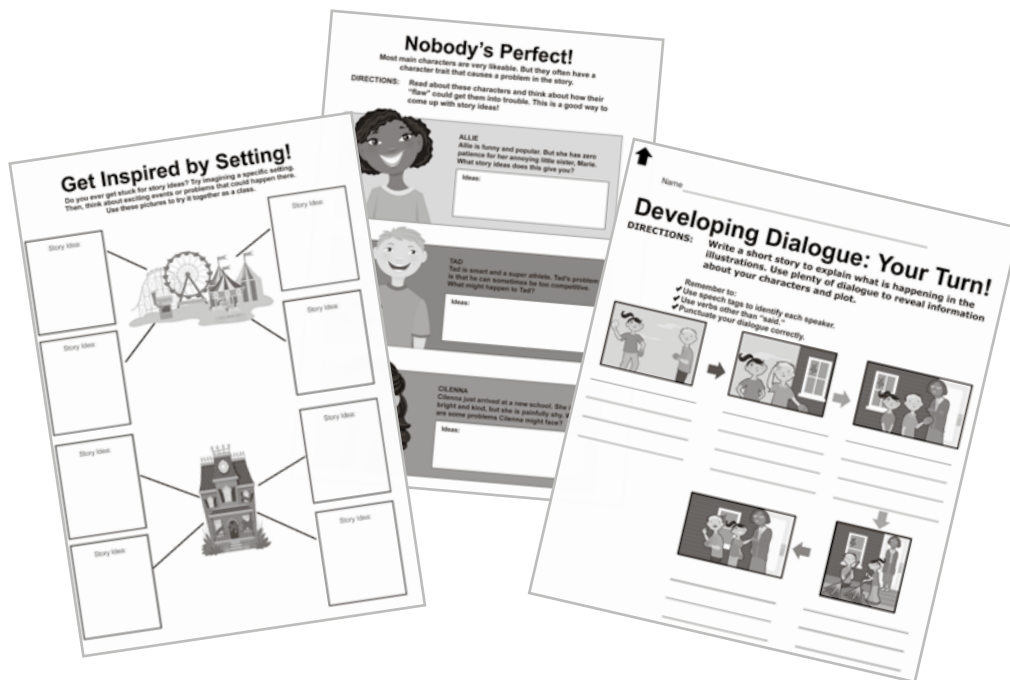


SMART Board® Lessons: Narrative Writing

With 40 Ready-to-Use, Motivating Lessons in Notebook Software
to Help You Teach Essential Writing Skills



by Karen Kellaher

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Teaching
Resources

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Introduction

Not long ago, I mentioned to a brilliant retired teacher I know how much I was enjoying creating lessons for the SMART Board. “Smart what?” was her puzzled response. Though she has been out of the classroom for only six years, she had never heard of—much less used—an interactive whiteboard. Now, a typical school in our area has a huge SMART Board in the computer lab and an equally huge teacher waiting list for the portable units available for classroom use.

That conversation illustrated for me just how fast the technology landscape is changing in our schools. Almost as fast as you can say, “Budget approved,” SMART Boards and similar whiteboard units are replacing overhead projectors and “old-fashioned” dry-erase boards. There are several excellent reasons why.

- The SMART Board offers instant lesson engagement. Whether you are teaching about nouns, narratives, or Roman numerals, you will have students’ immediate attention. Many of today’s kids were computer literate even before they started school. They are accustomed to games and gadgets that respond to the touch of a fingertip. A SMART Board grabs their attention in a way that blackboards and handouts fail to do.
- Because it offers a large, interactive display and opportunities for collaborative learning, the SMART Board is a smart way to teach students 21st-century skills like working in teams, marking text electronically, synthesizing information, organizing data, interpreting visual aids, and evaluating Web sites. These skills are an increasingly important part of the standards in many states.
- The SMART Board is easy to use, even for technophobes. I didn’t believe it myself (in fact, I was a little scared of the giant whiteboard) until I took my first workshop. But, using the board and the accompanying Notebook software is fairly intuitive. On the interactive whiteboard, you can do anything you can do on your computer screen—and then some. So, even if you are just learning the technology, you can pull off a fun, effective lesson.

About the Notebook Files and This Book

Make the most of SMART technology within your language arts curriculum. The SMART Notebook pages in the companion folder are a perfect way to teach writing skills because they allow you to model concepts and skills for the whole class. You can read and analyze pieces of text together, deciding what works and why. You can move, highlight, underline, and change text right on the whiteboard. And, best of all, you can save everything for later use or review. When your class comes up with awesome sensory details or alternatives to replace the dreaded *said*, you can capture the discussion on screen using our organizers and activities, then provide students with copies for their writing folders.

The companion folder contains five units on narrative writing skills. Each unit is a Notebook file with eight interactive pages that take advantage of the SMART technology without being overwhelming to the SMART Board novice. You will find opportunities to use the Creative Pens, on-screen keyboard, graphic organizers, cloning tools, drag-and-drop feature, and more. Instructions for using each SMART tool are embedded in the lesson plans.

Each unit in the companion folder introduces narrative writing skills in a gradual-release format. The first lesson in each unit introduces the topic, engages students' attention, and establishes what they already know. In the next six lessons, students collaboratively explore concrete skills related to the topic. In the last "lesson," students synthesize and apply what they have learned in a brief independent writing assignment. You may choose to have students complete this final Your Turn! activity in class or as a homework assignment.

This book contains easy-to-use lessons corresponding to each companion folder unit. Lessons include objectives, pacing suggestions, and step-by-step directions for teaching with each SMART Notebook page in the companion folder. They also correlate with important language arts standards.

Tech Tips

Although the SMART Writing companion folder was created using Notebook 10 software, you will be able to use the activities with older versions of the software. If you are still getting the hang of your SMART Board, Board, be sure to look for the technology tips offered at various points throughout the units. However, the following is an overview of the main Notebook features you will be using.



SMART Pens These are the black, red, green, and blue pens that came with your SMART Board. Use them to write directly on the screen in digital ink.



Creative Pens A student favorite, this tool allows you to draw fun lines made of smiley faces, stars, rainbow stripes, and more.



Magic Pen When students circle text or art with the Magic Pen, a spotlight focuses on the circled portion of the page. Everything else on the page goes dark temporarily. It's a dramatic way to focus attention on one element on a page!



Eraser Like its old-fashioned counterparts, this eraser removes unwanted writing. It will work on text and lines created with the SMART pens. It will not work on typed text or art objects.



On-Screen Keyboard If your students are adding text to a small field or simply prefer typing to writing freehand, use the on-screen keyboard. You can access it by touching the keyboard icon on the front tray of your SMART Board.



Properties Tool In several of the activities in this book, you will be guided to use this feature to change the color or style of a SMART pen or to add color to a box.



Screen Shade A teacher favorite, this tool allows you to cover part of a page while focusing attention on another part. Activate the shade by clicking on the Screen Shade icon on your toolbar. Deactivate it by clicking again. To gradually open a shade that covers your screen, use one of the circular buttons on the shade itself to drag the shade open.

UNIT 1

Designing Settings

A strong setting invites readers into a story and plays a significant role in shaping the plot. Use this series of Notebook pages to introduce the narrative “when” and “where” and to help students develop strong settings in their own writing.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the main components of setting (time and place).
- ✓ Use setting to generate story ideas.
- ✓ Use sensory details to describe various story settings.

TIME

About 3–4 class periods for Unit 1 (allow 15–20 minutes per lesson)


MEETING THE STANDARDS

This lesson correlates with the following writing standards for grades 3 through 6:

- Students identify and describe all aspects of the setting of a story (e.g., time of day, place, year).
- Students generate ideas using organizers and other prewriting strategies.
- Students write narratives using concrete sensory details.

GETTING READY

Before students arrive, have your SMART Board ready to go.

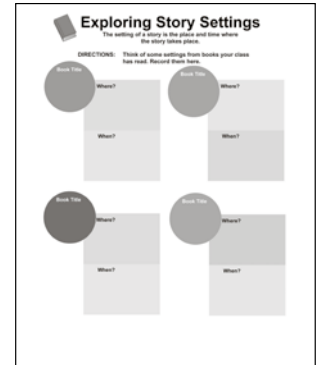
Open the companion folder, then the lesson file. The first interactive page, *Exploring Story Settings*, will appear on your SMART Board. If you wish, use your Screen Shade tool  to conceal the page until you are ready to begin.



INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT

Exploring Story Settings

1. Display *Exploring Story Settings* on the SMART Board. To begin, ask students to think about what we mean by *setting*. Solicit definitions from the class. You may find that students think initially of the geographic aspect of setting, that is, *where* a story takes place. Guide them to understand that setting also includes another important “W”—*when* the story takes place. Explain that both the geographic and temporal aspects of setting can play a huge role in a story, determining how characters behave, the problems they encounter, and how they tackle those problems.
2. Invite students to think of some stories they have read recently. For each example, record the book title on the graphic organizer. (Use a SMART pen or the on-screen keyboard to write text directly on the organizer.) Then ask students to share where and when the narrative took place. Have students record these setting details in the text boxes of the organizer.



TECH TIP

If students have trouble writing with the SMART pens, check that they are holding the stylus correctly. If a student’s wrist or hand rubs against the screen while writing, his or her writing will appear garbled and illegible. When using these pens, only the stylus tip should make contact with the SMART Board.

3. Use students’ examples to make the following points:

- **What we know about setting can vary greatly from book to book.** Some authors offer specific details about setting, but others prefer to leave place names and dates up to the reader’s imagination. For example, in *Journey to America* by Sonia Levitin, we are told that the action takes place in 1938 in Berlin, Germany. However, in *Sarah, Plain and Tall* by Patricia MacLachlan, no town, state, or year is specified. We know simply that the story takes place in the American prairie in a time when horse-drawn carriages were a main form of transportation. Both techniques can be very effective.
- **Setting has many layers.** Place can involve a country, state, city, neighborhood, building, or even room. Time might include historical era, year, season, month, day of the week, or time of day.

4. Save your class’s graphic organizer. Later, make a copy for each student to keep in his or her writing folder.