



5TH GRADE **ELA**

Student Materials

Unit 5 ***Friendship Across Boundaries: Return to Sender***





Daily Lesson Materials

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* — Dedication page poem and pp. 321-322.

1. What do you think the poet means when she uses the phrase "a life filled with colour" (line 1)? What might this phrase suggest about who she is and her experiences?

2. What objects and places does the poet say she is "from," and what do these details help the reader understand about her?

3. Which line(s) in the poem show how the speaker feels proud of who she is, and what do these lines suggest about her identity?

4. What does the final statement "I am from all that has happened, and all that will be" (line 18-19) reveal about how the speaker understands her past and future? What evidence in the poem supports your interpretation?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Life on a Vermont Dairy Farm Text Set

Group A: Vermont Farmers' Deep Connection to the Land

Directions: Watch the following video: [Russo Family Farm, Vermont](#). Then, discuss the ideas collaboratively and take notes on the points you covered.

What moments show how connected the farmer is to his land?

What words, phrases, or images help you understand the meaning of land, place, or heritage?

Group B: Daily Life on the Farm

Directions: Read the following article: [A Day-in-the-Life on an Organic Dairy Farm in Cornwall, Vermont](#). Then, discuss the ideas collaboratively and take notes on the points you covered.

What day-to-day responsibilities are described?

What hardships are described? What keeps them going despite these challenges?

Whole Group: Life as a Migrant Worker on a Dairy Farm

Directions: Read the first three paragraphs and the assigned photos as a class from [The Golden Cage](#). Then, discuss the ideas in a small group and take notes on the points you covered.

Look closely at the images. What do you notice? What is happening?

What connections can you make between you and the images?

How might these images be connected to the video and the article you read earlier?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

Explain how family farmers and migrant workers are connected to Vermont farms in different ways.

Use information from at least two jigsaw sections to support your answer.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 3 – 16.

1. Why does Tyler think people are "trespassing" on the farm? How does he react?

2. Why does Tyler call the farm "bad-luck farm" (p. 4)? Does the name fit?

3. How does Tyler respond to the situation on the farm? How does his mother respond? What is similar and different about their responses? Why?

4. On the way back from Boston, Tyler's mom surprises him with the best news ever. What news does his mom share? Why does Tyler think this is the best news ever?

5. Why does Tyler make the promise, "No Questions. No Worries." (p. 16) to himself?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

Read the sentence from page 16:

"Sometimes in life he just has to accept stuff he'll never ever understand."

What does Tyler mean by this? What happens in this chapter that Tyler doesn't fully understand?
Paraphrase details from the text to help support your answer.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 17 – 22.

1. Both Papá and Mari are filled with worries. Compare and contrast their worries.

2. Mari says that she feels "so alone sometimes" (p. 21). What causes her to feel alone?

3. How has place shaped Mari and her family? Give a specific example.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

console

How does Mari's letter help readers better understand Mari and her relationship with her family?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 23 – 36.

1. Tyler's mom calls Mari and her family "angels." Explain why.

2. Read the sentences: "You guys are lifesavers!" (p. 32) and "She can sew like a barn on fire" (p. 33). What types of figurative language are these sentences? Why are Mari and her sisters confused by these sentences?

3. Why does Papá not want Mari to send the letters? How does Mari respond? What does this interaction show about Mari?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Time Detectives

- ✓ if the sentence does not need revision because all verbs stay in the same time or the time changes on purpose
- X if the sentence needs revision because at least one verb shifts to a different time without a clear reason

Mark each sentence:

1. ___ When Tyler **walked** into the barn that morning, he **checks** the tractor tires like Dad taught him.
2. ___ Mari **writes** in her notebook every night and **hopes** her father will return soon.
3. ___ By the time the girls **arrived** at the trailer, Uncle Felipe **has started** tuning his guitar.
4. ___ If the farm **loses** more money this month, Tyler **will have** to help with extra chores.
5. ___ When Mari first **came** to Vermont, she **is feeling** nervous about speaking English in front of new people.
6. ___ Tyler **was** worried about the missing men because he **heard** Mama Reyna's voice shake.
7. ___ Mrs. Morales **reads** the letter aloud, and the boys **listened** closely.
8. ___ Everyone in the Ramirez family **hopes** the plan **would** help them stay together.
9. ___ Mari **wants** to show Tyler the photos she **took** back in Las Margaritas.
10. ___ The townspeople **predict** that the upcoming fair **will bring** more visitors to the farm.

Revised sentences:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to write their revised sentences. The box occupies most of the page's vertical space.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

After you and your partner identify which [Time Detectives Handout \(G5, U5, L6\)](#) sentences need revision, revise those sentences so the verb tenses stay consistent.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 39 – 57.

1. How does Tyler respond to his mother's suggestion that he introduce himself to the girls? What causes him to change his mind?

2. Summarize what happens when Tyler visits the girls. Do they all have the same perspective about the visit? Why?

3. How does Tyler’s realization that he is "just one of a zillion people" (p. 49) challenge the way he sees himself? What does this show about Tyler?

4. Even though Tyler and Mari are very different, they are becoming friends. Do you agree or disagree?

5. What "big mystery" does Tyler's family reveal? How does he respond? Why?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

contradiction reluctance resigned

On page 49, Tyler states that "for the first time in his life, he has met people who are really different." What do the events of this chapter suggest about Tyler?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 58 – 72.

1. Why is Mari writing a letter to the President? What does it reveal about her perspective?

2. On page 66, the author describes Clayton's voice as an "ugly whisper." Describe why. How does Tyler respond?

3. On page 69, the author describes Tyler's voice as "almost as unfriendly as the first time [Mari] met him." Explain why. What changes in Tyler?

4. At the end of the chapter, Mari celebrates both Mexico and the United States on Mexican Independence Day. Why?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 92 – 106.

1. Why does Mari think her two sisters would be unable to get used to life in Las Margaritas?

2. Why does Mari ask their friend in North Carolina to leave their new phone number at the old apartment? What does this reveal about Mari's perspective and personality?

3. Explain why Mari's family and Mrs. Paquette have such different experiences when the trick-or-treaters visit.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

preoccupying insistent

What do Ofie, Papá, and Mari's different opinions on pages 95–98 reveal about their personalities and perspectives?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Determining Theme

Use the note taker below to keep ideas and details about possible themes of *Return to Sender*.

Theme	Discussion Day 1 (pp. 1–106) Evidence that develops the theme	Discussion Day 2 (pp. 1–263) Evidence that develops the theme

Name: _____ Date: _____

Determining Theme

Use the note taker below to keep ideas and details about possible themes of *Return to Sender*.

Theme	Discussion Day 1 (pp. 1–106) Evidence that develops the theme	Discussion Day 2 (pp. 1–263) Evidence that develops the theme
Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyler's father is seriously injured while working on the farm (5) ● The work is too much for the remaining family members (7) ● Hiring migrant workers enables the Paquette family to keep the farm (13) 	
Understanding others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyler realizes that he has not spent much time with people who are different from him and how limited his experience has been (49) ● Tyler notices that the new workers speak Spanish, which makes him curious but also uncertain (Ch. 3–4). ● Tyler begins to observe rather than judge, noticing differences without fully understanding them yet. 	

<p>Home and belonging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Paquette farm is described as more than land; it is deeply connected to the family's identity and history (6)● Tyler worries that losing the farm would mean losing his sense of home and devastate his dad● Mari's family is also connected to the farm; more than one family can belong to the same place	
<p>Respect and fairness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Tyler becomes aware that some people do the hardest work but receive little recognition● The workers' labor is necessary for the farm's survival, yet they are forced to hide (59)● "The cows can't wait for their milking till the politicians get the laws changed." (87)	

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

What themes are present so far in *Return to Sender*? Write a thematic statement for the theme that resonates most with you.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Single Paragraph Outline

Topic Sentence: _____

● Detail 1: _____

● Detail 2: _____

● Detail 3: _____

● Detail 4: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Determining Theme

Use the note taker below to keep ideas and details about possible themes of *Return to Sender*.

Theme	Discussion Day 1 (pp. 1–106) Evidence that develops the theme	Discussion Day 2 (pp. 1–263) Evidence that develops the theme

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

What is a theme that is present so far in *Return to Sender*? State a theme and describe how it is developing.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 121 – 136.

1. Why do Mari and her family need to "lay low" (p. 122)? Compare and contrast how different family members respond to needing to "lay low."

2. Describe the relationship between Grandma and the Cruz family.

3. Read the sentences from page 132: "Tyler heaved the hugest sigh, like he was off to a firing squad to be shot to death for a crime he never committed." "When he twisted around, he looked like I had just granted him a pardon." How does the figurative language help readers better understand Tyler?

4. What does Mari's **petition** to the Virgin of Guadalupe regarding Tío Felipe suggest about her?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

petition culpable unburden

What happens to Tío Felipe? How do Mari and her family respond? Why?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Compare and Contrast Graphic Organizer

	Tyler	Mari
Ethnic Background		
History		
Customs		

	Tyler	Mari
Values and Beliefs		
Priorities		
Other		

Name: _____ Date: _____

Compare and Contrast Graphic Organizer

	Tyler	Mari
Ethnic Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● White ● Family immigrated from Canada in the 1800s (87) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mexican ● Undocumented, has two American sisters (18)
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi-generation Vermont farming family (6) ● Limited exposure to life outside his community— "For the first time in his life, he has met people who are really different." (49) ● Father is seriously injured, threatening the family's ability to keep the farm (5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Born in Las Margaritas → North Carolina → Vermont (17) ● Separated from mother (17) ● Constantly worried about La Migra
Customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily routines tied to farm life: milking cows, maintaining the land ● Halloween: Trick-or-Treating; jack-o'-lantern (104, 83) ● Thanksgiving dinner with the whole family (112) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bilingual Spanish is spoken at home, English in public, Spanish words sprinkled in ● Sept. 16th—Mexican Independence day (71-72) ● Day of the Dead: three days, alters to remember the dead (83)

	Tyler	Mari
Values and Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responsibility, loyalty to family, and preserving the farm ● Christian Faith (82) ● Laws are always right and just; "All his life his parents had taught him to obey the laws and respect the United States of America." (56) ● Hard work is recognized and rewarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family unity is essential—always worrying about Tío's, father, sisters, never gives up on mother ● "How sweet it is when a family is reunited and the lost ones are brought back into the fold." (134) ● Catholic (135) ● Hard work is necessary to survive
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Saving the farm for his family, especially for his father and grandmother ● Obedience, fairness, and following the law (56) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting her family, especially her younger siblings ● Bringing her family back together ● Preserving her connection to her Mexican Heritage and family
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wants to do the right thing, but sometimes struggles—Tries to stand up to bullies, but backs down (66) ● Has to mature quickly to help on the farm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lives with constant uncertainty and fear ● Has to mature quickly to take care of her family

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 139 – 155.

1. What is a "silver lining" (p. 140)? Why is Grandma Tyler's silver lining?

2. Read the quote from page 145: "Mari pauses to catch her breath, as if she might drown in a torrent of words tumbling out of her mouth." Explain the significance of this description.

3. Compare and contrast Mari and Tyler's feelings about Christmas. In what ways do their feelings highlight the differences between the two?

4. Summarize what happens when Tyler goes to the jail.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

ballistic

Tyler and Mari are developing a true friendship. Do you agree or disagree? Defend your answer using specific details from the text.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Mexican Traditions Text Set

	Why is this tradition important?	How is this tradition celebrated?
Three Kings Day Text 1 Text 2		
Day of the Dead Text 1 Text 2 Video		
Mexican Independence Day Text 1 Text 2 Video		

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 181 - 194.

1. On page 187, Tyler feels as if "he's lost in some dark wood inside his own head." Explain why.

2. What motion does Mr. Rossetti put forward at the town meeting? Why?

3. Summarize how Mr. Bicknell responds to Mr. Rossetti.

4. Tyler ends by saying "he both lost and found himself at this town meeting night." (p. 194) Explain.

5. On page 203, Tyler and Mari get angry with each other. Summarize why. How does the fight impact Mari and Tyler?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

enlightened upstanding

What motion is proposed at the town meeting? How do different members in the community respond?



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/black-and-white-cow-on-green-grass-field-near-green-trees-4909803/>

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

In *Return to Sender*, Julia Alvarez uses different sentence lengths and punctuation to help readers hear each character's voice. Today, you will practice bringing your voice to the page. First, choose one of the following prompts to write about:

- Write about a place that is important to you.
- Write about a time you noticed something before anyone else did.
- Write about a moment that felt different from what you expected.

As you write, think about how you talk and think when something matters to you. Make at least three purposeful writing choices using sentence length and punctuation to create your voice on the page. These might include:

- Reducing a sentence to make it hit hard
- Combining ideas to show thinking
- Expanding a sentence to slow the moment
- Using punctuation to show strong feelings or calm



Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 213 – 226.

1. Tyler starts the chapter by saying, "April is definitely turning into a month of surprises." Summarize the surprises described on pages 213–215 and the impact they have on different people.

2. Read the quote from page 217: "Grandma closes her eyes as if she's hoping that it's all a nightmare that will disappear when she opens them again." Explain the significance of this quote. Compare Grandma's response with the way Tyler responds.

3. How does Mr. Rossetti respond to the Cruz's situation? What does his response reveal about how his perspective has or hasn't changed?

4. How does Mr. Cruz respond to Tyler's offer? What does this show about how Mr. Cruz's perspective has changed over time?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 227 – 246.

1. What descriptions does the author use to convey how Mari is feeling? Identify at least two examples and explain the effect they have on readers.

2. On page 246, Mari writes, "But unlike the names on that wall, she has come back to us." What is the significance of this quote? How is Mari feeling?

3. At this point in the text, would you consider Tyler and Mari to be true friends? Explain.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 249 – 263.

1. How does Mamá's return compare to what the family may have envisioned?

2. What announcement does Grandma make during dinner, and how do others respond?

3. Explain the significance of Tyler's birthday present to Mari.

4. On page 257, Tyler's mother tells him that "being an adult is about navigating your way through choices and challenges using the North Star of your heart and conscience." In what ways does Tyler use his conscience to make choices?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

ecstatic

Describe the biggest change in Tyler and what leads to this change. Explain how this change impacts his perspective of Mari.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Determining Theme

Use the note taker below to keep ideas and details about possible themes of *Return to Sender*.

Theme	Discussion Day 1 (pp. 1–106) Evidence that develops the theme	Discussion Day 2 (pp. 1–263) Evidence that develops the theme

Name: _____ Date: _____

Determining Theme

Use the note taker below to keep ideas and details about possible themes of *Return to Sender*.

Theme	Discussion Day 1 (pp. 1–106) Evidence that develops the theme	Discussion Day 2 (pp. 1–263) Evidence that develops the theme
Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyler's father is seriously injured while working on the farm (5) ● The work is too much for the remaining family members (7) ● Hiring migrant workers enables the Paquette family to keep the farm (13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After Thanksgiving dinner, even though it is late, the Mexican workers return to work to milk the cows (112) ● Tyler's Aunt Vicky says, "I just don't know how we're expected to survive." (113) ● Mari's father and uncles work long hours on the farm feeding and cleaning (117) ● Tyler writes note to Mari, "Thank you for helping save our farm" (191) ● Mari is hurt when she feels like Tyler does not appreciate how hard her family is working to help the Paquette family stay on the farm, not just about the money (205) ● Pages 250–251 describes how the Paquettes and the Mexican workers split work on the farm

<p>Understanding others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyler realizes that he has not spent much time with people who are different from him and how limited his experience has been (49) ● Tyler notices that the new workers speak Spanish, which makes him curious but also uncertain (Ch. 3–4). ● Tyler begins to observe rather than judge, noticing differences without fully understanding them yet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mari's family understands Grandma's connection to the farm—, Mari's uncle says, "you must promise not to send her from her home...we know what that is like." (134) ● Tyler understands Grandma's need for the farm (11) ● Tyler recognizes Mari's need for hope, shows her Pleiades, or Seven Sisters, all sisters reunited (146) ● When visiting Tío Felipe in prison, Tyler feels scared, he thinks about how Felipe must feel (152) ● Tyler begins to see Mr. Rosetti as a grandfatherly friend as he gets to know him (216)
<p>Home and belonging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Paquette farm is described as more than land; it is deeply connected to the family's identity and history (6) ● Tyler worries that losing the farm would mean losing his sense of home and devastate his dad ● Mari's family is also connected to the farm; more than one family can belong to the same place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyler grows closer to the three Marias through experiences like stargazing (117), says "there's room for you here on our farm" (143) ● Belonging complicated—Ofie and Luby are American—Papá realizes "They belong here. This is their home" (124) ● Grandma makes Mari's family feel like they belong—inviting to Thanksgiving (110), keeping company, has the girls call her "Grandma" (200) ● Grandma is very connected the farm—she wants to be carried out "feet first" (136)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mari says, "I used to feel so alone, neither Mexican nor American. But now that I have a special friend I feel like I don't have to be one thing or another." (202) ● Grandma plans to go to Mexico and visit Mari's family (253)
<p>Respect and fairness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyler becomes aware that some people do the hardest work but receive little recognition ● The workers' labor is necessary for the farm's survival, yet they are forced to hide (59) ● "The cows can't wait for their milking till the politicians get the laws changed." (87) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyler does not want Mary and her family to have to leave. "He wants the law to be changed so they can stay, helping the family as well as themselves." (113) ● When Ben and Tío Felipe are stopped by the police Felipe becomes a fugitive and Ben is just escorted home (122) ● "Even though this country is treating you like a criminal, you are our hero!" (157) ● Tyler continues to struggle with how his family can be good patriots and also employ undocumented workers (187) ● Mr. Bicknell ask others to consider the role immigrants have always played in shaping Vermont (190-191) ● "Why do we always have to hide how hard we are working? We are not criminals!" (203) ● Coyotes refer to humans as cargo (22)

Doing what is right

- After picking up the money, Tyler says the flag feels much heavier than it did before (186)
- He begins to question if he is an upstanding young man (187)
- Mr. Bicknell and Mom discuss what a good man Tyler is, but he doesn't feel like it (192-193)
- When Mr. Rosetti falls, Tyler does the right thing and tells him about the money (193)
- "Tyler feels older and wiser, as if he has both lost and found himself this town meeting night" (194)
- Tyler, who normally would not fight, gets into one with the boys who always make fun of Mari (204)
- Mr. Rosetti does not want to give money to the coyotes (220)
- Tyler gives his savings to Mari's father to save her mother (222)
- Tyler and Mari have to lie to his parents and aunt and uncle about the real reason for their trip (231)
- They save Mari's mother's life
- "Being an adult is about navigating your way through choices and challenges using the North Star of your heart and conscience." (257)
- Doing what is right can be confusing and contradict what you initially think or believe

Name: _____

Date: _____

Discussion Prompt

What themes are present so far in *Return to Sender*? Write a thematic statement that resonates most with you.

Use the box below to plan your response. Write your response on the lines below the box.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Exemplar Paragraphs

Exemplar 1

One theme that is present in *Return to Sender* is that working together makes it possible to get through hard times. Early in the story, Tyler's family struggles to keep the farm running after his father is injured, and there is too much work for everyone to handle on their own. Because of this, Tyler's family decides to hire migrant workers to help with the farm work. Mari's family works long hours milking cows and helping take care of the farm, which shows that many people are needed to keep it going. Tyler also notices that life on the farm changes once more people are working together. This evidence shows that cooperation is an important idea in the story and that the theme of working together continues to develop as the novel unfolds.

Exemplar 2

One theme that is present in *Return to Sender* is that working together makes it possible to get through hard times. This theme begins to develop when Tyler's father is badly injured, leaving the family unable to manage the farm on their own. With Tyler's brother leaving for college and Tyler in school, the Paquettes' farm, like many dairy farms, is struggling (7). Because of this, the Paquettes hire Mari's family, whose hard work allows the farm to keep running. For example, on Thanksgiving, "It's late by the time the meal is done and the Mexican workers head off to the evening milking." (112) On pages 250–251, the author describes how the Paquettes work tirelessly in the field, while Mari's father and Tío milk the cows and do the barn chores, crossing paths only briefly as each group finishes for the night. Even though the work is exhausting for both the Paquettes and the Cruzes, they are all committed to helping the farm survive. This evidence shows that cooperation is an important idea in the story and that the theme of working together continues to develop as the novel unfolds.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Single Paragraph Outline

Topic Sentence: _____

● Detail 1: _____

● Detail 2: _____

● Detail 3: _____

● Detail 4: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 281 – 296.

1. On page 269, Tyler stops Mari from running to her parents. What does this reveal about Tyler and how he's changed?

2. Where does Grandma take Tyler and the girls? Why?

3. On page 273, Mr. Rosetti says, "That's no way to treat decent folks!" How do Mr. Rosetti's actions in this chapter reveal how he has changed?

4. Why are *las golondrinas* important to Mari?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Today's reading was *Return to Sender* pg. 299 – 318.

1. Summarize what happens when Mari goes to the Homeland Security office.

2. How do Ofie and Luby respond to the news that they are moving back to Mexico? How does Mari change their minds?

3. Explain why Mari is both excited and upset about her return to Mexico.

4. Why is Mari willing to give up her life in Vermont for her parents?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

testimony commending

Explain why Mari decides to visit the Homeland Security office and what this shows about her character.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. What is the plan for the farm? How does Tyler feel about it?

2. How does thinking about Mari and her family help Tyler cope with the possibility of not farming anymore?

3. Summarize Tyler's letter to Mari.

4. Based on Mari's letter, how has the family adjusted to being back in Mexico? Explain the different points of view they have of being back.

5. Think about the events in the story. What might the swallows represent in the text *Return to Sender*?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

Why does Mari propose naming the farm Stars and Swallows, *Estrellas y Golondrinas*?

Explain whether you think this is the right name for the farm.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Compare and Contrast Graphic Organizer

	Tyler	Mari
Ethnic Background		
History		
Customs		

	Tyler	Mari
Values and Beliefs		
Priorities		
Other		

Name: _____ Date: _____

Compare and Contrast Graphic Organizer

	Tyler	Mari
Ethnic Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● White ● Family immigrated from Canada in the 1800s (87) ● Beginning to see his social and legal privilege 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mexican ● Undocumented, has two American sisters (18)
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi-generation Vermont farming family (6) ● Limited exposure to life outside his community—"For the first time in his life, he has met people who are really different." (49) ● Father is seriously injured, threatening the family's ability to keep the farm (5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Born in Las Margaritas → North Carolina → Vermont (17) ● Separated from mother (17) ● Constantly worried about La Migra
Customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily routines tied to farm life: milking cows, maintaining the land ● Halloween: Trick-or-Treating; jack-o'-lantern (104, 83) ● Thanksgiving dinner with the whole family (112) ● Celebrates Christmas, Groundhog Day on Feb. 2 ● Town meeting day, special to Vermont (182) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bilingual Spanish is spoken at home, English in public, Spanish words sprinkled in ● Sept. 16th-Mexican Independence day (71-72) ● Day of the Dead: three days, alters to remember the dead (83) ● Celebrates Christmas, Three King Day on Jan. 6, Day of the Candles on Feb. 2

	Tyler	Mari
Values and Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responsibility, loyalty to family, and preserving the farm ● Christian Faith (82) ● Laws are always right and just; "All his life his parents had taught him to obey the laws and respect the United States of America." (56) ● Hard work is recognized and rewarded ● Sometimes doing the right thing is difficult—returning Mr. Rosetti's money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family unity is essential—always worrying about Tío's, father, sisters, never gives up on mother ● "How sweet it is when a family is reunited and the lost ones are brought back into the fold." (134) ● Catholic (135) ● Hard work is necessary to survive ● What is right does not always align with the law—"Why do we always have to hide how hard we are working? We are not criminals!" (203)
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Saving the farm for his family, especially for his father and grandmother ● Obedience, fairness, and following the law (56) ● Broadening understanding of right and wrong—Tío Felipe is in jail, but not a bad person; his parents and uncle hire undocumented workers ● New focus on protecting the people he cares about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting her family, especially her younger siblings ● Bringing her family back together ● Preserving her connection to her Mexican Heritage and family ● Begins to trust and open up more—"I used to feel so alone, neither Mexican nor American. But now that I have a special friend I feel like I don't have to be one thing or another." (202)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wants to do the right thing, but sometimes struggles—Tries to stand up to bullies, but backs down (66) ● Has to mature quickly to help on the farm ● Learning and evolving through his friendship with Mari 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lives with constant uncertainty and fear ● Has to mature quickly to take care of her family ● Will do anything for family, even when it is scary and hard—giving her testimony Homeland Security (290-292)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: Mari and Tyler's friendship changes both of their lives by helping them understand others in new ways. Even though they come from very different backgrounds, their relationship helps them grow through empathy, trust, and responsibility.

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: Tyler's friendship with Mari helps him rethink his beliefs about the law and what it means to do the right thing.

- **Detail:** Beginning → believes laws are always right and should be followed → taught from a young age to obey the law and respect the United States (56)
- **Detail:** Starts to reconsider understanding of right vs. wrong → sees undocumented people can be hardworking and good
- **Detail:** Priorities shift to protecting people he cares about → focus not only on saving the farm but also on helping and protecting Mari and her family

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: Mari's friendship with Tyler helps her learn to trust others and become comfortable with who she is.

- **Detail:** Lives with fear and a lot of responsibility → constantly worried about La Migra and taking care of sisters
- **Detail:** Opens up to Tyler → Mari begins to share personal thoughts and worries
- **Detail:** Mari feels more confident about who she is → Having a special friend helps her feel less alone and less pressured to choose between being Mexican or American (202)

Conclusion: Through their friendship, Mari and Tyler both grow in understanding, showing how relationships can shape the way people see the world and each other.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Discussion Prompt

Write a multiple-paragraph essay that compares and contrasts Mari and Tyler. Your essay should explain how their relationship impacts both of their lives.

Use the box below to plan your response. Write your response on the lines below the box.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Point of View:

Setting:

Characters:

Climax:

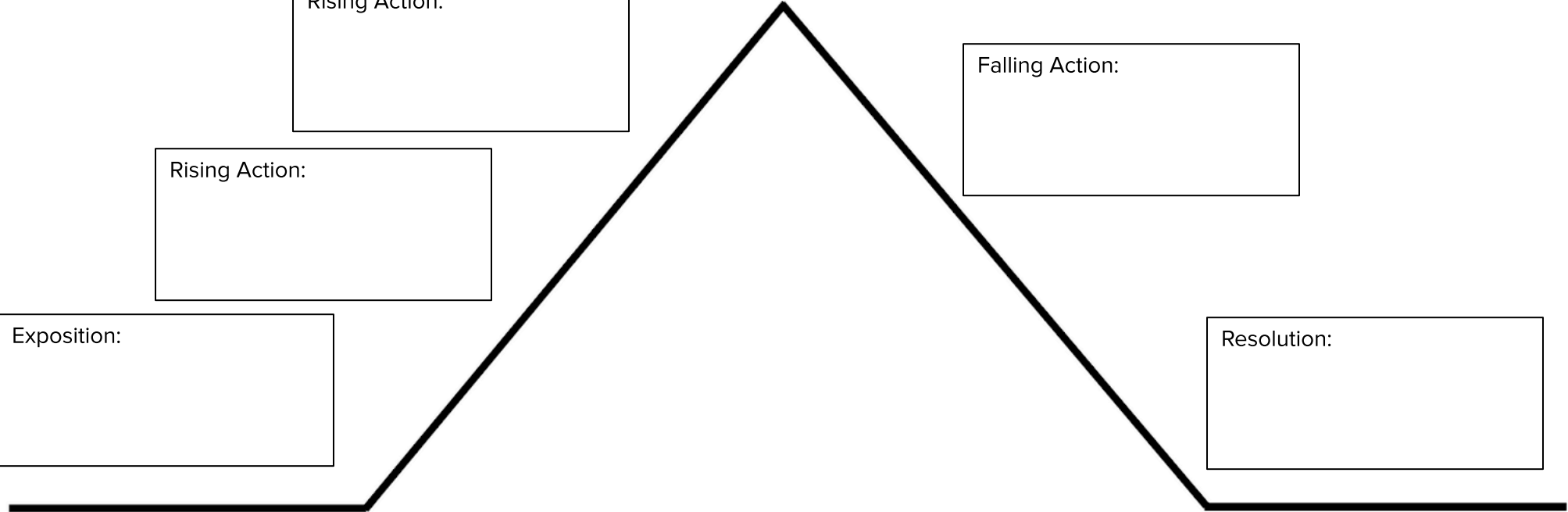
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Falling Action:

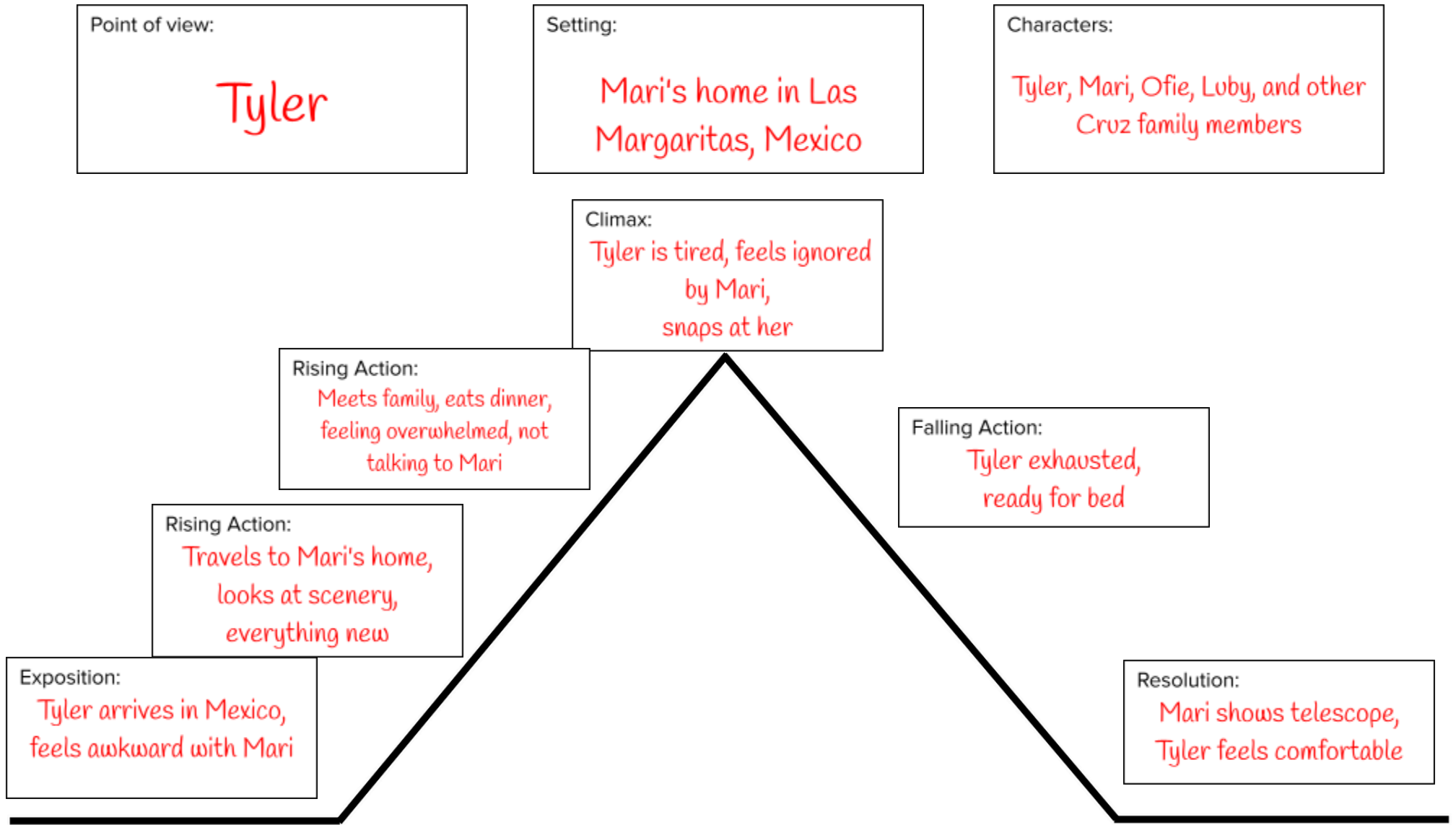
Rising Action:

Exposition:

Resolution:



Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer



Sample Response: Day 2, Initial Drafting

"Tyler!"

Tyler spun around at the sound of his name and scanned the crowd. Fast-moving travelers made it difficult to scan the faces in the Mexican airport. Suddenly Tyler noticed a jostling in the crowd, and Mari burst towards him. He ran to meet her, but as soon as they were within a few feet they both paused. *Should he hug her? Give her a high five?* he thought.

Before he could decide, Tyler was tackled around the waist by Mari's younger sisters, Lubi and Ofie. They bounced around him, eager to hear about his plane ride.

"Leave him alone, Tyler must be exhausted!" Mari laughed, as she shooed her sisters away. She grabbed the handle to his suitcase, while Tyler shouldered his duffel bag.

"Wow, I can't believe I'm actually here!" Tyler exclaimed, as they followed the crowds that seemed to be heading towards an exit. He could hardly believe that he was in another country, and that he was actually seeing his friend again.

On the drive to Mari's family home, Tyler was awestruck by the scenery around him. The vivid green trees and dirt roads were so familiar to him— just like Vermont— and yet at the same time everything was different. The color of the earth, the species of trees, and the songs of birds felt like a whole new world. While the two younger Marias chattered away beside him, Tyler tried to notice every detail of this new land.

Conclusion Quick-Write

Writers want to end their story in a way that is entertaining and satisfying for the reader. Craft choices writers use to do this include:

- Resolving the problem while showing a lesson or change.
- Showing how the narrator reflects on the events of the story.
- Leaving the reader with a question to continue to think about.

Think about the final event in your story. Write a conclusion below, thinking about the final event of the story and a craft choice that will leave your reader satisfied and engaged.

Sample Response: Day 3, Finish Drafting

"Tyler!"

Tyler spun around at the sound of his name and scanned the crowd. Fast-moving travelers made it difficult to scan the faces in the airport. Suddenly Tyler noticed a jostling in the crowd, and Mari burst towards him. He ran to meet her, but as soon as they were within a few feet they both paused. Should he hug her? Give her a high five?

Before he could decide, Tyler was tackled around the waist by Mari's younger sisters, Lubi and Ofie. They bounced around him, eager to hear about his plane ride.

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Tyler could still hardly believe that his parents had allowed him to travel all the way to Mexico. After last year's canceled D.C. trip and the wild events on the farm, they sat him down and explained how proud they were of how he had handled all that had happened. The farm was doing well, especially now that Dad could work a little more, and Tyler had been saving all of his money that he earned working for Mr. Rossetti. His parents knew how much Tyler missed Mari and her family, and his grandmother had persuaded them to let him come for a visit. Still, Tyler hadn't quite believed the trip would really happen until he stepped onto the plane in Boston.

But now that he was here, Tyler was finding it hard to talk to Mari. They had exchanged letters for many months, yet seeing each other in person left his brain feeling frozen. What should they talk about? Why did seeing his friend feel so strange?

When they arrived at the family's home, Ofie and Luby grabbed Tyler's hands and excitedly showed him the house, the small yard with a cat lounging in the sun, and the garden that was bursting with peppers, tomatoes, and leafy greens. When they burst into the kitchen, Tyler was overwhelmed by warm hugs and laughter from various family members, whose names he could

hardly catch as he was introduced. His grandmother and Mr. Rossetti joined them for the meal, and he couldn't believe how easily they fit into the large Mexican family!

All through dinner Tyler answered questions from aunts, uncles, and grandparents, with the younger Marias translating for him. Mari sat quietly next to Tyler, but they barely spoke the entire meal. By the end of the evening, Tyler was exhausted and couldn't wait to fall into the bed of the extra room in his grandma's rented apartment.

Just as he was about to leave, he felt a tap on his shoulder. He spun around to see Mari. He felt a pit of guilt in his stomach, and began to apologize for his rude words to her. Just then he stopped, as he noticed what she was carrying. Mari smiled, holding Tyler's old telescope in her arms.

"Do you think you have time for a quick stargazing lesson before you leave?" she asked shyly. Tyler couldn't contain his smile, and for the first time that day, he knew exactly where he fit in.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

Write a story describing what happens the next time Tyler and Mari see each other.

Your story should:

- Be told from either Tyler or Mari's point of view
- Have a logical and engaging sequence of events
- Include precise, detailed words and phrases

Name: _____ Date: _____

Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Point of View:

Setting:

Characters:

Climax:

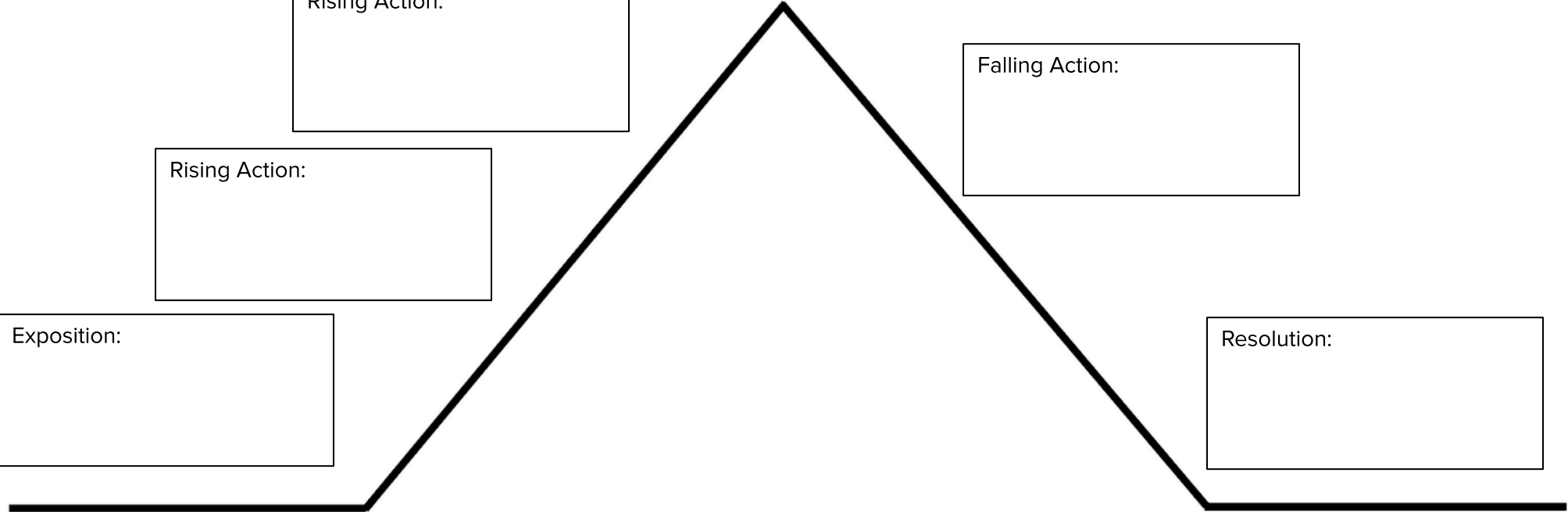
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Falling Action:

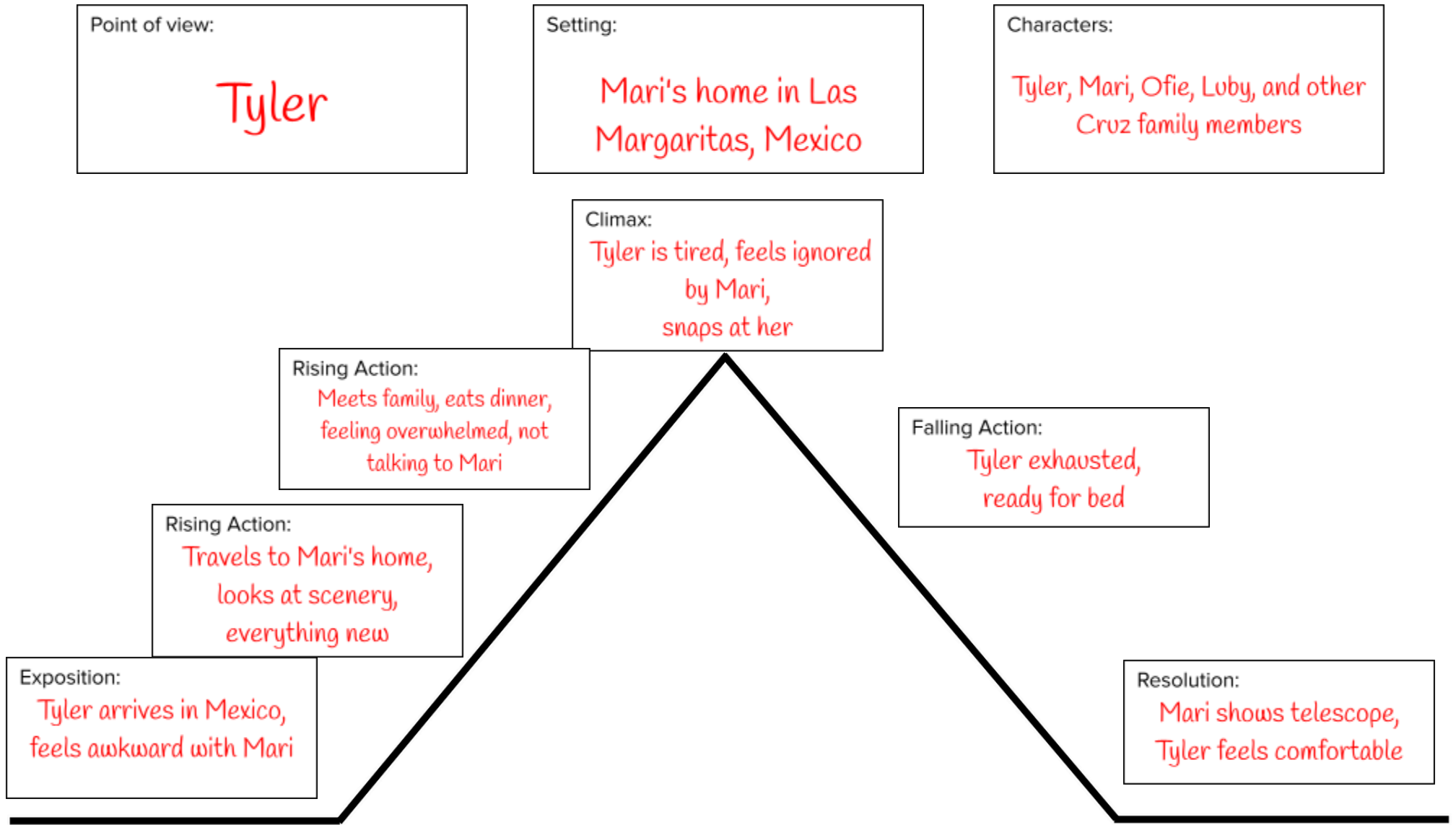
Rising Action:

Exposition:

Resolution:



Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer



Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

Brainstorm the point of view, setting, characters, and events using the [Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer](#).

Name: _____ Date: _____

Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Point of View:

Setting:

Characters:

Climax:

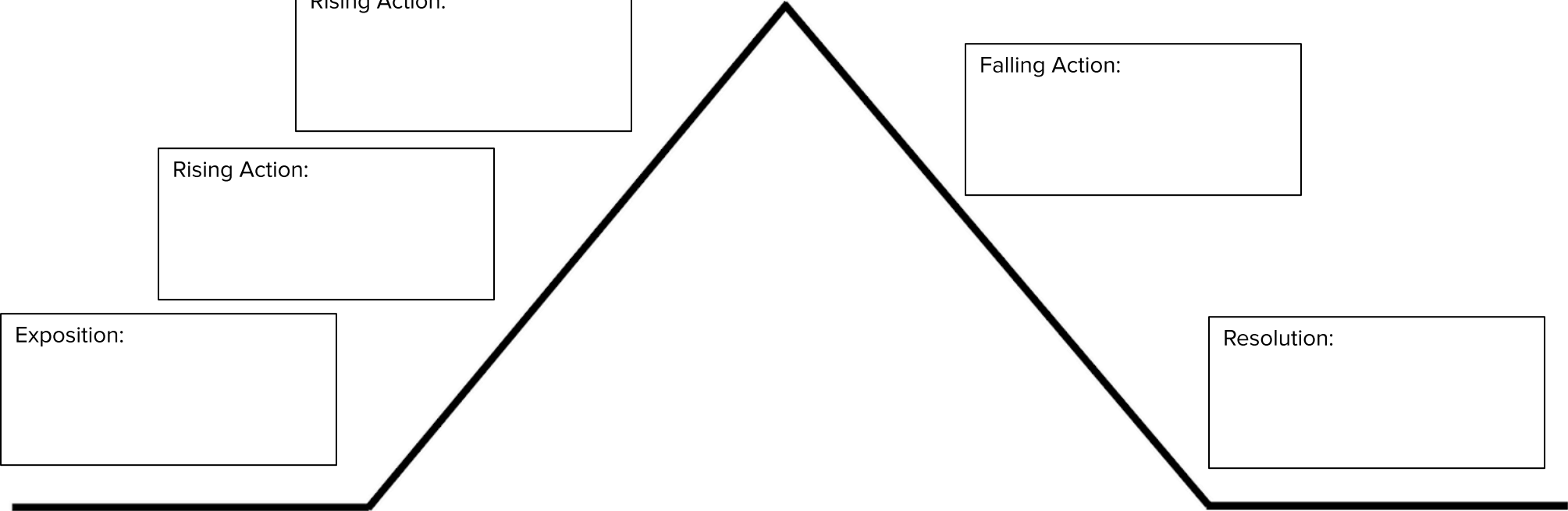
Rising Action:

Falling Action:

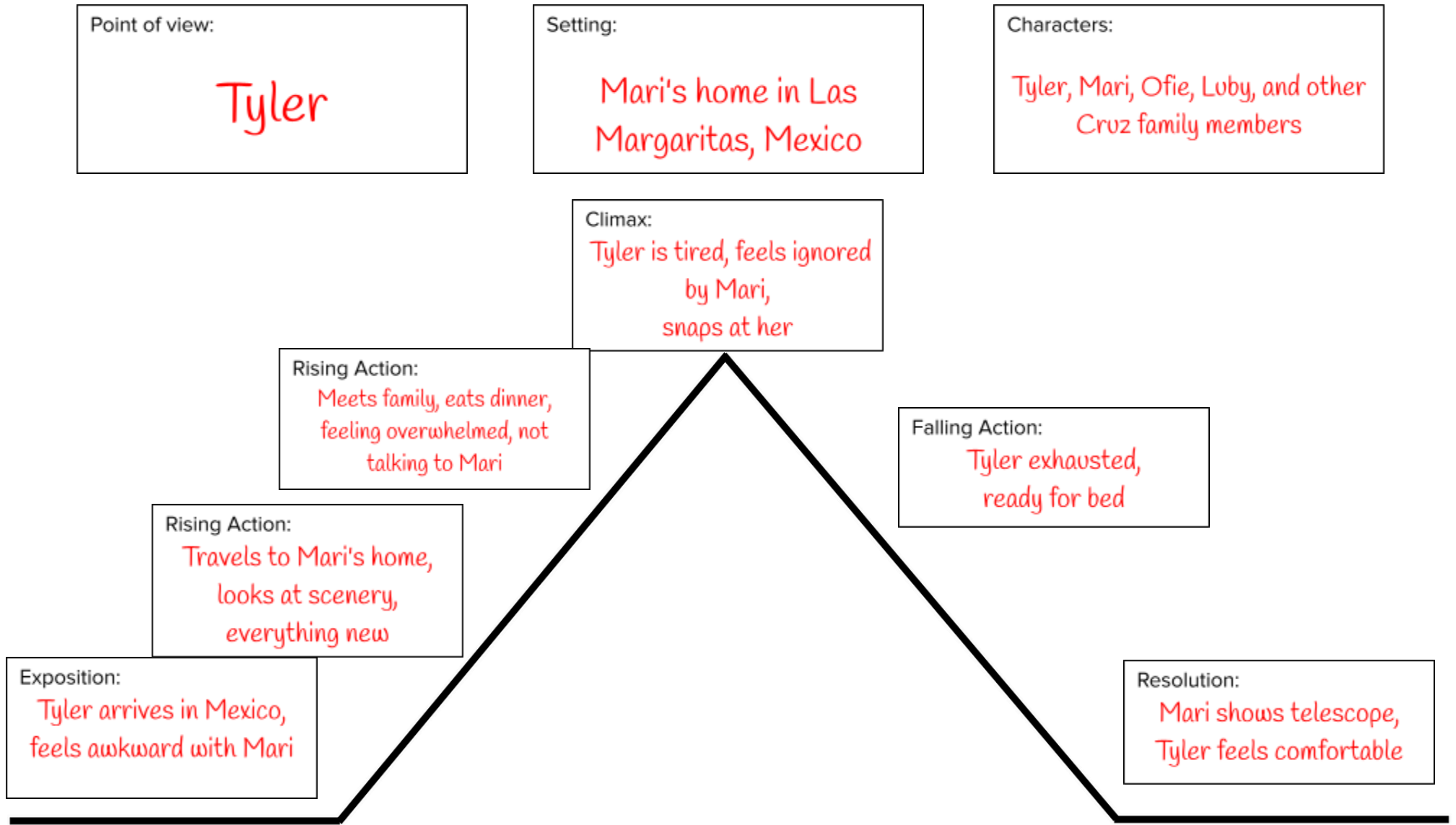
Rising Action:

Exposition:

Resolution:



Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer



Sample Response: Day 2, Initial Drafting

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer

Point of View:

Setting:

Characters:

Climax:

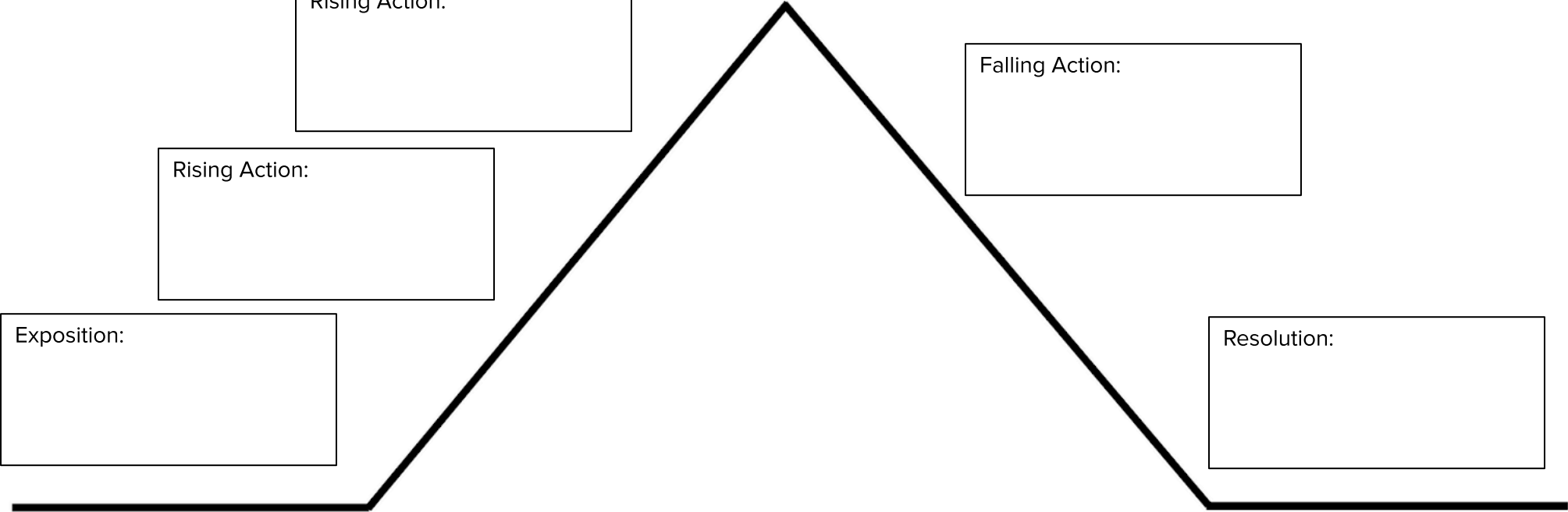
Rising Action:

Falling Action:

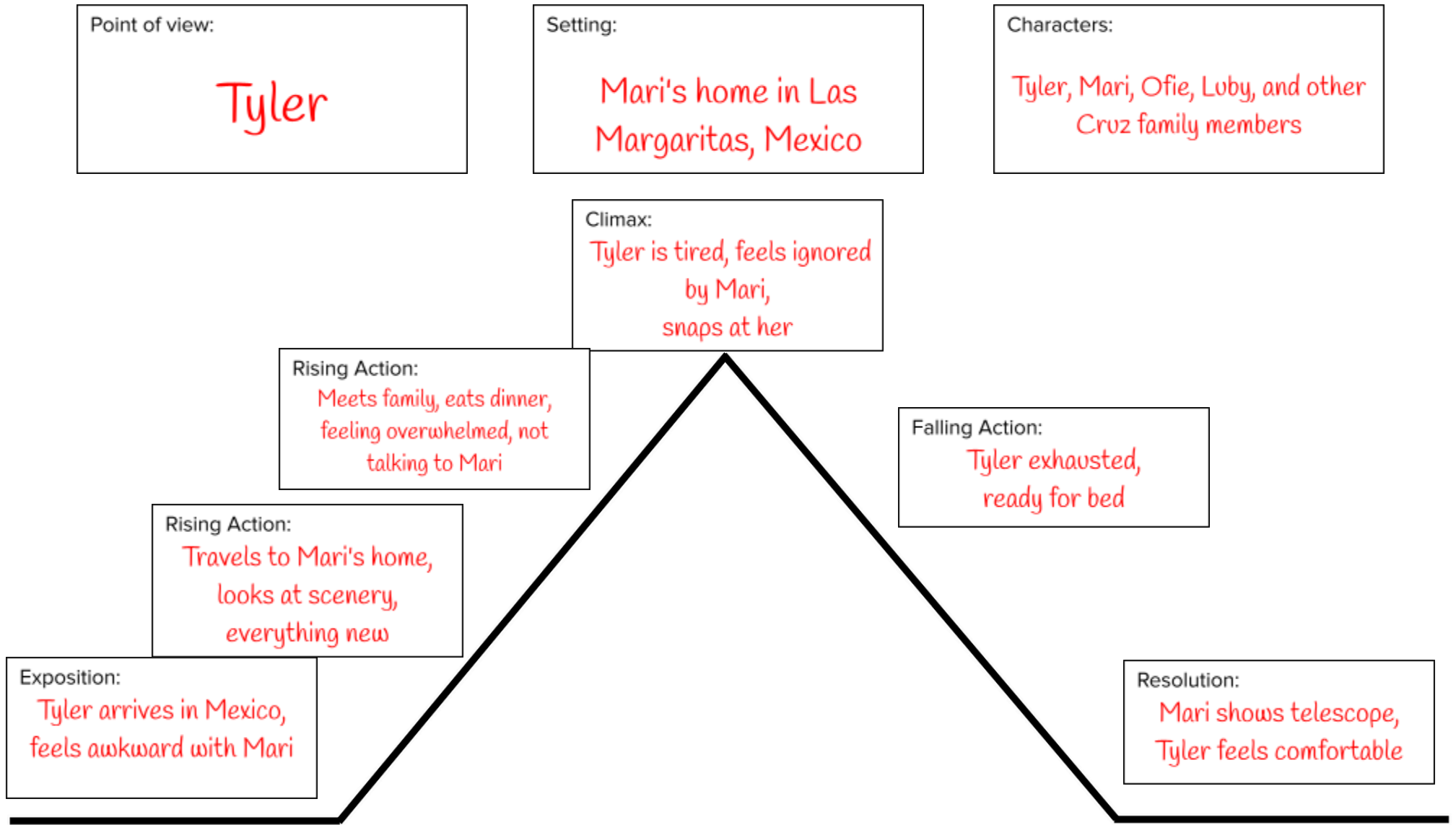
Rising Action:

Exposition:

Resolution:



Narrative Brainstorming Graphic Organizer



Sample Response: Day 3, Finish Drafting

"Tyler!"

Tyler spun around at the sound of his name and scanned the crowd. Fast-moving travelers made it difficult to scan the faces in the airport. Suddenly Tyler noticed a jostling in the crowd, and Mari burst towards him. He ran to meet her, but as soon as they were within a few feet they both paused. Should he hug her? Give her a high five?

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Tyler could still hardly believe that his parents had allowed him to travel all the way to Mexico. After last year's canceled D.C. trip and the wild events on the farm, they sat him down and explained how proud they were of how he had handled all that had happened. The farm was doing well, especially now that Dad could work a little more, and Tyler had been saving all of his money that he earned working for Mr. Rossetti. His parents knew how much Tyler missed Mari and her family, and his grandmother had persuaded them to let him come for a visit. Still, Tyler hadn't quite believed the trip would really happen until he stepped onto the plane in Boston.

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When they arrived at the family's home, Ofie and Luby grabbed Tyler's hands and excitedly showed him the house, the small yard with a cat lounging in the sun, and the garden that was bursting with peppers, tomatoes, and leafy greens. When they burst into the kitchen, Tyler was overwhelmed by warm hugs and laughter from various family members, whose names he could

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"Do you think you have time for a quick stargazing lesson before you leave?" she asked shyly. Tyler couldn't contain his smile, and for the first time that day, he knew exactly where he fit in.

Conclusion Quick-Write

Writers want to end their story in a way that is entertaining and satisfying for the reader. Craft choices writers use to do this include:

- Resolving the problem while showing a lesson or change.
- Showing how the narrator reflects on the events of the story.
- Leaving the reader with a question to continue to think about.

Think about the final event in your story. Write a conclusion below, thinking about the final event of the story and a craft choice that will leave your reader satisfied and engaged.

Name: _____

Writing Prompt

Add a conclusion to your story that:

- resolves the problem while showing a lesson or change,
- shows how the narrator reflects on the events of the story,
- or leaves the reader with a question to continue to think about

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____

- Detail: _____

- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Farm Name Brainstorm

Part 1:

Important Details from the Text

List significant moments from *Return to Sender* that happen on or because of the farm.

Page number	Important Detail

Part 2

What Do These Details Show About the Farm?

What big idea connects these details? What does the farm stand for? (Examples: teamwork, dignity, belonging, home)

Possible Farm Names

Brainstorm names that match the big idea above.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: Choosing a name for a place matters because it tells a story about what is important there. Based on the events in the novel, Manos Unidas Farm, meaning United Hands Farm, is a fitting name for the Paquette farm.

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: This name fits because the Paquette farm survives through the work of many hands working together.

- Detail: Tyler's father is injured in a horrible accident (5) → the Paquettes must think about selling the farm (6-7)
- Detail: Mari's family does the daily work → the help allows the Paquettes to stay on the farm (13)
- Detail: Both the Paquettes and Mari's family important partners → Tyler thanks Mari (191) and Mrs. Paquette calls them angels (32)

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: Manos Unidas Farm also reflects how shared work helps people understand one another across differences.

- Detail: In the beginning, Tyler does not fully understand Mari → realizes he hasn't met many people different from him (49)
- Detail: Tyler learns more about Mexican culture and traditions; realizes how far they are from home → they belong on the farm too (91)

- **Detail:** The Paquettes begin to see Mari and her family as part of their family; they begin to see the farm as home (267) → they are all connected (306)

Conclusion: In conclusion, the Paquette farm becomes a place where many hands work together to keep the land going and where people from different backgrounds learn to belong and care for one another. Because the farm survives through shared work and growing partnerships, what name could reflect that better than Manos Unidas Farm?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

On page 317, Mari writes, "Too bad Mr. Bicknell won't be your teacher anymore. He would come up with a creative assignment for everyone in class to suggest a name and write a story why. The link in a democracy, everyone would vote."

Using details from the novel, choose a meaningful name for the Paquette farm and write a multi-paragraph essay explaining why this name fits the place and the people connected to it.

Write a multiple paragraph essay to answer the question. Your essay should:

- Propose a name for the Paquette Farm.
- Include reasons and details to support your opinion.
- Include transition words and phrases to link different reasons.
- Provide a concluding statement.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Farm Name Brainstorm

Part 1:

Important Details from the Text

List significant moments from *Return to Sender* that happen on or because of the farm.

Page number	Important Detail

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What Do These Details Show About the Farm?

What big idea connects these details? What does the farm stand for? (Examples: teamwork, dignity, belonging, home)

Possible Farm Names

Brainstorm names that match the big idea above.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Writing Prompt

Think about the Paquette farm and the people connected to it in *Return to Sender*. Brainstorm possible names for the farm and list reasons why each name would fit. Use the text to gather details about the farm, the workers, and what the farm represents. Then, choose the name you feel strongest about and organize your reasons and evidence to prepare for writing your essay.

You should:

- Orally brainstorm ideas before choosing a position.
- Plan your opinion writing using a [Two Paragraph Outline](#) or [Three Paragraph Outline](#).

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____

- Detail: _____

- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____

Writing Prompt

Write an introduction for your essay about naming the Paquette farm that clearly states the name you believe best fits the Paquette farm.

Your introduction should include:

- Background information to introduce the topic that may include a question, fact, image, example, or story
- A clearly stated opinion, written in the third-person

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: Choosing a name for a place matters because it tells a story about what is important there. Based on the events in the novel, Manos Unidas Farm, meaning United Hands Farm, is a fitting name for the Paquette farm.

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: This name fits because the Paquette farm survives through the work of many hands working together.

- Detail: Tyler's father is injured in a horrible accident (5) → the Paquettes must think about selling the farm (6–7)
- Detail: Mari's family does the daily work → the help allows the Paquettes to stay on the farm (13)
- Detail: Both the Paquettes and Mari's family important partners → Tyler thanks Mari (191) and Mrs. Paquette calls them angels (32)

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: Manos Unidas Farm also reflects how shared work helps people understand one another across differences.

- Detail: In the beginning, Tyler does not fully understand Mari → realizes he hasn't met many people different from him (49)
- Detail: Tyler learns more about Mexican culture and traditions; realizes how far they are from home → they belong on the farm too (91)

- **Detail:** The Paquettes begin to see Mari and her family as part of their family; they begin to see the farm as home (267) → they are all connected (306)

Conclusion: In conclusion, the Paquette farm becomes a place where many hands work together to keep the land going and where people from different backgrounds learn to belong and care for one another. Because the farm survives through shared work and growing partnerships, what name could reflect that better than Manos Unidas Farm?

Name: _____

Writing Prompt

Write at least two body paragraphs explaining why your chosen name fits the Paquette farm. Each paragraph should focus on a different reason.

- Body Paragraph 1: Explain how the name fits the place, using specific details from the novel.
- Body Paragraph 2: Explain how the name fits the people connected to the farm, using details about their values, experiences, or relationships.

Each paragraph should include:

- A clear topic sentence that states a reason to support your position
- Specific details or evidence that support your idea
- The strongest reasons or details first
- Only details that strengthen your position

Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Paragraph Outline

Topic: _____

Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 2

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____
- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____

Paragraph 3

Topic Sentence: _____

- Detail: _____

- Detail: _____

- Detail: _____

Concluding Sentence: _____



Vocabulary

Word	Part of Speech	Definition
agitated	adj.	bothered by something
ballistic	adj.	very angry
commending	v.	praising; usually in public
console	v.	to help someone feel less sad or disappointed
contradiction	n.	something that goes against, or is the opposite of, what was said before
culpable	adj.	deserving blame
ecstatic	adj.	very happy or excited
en-	prefix	
enlightened	adj.	having or showing a good understanding of how people should be treated
esteemed	adj.	held in great respect; admired greatly
insistent	adj.	demanding something happen
-ous	suffix	possessing the qualities of

Word	Part of Speech	Definition
petition	n.	make or present a formal request with respect to a particular cause
pre-	prefix	before
preoccupying	v.	thinking or worrying about often
reluctance	n.	a feeling of not wanting to do something, because you are unsure or don't feel confident about it
resigned	adj.	defeated, but accepting
-sion	suffix	
testimony	n.	what someone says in a court of law while promising to be honest
-tion	suffix	act, process
un-	prefix	not
unburden	v.	to take a problem or burden from someone
undisclosed	adj.	not shared with the public
upstanding	adj.	honest and respectable



Unit Rubrics & Assessments

Narrative Writing Rubric

5th Grade English Language Arts

Rubric Scoring Key	Fully meets (4) All criteria present in the writing	Mostly meets (3) Most criteria present, with some misunderstandings	Partially meets (2) Criteria attempted, but major misunderstandings	Does not meet yet (1) Criteria are not attempted or not enough evidence to rate
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Structure	Rubric Score	Notes
Event Sequence Includes all the key components of the narrative arc: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution; Uses paragraphs to manage the sequence of events by showing a new event or when a new character speaks	4 3 2 1	
Point of View Point of view is clear and consistent throughout the story; Clear understanding of the task's audience and purpose	4 3 2 1	
Setting Includes many details directly and indirectly to describe the place, time, and (if pertinent) the weather conditions of the story; Describes the setting using multiple sensory details, descriptions of the characters' actions, dialogue, or physical appearance; Uses adjectives to evoke mood or atmosphere	4 3 2 1	
Paragraph Structure Consistently starts new paragraphs appropriately, including when a new event starts or when a new character is speaking	4 3 2 1	

Development	Rubric Score	Notes
Characters Includes one or more major characters; Develops the major character with multiple details and descriptions; Uses both direct and indirect description	4 3 2 1	
Plot Begins by introducing the characters, setting, and background information using sensory details; <u>May</u> begin by dropping the reader into the action; Major characters experience and solve problems throughout the story; Ends with a resolution, which <u>may</u> include: resolving the problem while showing a lesson or change, showing how the narrator reflects on the events of the story, or leaving the reader with a question to continue to think about	4 3 2 1	
Precise Words and Phrases Uses several temporal words to help the events in the story unfold logically	4 3 2 1	
Dialogue Appropriately uses dialogue to advance the plot and establish a character's personality; Includes a variety of dialogue tags that show how the characters are speaking	4 3 2 1	

Language	Rubric Score	Notes
Grammar Expands, combines, and reduces sentences when revising for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style; Appropriately uses correlative conjunctions (e.g. <i>either/or</i> , <i>neither/nor</i>); Uses verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions; Recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb tense when revising	4 3 2 1	
Conventions Uses correct capitalization and punctuation conventions; Uses commas correctly, including to separate items in a series, separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence, set off the words "yes" and "no" (e.g. <i>Yes, thank you</i>), set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g. <i>It's true, isn't it?</i>), indicate a direct address (e.g. <i>Is that you, Norma?</i>); Uses underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works	4 3 2 1	

Opinion Writing Rubric

5th Grade English Language Arts

Rubric Scoring Key	Fully meets (4) All criteria present in the writing	Mostly meets (3) Most criteria present, with some misunderstandings	Partially meets (2) Criteria attempted, but major misunderstandings	Does not meet yet (1) Criteria are not attempted or not enough evidence to rate
Structure				
Organizational Structure Ideas grouped with multiple paragraphs; Each paragraph focuses on one reason that supports the position; All facts and details are grouped and ordered intentionally; Uses third-person to state opinion consistently		Rubric Score 4 3 2 1		Notes
Introduction Clearly states a topic and opinion based on facts and details; Introduction <u>may</u> use a lead that captures the reader's interest, such as presenting interesting details or facts, describing a memorable image, or providing an anecdote		Rubric Score 4 3 2 1		Notes
Conclusion Includes a concluding sentence or section that asks a question or makes a suggestion; Begins with a transition word or phrase unique to conclusions (e.g. <i>In conclusion, finally, in closing, in summary, thus, therefore</i>)		Rubric Score 4 3 2 1		Notes
Development				
Reasons Includes three to four facts and details to support their position; Effectively chooses compelling reasons and orders most compelling reasons first; Elaborates on reasons and details by providing explanations, examples, or context		Rubric Score 4 3 2 1		Notes
Linking Words and Phrases Effectively and consistently uses linking words or phrases to connect opinion and reasons or paragraphs		Rubric Score 4 3 2 1		Notes
Language				
Grammar Expands, combines, and reduces sentences when revising for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style; Appropriately uses correlative conjunctions (e.g. <i>either/or, neither/nor</i>); Uses verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions; Recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb tense when revising		Rubric Score 4 3 2 1		Notes
Conventions Uses correct capitalization and punctuation conventions; Uses commas correctly, including to separate items in a series, separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence, set off the words "yes" and "no" (e.g. <i>Yes, thank you</i>), set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g. <i>It's true, isn't it?</i>), to indicate a direct address (e.g. <i>Is that you, Norma?</i>); Uses underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works		Rubric Score 4 3 2 1		Notes

Name: _____ Date: _____

Single Point Narrative Writing Rubric

	Areas for Growth What could I do to make my writing even stronger? How can I improve?	Criteria Expectations for my writing assignment:	Strengths What am I doing well already? What am I proud of?
Event Sequence		I include a logical sequence of events that describe a conflict, climax, and resolution.	
		I include a satisfying ending that leaves the reader with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lesson learned • The narrator's reflection • A final question to think about 	
Setting		I include details that show where and when the story takes place.	
Characters		I include details and descriptions that help readers get to know the characters.	
Precise Words and Phrases		I include precise words and phrases that show a sequence or specific timing of events.	

Name: _____ Date: _____

Single Point Opinion Writing Rubric

	Areas for Growth What could I do to make my writing even stronger? How can I improve?	Criteria Expectations for my writing assignment:	Strengths What am I doing well already? What am I proud of?
Introduction		My introduction clearly states my position and may hook the reader by including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A question- Important facts or details- A relevant story	
Conclusion		My conclusion brings a sense of closure and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A transition word or phrase- A summary of the position and main ideas	
Position		My position is clearly stated and is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Written in third-person- Based on facts and details, not my personal experiences	
Reasons		My main ideas are clearly explained and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Facts and details to support each idea- Appropriate explanation to connect details to the main idea	

Name: _____ Date: _____

Editing Checklist 1

Language and Conventions Focus Area	✓
I keep verb tenses consistent so the time of the action is clear.	

My writing goal:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Editing Checklist 2

Language and Conventions Focus Area	✓
I keep verb tenses consistent so the time of the action is clear.	
I expand, combine, or reduce sentences intentionally to convey meaning or create a specific voice.	
I use punctuation (commas, periods, question marks, exclamation points, or ellipses) to convey meaning or to create a specific voice.	

My writing goal:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read the short story "El Angel de Oro" from the book *The Circuit: stories from the life of a migrant child* by Francisco Jiménez, then answer the questions that follow.

El Angel de Oro

By Francisco Jiménez

In this excerpt, the narrator and his family live in a labor camp with other migrant workers. Migrant workers are people who travel, sometimes between states and even countries, to work seasonal jobs, like picking fruit and vegetables.

- 1 It always rained a lot in Corcoran during the cotton season, but that year it rained more than usual. No sooner had we arrived from Fowler, where we had picked grapes, than it started to pour. Our cabin was one of several farm-worker shacks lined up in a row behind which ran a small creek.
- 2 There was not a lot to do when it rained. We stayed indoors telling ghost stories we had heard from other migrant workers. We also played guessing games. When I got tired of listening to the same stories told many times before, I watched our neighbor's goldfish. From our window I could see into the next cabin where a fishbowl sat on a small table. I spent hours glued to our window, watching the goldfish glide in slow motion, stirring the jade green plants with its delicate fins. Mamá enjoyed watching it too. She called it "*el Angel de Oro*."
- 3 Papá passed most of his time worrying. He smoked one cigarette after another and complained about the rain because we could not pick the cotton when it was wet. "If this rain doesn't stop we'll have to leave and find work somewhere else," he repeated, pacing up and down the floor. Even the thought of rain gave him a headache. Luckily for me, I got to go to school the following week.
- 4 Monday morning, after getting Mamá's blessing, I headed for school, which was only about a mile from the cotton labor camp. I could see it from where we lived. On the way, I met Miguelito, who lived in the same labor camp. He was two years older than I and had started school for the first time that year a month earlier, in October. He took me to the main office and translated into Spanish some of the questions the principal asked me. Before I was led to my third grade class, Miguelito and I agreed to meet on the playground after school and walk home together.
- 5 Miguelito was already waiting for me when I got to the playground. We started walking toward the labor camp, following the same route we had taken that morning. The path was muddy and full of puddles, just like the school playground. Miguelito and I imagined the puddles were lakes and we pretended to be giants stepping over them. We counted out loud the number of lakes we stepped over, trying to outdo each other. Miguelito had longer legs than I did, but I kept up with him until I slipped and lost my balance. My right foot landed right in one of the puddles, splashing muddy water on my clean overalls and on Miguelito. The cardboard inside my shoe got soggy and started to fall apart. Once I collected myself, Miguelito and I began laughing. We continued walking but every time we looked at each other, we would start laughing again. This

went on until we arrived at the labor camp.

- 6 As we approached our cabin, I knew no one was home because our *Carcachita*, our old jalopy, was not parked in front. "Want to come in?" I asked.
- 7 "I have to go home first," he answered. "I'll come back in a little while."
- 8 "I'll be in the back by the creek," I said. "Don't forget, our cabin is number ten."
- 9 "I live ten cabins down from you, number twenty," Miguelito replied cheerfully.
- 10 I went inside our cabin. It was cold and quiet. I went over to our window to look at our neighbor's goldfish. I watched it swim back and forth. "I wonder if he gets lonely," I thought to myself. I then went out behind our cabin, and sat on a rock by the edge of the creek. I listened to the water murmur and watched the little gray fish play with each other. The current gently tugged at the plants growing in the water. I picked up some pebbles and tossed them in one at a time, trying not to hit the fish.
- 11 "What are you doing?" asked Miguelito, coming up behind me and making me jump.
- 12 "I am just watching the little fish while I wait for my parents to get back from work."
- 13 "Do you want to catch some?"
- 14 "Catch what?" I asked.
- 15 "Fish, *tonto*," he replied, chuckling.
- 16 Before I could answer, he jumped up like a grasshopper, ran over to a small pepper tree that was a few yards away, and yanked off two branches. "These are our fishing poles," he said excitedly, handing one over to me. "Tomorrow I'll bring the other stuff and we'll finish making them."
- 17 That night it poured again, and in the morning the rain turned to drizzle. I put my hat on and walked out the door, hoping to meet Miguelito so we could walk to school together. I could not wait to catch fish with him in the afternoon, but he did not show up, and I did not see him at school all day. When I returned home from school that afternoon, I went to see if he was waiting for me by the creek. He was not there either. Then I remembered his cabin number. I hurried to number twenty and knocked on the door. No one answered. I went around to the side of the cabin and peaked through the window. The cabin was completely empty. My heart sank into my stomach. Slowly I walked home, feeling a lump in my throat. I heard Miguelito's laugh in my head and thought about our game with the puddles. When I got home I stood by our window and stared at our neighbor's goldfish for the longest time. Finally my family arrived. They had spent all day driving around looking for work.
- 18 It rained so much that night that the creek flooded into the dirt streets, making the cabins look like they floated on a lake. Then, days later, when the clouds disappeared and the sun emerged, the lake began to split into hundreds of small puddles throughout the labor camp.
- 19 One day, on my way home from school, I discovered little gray fish in the puddles. I had no idea how they got there, but I noticed that in the smaller puddles the fish were dying. The mud was

suffocating them. As I gazed at the dead fish, the image of the goldfish flashed in my mind. I quickly ran to our cabin and got the empty Hills Brothers coffee can. I filled it with water and began picking up the dying fish from the mud puddles, putting them in the can, and dumping them in the creek. After a couple of hours, I was exhausted. There were too many and I could not work fast enough to save them all. I prayed for rain, but the sun kept beating down, turning the puddles into mud.

- 20 I picked up one last, small dying fish and took it to our next door neighbor who owned the goldfish. I knocked and knocked on the door until my hand hurt. No one was home. I placed the coffee can on the front steps and peered inside. The little gray fish looked up at me, rapidly opening and closing its mouth.
- 21 That evening I looked through the window into our neighbor's cabin. The goldfish swam peacefully, alongside the little gray fish. I sighed and smiled to myself.

From *The Circuit: Stories From the Life of A Migrant Child* by Francisco Jiménez. Copyright © 1997 University of New Mexico Press, 1997.

1. Read the sentence from paragraph 3.

Papá passed most of his time worrying.

What does this quote reveal about the family's situation?

- a. The family feels relaxed because they enjoy staying inside during the rain
 - b. The family is struggling because the rain is preventing them from working
 - c. Papá prefers staying home instead of working in the fields
 - d. The family is planning to move because they want a new place to live
2. How do Papá and the narrator each respond to the rainy weather?
- a. Papá enjoys the break, while the narrator becomes anxious about missing work.
 - b. Papá gets frustrated, while the narrator finds ways to stay busy.
 - c. Papá wants to move away immediately, while the narrator insists the family must stay in Corcoran.
 - d. Papá ignores the rain, while the narrator refuses to go outside.
3. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A: In paragraph 16, what is Miguelito doing when he "jumped up like a grasshopper"?

- a. Pretending to be an insect
- b. Trying to scare the narrator
- c. Acting eagerly
- d. Moving carefully

Part B: What does this show about Miguelito's relationship with the narrator?

- a. Miguelito is trying to impress the narrator.
- b. Miguelito is excited to show the narrator things he likes to do.
- c. Miguelito is not sure about his friendship with the narrator.
- d. Miguelito is teasing the narrator.

4. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A: How does the narrator feel when he sees Miguelito's cabin is empty?

- a. The narrator is disappointed he won't get to play their puddle game anymore.
- b. The narrator is angry that Miguelito's family must have found work when his family did not.
- c. The narrator is worried that the goldfish won't be taken care of.
- d. The narrator is devastated that his friend left without warning.

Part B: Which line from paragraph 17 best supports your answer in Part A?

- a. "My heart sank into my stomach."
- b. "I hear Miguelito's laugh in my head and thought about our game with the puddles."
- c. "When I got home I stood by our window and stared at our neighbor's goldfish for the longest time."
- d. "They had spent all day driving around looking for work."

5. Which detail from the story supports the idea that the narrator is compassionate?

- a. He competes with Miguelito to count puddles.
- b. He spends time indoors telling ghost stories.
- c. He rushes to rescue the dying fish from the mud.
- d. He peeks into empty cabins to see where neighbors have gone.

6. Which sentence best summarizes this passage?

- a. A boy plays in puddles during a rainstorm and makes a new friend who teaches him how to fish.
- b. While his parents search for work, a boy starts attending school and spends most of his free time watching a goldfish during the rainy season.
- c. A migrant boy meets a new friend, but the friend suddenly leaves, inspiring him to care for small fish trying to survive after the rain.
- d. During a rainy season, a family of migrant laborers moves from Fowler to Corcoran to pick cotton and struggles to find work.

7. Which statement best expresses a theme of the passage?
- a. Friendship can end without warning, and loneliness never goes away.
 - b. People must move from place to place to survive, even if they dislike it.
 - c. Small acts of kindness can make a meaningful difference in the world.
 - d. Children should always follow the rules and look out for one another.

8. Describe the narrator and Miguelito's relationship. How does it impact the narrator's life?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part One: Vocabulary

1. What does it mean if something is **undisclosed**?
 - a. People are told about it
 - b. It isn't open to the public
 - c. Information is kept secret from people
 - d. It is easy to locate

2. What is a **contradiction**? Describe an example of a **contradiction** from *Return to Sender*.

3. What does it mean if something is **preoccupying** you?
 - a. You aren't willing to do it.
 - b. You are thinking or worrying about it often.
 - c. You are doing your best to make it happen.
 - d. You are trying to make space for it.

4. What does it mean to **console** someone?
 - a. To take something from them
 - b. To praise them
 - c. To help them feel less sad or disappointed
 - d. To catch them

5. Pick two of the words from the list below. Write a sentence using each word that shows what the word means.

ecstatic	agitated	insistent	unburden
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- _____

- _____

Student: _____ Examiner: _____ Date: _____

Words Read Correctly: _____ Errors: _____

Excerpt from *Return to Sender*

"Oh jeez!" Mr. Calhoun sighed. Right then and there, I knew that despite his name, Mr.	16
O'Goody was not good news.	21
Before I could get too nervous, a stocky man with a thick neck and a big jaw stood	39
before us. He didn't look a whole lot older than Mr. Calhoun, except for being bald with	56
just a fringe right above his ears. But what he'd lost on his head, he had on his	75
eyebrows.	
They were real bushy, which made his eyes look sneaky, like they were undercover but	90
ready to pounce on you if you told a lie and lock you up in jail.	106
He shook everyone's hands. When he got to me, he said, "You must be Maria?"	121
I couldn't find my voice, no way, so I just nodded.	132
"Come along then," he said real gruff like he already knew that I was going to be a	151
waste	
of his time. Especially if I wouldn't talk. "Your friends can wait here."	164
Mr. Calhoun quick stood up and said he needed to come along to represent his client.	180
"Me too," Tyler added. He had promised to stand by me, no matter what. For a second	197
there, I'd been afraid he had forgotten.	204
Mr. O'Goody turned to face them both. "I know you got your law degree, Calhoun. But	220
what about you, young man?"	225
Tyler shook his head and his face got even redder than Mr. Calhoun's hair. "I'm Mari's	241
friend ... and I just came along so she won't be so scared," he stammered.	257

Alvarez, Julia. *Return to Sender*. Yearling, 2010. Print. Pages 288-289.

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Alvarez, Julia. *Return to Sender*. Yearling, 2010. Print. Pages 288-289.



Texts & Supporting Readings



In addition to the materials in this document, students will engage with third party, copyrighted materials as part of this unit. To see a list of those texts and their authors please visit:

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