finished placing each piece, fold the wings back into the marquee position. Fold the marquee down to the drawer.

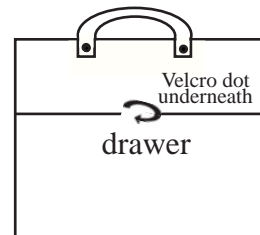
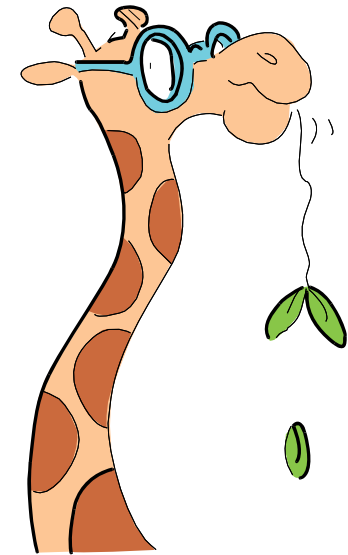
17. Fold the drawer up over the marquee. Place a Velcro dot under the top of the drawer flap so that it stays closed.

18. Make the ring clip words by cutting them out, cutting them apart, and punching a hole in the top of each strip with a hole punch. Thread each word strip on the ring clip. Place those in the drawer.

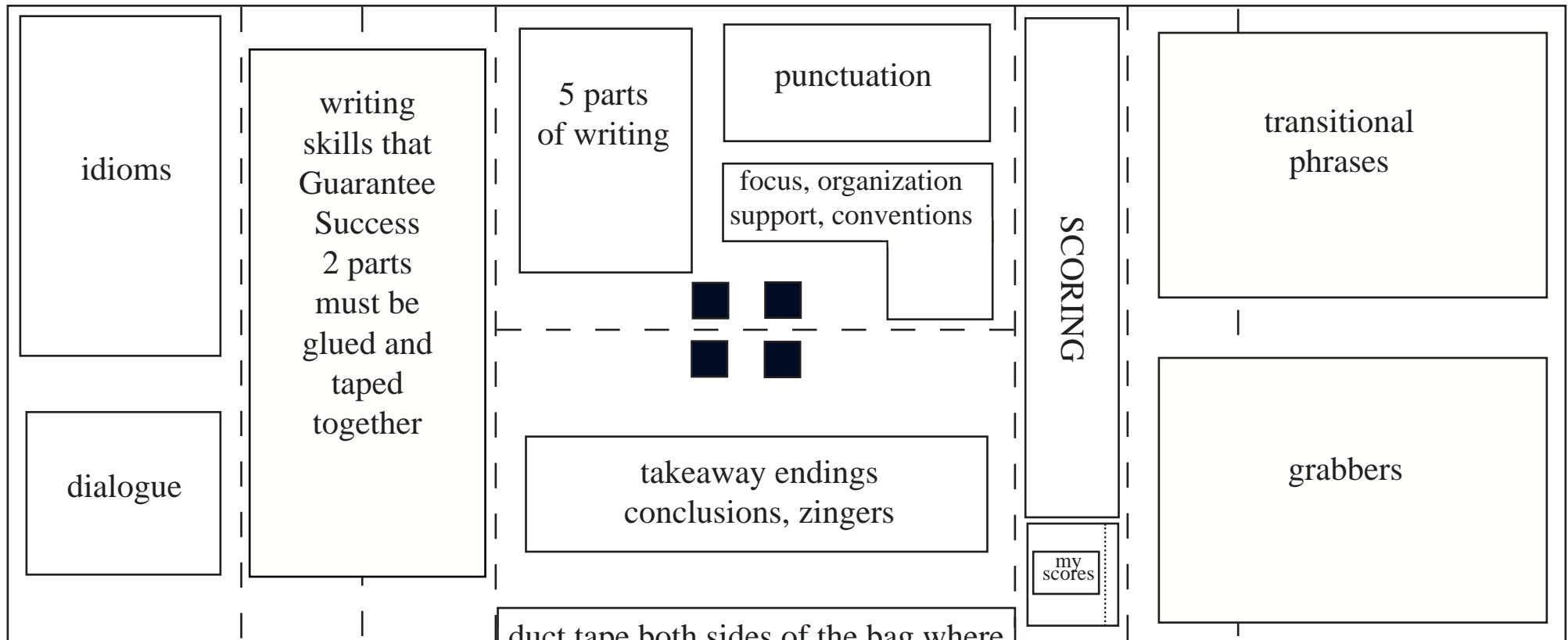
19. Make the slider according to the directions. Place the slider in the drawer.

20. Pull apart one Velcro dot. Put the soft part around the middle of a pencil. Put the stiff part in the center of the bottom of the drawer. Place the pencil there so that the two parts stick together. You can also place a 2" segment of drinking straw over the top of the sharpened pencil to keep the tip from breaking. The straws from McDonalds, Burger King, and Popeye's Fried Chicken are all wide enough to slip over a standard sharpened pencil.

21. Use the writing satchel to help your students become better writers. Have fun! Make learning hands-on and memorable. Encourage creativity and imagination. Celebrate every success!



MASTER PLAN for Writing Satchel



sparkle words

2 parts must be glued and taped together



These two pieces are glued to the FRONT of the marquee wings



“LIKE” similes

“AS” similes

