

# Lesson 5: Descriptive Writing – Describing a Thing

Lesson Focus: Using Words to Describe Something

## Objectives

### Your child will:

- Use words to describe something.
- Write a nonfiction article.
- Read a description of something and identify what it is.

## Advance Prep

- Activity Set 5:2 *Willy Worm Word Wall* or *Portable Word Bank*
- Activity Set 5:2 *Object box*

## Materials

### Activity Set Worksheet

- Scissors, glue

### Guided Writing Practice

- Tablet or chart paper and markers
- *Super Speller!*
- Pointers
- Highlighter marker

### Pre-writing Activities

- Nonfiction picture book to read aloud that describes something such as a fire engine or wild animal (see p. 235 for recommended titles)
- Assorted 3-inch die-cut paper circles or construction paper to cut your own (you will also need these in Lessons 5, 6, and 7), or a manila file folder
- Scissors, clear tape
- Pencils, crayons, or markers
- Shoe box or other empty box
- Variety of small items such as a *kitchen timer*, *toy car*, *stuffed animal*, *pencil*, *hair brush*
- Journals

### Brainstorming

- 12- x 18-inch light-color construction paper, or butcher paper or newsprint
- Marker



## The Writing Project

- Grade-level writing paper
- Pencils, crayons, or markers

## Smaller Steps

- 12- x 18-inch construction paper

## Flying Higher

- Variety of pictures found in such places as nature magazines, toy catalogs, or animal calendars
- Scissors, glue, stapler

## Editing and Revising

- Highlighter marker
- Dictionary and *Super Speller!*
- *Spinner Spelling Game*

## Publishing the Project

- Chinese food take-out box, or other empty box
- Craft supplies for decorating the box such as stickers or markers

## Want to Do More? (optional)

- Writing Across the Curriculum
  - ~ Variety of pictures found in such places as nature magazines or calendars
  - ~ Pencils, crayons, or markers
  - ~ Scissors, glue, stapler
- Computer Capers
  - ~ Computer publishing program
  - ~ 8.5- x 11-inch cardstock or scrapbooking paper, any color
  - ~ Scissors

# ACTIVITY SET 5:I

## Lesson Overview

Lesson 5 continues helping your child transition from writing stories and personal narratives to writing nonfiction, or factual, articles. This will be his first lesson in descriptive writing, in which he learns to describe a thing. The engaging activities will introduce him to some creative tools for developing descriptive vocabulary.

### At a Glance: Activity Set 5:I

- Lesson Overview
- Activity Set Worksheet

## Activity Set Worksheet: "What Is It?"

Remove the Lesson 5 "What Is It?" pages from the Activity Set Worksheet Pack. If you are using the e-book version, print out all three pages of the worksheet.



### Activity Worksheet (First Page)

Use the Lesson 5 Activity Set worksheet to introduce your child to describing a thing.

1. Read each description from the first page of the "What Is It?" worksheet, *one clue at a time*.
2. Ask your child to guess the answer based on what he knows so far.
3. Talk about ideas for something he would like to describe. Help him write its description on the blank lines.

*"I really like [using] the worksheet... to create interest and set the mood for the rest of the lesson."*

*– Beth, SC*

### Activity Worksheet (Second Page)

1. Give your child the second page of the "What Is It?" worksheet. In the blank square, have him draw a picture of the thing he described.
2. Show him how to cut out the four mini-pages from the first page and glue them over the corresponding pictures on the second page to create flaps. (Apply glue just along the top of each mini-page.)

### Activity Worksheet (Third Page)

1. On the lined page of the Lesson 5 worksheet, encourage your child to choose one of the things pictured around the border of the page. Have him write a description about it and draw his own picture.
2. Praise your child for his efforts to write independently. Do not edit or revise his work because this is just an opportunity for him to practice doing it on his own.

# ACTIVITY SET 5:2

## Guided Writing Practice

This lesson introduces your child to descriptive writing. During Guided Writing Practice use a marker and write together on chart paper or newsprint to describe an object or animal that interests your child.

### At a Glance: Activity Set 5:2

- Guided Writing Practice
- Pre-writing Activities

### Directions

1. Ask your child to choose one object to write about, preferably one he can observe firsthand. (Note: he will describe a person in Lesson 6 and a place in Lesson 7, so stick with objects or animals throughout this lesson.) Ideas include:
  - Favorite toy or stuffed animal
  - Pet or other animal
  - Natural object such as a *seashell, rock, flower, or tree*
  - Household object such as a *can opener, tea cup, rocking chair, or picture frame*
  - Outdoor object such as a *bike, rake, tree house, or wading pool*
  - Clothing accessory such as a *necklace, baseball cap, or shoe*
  - Sporting equipment such as a *golf club, tennis racket, roller blades, or basketball hoop*
2. Before you begin to write, discuss various ways to describe the object. Help your child think about things such as:
  - *Appearance* (how it looks).
  - *Texture* (how it feels).
  - *Action* (what it does or how it moves or acts).
  - *Why it is unique or important.*
3. Review how a nonfiction article is written with an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *closing*.
4. Indent the first line of each paragraph. Write 5-10 sentences. Skip every other line as you write. Share the marker so he writes a few of the words he knows.
5. Continue using your preferred *Super Speller!*

Here's an example of a completed Guided Writing Practice:

### Our Apple Tree

We have a tall apple tree in our back yard. It is full of green leaves. In the summer, we hang a swing on a branch. In the fall we pick juicy red apples. In the winter, we hang a bird feeder from the tree and I watch the pretty cardinals fight over the seeds. Our apple tree is fun all year long!

If your child can't think of what to say, write sentence starters for him to complete, or prompt him with questions such as:

- *Where did you find it? or Where does it live?*
- *What color is it?*
- *What does it feel like?*
- *Does it make any sounds?*

Here's a partial dialogue to get you started:

- You: Today when we write, we're going to describe something. Can you think of something you would like to write about today?*
- Child: Can I write about Grandma?*
- You: Well, Grandma is a person. Today we're going to write about a thing. Maybe you could look out the window for an idea. What thing could we describe?*
- Child: The apple tree?*
- You: Good idea! An apple tree is a thing. Let's talk about how we want to describe it.*
- Child: I like our apple tree.*
- You: Describing words tell how something looks or smells or feels. Use words that will tell me more about the tree.*
- Child: It's in our back yard and it's tall.*
- You: That would make a good introduction. Let's start the sentence by saying, "We have a... what?"*
- Child: We have an apple tree.*
- You: Yes, but don't forget to use your describing word. We have a \_\_\_\_\_ apple tree.*
- Child: We have a tall apple tree.*
- You: Much better. And where is it?*
- Child: In our back yard.*
- You: Now let's put that information all together into one sentence and write it down.*
- Child: We have a tall apple tree in our back yard. (Share the marker with your child so he can write a word or two.)*
- You: Good. Now can you describe the tree and tell me what it looks like?*
- Child: Well, it's full of leaves.*
- You: Great! Can you think of a describing word that tells more about what the leaves look like?*
- Child: They're green?*
- You: Super! It is full of green leaves. Let's write that for our next sentence. (Write the sentence together. Continue gently guiding and prompting your child in this manner until finished.)*

When you are finished:

- Check to make sure your completed article includes an *introduction*, a *body* that tells more about the object, and a *closing*. Write the title at the top.
- Ask your child to choose a pointer to read over what you wrote together.
  - ~ Ask him to point out two or three words that describe.
  - ~ Ask him to point out a difficult word that was spelled correctly. Hand him a highlighter to highlight that word on the paper.
  - ~ Ask him to identify one sentence that was written correctly by starting it with a capital letter and using the correct punctuation. Have him highlight that entire sentence.

Practicing this every day during Guided Writing Practice will help teach him how to begin self-editing his own writing by looking for words and sentences he wrote correctly.

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### *Parents Say . . .*

*I agree that it's best to choose objects you can observe in person. It made all the difference in the world for my son. At first he tried to describe his object from memory, but he could hardly think of anything to say. Once he actually had the object in hand, though, he was able to think of all sorts of great words!*

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## Pre-writing Activities

### Advance Prep

#### **Make a Willy Worm Word Wall**

1. Cut out about a dozen 3-inch circles from construction paper, or use die-cut circles such as might be used for scrapbooking.
2. Tape the circles together in a row to form a worm. Mount the worm on a wall or place it on a countertop. Draw a smiley face on the first circle to represent the worm's face.
3. On the first three circles, write various describing words, one word per circle. Use descriptive adjectives such as *small*, *fast*, *yellow*, *soft*, or *bumpy*.
4. Gather a variety of small items in a shoe box such as a *kitchen timer*, *toy car*, *stuffed animal*, *pencil*, and *hairbrush*.

#### **Alternate Activity**

An older child might prefer making a *Portable Word Bank* of descriptive words. Label the front of the folder and the tab "Describing Words." Inside, write three descriptive adjectives. See p. 9 for a more detailed explanation.

## Picture Book That Describes an Object or Animal

Today, read a nonfiction picture book about something such as a fire engine or wild animal. When finished, look through the book together and find at least five describing words.

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### Parents Say . . .

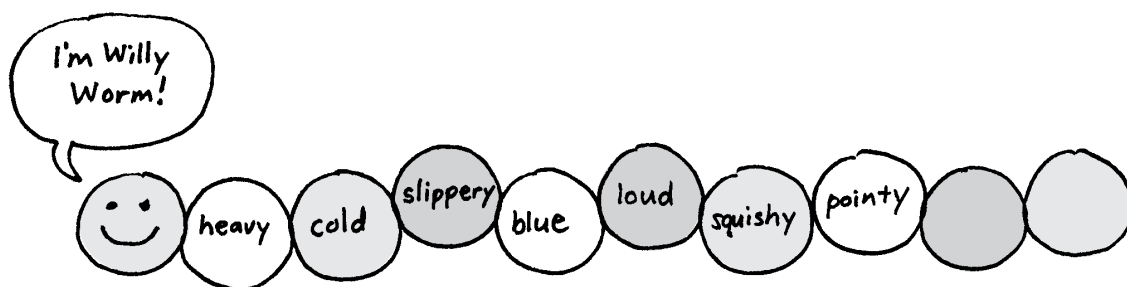
*I pulled out our bird field guide and read about different kinds of nests.*

*We picked several books to read. Then we discussed how each author described things in the book—and what we learned by reading.*

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### Willy Worm Word Wall Game

The purpose of the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or *Portable Word Bank* is to help your child collect a variety of describing words he can use as he writes. To add to the word wall or word bank, play this simple game with your child to practice using words to describe things.



1. First choose one object from the shoe box, but don't show it to your child. Then say 5-10 words or sentences that describe the object. When finished, let him try to guess what it is.
2. Show the object to your child. Ask him to say ONE word that describes it. It can be a word you already used, or he may think of a new one. Write this word on the fourth circle of the *Willy Worm Word Wall* (or add it to the *Portable Word Bank*). For example:

- If the object is a plastic cup, he might say *blue*.
- If the object is a kitchen timer, he might say *loud*.
- If the object is a stuffed animal, he might say *squishy*.

If he repeats a word that's already been used on the word wall or word bank, encourage him to think of a new word.

3. Next, give your child a turn to choose an object from the box and describe it. When he is finished, try to guess what it is. After he shows you the object, choose ONE word that describes it to write on the next blank circle of the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or word bank.
4. Over the next few lessons, your child will be learning about descriptive writing. Continue to add more describing words to the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or *Portable Word Bank* as a handy reference for him to use. You can add more circles and make *Willy Worm* longer.

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### *Parents Say . . .*

*We loved this game! I suggest both parent and child (and siblings, because they loved getting in on the action) have their own boxes with items they choose. It makes guessing more fun if you haven't seen each other's items ahead of time.*

- *To save space:*
    - ~ *Instead of stretching Willy Worm into one long line, wind him back and forth.*
    - ~ *Write more than one word in each circle.*
  - *To save time:*
    - ~ *Cut squares instead of circles, and make a train instead of a worm.*
    - ~ *Draw Willy Worm on a large sheet of poster board or butcher paper.*
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### ***Journal Writing Practice – Describing an Object***

Lesson 4 introduced your child to journal writing. To reinforce journaling skills, you'll want to encourage him to write in his journal often, beginning today! When you have finished playing the game, spend 10-15 minutes writing in your journals together describing one of the objects from the box. Skip every other line. Add today's date.

Instead of writing sentences in his journal, a more reluctant learner may draw a picture and copy down words from the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or *Portable Word Bank* to describe the object.

**NOTE:** Write in your journals together several more times during Lesson 5. Don't pass up this opportunity to model writing for your child. As you work alongside him, your actions show that writing is an important part of your day, too!



## ACTIVITY SET 5:3

### Guided Writing Practice

Continue to practice describing an object following the instructions and guidelines in Activity Set 6:2.

1. Ask your child to choose one object or animal to write about, preferably one he can describe firsthand. Do not describe a person.
2. Review how a nonfiction article is written with an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *closing*.
3. Follow these guidelines:
  - Write 5-10 sentences.
  - Indent the first line of each paragraph.
  - Skip every other line as you write.
  - Continue using the *Super Speller*!

Here's an example of a completed Guided Writing Practice:

#### A Noisy Toy

My baby sister Zoe has a noisy toy. If she shakes it, it makes a splashing noise. When she turns it upside down, it moos like a cow. I like to push the red button. It says "ding-dong" like our doorbell. And when I push the green button, it rings like a phone. I like to help my sister play with her funny toy.

If your child gets stuck, you will need to guide him. Here's an example of a partial dialogue:

- You: *Since you picked Zoe's noisy toy as today's object, let's think about the different noises you can describe. What's one noise the toy makes?*
- Child: It splashes.
- You: *When do you hear a splash?*
- Child: If she shakes it.
- You: *So you could say: If she shakes it, it . . . does what?*
- Child: If she shakes it, it makes a splashing noise.
- You: *Great. Let's write that as your second sentence.*  
*What is another noise the toy makes?*
- Child: It goes moo.
- You: *When?*
- Child: When she turns it upside down.
- You: *What else says "moo"?*

#### At a Glance: Activity Set 5:3

- Guided Writing Practice
- Brainstorming

Child: A cow.

You: *So it moos like a cow. You could write: When she turns it upside down, it . . . does what?*

Child: When she turns it upside down, it moos like a cow?

You: *I like that! Let's write it down: When she turns it upside down, it moos like a cow.*

(Continue gently guiding and prompting your child in this manner until finished.)

When you are finished writing the sentences:

- Make sure there is an *introduction*, a *body*, a *closing*, and a *title*.
- Ask your child to choose a pointer to read over what you wrote together. Ask him to point out and highlight:
  - ~ Describing words.
  - ~ A difficult word that was spelled correctly.
  - ~ One sentence that starts with a capital letter and uses correct punctuation.

## Brainstorming – Making a Graphic Organizer Kite

Graphic organizers help children brainstorm for and arrange ideas. Each of the remaining lessons will introduce your child to different graphic organizers. Though they will not necessarily always tie into your child's story theme, that's okay; he will still be learning new and creative ways to organize his thoughts in preparation for writing.

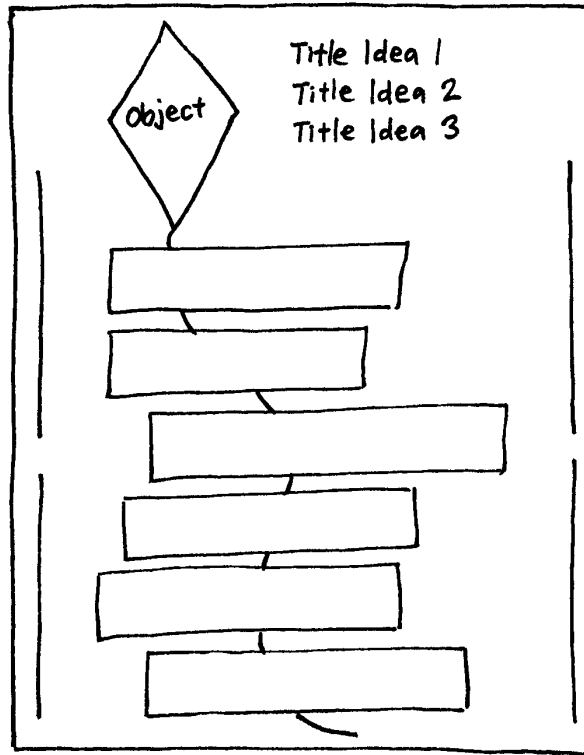
### Directions

1. Write on a 12- x 18-inch piece of light-color construction paper. Or, use an easel with butcher paper or newsprint.
2. Use a marker to draw a small diamond-shaped kite at the top. Ask your child to choose an object or animal he would like to write about. (Remember to save people and places for later lessons.)
3. If he is hesitant to volunteer an idea, suggest one of the items in the shoe box from Activity Set 5:2, or help him choose from the list on p. 122. Write the name of the object in the center of the kite.
4. Draw a long tail on the kite from the base of the diamond to the bottom of the page. Near the top of the tail, at the base of the diamond, draw a rectangle to represent a ribbon. Ask your child to suggest a word or sentence to write inside the rectangle that describes the object.
5. Continue to draw more ribbons on the kite tail. Inside each rectangle, write words or sentences that describe the object. Refer to the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or *Portable Word Bank* for a list of describing words. Add new words to the circles on the word wall or word bank as you go.

*“I like having a limited number of blank spaces [to fill in]—less intimidating for the student . . . than making a list on blank paper.”*

*– Debbie, FL*

6. Discuss ideas for an *introduction* and a *closing*. Write these ideas along the side of the paper. Later, during the Writing Project, the words and sentences written on the kite ribbons can be used to write the *body* of the child's article.
7. Discuss the main idea, and write ideas for a title at the top of the paper.



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### *Parents Say . . .*

*My daughter liked the kite so much we turned it into a game. She would write the object in the kite and the describing words on the tail and then read me the descriptions. I would have to guess what she described. We were having such a good time, my teenage son came in and joined us!*

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## ACTIVITY SET 5:4

### Guided Writing Practice

If it is too much for your child to do Guided Writing and the Writing Project on the same day, you may skip Guided Writing Practice today.

#### At a Glance: Activity Set 5:4

- Guided Writing Practice (optional)
- The Writing Project
- Smaller Steps or Flying Higher

### The Writing Project – Writing a Nonfiction Article

Help your child write a nonfiction article that describes a familiar object or animal.

#### **Directions**

1. Don't forget to adjust the Writing Project for a younger or more reluctant writer by using Smaller Steps, or consider the Flying Higher activity if your advanced writer needs more of a challenge.
2. Provide grade-level lined writing paper.
3. The article will have an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *closing*.
4. Have your child gather story details from the picture of the kite (his brainstorming) and encourage him to refer to the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or *Portable Word Bank* as he works.
5. Instruct him to skip every other line as he writes. This provides space to write corrections during Editing and Revising.

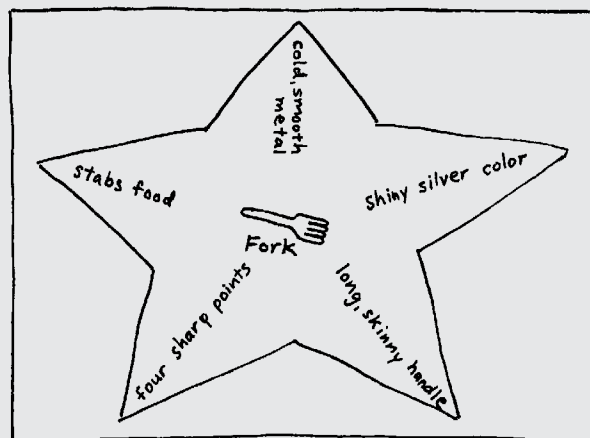
## Smaller Steps – What Is It?

A younger or reluctant writer may feel overwhelmed trying to write a nonfiction article. Instead, help him gain confidence using words to describe something. Here's how:

1. Sketch a large star on a sheet of 12- x 18-inch construction paper. In the center of the star, have him draw a picture of the object he wants to describe. Make sure it's an object he can observe firsthand.

2. After he writes the name of the object underneath his picture, instruct him to write a word, phrase, or sentence on each point of the star to describe the object. If he gets stuck, prompt him with questions about how the object looks or feels.

- cold, smooth metal
- shiny silver color
- long, skinny handle
- four sharp points
- stabs food



3. Next, have him write simple sentences about the object (alternatively, he may dictate to you while you write) to create a "What Is It?" article. For the introduction, suggest that he write: "Can you guess my object?" His closing should give the answer. Here's an example:

*Can you guess my object? It is shiny and silver. It is made of metal and feels smooth and cold. The handle is long and skinny. It has four sharp points on the end. You stab your food with it. Do you know what it is? It is a fork!*

4. When finished, have him read his story to others to see if they can guess the object before he reveals its identity!

## Flying Higher – More Practice Using Describing Words

An accelerated learner can choose to describe a variety of objects or animals by browsing through a nature magazine, toy catalog, or animal calendar.

1. Help him cut out pictures that interest him and glue each picture on the top half of a piece of paper, one picture per paper.
2. On the bottom half of each page, have him write a description of the object.
3. Staple the pages into a book.

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### *Parents Say . . .*

*My reluctant son loved the star activity. Knowing that he had to fill in each of the points on the star really helped him focus, plus he appreciated only having to include a set amount of facts.*

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## ACTIVITY SET 5:5

### Guided Writing Practice

Continue to practice describing an object or animal following the instructions and guidelines in Activity Set 6:2.

1. Include an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *closing*.
2. Write 5-10 sentences, skipping every other line as you write.
3. Continue using the *Super Speller*!

Here's an example of a completed Guided Writing Practice:

#### My Sleeping Buddy

Roscoe is my old stuffed dog. I have had him since I was two. His tail and one of his floppy ears came off, and he is missing some stuffing. Sometimes I use him for a pillow. I don't care if Roscoe looks lumpy and old. He is a good sleeping buddy because he is so soft and squishy.

If your child gets stuck, guide him with questions such as what, how, or where. For example:

*You: Let's take a good look at old Roscoe. What can you tell me about how he looks?*

*Child: Well, he's stuffed and lumpy!*

*You: Good! What else?*

*Child: He's missing his tail and one ear and some of his stuffing.*

*You: And how does he feel?*

*Child: Soft and squishy!*

*You: Great describing words! Let's add stuffed, lumpy, soft, and squishy to our Willy Worm Word Wall (or to our Portable Word Bank).*

*How would you like to begin your story? Introduce the reader to Roscoe.*

*Child: Roscoe is my dog.*

*You: That's a great start. Now look at Willy Worm to choose one or two words to describe Roscoe.*

*Child: Old and stuffed?*

*You: Sure! Roscoe is my . . .*

*Child: Roscoe is my old stuffed dog.*

(Write the sentence together. Continue gently guiding and prompting your child in this manner until finished.)

When finished, do the pointer and highlighter activities together.

#### Activity Set 5:5 At a Glance

- Guided Writing Practice
- Editing and Revising



## Editing and Revising

Sit down with your child and his Writing Project and read his article together. Continue helping him learn how to self-edit his own work by using the Writing Skills Checklist from Activity Set 3:8 or by simply guiding him orally following the directions below.

### **Directions**

It's easy to focus on mistakes, so use editing time to build confidence in your child by asking him to find words and sentences he wrote *correctly*.

1. Give your child a highlighter. Tell him that today he will read his article and do another "Job Well Done" search.
  - As you watch, encourage him to look over the article by himself and highlight a difficult word he spelled correctly.
  - Next, ask him to highlight a sentence he wrote correctly by starting it with a capital letter and using the correct punctuation. Praise him for a job well done.
2. Discuss the structure of the writing. Ask, "Does your article have an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *closing*?" If not, discuss ideas for improvement.
3. Ask your child to find describing words that tell about his subject. If he needs to use a few more, help him add them.
4. Examine each sentence with your child. Make sure:
  - Each sentence has correct punctuation and begins with a capital letter.
  - He indented the first line of the paragraph(s).
  - Each sentence has correct punctuation and begins with a capital letter.
5. Circle any misspelled words.
  - Look up each word in the dictionary, on the *Super Speller!* or on the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or word bank.
  - Write each misspelled word correctly on an index card to use for the *Spinner Spelling Game*.
  - Spend time playing the *Spinner Spelling Game* together to review key spelling words.
6. Help your child revise his writing.
  - Write the corrections in between the lines on the paper.
  - He may rewrite his corrections on a new paper if he chooses.



## Does Editing Reduce Your Child to Tears?

Try these ideas if your child seems resistant to editing and revising:

- If he's easily discouraged or overwhelmed by his mistakes:
  - ~ Give him a list of just five things to search for and fix.
- If he's reluctant to make any marks on his Writing Project:
  - ~ Make a photocopy of the original and let him edit the photocopy.
  - ~ Type and print out the story, article, or report. As you type, don't fix any of his spelling or punctuation. Let him edit the typed copy.
- If he still isn't working independently:
  - ~ Type out his Writing Project as a worksheet, making several intentional mistakes. Give him a set of directions such as:
    - Find 3 misspelled words, 4 punctuation errors, and 2 capitalization errors.
    - Circle your 5 favorite describing words.

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### *Parents Say . . .*

*With my older children, we use revising time to change a few of their words for more interesting ones. Sometimes we check out the thesaurus, and other times we just brainstorm for more descriptive words. Then we choose some of these new words for spelling activities.*

*They enjoyed using the editing checklist from Lesson 3:8. We added a couple of things to it, like "Use descriptive words."*

*I gave my daughter tiny stickers to place over each descriptive word she used. She loved this activity and even asked if she could add more descriptive words to her article!*

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## ACTIVITY SET 5:6

### Guided Writing Practice

Continue to practice describing an object or animal following the instructions and guidelines in Activity Set 5:2. When finished, do the pointer and highlighter activities together. Here is an example of a completed Guided Writing Practice:

#### My Rock Collection

I have an egg carton filled with rocks. One is a piece of sulfur. It is yellow and smells funny. I like the tiger's eye. It has brown stripes and it is very smooth and shiny. My amethyst has sharp purple crystals that sparkle. It is very pretty. But my favorite rock is my pink quartz because it looks like a diamond!

#### At a Glance: Activity Set 5:6

- Guided Writing Practice
- Journal Writing Practice

### Journal Writing Practice – Describing an Object

Today would be a good day to spend 10-15 minutes writing in your journals together describing one of the objects from the box you assembled during Activity Set 5:2.

Skip every other line. Add today's date.

Instead of writing sentences in his journal, a more reluctant writer may draw a picture and copy down words from the *Willy Worm Word Wall* or *Portable Word Bank* to describe the object.

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#### *Parents Say . . .*

*My daughter resists journaling, but if I let her draw a picture along with it, then she's much more willing to write.*

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## ACTIVITY SET 5:7

### Guided Writing Practice

Continue to practice describing an object or animal following the instructions and guidelines in Activity Set 5:2. When finished, do the pointer and highlighter activities together.

#### At a Glance: Activity Set 5:7

- Guided Writing Practice
- Publishing the Project

### Publishing the Project – Portable Story Box

Help your child make a Portable Story Box to carry and display his Writing Project. Here's how:

1. Provide stickers, markers, and other craft supplies for your child to decorate a Chinese food take-out box or other empty box. Encourage him to decorate according to the theme of his Writing Project.

Examples:

- If the child describes a grizzly bear, he might decorate the box with paper cutouts that resemble mountains and pine trees.
  - A child who describes a princess wand could use glitter pens or sparkly star-shaped stickers.
  - A student who describes a starfish might color sand and an ocean on the box or glue on tiny seashells or paper starfish.
2. Help your child find a picture of the object he described in his Writing Project, or have him draw one. Fold this and place it in the bottom of the box.
  3. Fold his Writing Project and place the paper in the box.
  4. Encourage your child to show the box to friends or family members and ask them to guess what's inside the box. After they are done guessing, he can open the box, read the story to them, and show them the picture.

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#### Parents Say:

*One son wanted to publish his Writing Project in his journal, so he drew a picture to go along with his journal entry.*

*Instead of making the story box, I typed my son's nonfiction article, which he glued it to a large piece of construction paper. Then he added photographs.*

*I love to preserve my children's projects but don't have much storage space for the bulkier ones. So after I display their published projects for a few weeks, I take a photo and save their artwork that way.*

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## ACTIVITY SET 5:8

### Guided Writing Practice

If you choose to do Guided Writing Practice today, continue to practice describing an object or animal following the instructions and guidelines in Activity Set 5:2. When finished, do the pointer and highlighter activities together.

### Evaluating the Student's Work

Use the Primary Writing Skills Evaluation Chart for Lessons 1-5 to evaluate your student's work.

#### At a Glance: Activity Set 5:8

- Guided Writing Practice (optional)
- Evaluating the Student's Work
- Want to Do More? (optional)  
Writing Across the Curriculum
- Want to Do More? (optional)  
Computer Capers

### Want to Do More?

#### **Writing Across the Curriculum: Spotlight on Science – Making a Reference Book**

Make a reference book about a science topic you are studying.

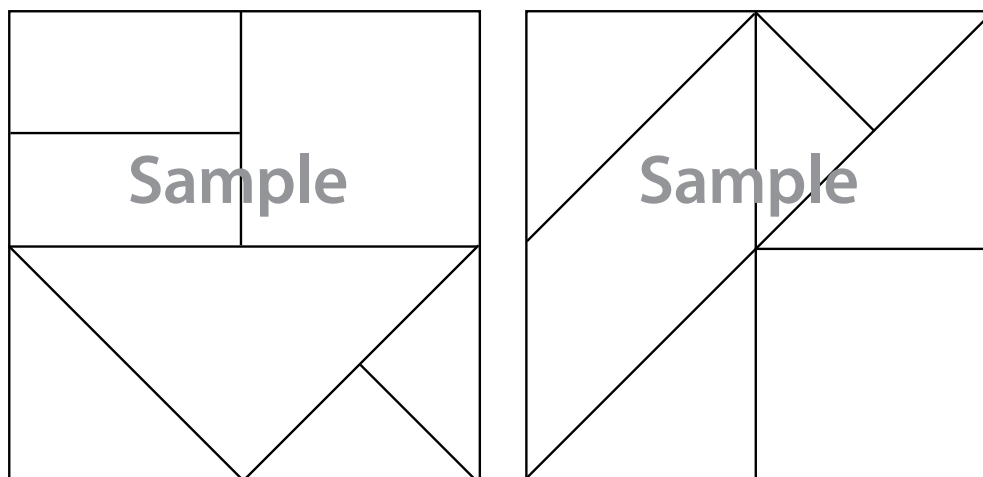
1. Use nature magazines, old calendars, or the Internet to help your child find pictures about something you are learning about in science, such as *planets*, *natural resources*, or *plants*.
2. Glue a picture of each object on a separate piece of paper and write a short description of each one. For example, if you are studying about natural resources, look for pictures of a *lake*, *forest*, *mountain*, *minerals*, *glacier*, or *trout*.
3. Staple the pages together into a book to use as a reference.
4. Write an article about the topic. Don't forget to include an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *closing*!

#### **Computer Capers – Making a Tangram Puzzle**

A *tangram* is a Chinese puzzle consisting of seven shapes cut from a square. The objective is to form any number of specific shapes using all seven pieces. For a fun computer activity, use a drawing or publishing program to make a tangram with your child.

1. Using the program's drawing tools, help your child draw a large square, about 6 x 6 inches. Then divide the square into seven shapes by pasting or drawing lines inside the square to form triangles, rectangles, or other straight-sided geometric shapes.
2. Print out the tangram on sturdy paper, cut out the shapes, and help your child arrange all seven pieces to form an animal.
3. Have him write a description of the animal he made from the tangram. (He should describe the real animal, not the paper one he created from the tangram.)

Below are two examples of how you and your child might create your own seven-piece tangram together:



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### *Parents Say . . .*

*My 12-year-old enjoyed making the tangram square in Word and printing out copies for himself and his siblings. After they created their animal, they each did a Guided Writing Practice about it. It took us longer that way, but they really had fun with this activity.*

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