NARRATIVE WRITING FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT
6ᵗʰ - 8th Grade English Language Arts

Challenge	Suggestions for Support
Students are struggling to start a narrative and orient the reader.	Review and model different strategies for starting a narrative. Potential strategies: ● Start right in the middle of the action ● Start with a sound effect ● Start by asking a question ● Start with dialogue ● Start with foreshadowing of what is to come ● Start by describing the setting or character(s)
Students are struggling to introduce a narrator or characters.	Prompt students to think about the following aspects of character development when brainstorming: ● Who is the narrator, and why is that person telling the story? ● Physical description (What do they look like? Are there aspects of their physical appearance that are important to the story?) ● Character traits (Are there particular traits that need to be emphasized?) ● Character's actions and speech (Do the character's actions follow a particular pattern? Are there particular things that the character does? Is there anything noteworthy about the character's speech?) ● Character's ideas and thoughts (How are they feeling? What motivates them?) ● Character's role in the story (What do other characters think and say about the character? How does the character interact with others?) Review with students' different strategies for describing a narrator or character. If needed, provide students exemplars of each strategy and have students analyze how the strategy is used:

	- Describe clothing and accessories - Describe a character's facial expressions - Describe actions that reveal physical characteristics - Include figurative language - Describe how characters move - Scatter physical descriptions throughout the narrative
Students are struggling to develop a point of view or establish a context.	Prompt students to think about the following questions when brainstorming setting: - What is the main location? - Are there any features of the main location that make it unique and should be highlighted? - Are there activities or occupations that are unique and/or important to the setting? - Does the setting influence the mood? - How does the setting influence the character's actions? Review the different strategies for developing setting with students. If needed, provide students exemplars of each strategy and have students analyze how the strategy is used: - Use five senses to describe the setting - Describe the setting through the character's actions - Sprinkle in details about the setting - Review how to use particular adjectives to set the mood
Students are struggling to organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.	Review with students the different components of the Narrative Writing Brainstorm Template and why each event is important. Provide students with a partially completed graphic organizer and have students brainstorm the rest of the story. Review with students how a character's actions can drive the action of a story. Have students brainstorm stories where the character drives the action. Either: The character learns an explicit lesson. The character gets his or her comeuppance for a mistake made or a negative trait, and the sequence of events highlights how this unfolds.

	● The character changes or realizes something as a result of the struggle. The sequence of events highlights the character's change. Have students write one event from the brainstorm at a time. This will ensure that all events are developed equally. Have students analyze exemplars and non-exemplars to notice the different ways authors make sure a sequence of events unfolds naturally. Review how to use paragraphs to manage the sequence of events. Paragraphs can be used when: ● There is a setting/scene change ● To show a passage of time ● To introduce a new idea ● When a character changes ● When a new event starts ● When there is a change in speaker/dialogue
Students are struggling to use dialogue and description to develop experiences.	Review how to use dialogue to show a character's inner thoughts and feelings. Review how to use dialogue to progress the action in a story. Students can use dialogue to show a change in location, events, or introduce new characters without needing to provide lots of additional description. Review how to use direct dialogue from a mentor text if extending a story or rewriting from a different character's perspective. Review how to use precise dialogue tags. Use powerful verbs in dialogue tags to show how a character says something. Use precise verbs instead of always using the word "said" to help a reader visualize the way the speaker is feeling. Potential synonyms to use are: ○ Rejoiced, laughed, joked, giggled, sang, cheered, smirked, chimed, beamed

	o Bawled, sobbed, sniffled, chuckled, giggled, laughed, roared, whined o Asked, inquired, requested, begged o Shouted, belted, yelled, screamed, exclaimed, boomed, called, whispered o Hissed, fumed, snapped, barked, grunted, thundered Review how to use correct punctuation when including dialogue. ● quotation marks at the beginning and end of what the character says ● punctuation inside the quotation marks
Students are struggling to use transitional words, phrases, or clauses to manage the sequence of events.	Review and model how to use different transitional phrases to manage the sequence of events. ● Transitional words and phrases can be used to show there is a transition in time. (*The next day, after a while, before long, late that afternoon, the next thing I knew, etc.*) ● Transitional words and phrases can be used to show there is a transition in setting or location. (*In our backyard, when we went upstairs, at the post office, behind the trees etc.*) ● Transitional words and phrases can be used to show a sequence of events, or to show the connection between events. (*At the beginning, as a result, it started when, as soon as, in the end, etc.*)
Students are struggling to use precise words and phrases.	Review how to replace overused words with more powerful words. Words that can often be replaced with more powerful words are: ● Verbs: Use powerful verbs to highlight the way a character does something o Example: *Hercules <u>threw</u> the rock. → Hercules <u>hurled</u> the rock.* ● Adjectives: Use powerful adjectives to describe the noun of the sentence to help the reader visualize a character or event

- Example: _Hercules_ threw the _rock_. → _With his incredible strength_, Hercules threw the _massive boulder_.
- Adverbs: Use powerful adverbs to help a reader understand how a character is feeling or acting
    - Example: _Hercules threw the rock._ → _Hercules swiftly threw the rock across the sky._

Review how to include figurative language. Use figurative language to help a reader better understand a character and how they respond to a situation. Figurative language should paint a more vivid picture of the scene for the reader, fit with the plot, or lead to a deeper understanding of the character. Types of figurative language include simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, and idioms. Make sure students don't overuse figurative language, because too much can take away from the scene or understanding of character.

- Example: _Hercules threw the rock._ → _Hercules threw the rock as if it were a pillow._

Review how to use italics, bold, capitalization, or underlining to emphasize words. Words that are written in italics, bold, are capitalized, or are underlined get noticed. Use italics, bolding, capitalization, or underlining to draw attention to and emphasize a certain word or idea. Or, use italics to show what someone is thinking.

Review how to use punctuation for effect. Model how to use different types of punctuation to add more enthusiasm and feeling to a piece of writing.
- End punctuation (exclamation points) can be used to show excitement but should be used sparingly.
- Parentheses can be used around a word or a phrase that is not essential or significant to the original sentence. Using parentheses doesn't change the meaning of the sentence.

	● A dash can be used to add emphasis or importance to an idea. Dashes set off a detail in a more dramatic way than a comma.
	
	Review how to use a variety of sentence structures. The length of a sentence can impact the mood of a story. Additionally, using a variety of sentence structures makes the writing exciting.
	  ○ Shorter sentences can be used to emphasize a dramatic event or action, convey a quick detail, or emphasize the importance of a statement.
	  ○ Longer sentences can be used to emphasize what a character is thinking and feeling, to tell stories and reflect on past events, or to slow down a description.
	  ○ Questions can be used to highlight emotions or particular points, or help the reader see inside a character's head.
	  ○ Interjections can be used to show excitement or emotion.
	    ○ Examples: *ahh, aww, eww, hmph, oops, ouch, shh, whew, yikes, hmm, um, look*

Students are struggling to provide a conclusion that follows the narrated experience.	Review with students' strategies for ending a story. ● Provide insight on what the character learned or the character's reflection on events ● Include a cliffhanger that has a reader wondering what will happen next ● Use a question to leave a reader thinking about the events of the story
Students are struggling to write a narrative that connects with the mentor text.	Prompt students to think about the following when planning a narrative in response to the text: ● Which characters need to be included? What do I know about each of the characters? ● What key plot events or understandings do I need to continue or reference? ● What key aspects of setting do I need to continue or reference?

	- Has the author given us any clues about what could potentially happen next? - Has the author given us any clues about how other characters might be feeling? - What point of view was the story written in?