

# Exercises and Extension Activities

Following is a detailed list of ideas on how to introduce exercises to the students along with some suggested extension activities. In general, we think that it is best for teachers to read, explain and discuss each new concept with the class, and practice with examples before students begin the exercises. It is helpful to introduce many of the concepts by reading a book that describes that concept clearly. Many of the well known fairy tales work well, and we have offered a few suggestions along the way. A good book to read to introduce the process of writing might be *Patches Lost and Found* by Steven Kroll (Winslow Press).

## Chapter 1: Getting Started

### Brainstorming

**Page 2.** Before students begin to write, it is a good idea to brainstorm for ideas on what to write about. A classroom discussion could generate some ideas. **Asking** some leading questions could help, for example: What **kinds** of things make you laugh? What is fun to do? What things interest you? Experiences students have had, books and magazines they have read, movies they have seen, etc., can spark ideas. Encourage students to jot down their own ideas or those generated in the classroom discussion on page 139. Then they will be available when they need them. Also remind students of the story starters on page 140 that they can use and add to.

### Categorizing

**Page 4.** The concept of a category may be new to many students and it would be helpful to have a classroom discussion to explain it. Categorizing things that are in the classroom is an easy way to start (e.g., items in your desk, items for writing, items for art projects, etc.)

**Page 5.** *Henry and Mudge and the Forever Sea* by Cynthia Rylant (Simon & Schuster) would be a good book to read here. Students could list the items in each person's beach bag after reading the book as a class.

### Using a Web

**Page 6** (also on page 18). Remind students that details on a web do not need to be written in complete sentences. In fact, the shorter the better. These are just personal notes. Explain to the students that the words on their webs should just be reminders of a larger thought.

**Page 9.** The categories that the students don't use now could be used in later writing exercises or for story ideas.

# Answer Key

Answers are provided only for exercises that are not open-ended.

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## Categorizing



Before writing, it is **helpful** to group similar ideas together. This is called **categorizing**. Grouping or categorizing similar ideas makes it easier to write a story that makes sense. For example, read this categorized list:

cow  
hamster  
parakeet  
lion  
wolf

What do the words in this list have in common?

They are all animals.

Here's another list:

going to the bike store  
trying different bikes  
choosing the purple mountain bike  
picking out a helmet

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What do you think these actions have in common?

They all have to do with buying a bike.

So if you wanted to write about animals, it might help you to make a list like the **first** one. These might be all the animals you like. You could write a sentence about each one.

### Exercise 1

Look at the lists below. Find the item in each list that doesn't belong and cross it out.

- |                    |                   |                      |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. science         | 2. baseball       | 3. <del>summer</del> |
| social studies     | soccer ball       | shorts               |
| <del>running</del> | <del>spider</del> | shirt                |
| reading            | kickball          | pants                |
| math               | football          | socks                |

### Exercise 2

Think of something you do often, such as go to school, get ready for bed, or visit a friend. Make a list of some of the things you do to get ready. (For example, to go to school, you have to wake up first.) Write your list below.

Answers will vary.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

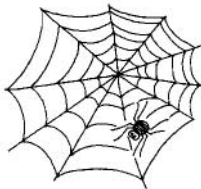
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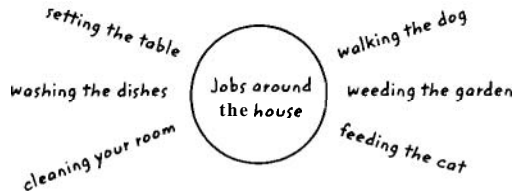
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Page 6

## Using a Web



A web is another way to brainstorm



Look at the web above and see if you can group the jobs into the following categories (groups):

Outdoor Jobs

walking the dog

weeding the garden

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Pet Jobs

feeding the cat

walking the dog

Indoor Jobs

setting the table

cleaning your room

washing the dishes

feeding the cat

Remember, when you have grouped or categorized similar ideas, you will find that it is easier to write a story that makes sense.

Your story might end up like this:

I have many jobs around the house. First of all, I walk the dog every day when I get home from school. Then I make sure the cat has her food. In the evening I set the table for dinner and help with the dishes. On weekends, my brother and I both weed the garden. I water the flowers in the front yard. He waters the ones in the back. Every Saturday I clean my room.