

Character Building Writing Prompts

Focus: Positive Behavior Skills for the
Middle and High School

Jo Ann Kuharske

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DEDICATION

I want to thank my family and friends for their continued support.

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INTRODUCTION

First Week of School

Announcements About Character Building Traits—if you choose to use the prompts this way. The announcements are a nice reinforcement tool for schools that are using Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports or PBIS.

Here is how this works. Let's say school starts on September 2nd. Every English class does the same writing prompt. This is then read on the announcements the next day. You can have the announcements rotate by class each week. This way each class is represented on the morning announcements. A different student will read the announcement every day. This way a diverse group of students will be making the announcements. I am giving you some examples to help you get started on day 1 of the school year. You will notice that you write about a different topic on Friday. That is because the announcement that is read will be the writing from the day before. This way your theme on the announcements is for Monday through Friday.

The following announcements can help you get started during the first week. Many districts begin the year with a four day week. Choose the prompts that are appropriate for your needs. I have included a few extra weeks of prompts to accommodate short weeks, like Thanksgiving. I did include five prompts per week so they will be compatible with your school year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Morning Announcement Examples

September 2

“Students, at OUR SCHOOL NAME this year we are going to be working together to implement a program that is called Character Building. Character building includes such topics as how to make a friend, talking about respect, identifying reasons why school is important, reasons for saying I’m sorry, and many, many others.”

“Making friends is our first character trait. Making friends can be difficult, especially if you are in a new place where you do not know anyone. This week we will read suggestions every day on how to make friends, be friendly, or what you should look for when choosing a good friend. Here is the tip for the day: Smile. This tells others that you are approachable. If you look grumpy, people will not want to be around you. Try to smile today, especially when you are around people you do not know. Pay attention to the response you get from them! This is one way to make a new friend and be friendly to others.”

September 3

“Students, here is more information on character building. Yesterday you worked on greeting someone with a smile. Did you notice the impact it had on others?”

“Students, yesterday I told you about how to smile when greeting others. Smiling makes people want to approach you, and it helps give you the confidence to approach others. Today you should try to approach someone you do not know and strike up a conversation. A good way to start a conversation is by talking about something you might have in common. You could talk about the classes you have, or you could talk about what you did over summer vacation. If there are long silent pauses when talking to the new person, it is ok, they are probably just as nervous as you are. Take a deep breath and smile. If you can’t think of anything more to say, say goodbye politely. You could say something like, “I’ll see you tomorrow, or see you in a little while. These are just a few tips on how to make a new friend. Try to make one new friend today at OUR SCHOOL NAME.”

September 4

“Students, here is a tip for making a new friend. Try complementing the person. You could say something like, “your hair sure looks great, or that answer you gave in class was perfect, or you sure sounded smart!” Remember, your compliment must be SINCERE. If your compliment is not sincere, they will probably be able to sense this and they will not want to speak with you again. They will feel like you are making fun of them if you do not say the compliment sincerely. Here is how you say something sincerely...First, make eye contact with the person. Second, avoid laughing. Finally, say something that is true. You wouldn't want to say that the person has pretty hair if it looks like they just woke up. You must say something that is TRUE in order for the person to believe you. If you laugh at the person, the person will feel badly and they will think that you are making fun of them. Try these three things when trying to make a new friend this week. Remember, the 1. Make eye contact, 2. Avoid laughing, and 3. Say something true.”

Or.....

September 4

“Students, today you should work on having a firm handshake. Greeting someone with a firm handshake is much better than greeting someone with a limp handshake. A firm handshake says, “I am in charge of myself.” A limp, weak handshake tells the other person that you do not have confidence in yourself. Greet the person with enthusiasm. This energy should also be in your handshake. Try giving someone a firm handshake today. Remember to make eye contact while greeting the person. Say something like “Hello, or Good morning.” This is a great way to be friendly.”

September 5, 2014

“Students, today you should work on talking to someone you don’t know. An easy way to start up a conversation with someone is by talking about things you might have in common. This might include such things as your classes, or how you spent your summer vacation. What the person says might not be interesting to **you**; however, you should still be respectful by keeping eye contact with the person. Remember, the person you are speaking to is probably just as nervous as you are, AND your goal is to get to know the person. Talking about what you did over summer vacation is just one way of getting to know the person.”

September 6

“Students, let’s practice making new friends, but remember, you don’t need to forget your old friends. Next, week our character-building trait is about being prepared for class. An 8th Grade student, from Ms. Kuharske’s class, will read this announcement. The writing/sponge activities that you do in class everyday will be used for announcements. We are going to have an announcement from a different class each week.

WEEKS 1 - 4

Week 1

Making Friends

- Why is it important to greet someone with a smile?
- How can you start a conversation with someone new?
- What are some good ways to pay someone a sincere compliment? Or What does a handshake say about you?
- Why do you make eye contact when talking to someone?
- How can you start a conversation with someone new?
- What does it mean to be prepared for class?

Week 2

Coming Prepared to Class

- What impression do you leave on people when you are not prepared?
- What can you do to be prepared for class?
- What happens to your grades when you don't have all the necessary materials?
- What kind of advice can you give someone to be prepared for class?
- What kinds of after school activities does OUR SCHOOL have?

Week 3

What After School Activities Can Do For Me

- What are the benefits of staying after school for academics?
- What are the benefits of staying after school for athletics?
- What are the benefits of joining a group?
- How can after school activities help me?
- How should I enter and exit a classroom?

Week 4

How To Enter And Exit A Classroom

- If I run into a classroom, what does that say about me?
- What does it tell others if I push and shove them out of my way to get in and out of the door?
- If I am late to class, pounding on the door and yelling disturbs the class, what can I do instead to get into class?
- What are some key things to remember when entering and leaving a classroom?
- What is a good way to get the teachers attention?

WEEKS 5-8

Week 5

Appropriate Ways To Get A Teachers Attention

- What does it tell other people about me when I yell things out?
- How can I tell when it is an appropriate time to get the teachers attention?
- What can I do if the teacher does not notice my hand in the air?
- If I get sent to another Teachers room on an errand, what is the best way I can get the Teachers attention without disturbing class?
- What does ‘appropriate classroom behavior’ mean?

Week 6

Appropriate Classroom Behavior

- Why is appropriate classroom behavior important?
- What do you think other students and Teachers think of students who don’t act appropriately in class?
- What does ‘coming to class ready to learn’ mean?
- Why is it important to stay in my own chair? What does it say about me when I don’t do that?
- What is appropriate hallway behavior?

Week 7

Appropriate Hallway Behavior

- What does it say about me when I tear another person's work down, or write on it?
- Why is it important to walk in the hallway?
- What happens when people don't walk in the hallway?
- What will people think of me if I leave a mess in the hallway?
- What does it mean it to "treat people the way you want to be treated"?

Week 8

Being Recognized By Others

- How does treating other people with respect make them notice me?
- How can I let people know I want to be involved when I am so shy?
- When another person is having a bad day, what can I do to make them realize they are not alone?
- I have people in class that I have never spoken to, how can I make them feel like part of the class?
- Define: Profane Language.

WEEKS 9-12

Week 9

Profanity

- Sometimes people slip and say bad words. What should they say afterwards?
- How do I tell a friend or classmate that I don't like hearing all of their bad language without making me look like a baby?
- What do you think of the people who are always yelling out profanity and talking with profanity?
- What kinds of tips can you give someone to stop using profanity?
- What does it feel like when someone takes something from you without asking?

Week 10

How To Ask Others To Borrow Items

- What is a good way to ask someone to borrow something?
- What should you do to get an item back from someone?
- What are some other good methods to use to get an item back?
- If someone says, 'No you can't borrow this,' does it mean they don't like you?
- What does respect mean?

Week 11

How To Respect Others

- When talking to someone else it is important to make eye contact. What does this show others?
- When a person laughs out loud or talks while you are answering a question or reading, how does that make you feel?
- How should people act when someone else is reading aloud in class or answering a question?
- What are ways you can show respect to other people?
- Adults always tell you to ‘respect yourself’, what does this mean?

Week 12

How To Respect Yourself

- Why is it important do dress appropriately?
- Why does eating a diet of healthy food and doing exercise show self-respect?
- In this age of technology, there is pressure to take pictures of yourself and send them to others in an email or text. You may not think they will share the pictures, but that usually happens. They will be out there forever. If we do this, we are not showing ourselves self-respect. Why?
- What are some other ways to show self-respect?
- If you borrow something from someone else, what condition should it be returned in?

WEEKS 13-16

Week 13

How To Respect Another Person's Property

- When you borrow an item from someone you should return it promptly. Why?
- If you break another persons' property, what should you do?
- If you find something that does not belong to you, what should you do with it?
- How do you feel when you loan out an item and it is not returned in the same condition you lent it out in?
- Everyone goes shopping. Why is a good education important to have when you go shopping? (Think of getting a good deal, getting change, the percent off, interest rates, balancing checkbooks, contracts...)

Week 14

The Importance Of School

- How can school help you get a job?
- What can doing well in school do for your self-confidence?
- What types of things does OUR SCHOOL have in place to help students improve their grades?
- If you aren't doing well in school right now, what can you do to improve?
- What do you miss when you are late for a class or school?

Week 15
Being On Time

- Why is important to be on time?
- What does it say about your character to be late?
- What does chronic tardiness say about your attitude towards a class?
- What advice could you give a person who is tardy too much on how to be on time?
- When you don't understand a person's cultural belief or custom, what should you do?

Week 16
Respecting Other Cultural Beliefs

- How can you show respect for other cultural beliefs?
- What can you say to someone who is being disrespectful to another persons' cultural belief?
- Not all cultures celebrate the same holidays. What is a good way to explain your beliefs to someone?
- During the holiday season many discussions about religion can occur at lunch. What should you do if you don't feel comfortable having that kind of conversation?
- What does being prepared for class mean?

WEEKS 17-20

Week 17

Being Prepared For Class

- If I lost a textbook, how can I get another one?
- What does being prepared for class say about me?
- How can using my assignment notebook/agenda help keep me prepared for class?
- If I am on my phone or listening to music, am I displaying traits that I am ready for class?
- What does “good manners” mean to you?

Week 18

Good Manners

- Why are good manners important in dealing with others?
- If a person is carrying a lot of stuff, has a stroller, is in a wheel chair, or on crutches, why should you open the door for them?
- Why is it important to say please and thank you?
- How can you teach someone else good manners?
- What is anger?

Week 19
Anger Management

- Sometimes we get angry over things that happen in the hallway, like getting bumped into, being run into, someone touching you, or shouting near you. These things can make you angry. What is a good way to handle these types of situations without saying something mean or resorting to physical contact?
- Many people when they are angry just don't stop to think about what they are about to do or say. What are some good tips you can give someone so they get a chance to think about their actions before they say or do something they will regret later?
- Occasionally a small problem can escalate in the hallway because of an audience. Sometimes students feel they cannot back out of a situation without fighting for fear of how it will look to their friends. What can people in the hallway do to help someone who is angry get a chance to deal with his or her feelings?
- In today's society technology is everywhere. When you are angry people record your actions and post video/texts/pictures of you online without your consent. How can you remember that when you are upset, so it does not happen to you?
- When you go to a person's home, a new school, a restaurant, or a store, you will first notice how it looks. What does it say to you if there is paper on the floor, clothes piled in a heap on the floor, uneaten food laying on the table, or dirty dishes sitting around?

Week 20

Respecting Public Property—Keeping OUR SCHOOL Clean

- What do you think OUR SCHOOL would look like if everyone picked up one piece of garbage off of the floor today? Would it make you feel proud?
- If you were going to celebrate your birthday at a skating rink, Dave and Busters, or anywhere else, how would you feel if you got there and the place was a disaster?
- If you see someone destroying another persons' work or property, what should you do?
- Teachers like to hang up work in the hallway. Some students like to tear down other peoples work. What does that say about them when they have to destroy someone else's work?
- What is body language?

WEEKS 21-24

Week 21

Body Language—What does it say?

- What can body language tell you about how someone is feeling?
- Sometimes, what you wear can affect your body language. If you dress up every day and today you wore sweats, what does that say?
- How can you communicate to others without talking that you have confidence in yourself?
- What are some good ways to communicate that you are ready to learn to your teacher?
- Why is it important to behave appropriately in the Auditorium?

Week 22

Appropriate Auditorium Behavior

- How should you enter the auditorium? What does it say about you if you don't come in the proper way?
- What does it tell the person or group performing if you are sleeping, on the phone, giggling, laughing, or talking during a performance? How do you think that makes the performer or performers feel?
- Why is it important to remain in your seat in the auditorium?
- What do you think appropriate auditorium behavior is?
- How should you enter the lunchroom?

Week 23

Appropriate Lunchroom Behavior

- When students run in the lunchroom, what can happen?
- When you leave the cafeteria your area should be clean. How does it make you feel when you go to lunch and there is food all over the floor and your tables?
- How should you talk in the cafeteria?
- How should you leave the cafeteria?
- What is a good way to interrupt a friend who is talking to someone else in the hall?

Week 24

How To Interrupt Someone

- In class how do you positively get a teachers attention?
- What are some good ways to interrupt someone who is on the phone?
- Has someone ever interrupted you while you were talking to someone? How did that make you feel?
- When you want to talk to someone who is talking or on the phone, what are some good nonverbal ways to get their attention?
- What does neat work say about you?

WEEKS 25-28

Week 25

Neat Work And What It Says About You

- Why is it important to do neat work?
- How would you describe neat work?
- Neat work says that you put time and effort into your assignment, what do you think messy work says about the work you did?
- Do you think the neatness of our writing matters on how people judge you? Yes or No. Why?
- What is Gossiping?

Week 26

Gossiping

- Do you feel that most of Gossip is accurate by the time it gets to you? Why or why not?
- How can you tell someone that you do not want to hear the gossip without being rude?
- When gossip gets back to the person it is about, and yes it usually does, do you think it will hurt their feelings? Would it hurt yours? Do you think most of what you hear is even true?
- How can you put a stop to gossip that is being spread? Or How can you stop gossip from being spread on facebook, or twitter?
- Why is it important to be prompt?

Week 27
Being On Time

- If you are late, what does it tell people that you think of them?
- What do you miss in class if you are late?
- Do you think people like waiting for you all of the time?
- What strategies can I use to be on time?
- Don't you hate it when someone walks by you and you smell a bad odor? I know I sure do. What can you do to make sure you do not smell bad?

Week 28

Good Hygiene/Dressing Appropriately

- The first impression someone has of you is how you look. If you are wearing inappropriate clothes for school what do you think the other kids will think of you?
- You don't have to have the newest clothing items to be dressed appropriately. You just need to make sure your clothes are clean. What message does it send to others if your clothes are dirty?
- What can you do to help a person improve their personal hygiene without hurting their feelings? This is hard to do. Try to come up with some good strategies. Remember it is not always the persons fault if there is no money to do the wash, or to buy new clothes. Be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others when you respond to this.
- If I find out that someone needs more help than I can give, where can I go to get them help? Remember, they might be too embarrassed or ashamed to get help on their own. Who at school, besides your teacher could you go to for help?
- If you want to help a friend who is upset or sad, what can you do?

WEEKS 29-32

Week 29

Helping Others And Taking Turns

- What are some of the benefits of helping others?
- What are some of the different things you can do at school or home to help others?
- Little kids are taught to share with others. This seems to be forgotten, as we get older. Why is it still important to share with others?
- Sometimes there are not enough supplies for everyone to use, why is it important to take turns?
- What does good telephone etiquette mean to you?

Week 30

Telephone Etiquette

- Should you have your phone on in class?
- If you have a phone in school, how should you have the settings on your phone set?
- What happens in class, when phones are “ringing”? How does this affect the learning environment of the rest of the class?
- What is the best way to handle someone who lets their phone go off in class?
- Why shouldn't I talk during class?

Week 31

Appropriate Classroom Behavior

- Why is it important to follow the directions the first time they are given?
- What does it say about my attitude towards a class and the teacher if I talk during the instructions? Is this respectful to my fellow classmates?
- Why should I leave my area clean when I leave for my next class? What does it say about me if I don't?
- What should I do with my electronic devices during class time?
- What does it mean to be positive?

Week 32

Be Positive

- How can I be a positive person?
- How can I help others to be positive?
- How can being positive improve my attitude towards life?
- Offering to help someone is a way of showing a positive attitude, how does this benefit you and others?
- Define: Peer Pressure.

WEEKS 33-36

Week 33

Peer Pressure

- Does peer pressure always have to be negative?
- If my friend keeps trying to get me to do something I don't want to do, what can I do or say to let them know I won't do something without losing them as a friend?
- When adults tell you to 'stand your ground,' what does that mean?
- What are some good strategies for saying "no"?
- How can you demonstrate caring behavior?

Week 34

Caring

- Do you have to know someone to demonstrate caring behavior?
- When a person is having a bad day, what are some of the little things you can do to show them that you care?
- When there are fundraisers for the needy, does this demonstrate caring?
- If you have a pet, what is a way you can show them you care?
- What is loyalty?

Week 35

Loyalty

- How can you demonstrate loyalty to a friend?
- If your friend is being talked about and you don't like it, should you stand up for them, or just go along with what is being said?
- How do you know if your friends are loyal to you?
- How do you think your friends feel if you are not loyal to them? Do you think that they will remain your friend?
- Why is it important to be helpful in the classroom?

Week 36

How To Be Helpful In The Classroom

- What are some of the ways you can be helpful in the classroom?
- Why is it helpful to push in your chair, and throw out any garbage near you?
- If I spill something on the floor should I yell out and over react, or should I just quietly clean it up?
- How can you help other students in the classroom?
- Who can I contact here at OUR SCHOOL about signing up for summer college programs?

WEEKS 37-38

Week of 37

Planning For A Successful Summer

- Who can answer all of my questions about summer school for the summer?
- If I am looking for babysitting jobs, I need to take a babysitting course. Where do you think I should look for this information?
- What are some of the fun things I can do in the summer around the house?
- If I am getting a job over the summer, where do I need to go to get a job permit?
- How can I make sure I don't lose contact with my friends over the summer?

Week 38

How Can I Keep In Touch With My Friends Over The Summer

- Many students do not have a phone to keep in contact with friends over the summer, what are some other methods I can use?
- When I plan to meet a friend somewhere, what are some ways to be safe while I wait?
- When you arrange to meet a friend somewhere and they don't show up, what should you do?
- What is some advice you can leave for the students coming into your grade next year?
- Write a message congratulating the 8th graders on promotion, or 12th graders who are graduating.

Alignment To The Common Core State Standards

All of the standards listed have been taken from the Common Core State Standards.

Read the Common Core Standards:. (n.d.). *Common Core State*

Standards Initiative. Retrieved February 15, 2014, from

<http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>

Grade 6

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.4 Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1a Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1b Use intensive pronouns (e.g., *myself*, *ourselves*).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1c Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1d Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1e Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2a Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2b Spell correctly.

Grade 7

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.1a Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.1b Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.1c Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.2a Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., *It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie* but not *He wore an old[,] green shirt*).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.2b Spell correctly.

Grade 8

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1a Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1b Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1c Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2a Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2b Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2c Spell correctly.

Grade 9-10

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.3d Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.1a Use parallel structure.*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.1b Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.2a Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.2b Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.2c Spell correctly.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.2d Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.2e Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.1a Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.1b Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage*, *Garner's Modern American Usage*) as needed.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.2a Observe hyphenation conventions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.2b Spell correctly.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jo Ann Kuharske has been teaching since January 1992. She has been working in urban middle schools since that time. Jo Ann has used these character building traits with the middle school level with great success.

She is married with two children.