



Decode & design writing prompts

 SPARK YOUR NEXT STEPS

Recognize the impact of academic vocabulary.

Sort the phrases into categories.



NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

- explain the different aspects
- draw conclusions
- identify similarities
- explain the parts
- describe the steps
- write an original narrative
- provide multiple reasons
- show how alike and different
- determine strengths and weaknesses
- convince the audience
- evaluate the main differences
- sequence the events
- identify the main points
- provide counterclaims
- describe the topic
- order the events
- include opposition
- compare ___ to ___
- explain different kinds
- determine a position
- over time
- fiction based on fact
- show the time line
- argue if ___ or ___
- write a comparison
- initial to now
- address both viewpoints
- explain similarities and differences
- make a claim
- describe different components
- explain the process
- rewrite the story
- conception to current
- name different facets
- identify the types
- consider multiple perspectives
- explain the main ideas
- evolution/evolve
- from beginning to end
- write an opinion
- present details about both
- support reasons with evidence
- from a different character's perspective

PROMPT

Identify the 3 parts of a typical prompt.

1

THE BACKGROUND

The first sentences review the broad subject and/or the text(s) read.

2

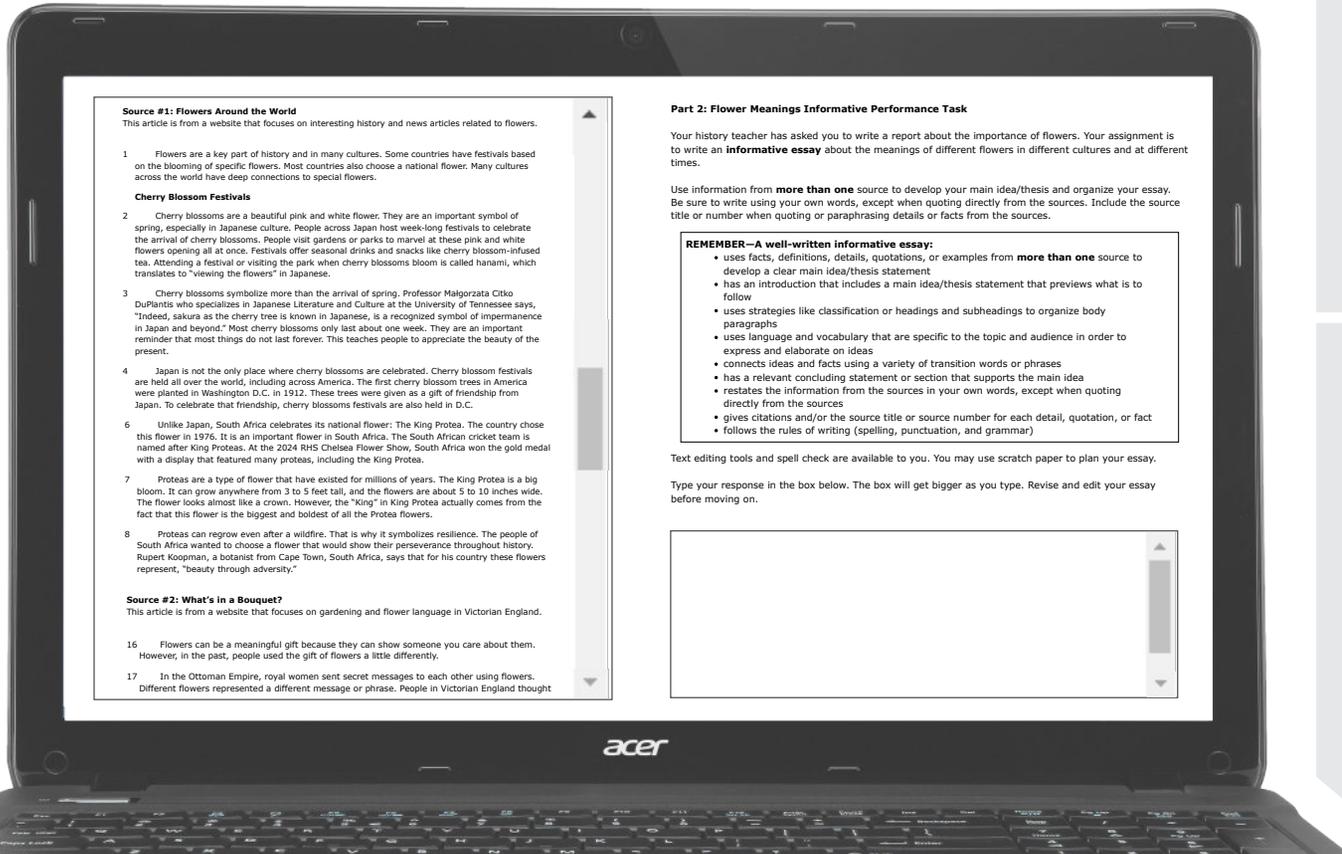
THE TASK

The middle sentences outline the specific writing task.

3

THE EVIDENCE

The final sentences remind the reader to include textual evidence from the provided sources.



In the passage, the main character faces several challenges that help shape who he becomes. Write an essay explaining how the character changes throughout the story. Use details from the text to support your response.

Read the excerpt from “Say What, Horse?” Based on the information in the article, write a response to the following: Explain what new research reveals about horses’ ability to communicate.

Write a well-organized informational composition that uses specific evidence from the article to support your answer.

Remember to clearly state your central idea, organize your writing, develop your ideas, use evidence from the selection in your response, and use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar.

Manage your time carefully. Write your response in the box provided.

Flavored milk is popular with many students, but some people believe that flavored milk should not be served in school cafeterias. After reading “Milk Nutrition” by the Midwest Dairy Association and Jamie Oliver’s video on “Sugar Overload,” write an essay in which you take a position: do you agree or disagree with serving flavored milk in school cafeterias?

Be certain to use information found in the article and video to support your point of view. Use facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, and examples from the article and video to write about the subject knowledgeably. Also, remember to use correct grammar, usage, capitalization, and spelling when writing your essay.



DECODE

Identify the mode, format, & structure.

Your class has researched about different careers. Now correspond with your peers informing them on how to become an astronaut. Your letter will be read by other students.

Each author uses different evidence to support his or her stance on school start times. Write an essay that compares each author's overall claim about school start times and evaluates how he or she advances his or her unique perspective.

You've read about different types of service animals and the new rule that allows only dogs and miniature horses to be service animals in public places. Argue whether this rule is fair or not.

Based on the story, compare the personality traits of the two main characters. Explain ways that they are similar and different.

Can the brain become smarter or is intelligence fixed? After reading articles on learning and the brain, correspond with parents explaining the brain-development process that occurs from birth to twenty-five years of age.

Imagine you have the chance to climb Mount Everest. Write a story about something that happens as you climb the mountain. Use information and details from the sources about Mount Everest and those who climbed the mountain.

The story "Departure" describes a character leaving home, and the passage from "Up the Coolly" describes a character returning home. Write an essay that analyzes how the narrators relate the events about the journeys in a manner that builds mystery and/or tension.

Circle the **MODE** you are to write in.

- Narrative
- Informative
- Persuasive
- Argumentative

Circle the **FORMAT** you are to write in.

- Essay
- Letter
- Article
- Story

Describe the **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE** you are to write in.

DESIGN

Develop extended-response writing prompts.

STEP 1 | SELECT TEXT(S).

- Choose a text (or multiple texts) complex enough to support analysis.
- If using multiple texts, ensure they connect in theme, topic, or perspective.

STEP 2 | DETERMINE THE PRODUCT.

- Opinion/Persuasive/Argumentative | Take a position and support it with reasons and text evidence.
- Informative/Expository | Explain an idea, compare key points, or analyze a story element.
- Narrative | Write or rewrite a story using text details.

STEP 3 | CREATE THE TASK.

- Within 1-2 sentences, reveal the writing format (e.g., an essay, letter/correspondence, article, story) and the purpose (e.g. compare, explain, describe, persuade).
- Utilize the academic language like that used on your state assessment.

STEP 4 | COMPLETE THE PROMPT.

- Write an opening sentence that names the text(s) read and/or topics learned about.
- Close the prompt with an expectation that students use text evidence to support their responses.
- Format the prompt so it looks like what your students will see on the state assessment.

Leverage AI to draft prompts.

Generate several different prompts all about... (topic). Make one for each of the following text structures: (list them). Start each prompt with reference to having read... (number) of... (types) texts about... (topic). End each prompt with reference to the response including details from the text(s) read. All prompts generated should be appropriate for... (grade level) students.



✦ **Persuasive:** Having read three articles about the U.S. Civil War, imagine you are a young person living in either the North or South during that time. Write a letter to a friend trying to convince them that your side is right and should win the war. Explain why your side is fighting and why it's important for them to be successful. Remember to include details from the texts you read.

✦ **Informative:** Having read three articles about the U.S. Civil War, explain to someone who doesn't know much about it what the main differences were between the North and the South before and during the war. Describe things like their economies, ways of life, and what they were fighting for. Remember to include details from the texts you read to show these similarities and differences.

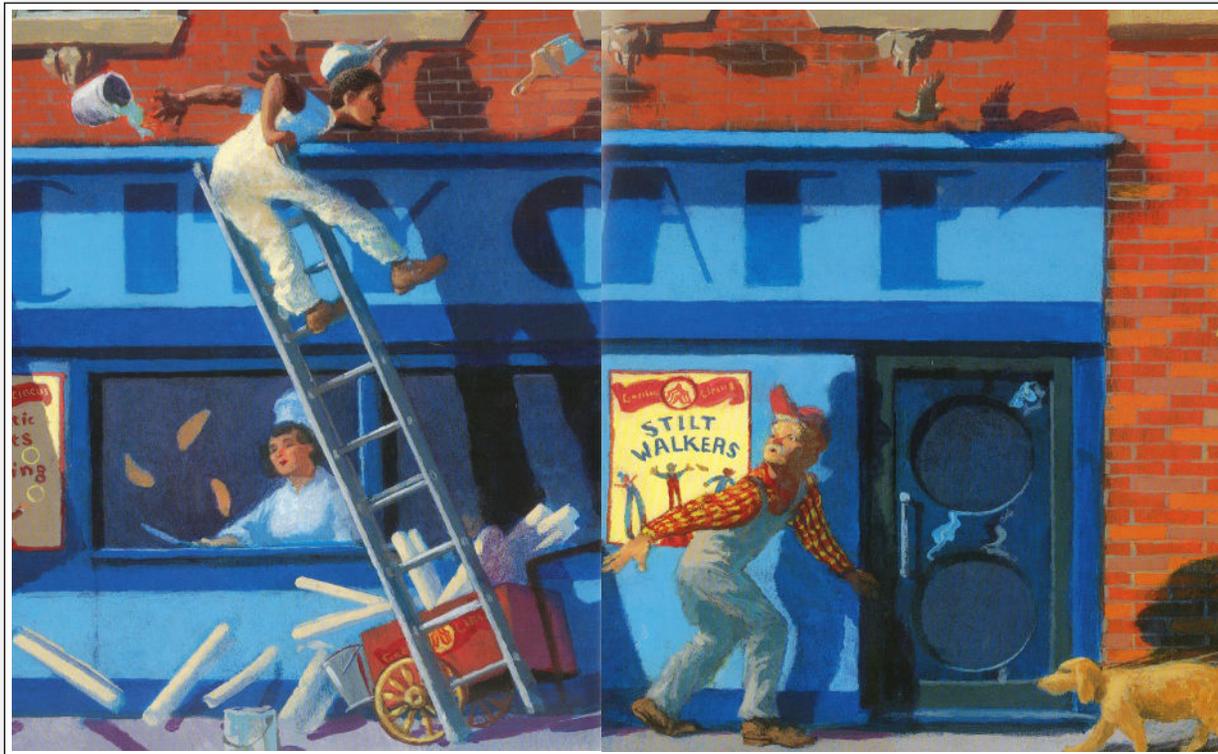
✦ **Informative:** Having read three articles about the U.S. Civil War, write an essay describing the main issues that caused the war. Use vivid words to help someone else understand what these issues were like and why they led to conflict. Include specific details and information you learned from the texts you read to make your description clear and interesting.

✦ **Narrative:** Having read three articles about the U.S. Civil War, imagine you are a young person who witnessed an important event during the war (like a battle, a speech, or a change in your town). Write a story about what you saw and how it made you feel. Describe the event and the people involved, using details you learned from the texts you read to make your story realistic.

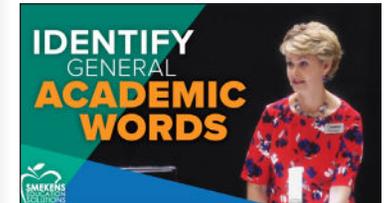
SECRET SITE
RESOURCE



GENERATE



SIDEWALK CIRCUS, PAUL FLEISCHMAN



Identify 10-15 general academic words per grade level.



NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

PERSUADE | ARGUE

EXPLAIN | DESCRIBE

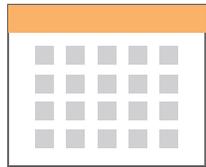
COMPARE-CONTRAST

NARRATE | ENTERTAIN

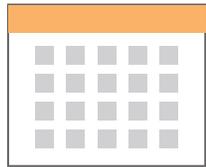
INSTRUCT

Deliver a scaffold of prompt-decoding mini-lessons within *reading* instruction.

Provide a prompt-decoding mini-lesson at the end of each reading unit.



Teach the **three main parts** of a typical writing prompt and understand the purpose each part serves.

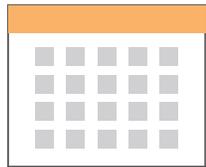


Teach the meaning of **text evidence** and that specific words need to come from the passage(s) provided.

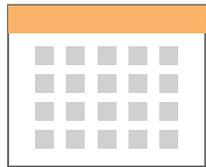


Teach that the **key words** which indicate the required writing mode are found within the Task Sentence(s).

- Key words that imply the response should be persuasive/argumentative
- Key words that imply the response should be informative
- Key words that imply the response should be narrative
- The differences between genre/mode (e.g., persuasive, informative, narrative) and format (e.g., letter, essay, article)

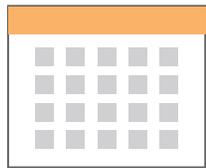


Provide regular opportunities for students to practice decoding 3-part prompts using short daily activities like bell ringers or morning work.



Teach the **ingredients and organizational structure** that each mode follows.

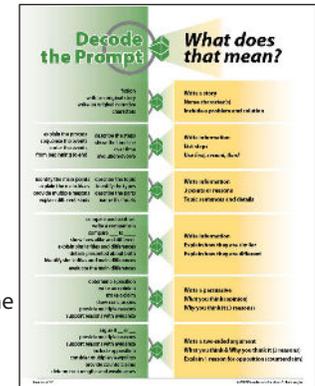
- Opinion/Persuasive
- Argument
- Procedural how-to (informative)
- Descriptive/all-about (informative)
- Compare-contrast (informative)
- Narrative



Gradually release prompt-decoding responsibility to students, rather than spending extensive time dissecting and deciphering prompts as a whole class.



View the entire third grade decoding the prompt mini-lesson and access the Cheat Sheet of key words.



Based on the information from the reading, argue if **JACKIE ROBINSON'S** baseball success was not greater than that of Babe Ruth's. Be sure to acknowledge opposing viewpoints within your essay. Provide evidence from the text to support your opinions.

Based on the information from the reading, explain the different kinds of success **JACKIE ROBINSON** achieved in his lifetime. Provide evidence from the text to support your opinions.

Based on the information from the reading, write an opinion essay identifying the reason(s) **JACKIE ROBINSON** experienced success. Provide evidence from the text to support your opinions.

Decode a prompt in 3 steps.

SECRET SITE RESOURCES



Use the prompt to determine the genre.

DISSECT



Organize the response to fit the text structure

THE PROMPT	KEY WORDS IN CONTEXT		ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE		
<p><i>Detail how Gaylord Nelson inspired, informed, and initiated Earth Day from its conception to its current state.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the process • sequence the events • order the events • describe the steps • over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evolution/evolve • show the time line • from beginning to end • initial to now • conception to current 	<p>Informative/ How-to</p>	<p>Step 1, First Step 2, Second Step 3, Third Step 4, Fourth</p>	<p>Introduction The first step... Next... Then... Finally... Conclusion</p>
<p><i>Explain the different aspects of Earth Day as it's celebrated annually around the world.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the main points • explain the main ideas • provide multiple reasons • describe the topic • identify the types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain different kinds • explain different aspects • explain the parts • describe different components • name different facets 	<p>Informative/ Categorical</p>	<p>Main Idea 1 Main Idea 2 Main Idea 3</p>	<p>Introduction One way... Another facet... A third big part... Conclusion</p>
<p><i>Compare today's Earth Day celebrations to the first one led by Gaylord Nelson.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write a comparison • compare ___ to ___ • show how alike and different • explain similarities and differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details presented about both • identify similarities • main differences • evaluate the main differences 	<p>Informative/ Compare-Contrast</p>	<p>Category 1 Category 2 Category 3</p>	<p>Introduction Both address... A second category... They also include... Conclusion</p>
<p><i>Convince the audience that Gaylord Nelson's concerns are/are not being addressed.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine a position • write an opinion • make a claim • draw conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convince the audience • write a persuasive • provide multiple reasons • support reasons with evidence 	<p>Persuasive</p>	<p>Reason 1 Reason 2 Reason 3</p>	<p>Introduction One reason... A second reason... A third reason... Conclusion</p>
<p><i>Convince the audience that Gaylord Nelson's concerns are/are not being addressed. Address both viewpoints.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • argue if ___ or ___ • provide multiple reasons • support reasons with evidence • include opposition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide counterclaims • consider multiple perspectives • address both viewpoints • determine strengths and weaknesses 	<p>Argumentative</p>	<p>Reason 1 Reason 2 Counterclaim Reason 3</p>	<p>Introduction One reason... A second reason... Despite... A third reason... Conclusion</p>
<p><i>Using facts learned from the texts, write an original story describing how a school might celebrate Earth Day.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • characters • fiction • fiction based on fact • generate a story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write an original story • write an original narrative • rewrite the story 	<p>Narrative/ Story</p>	<p>Problem Solution</p>	<p>Introduction (Somebody...character) Wanted... But... So... Conclusion (Then...solution)</p>