

Review of the Syllabus of  
Creative Writing in Fiction  
in the  
Blended Structure & Style Program

By  
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Blended Structure & Style in Composition grew out of, and is an integral part of, the Blended  
Sound-Sight Program of Learning created by A.G. Ingham (C.M.)

## I The Syllabus in Fiction

The syllabus of the Blended Structure & Style program alternates between units of study & practice devoted to literature, largely fiction, which leads on to creative writing and those units which prepare students for academic compositions, note making, library & research reports with the final object being essay writing. Two streams alternate. One aims to produce creative writers of fiction, the other competent convincing essays. Becoming enmeshed in the various units, instructors should not lose sight of the main goals, so concerned with the trees, they fail to recognize the forest. Does alternation becloud the main goals? If so, why alternate? Fundamentally the justification for alternating units between fiction and academic writing involves student preference. Some students like one stream, while some prefer the other. Some units are tough slugging, others are more fun. Alternation provides variety. Since alternation might confuse the final goals of the program, possibly we should look at the units of the fiction stream and observe how they prepare writers for full creative writing in Unit VII.

## II Summaries of Stories: Unit III

While units one and two have been given over to note taking, which from grade four and up, should involve non-fiction, Unit III introduces fictional literature. Writers in Unit III are expected to summarize a story in three paragraphs following a sequence chart. Certainly over half of all short and anecdotal stories, novels and plays in the English language can be summarized using the sequence chart. The skill being taught is the ability to see the big picture. Students learn to generalize. They learn to compress. Even with older students begin with a fairy tale because the structure of the composition is all-important and because they are contending with a host of newly introduced stylistic elements. Thereafter get on with the literature of their grade level, longer stories, play sand eventually the novel.

Some of the better writers might move directly from summaries to creative writing in this unit, while weaker students continue with summaries. Let us take the play, "Cyrano de Bergerac" as in the models below. While weaker students might go to a second summary of, for example, "The Crucible," the stronger could be encouraged to compose and write a short story using the "Cyrano" summary as a model. One general theme shows how two imperfect individuals together make the "perfect" man. It is a common phenomenon, as in friendships between opposites where the strengths of both make up for the weaknesses of both. Teenage

duos come to mind. Surely it is not beyond the sensitivity of a high school student to explore this theme. Two model compositions follow. The first "Was it Too Late" is a three-paragraph summary of "Cyrano" while "Two in One" is a creative composition – also in three paragraphs – modeled on the summary of the play. Thus play – summary – creative composition, in that order, each in turn modeled on the one before it. The ending of the creative story, "Two in One" is different from the play. Possibly this is because this student had earlier summarized two short stories with mysterious endings: Frank Stockton's "The Lady or the Tiger" and Stephen Leacock's "Lord Oxhead's Secret." There is a Chinese fairy tale "The Bat & the Nightingale" which deals with the theme of co-operation between two individuals for their mutual benefit, as in "Cyrano."

One further note. When dealing with a piece of literature such as "Hamlet" with a prominent sub-theme, I have advised students to expand the three-paragraph sequence chart to four. This allows the sub-plot to be dealt with in its own paragraph. In novels which have multiple sub-plots, the most prominent might be dealt with in not more than two extra paragraphs. It should be noted that in the whole syllabus – except for the super essay – the requirements for compositions are limited to, three to five paragraphs. I strongly advise teachers not to go beyond five-paragraph limit in any adjustments they make. The objective is short, well constructed stylish gems.

## Was It Too Late?

by Marian Ting

Grade 6

Dec. 12, 2002

1           The play took place in France in 1640, during which time the French and  
4 Spanish fought against each other vigorously. Serving as a cadet in the French  
6, 2           ability to speak wittily and poetically. He possessed intellect. Among his  
allit.       numerous talents, his only setback and embarrassment was his peculiarly  
5           prominent proboscis, which he regarded with extreme sensitivity. As he  
1           viewed it as a deformity, he hesitated to tell his beautiful and clever cousin  
3           Roxane of his love for her, fearing her derision. Another key character is  
1           Christian De Neuville, the handsome cadet who fell in love with Roxane  
3           because he chanced to see her from a distance. Strangely he possessed an  
1           awkward impediment which caused him to stutter and falter for words when  
Triple     he stood in the presence of a beautiful woman. Cyrano and Christian loved  
1           Roxane differently; Cyrano loved her for her inner beauty, her wit and her  
Triple     grace; Christian adored her physical beauty and charm.

d. open., 3           Roxane desired affection. Completely oblivious to the hopes of her  
2           cousin, she fell in love with Christian, who was coincidentally in the same  
2           regiment as Cyrano. After learning of her feelings, he believed his slight  
4           chance of earning her love vanished forever. Using Christian as a means to  
4           convey his feelings to Roxane, he proceeded to help Christian win the girl,  
6           since he needed aid in knowing what to say to her. Christian agreed gratefully.  
1           Cyrano used his charm and poetry to write letters to Roxane, substituting the  
5           name Christian for his. While he was aiding Christian, Cyrano also saw it as a  
1, Triple   means to express his fervent and dedicated feelings to Roxane without her  
6           knowing. The two men shared their talents and gifts; the former his charming,  
6           lyrical, and romantic speeches, the latter his handsome face. Their scheme  
3           worked. Totally ignorant and unmindful of the ploy, Roxane believed  
5           Christian to be the author of his correspondence. When both cadets

unexpectedly and reluctantly journeyed away to fight the Spanish, Cyrano made sure "Christian" wrote every day, complying to a fervent request Roxane had asked of him before their departure. At the final scene of the great battle, Roxane knelt weeping over a dead Christian, killed during the first volley of the fight. Cyrano looked on sorrowfully, thinking he could never tell her of his devotion after she lost Christian.

Roxane continued to remember and mourn for Christian as a widow fifteen years later. Still unaware of the great aid Cyrano had given him and of the love he even now had for her, she treasured him as a close friend. Believing Roxane would still ridicule him if he informed her of his affections, Cyrano continued to visit her on the pretext of pure friendship. He arrived weekly to talk to her because he wished to lighten her low and gloomy spirits. Strangely one day he appeared late, pitifully and pathetically leaning on a cane with his face twisted in pain. It was clear he had received a fatal wound, though he tried to conceal it. During the chat, he casually, quietly, and yearningly asked Roxane for Christian's last letter, wanting to read it himself. Roxane consented. As he read aloud, Roxane listened and discovered the peculiar similarity between the voice of Cyrano and the voice which spoke of love to her from under the balcony long ago. She comprehended the scheme. All became clear. She understood. The soul which Roxane once thought to be Christian had actually emerged from Cyrano. With this discovery Roxane learned of the love which Cyrano had for her. She also realized she loved him. However, was it too late?

## Two in One

by Jackson Fun

Grade 9

May, 2003

3                    Cheerfully but also fearfully, Bart and Rex had signed on as masons at a  
2                    new hospital project in a small town nestled in a high pass in the Rockies. On  
all sides of the town, huge mountains rose up as if they formed the sides of a  
4, simile        bowl. As a consequence the sun failed to peep over the eastern mountains until  
late in the mornings while it set over those in the west early in the afternoon.  
6, 6, 5        Days were short. Twilight prolonged. While Bart was older, short and slightly  
1                    and noticeably lame, Rex was in his late teens, very tall and gangly. They  
Triple         argued over everything because one was Catholic, the other Protestant, one  
conservative and the other liberal, one given to the good life, the other  
5                    abstemious even puritanical. If Rex considered a passing girl to be pretty, Bart  
5                    would call her a horse face. If the young man believed a certain cloud  
5                    formation forecast rain, the old man would predict drought. If the teenager  
lauded a certain politician as concerned about people, the senior would  
2                    condemn him as corrupt and self-absorbed. In other words if Rex argued it  
6                    was white, Bart surely would contend it was black. They never agreed.  
4                    Climbing over the scaffolding and arguing continuously, no one could guess –  
and it was vital no one would – that they were father and son who had never  
d. close        seen each other since Rex had been a baby. Their plot hinged on secrecy.

5                    While Rex was paid the very high wages of a mason, he knew almost  
nothing about the trade except how to lay concrete and plaster blocks in  
1                    straight lines. There was lots of work he could do since hospitals specialize in  
Q                    long corridors. Would the foreman locate him in the corridors or in the  
operating room so extraordinarily filled with electrical tubing and plumbing, it  
1                    might have confounded a qualified mason? Rex worked extremely rapidly, so  
quickly in fact the union boss threatened to sack him if he did not slow down.  
2                    On the other hand Bart had been thoroughly trained and apprenticed in all  
6                    aspects of masonry, a quite unusual even rare artisan in the trade. However,

3 Bart was slow. Angrily the company bosses twice threatened to sack him.  
4 Finding a certain task impossible, Rex would call upon Bart, who, leaving his  
own work, would surreptitiously move over to give the young man a helping  
3, 6 hand. Naturally this made Bart appear even slower in his own tasks. More  
3 manager abuse. Consequently, being slow, the old codger suffered the wrath  
of the company “for driving up costs” and the young buck was hounded by the  
5 union because he was “working himself and everyone else out of a job.” If  
their relationship had ever been suspected, both company and union would  
have become suspicious and demanded proof of the qualifications of the son.  
1 Thereafter Rex would have been demoted to hod carrier at a fraction of a  
mason’s salary.

4 As a subject of conversation, it never ceased. Sitting around over their  
lunch pails while sipping their coffee and smoking their fags, the topic weighed  
Q on everyone’s mind. Who would be tagged to brick up the smoke stack which  
5 stretched hundreds of meters into the air? While looking rather skeptical, a  
6, 1 company manager had asked for a volunteer. No one offered. The stack  
would form a wind tunnel and be bitterly cold specifically and especially on  
3 bare hands in cold mortar. Obviously the space would be cramped while all  
bricks and mortar had to be lowered on a small rickety platform descending  
1 hundreds of feet over the mason’s head. One old man reported workers being  
Triple killed when the platform tipped, bricks and mortar tumbling from great  
2 heights, gathering murderous speed and crashing upon the mason’s head. Of  
course, Rex had not a single clue about how to brick up a smoke stack, nor  
1 could Bart sneak around to help. One old cackling character suggested Rex be  
3sss chosen since he was the youngest. Great joviality followed. Angrily Rex spoke  
up. “Oh! Yeah! Send the youngest just as old men gleefully declare war, then  
6 joyfully send off the younger generation to fight it.” That angered everybody.  
1, 2 They dispersed declaring Rex their volunteer. In privacy Bart asked Rex to  
calm down because he argued the managers would offer a money bribe and  
eventually the old men would scramble to be chosen like rats after poison.  
3, 1 Eventually a union boss organized a lottery. Whoever drew the marked lot  
6, 6 would be doomed for the chimney job. Rex drew forth. His lot was marked.

4 Dancing, jumping and stomping, the old men shouted “Rex! Rex! Rex!” Panic  
Q stricken, Rex looked at Bart who dropped his eyes. When the day arrived to  
Q begin bricking up the smoke stack, did Rex feign illness? Did his father step  
forth and volunteer to replace him or was their secret revealed and the two  
men who made one good mason, sacked unceremoniously?

## Putting Creative Stories into Verse (I)

After composing and perfecting creative stories built upon the model used in summarizing – the sequence chart – as in “Two in One,” students might be encouraged to try their hand at poetry, based on their stories just written. The sequence is important:

1. The original, the play Cyrano Bergerac.
2. The summary of it, “Was it Too Late?” based on sequence chart.
3. Creative story, “Two in One” modeled on the summary.
4. The poem “Father and Son” based on the creative story.

Poetry requires rhyme and rhythm. The first is style, the second structure. Whatever moderns might argue, I like some rhyme in poetry and so do young people. Rhythm refers to the beats per line. Recommend poems be kept to one or two stanzas. The rhyme and rhythm of the first stanza should be repeated in the second. Edit submitted poems. The first draft of the poem below monotonously repeated a three-beat line as:

Arguing constantly  
Rarely saw eye to eye  
They differed greatly  
How much they had tried [sic]  
They continually bickered  
While workmates smiled and snickered.

Through editing, the monotony was broken by combining and adding one beat lines. Insist that students note the rhyme and the rhythm in the margin so that you know their intent. You will often find that lines do not have, or have more beats than the students intended. Point this out suggesting additions and deletions. As the above shows initially Jackson had no “who” and the rhyme was faulty since “eye” and “tried” were less than ideal. Especially in poetry, it is important that you edit in consultation with the writer.

## Father and Son

by

Jackson Fun

Grade 9, Third draft

May, 2003

	Rhyme	Rhythm
Arguing constantly, they rarely saw eye to eye,	A	5
<u>Since</u> they differed and how much they might try	A	5
they <u>continually</u> bickered.	B	3
While		
mates <u>who smiled &amp; snickered</u> ,	B	3
mightily enjoyed the fun.	C	3
But why?		
<u>Because</u> a <u>cranky old</u> dad on the run,	C	4
Had		
one cantankerous son.	C	3
An <u>ominous smoke</u> stack <u>stretched, reaching</u> the sky,	A	5
Requiring stamina, <u>since</u> it was built so high.	A	5
The son <u>who</u> cringed with fear,	B	3
Waited as		
The lottery drew <u>quickly</u> near.	B	3
Father snorted "Done"	C	3
<u>Because?</u>		
The cantankerous son seemed now on the run,	C	4
And		
Father enjoyed the fun.	C	3

## Putting Creative Stories into Verse (II)

“The Parrot,” a three-paragraph summary following the sequence chart with the six point dress up, six openers, at least one decoration and one triple in each paragraph, is followed by a poem “A Second Chance” modeled on it. In each stanza the poem does exhibit the six-point dress up, decorations and triples. Note the rhyme. The first two and last two lines of each stanza rhyme.

### The Parrot

For his birthday David excitedly received a parrot when he came down the stairs in the morning. Fully grown and with a bad attitude, the parrot used a worse vocabulary because the bird appeared ill-natured. Every other word seemed to be a nasty or dirty expletive. Talking incessantly, the bird babbled, even shouted in words which, if not expletives, were to say the least, rude. It was shocking.

When David yelled at the bird, it got seriously worse. He grabbed and shook the parrot and it became madder and ruder. Finally in a moment of angry and desperate frustration, David shoved the parrot into the freezer because he could tolerate it no longer. For a few minutes he heard the bird squawking and kicking, screaming and cursing while the old freezer rattled. Then suddenly there was quiet. Fearing he might actually have hurt the parrot – which after all he was growing to like – David quickly, if fearfully and cautiously, opened the freezer door.

Stepping out calmly onto David’s outstretched and extended arm, the parrot spoke: “I’m sorry that I might have offended you with my rude and vulgar language and actions. In future I will endeavour to correct my behaviour which you, as my master, have every right to expect of me.” While David was surprised, even astounded at the bird’s change of attitude because it was so sudden, he was about to ask what had brought it about, when the parrot continued: “May I ask what the chicken did?”

### A Second Chance

Bounding down the stairs, he trembled with excitement and glee,  
Because before him paraded and preened, the most beautiful parrot one might see.  
Continuously nasty dirty expletives exploded like shells,  
which  
Shocked him, seared, pierced and hurt his ears,  
Hurt them terribly  
So –

While the refrigerated ice crystal cavern stretched ahead menacingly,  
The door swung, slamming shut on the parrot's last shout,  
Since it was, "Time out!"

Violently rocking the fridge which shook with a terrible clatter,  
The nasty bird screamed and maintained a steady chatter,  
While adjusting from comforting warmth to freezer chill.

Suddenly silence!

The opened door revealed a trembling and chastised bird.  
Stepping forth gingerly yet spryly and sedately, the parrot spoke  
Respectfully.

In a quizzical tone and because of curiosity, it softly asked about the chicken:  
"What terrible sin had it committed?"

And, "Was a second chance ever permitted?"

## Critiquing Narratives: Unit IX

The placing of the units on critiques has continually caused problems. I placed it last in the syllabus because frankly it is of lesser importance and teachers often fail to complete a syllabus. Frequently and justifiably they fall behind a little more each unit until June has come and gone. Something must be ignored. If one unit has to be dropped, best it should be critiques. Some teachers have met this problem by teaching critiques directly after Unit Three because that unit is intimately linked to Unit Nine. I have upon occasion followed this procedure. However, some problems follow. Writers at that stage might not be quite sophisticated enough. Secondly and even more importantly, if the syllabus is not completed, it will be Units Seven and Eight which suffer. Unit Seven on creative writing and Unit eight on essays are the climax or pinnacle of this program. Both should be stressed. Both should be given ample extra time. As a teacher, I attempted to shorten the time given to other units, so that more might be given to the key units, Seven and Eight. If a class, say in grade eight, had been introduced to the syllabus in grade seven, then clearly Unit Nine might readily follow Unit Three.

The two units – Three and Nine – are closely related. The easiest and fastest method is to take the three-paragraph summaries already written in Unit Three, add to them one-paragraph introductions and conclusions. That can be done in one lecture. The slower and superior method would be to introduce new literature, more complex, during this unit. After all you do not want critiques of “The Fox and the Crow” and other simplistic narratives which you utilized in Unit Three. By now, grades above six or seven could be writing critiques of long narratives and novels, plays and books. See this critique of a book of her own choosing, by a grade-eight student, for the more sophisticated approach.

## How Do You Tell a Cannibal About Love?

by Joyce Ting

Grade 8

January 15, 2003

d. open, 2

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Triple

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*Peace Child* is very dramatic. In this autobiography, Don Richardson recounts his Christian ministry among the Sawi people, deep in the jungles of what is now Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Scattered appropriately and plentifully throughout the book are twenty-five black-and-white photographs of the natives, the author and his wife, and Sawi huts. The story occurred in the 1960's, and was published by Regal books in 1976. *Peace Child* has been so esteemed, admired, and appreciated that it was translated into twelve other languages besides English. The copies printed totaled 315,000. Its 288 pages, divided into 25 chapters, contain one of the most exciting stories ever experienced with the headhunting cannibals. Don and his family lived among them, while learning their customs and rituals. Each of these seemed to form new barriers to prevent the sharing of the Gospel, because they were so contradictory yet established. Attempting to explain the Lord's love, His mercy, and Jesus' sacrifice, Don initially failed to capture or engage their interest. While considering the situation, he discovered the need to find a redemptive analogy with which the natives could relate their own beliefs. Descriptively, this book illustrates the culture of the natives and the missionaries, and how the two were finally united through a similar event. Through each success and failure, Don Richardson learned the answer to the question: How do you tell a cannibal about love?

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In 1955, while attending the Prairie Bible Institute, Don Richardson heard a lecture given by Ebenezer G. Vine. As the secretary of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union, Mr. Vine introduced a unique, important missions opportunity for the Christian students at Prairie Institute. Irian Jaya, the western half of a 1400-mile-long Indonesian island, was home for tens of thousands of tribes people who had never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In certain terrains, frozen and icy mountain ranges soared to altitudes of 15,000

3 feet. Contrastingly, valleys and lowlands in other areas experienced torrents of  
1 rain and scorching heat to maintain a lingering humidity. Numerous valleys  
1 were dotted with inhabited villages deep within the uncharted inner jungles of  
4 Irian Jaya. Each member of these villages knew very little of the outside world,  
allit. although it was the twentieth century. Appearing rather primitive, their  
1 weapons, tools, and huts conveyed that they might have still been living in the  
1 Stone Age. These people lived in separate, small, and scattered sections  
Triple because close contact with others usually, predictably, and sadly resulted in  
1 war and mass killing. However, these were more than isolated tribe people.  
1,1 They were headhunting cannibals. It was not the number of heads one  
1 acquired which attained much glory, but rather the treachery and deception  
1 with which each murder was crafted and conducted. The cannibals would  
1 cunningly and deviously befriend their enemies, then betray them unto death  
1 with neither mercy nor sympathy. Their term for this was *tuwī asonai man*,  
1 which translated into "To fatten with friendship for and unsuspecting  
1 slaughter." This, along with other disgusting rituals and bizarre beliefs, were  
1 kept through each generation as sacred ancestral teachings. It was for these  
1 people that Don and his nurse-trained wife felt God calling them to the  
1 ministry.

2 Before beginning his ministry, Don encountered a few complicated but  
3 necessary difficulties to conquer. Quickly and skillfully, with the aid of some  
1 natives, Don was able to design and construct a home shortly after their arrival.  
1 Three other tribes, Haenam, Kamur, and Yohwi, moved in around him.  
1 However, because they were unaccustomed to such close contact with  
1 neighboring tribes, frequent wars would break out. The language barrier  
4 prevented Don from speaking to them, although he earnestly and desirously  
5 wanted to end their disputes by explaining God's love and peace. Conquering  
Triple the Sawi language proved an even more trying and difficult ordeal than Don  
1 had first anticipated. Although a man from the Yohwi tribe served as an  
1 occasional translator and even a basic language teacher, Don learned many of  
1 his words by listening to the natives speaking, by guessing the words'  
1 definitions, and by trying to confirm his guesses. Each verb in the Sawi

2 language, as he later discovered, consisted of nineteen tenses, which were in  
6, 1 the indicative mood alone. Within these nineteen tenses were both the first  
person and a non-person form. This equaled thirty-eight verb endings. The  
language was also very specific. Only certain words could express the accurate  
d. close feeling or emotion. Overcoming this difficulty was important

### Triple

Once the language barrier was eventually, adequately, yet incompletely  
overcome, Don began his first attempt to present the Gospel to the natives.  
4 Coining his own word for "God" in the Sawi language, he began with the story  
5 of creation, the fall, a promised Savior, and the appearance of the Deliverer. As  
6 the story progressed, the Sawi were quickly losing interest. They began to  
5 yawn. Don understood that a new approach would be required. As a second  
2 attempt, he tried telling them the story of Judas betraying Jesus. To his dismay,  
simile the tribes people hailed Judas as the hero. Like fans admiring a celebrity, they  
honored his deceptive method of friendship before betrayal, which to them was  
2 a superb demonstration of *tuwi asonai man*. After these two failures, Don  
analyzed then drew a couple of parallels between his faith and those of the  
1 Sawi people. They both trusted in a supernatural world. However, while Don  
depended on God, who loves mercy and justice, the Sawi believed in departed  
1 spirits of the dead and uninterested, malicious demons. Both parties also  
2 agreed in the importance of interaction with the supernatural world. For the  
Sawi, nothing bad happened accidentally or unintentionally, but was caused by  
3 demons which could be activated or restrained through witchcraft.  
1 Contrastingly, Don believed in a God who commanded or allowed things to  
happen, which could be influenced by prayer. He realized the need for a  
redemptive analogy because otherwise, the Sawi had no way of relating to the  
message of the Gospel.

1 Two of the three tribes living around Don (the Haenam and the  
Kamur) continued to clash, because they were unused to living in close  
2 proximity. After discussing the situation with his wife, the missionary  
5 concluded that they were the cause of the Sawi's strife. If they did not live  
among the tribes and instead ministered to other natives, then all three would

3sss easily disperse. Reluctant to leave, the Richardsons still decided that their  
2 absence would create peace. They told the tribal leaders. They equally  
5 dreaded his departure. They promised to make peace. In a heartrending  
4 procedure, babies from prominent families of each tribe were exchanged. As  
long as the peace child, or baby, survived and remained alive, the two tribes  
would not fight each other. Enlightened by this event, Don cleverly and  
effectively drew another parallel between it and the story of Jesus, and  
presented it to the Sawi. Just as one man from Haenam and one from Kamur  
gave their own children, so God gave his own son as a Peace Child, equally  
precious, cherished, and beloved. Knowingly, Don asked the men if they  
would have given their child if they knew he would be mistreated or killed.  
Triple, 3 The answer was no. He explained how God had known Jesus would be killed,  
6, 1 and yet had given Him as a Peace Child anyway, since he loved the world so  
4, 1 much. Hearing this, one Sawi recalled the story of Judas. The disciple who  
2 had once been hailed as a hero was now seen as the villain. In this way, the  
incessant and violent quarrels ended, and the villages experienced the harmony  
brought by the world's Peace Child.

2 On the whole, this was an excellent book, although there seemed to  
5 be a few weaknesses. Since many names and Sawi terms were mentioned, a  
5 glossary of explanation for each word would have been helpful. Otherwise,  
each name could easily be confused with another. Although the book  
expounded on the way in which Christianity positively and effectively  
impacted the Sawi's appalling rituals, it failed to cite any examples of their  
virtuous traditions. As Christianity began to eliminate cannibalism, did it also  
quest. contradict and destroy parts of their heritage? The narration and photographs  
1 of the natives' ceremonial dress and towering huts, as well as the descriptions  
of their food, celebrations, and dances, truly take the reader to a whole different  
1 world. This book is easily read, and would be considered quite clear and  
3 comprehensible by most people. Inspiringly realistic, this autobiography  
proved a wonderful example of a Christian going into all the world to preach  
1 the Gospel, as Jesus commanded his followers in the Bible. Don Richardson's  
perseverance was extremely admirable, because he did not give up even when

4 his first attempts failed. Realizing the necessity of conveying God's love,  
conveying His salvation, and conveying His forgiveness to these people, he  
6, 1 remained loyal to His calling. Prayer and determination encouraged him. Don  
Richardson had discovered how to tell a cannibal about love.

#### IV Stories from Pictures: Unit V

While Unit III had been minimally creative, Unit V carries the process much further. Students are given a series of three pictures from which they are expected to create a three-paragraph story. Each picture seems to suggest one sentence. (Reference will be made to the pictures which follow in the story by a grade V student entitled "Catching a Mouse.") Picture one suggests "The adult cat was teaching a kitten about the anatomy of a mouse." What more is to be said? The problem for the student is to create an entire paragraph of at least six sentences from this picture if all sentence openers are required as they should be by Unit V – five of the sentences must come from the writer's imagination. Consequently Unit V is an exercise in imagination and because of that very much appeals to many students. This is a fun unit.

To keep young writers on track and prevent them from wandering far off topic, the rule is very important. Both topic and clincher must represent the central fact of the picture as follows:

Picture 1: Adult cat teaches kitten about mice.

Picture 2: Adult sends young cat off to the hunt.

Picture 3: Young cat surprised by mouse.

Teachers should be careful in not discussing too much about the pictures. You can give helpful hints. The topic and clincher needs to be stressed and students should be warned to name their characters in their first paragraphs. However if the teacher ventures into the imagination area, a standardization of stories might result. In picture one the adult cat might be a father, a teacher or policeman cat. Since this is an exercise in imagination, be cautious in your discussion of content. When you mark the first draft, then you can discuss with each writer how he/she might improve their story line.

This advice runs contrary to theory and practice. Teachers like to talk and discuss the content. Control yourself. Talk about structural and stylistic elements. Name the characters. It makes for easier writing. Use snippets of conversation but not a back and forth discussion because the structure for this has not been taught. Suggest students might explore the feelings

of both cats, their prior relationship and what they think of each other. Propose that the pictures express a deeper meaning than the obvious simple tale. If you discuss content you will channel them into your ideas. If you refer to father cat, then all of them will see him as such. Get their ideas on paper in a first draft, then discuss individually and in the group with the design of enhancing the plots they have chosen. Since this series of pictures was originally published in an adult magazine, it was designed for adults, understood on various levels. Only your top students will grasp some of the second level concepts. Compare the two models which follow, the first by a grade five student, the other by a grade ten. Surely even the titles are significant.

Grade Five: Catching a Mouse.

Grade Ten: Colonel Cat's Criminals.

## Catching a Mouse

by Enoch Tong

Grade 5

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Second draft

conv.

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Triple, 3

Triple, 1

6, 3

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Triple

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1

“Now son, this is a picture of a mouse,” father Rascal spoke slowly and carefully. Looking at the picture was his son, a curious and unique person who was named Punkin. Father dragged on. “The mouse is a rather sneaky animal, although it can disturb and exterminate your entire life, but because they are so small and industrious, they cause commotion.” Puffing himself up, the father cat became immensely pleased with his teaching ability. He loved to stalk, loved to corner and loved to hunt mice. Surely hunting skills were the sign of manhood, cathood and even fatherhood. His son must learn to be no longer a kitten. Punkin must become a cat. Casually listening to his father’s teachings, Punkin indifferently paid attention. Since he was so bored from the lesson, since his brain went floating away and since he kept thinking about his friends, Punkin had forgotten all about catching anything. As a consequence, Punkin did not know the twelve steps required for catching a mouse. Nevertheless father Rascal enthusiastically pursued the lesson always pointing energetically at a weird drawing on the wall.

1 Father yelled with a bellow like a sergeant, "Son I want to see a dead  
4 juicy mouse in your hands before dinner." Going towards the door, Punkin  
could not remember what his father had taught or instructed him to do. With a  
2, **Triple** snicker on Punkin's face, he quickly thought of a plan to trick, catch and trap a  
3 mouse. Suddenly he remembered that his friend Mike told him once that there  
were dozens of mice in the basement, which was dirty and messy because the  
1 owners never cleaned it up. The young cat decided to write out his plans since  
5 they were so complicated. When he had finished, it was only two hours from  
6, 1 dinner. Punkin ambled off. He could still hear his father's commands ringing  
**Triple** in his ears, "Be a cat. Find a mouse. Bring it back."

**d. open, 2** Suddenly Punkin became excited. With some surprise he came upon a  
sweet smiling creature, who looked and acted like a miniature size golf ball.  
3sss, 1 What cute ears! What a nose! Such tiny paws. He was delighted because here  
4 was someone he could play with. Grinning broadly and happily at his new  
fascination, Punkin completely forgot about his father and the lesson, the hunt  
of mice. "My goodness," he thought to himself, "Is this cute little bundle a boy

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2

or a girl?" Although he felt slightly shy, he asked, "What is your name?"  
"Smiley" the little creature squeaked in reply. After an awkward silence,  
**6, 2** Smiley whispered, "I am a mouse, you know." Punkin was stunned. Here he  
was rapidly following in love with this creature, when his father expected him  
**3** to be out cornering, catching and killing a mouse. Clearly, Punkin had missed  
**Triple** his chance of showing off his knowledge, of pleasing his father and catching a  
mouse.

## Colonel Cat's Criminals

by Jason Li

Grade 10

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Second Draft

3                   Pompously the police colonel stood before Recruit 641 pointing to a  
4 surreal diagram above which had been penciled the word "mouse." Refusing  
to use that word, the colonel always referred to the whole species as criminals  
because, or so he argued, they had stolen and eaten half of the food supply in  
3sss Mexico. Nor did he ever call any of the recruits by their names. Numbers he  
1 could remember. Names were irrelevant. Too individualized. Recruit 641  
who stood bewildered and befuddled had never seen one of these criminals yet  
supposedly he was expected to march up and down his beat, the stereotype  
allit. and profile constantly in mind to cover, catch and kill, the motto of the  
2 department. In closely even minutely examining the diagram, Recruit 641  
5 believed it impossible that such a creature existed. While the legs looked like  
sticks, the ears and head appeared like three saucers on top of a non-existent  
3 body. Eventually Recruit became weary as Colonel Cats waxed eloquent about  
the demonic and criminal mind, banging the diagram with vigour after each  
d. close important point. Suddenly the profile ended.

4                   Jumping to his feet, Recruit 641 trembled as Colonel Cats forcefully and  
Triple stridently pointed at the door, ordering the new policeman to catch, cage and  
conv. convict the criminals. "Make the world safe for cats," he shouted, "because our  
allit. wives must walk the streets in peace and our children mightily multiply and  
2 mature in plenty." For a fleeting moment, Recruit 641 wondered what had  
3 happened to Mexico. Wisely he decided silence would be golden and the  
5 better part of valour. While the colonel continued to mumble, Recruit could  
not erase that weird and wonderful diagram from his mind nor the theory of  
genetic criminality which he had just heard. Was it possible? He wondered.  
quest., 6

4                   Rocked out of his reverie, Recruit 641 murmured “Yes Sir!” as the blustering Colonel Cats jabbed his finger toward the door and ordered him out.

5                   While patrolling through the projects of subsidized underclass housing,  
allit.               Recruit 641 came face to face with a cute and cuddly creature, such as he had  
6, allit, 4           never seen before. She spoke softly, seriously, simply. Batting her long  
                      eyelashes at him, she asked, “Could you help me move this heavy bag of  
3                   mouse food into my little hovel?” Instantly Recruit opened his eyes in shock  
Triple             because this little creature was the menacing and terrifying threat to Mexico, to  
1                   our wives and to our children. This was the genetically programmed criminal.  
1                   This was the profiled demonic species which he was expected to corner and  
allit., 2           cage, catch, convict and kill. For a second he was totally baffled and  
                      overwhelmed by the contradiction between the theoretical diagram of his  
quest.             training and the reality here before him in the projects. “Where were the  
                      cunning criminals of Colonel Cats when you needed them?” he murmured.  
d. close           “What’s that?” she asked.

# Relax and Learn

Said is dead

## Five Little Jack-o-Lanterns

Sentence types

	Five little Jack-o-Lanterns, sitting on a gate	
exclaimed	The first one exclaimed, "My it's getting late!"	Exclamatory
demanded	The second one demanded, "Who goes there?"	Interrogative
whispered	The third one whispered, "There are bats in the air."	Assertive
shouted	The fourth one shouted, "Let's run, run and run!"	Imperative
replied	The fifth one replied, "It's only Hallowe'en fun!"	Assertive
	But poof went the wind and out went the light	
	While five little pumpkins rolled out of sight.	

## Cinquains

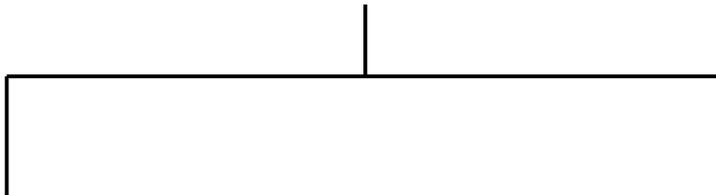
Dinosaurs  
Fearsome, deadly  
Raging, trash-talking, alley-ooping  
Make the opposition tremble  
Raptors

1. a noun which becomes a subject
2. Two adjectives describing the subject
3. Three participles, "ing" or "ed"
4. A sentence about the subject
5. Synonym or repeat subject

## Grumpy Groundhog

[Six-point dress-up underlined]

There once lived a groundhog named Grumpy  
He slept in bed which was unbelievably lumpy.  
He awoke and jumped up one warm, spring day.



When it was quite dull and ever so grey,  
No shadow! Determined to play,  
Because spring had decided to stay.

When it was quite sunny, hurrah, hurray!  
Shadow! Went back to sleep, okay!  
Because spring was still six weeks away.