

# **Student Writing Portfolio**

## **Level B**

*Blackline Masters*

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Institute for Excellence in Writing, L.L.C.

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### The Farmer and His Sons

A hard working farmer, stricken by a fatal illness, wished to be sure that his farm would continue to prosper and that his family would be taken care of. His sons were somewhat lazy, and he was afraid that they would be careless in tending the land. He called them to his bedside and said, “My sons, there is a great treasure hidden in one of my fields.” The sons, after his death, took their spades and mattocks and carefully dug over every portion of the land. They were frustrated to find no treasure. However, because of their thorough “plowing,” the fields yielded an extraordinary, abundant crop that year, and the family survived comfortably. Finally the sons realized that the “treasure” their father had spoken about was really the fruit of their own labor.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: "The Farmer and His Sons"

Spoke in complete sentences.	
Used clear pronunciation and proper intonation.	
Feet remained flat on the floor.	
Hands remained still (gently gripping podium).	
Eyes up when speaking.	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: "The Farmer and His Sons"

- ☐ Composition is double-spaced.
- ☐ Dress-ups are marked with underline.
- ☐ Name is on paper as directed.
- ☐ Title is centered.
- ☐ Title repeats key words of final sentence.
- ☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline.

<b>Dress-Ups (underlined)</b>	I
strong verb	

<b>Mechanics and Grammar</b>	I
ending punctuation	
capitalization	

- ☐ Checked for BANNED WORDS: said, thought, go/went

**Levi Strauss**

by Jill Pike

Levi Strauss is the man we can thank for one of the most common pieces of clothing: jeans. Strauss was born in 1829 in the town of Buttenheim, which was located on the German/Austrian border. Being Jewish, his family found life in Buttenheim very difficult. Levi's older brothers moved to America where they found a much better life. When Levi turned eighteen, he and the rest of his family moved to New York to seek a better life.

Levi started out as a street peddler and sold merchandise door to door. Levi did not like the city, so he moved to the country to peddle his wares. Wearing a 100-pound pack on his back and another 80-pound pack on his chest, Levi walked from farm to farm selling his wares. He carried enough things to sell for a week: pins, ribbons, thread, pots, pans, shovels, and hoes. His packs did not become lighter as he sold his wares, because farmers would often pay him with grain, honey, and molasses. Since he traveled in the country, he had to spend his nights sleeping in a friendly farmer's barn or on the ground in the woods. It wasn't easy, but he was a good salesman.

In 1853, Levi moved to San Francisco to work in his brother's store. Many men had moved west because of the gold rush. Levi began peddling canvas for tents to the men living in mining camps. One man came to him wondering if Levi could get him a pair of pants made out of the heavy canvas. His pants were in shreds from working in his mine, and he thought the canvas would last longer. So, Levi found a tailor to sew his canvas into pants. He had the tailor make several pairs, which he sold very quickly.

He wrote back to his brother for more canvas, but received denim instead. The denim was a heavy blue cotton cloth that came from the French town of Nimes. Genoese sailors liked to make their pants out of the denim and called them "jeans" after the Italian city of Genoa. By the 1860s Levi Strauss was making pants out of both denim and canvas. Everyone loved "those pants of Levi's." Cowboys, miners, railroad workers, and farmers all wore his "waist high overalls" because they lasted a long time and were comfortable to wear.

In 1872, Levi received a letter from Jacob Davis, a tailor from Reno, Nevada. Jacob had discovered that adding a copper rivet to the stress points in his pants kept them from ripping. He wondered if Levi Strauss and Company could help him make pants with this improvement. Levi and Jacob applied for a patent on this idea so that no one else could use it without permission. The copper rivets were a hit and made Levi's pants even more popular.

In 1873, the company added a trademark to their jeans: a two-arc design stitched on the back pocket that looked like the wings of a seagull in flight. The stitching on the pockets and on the jeans were all made in orange thread to match the copper rivets. In 1906, another trademark was added: a leather patch on the waistband of the pants. This patch showed two horses trying to pull a pair of Levi Strauss's pants apart.

Levi never married. When he was older, he moved in with his sister and her children, but he never stopped working. Everyone loved Levi Strauss. He was friendly to everyone in town. He was also very generous with his money. He supported many orphanages run by Catholics, Protestants, and Jews alike. He provided scholarships to every district in his state and helped a school for the deaf.

Levi died in 1902. Almost every shop owner in town closed their doors to attend the funeral. Thanks to hard work and a generous hand, Levi had gone from a little country peddler to one of the most famous men in America.

(Source: *Mr. Blue Jeans: A Story about Levi Strauss* by Maryann N. Weidt)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: "Levi Strauss"

- ☐ Composition is double-spaced.
- ☐ Dress-ups are marked with underline.
- ☐ Sentence openers are numbered in margin.
- ☐ Name is on paper as directed.
- ☐ Title is centered.
- ☐ Topic and clincher sentences repeat or reflect two to three key words (highlighted or bold).
- ☐ Title repeats key words of final sentence.
- ☐ Bibliography is included at the bottom of the report.
- ☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline.

<b>Dress-Ups</b> (underlined)	<b>I</b>	<b>(II)</b>
strong verb		
-ly adverb		
quality adjective		
when, while, where, as, since, if, although clause		
who/which clause		
"because" clause		

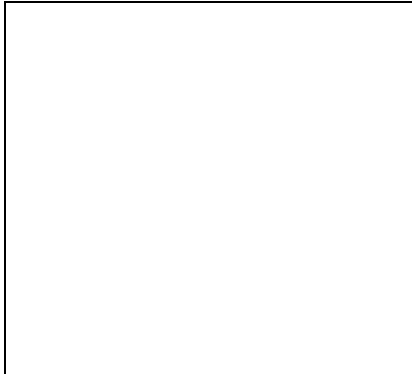
<b>Sentence Openers</b> (marked in margin)	<b>I</b>	<b>(II)</b>
❶ subject		
❷ prepositional		
❸ -ly adverb		
❹ V.S.S. (2–5 words)		

<b>Mechanics and Grammar</b> (correct usage)	<b>I</b>	<b>(II)</b>
proper punctuation of quotations		
commas		

Banned Words:

## “Writing from Pictures” Model

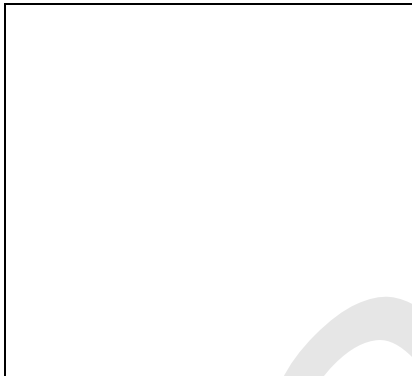
Key Point: Topic Sentence = Central Fact of Picture



I. Central Fact = \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Clincher = central fact \_\_\_\_\_



II. Central Fact = \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Clincher = central fact \_\_\_\_\_



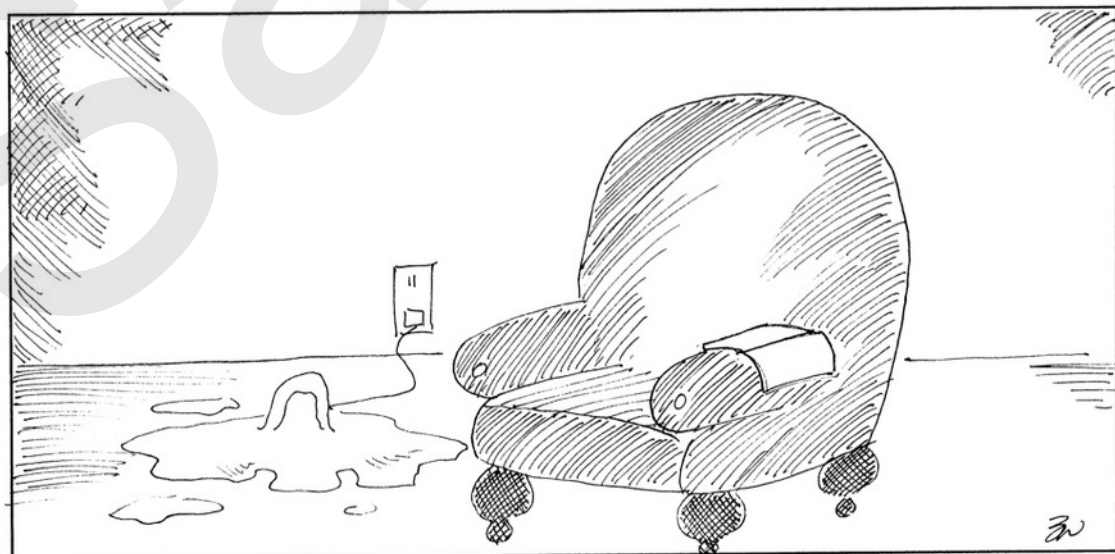
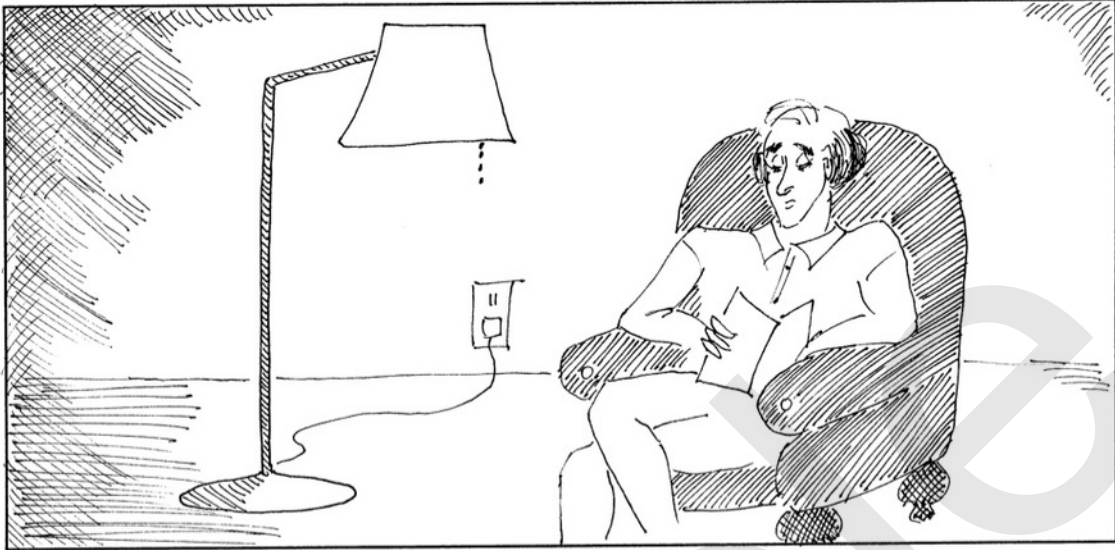
III. Central Fact = \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Clincher = central fact \_\_\_\_\_

Ask questions to get details:  
where? who? how? when? what? why? before? after? outside?





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Name is on paper as directed.
- ☐ Title is centered.
- ☐ Composition is double-spaced.
- ☐ Dress-ups are marked with underline.
- ☐ Sentence openers are numbered in margin.
- ☐ Topic and clincher sentences repeat or reflect two to three key words (highlighted or bold).
- ☐ Title repeats key words of final sentence.
- ☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline.

<b>Dress-Ups</b> (underlined)	<b>I</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>III</b>
strong verb			
-ly adverb			
quality adjective			
when, while, where, as, since, if, although, because clause			
who/which clause (invisible)			

<b>Sentence Openers</b> (marked in margin)	<b>I</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>III</b>
❶ subject			
❷ prepositional			
❸ -ly adverb			
❹ -ing ,			
❺ clausal ,			
❻ V.S.S. (Very Short Sentence: 2–5 words)			

<b>Mechanics and Grammar</b> (correct usage)	<b>I</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>III</b>
topic/clinch			

Banned Words:

## BARTON, Clara (1821–1912)

The founder of the American branch of the Red Cross was Clara Barton, a nurse who was sometimes called the “angel of the battlefield.”

Clara Barton was born on December 25, 1821, in Oxford, Mass. She was christened Clarissa Harlowe by her parents, Stephen and Sarah Barton. Clara was the youngest of seven children, separated by ten years from the next youngest Barton child. Although shy and small, she possessed courage and perseverance. When she was 11, she undertook the nursing of an invalid brother.

To temper Clara’s shyness, her mother gave her much responsibility. At 15 Clara became a teacher with her mother’s help. She taught school for 18 years. In Bordentown, N.J., she persuaded officials to set up a free public school under her direction. When the school proved successful, a male principal was appointed to replace her as head of the staff; Clara resigned her teaching position.

In 1854 she suffered the first of many periods of nervous exhaustion brought on by strenuous work. Later that year she was appointed a clerk in the Patent Office at Washington, D.C. At the outbreak of the Civil War, she learned that much suffering at the front was caused by the scarcity of supplies. Single-handedly she organized supply depots. Later she served as a nurse and in 1864 was appointed a superintendent of nurses. She often served near the line of fire. For four years after the war, she headed the government search for missing soldiers.

While in Europe for her health, Clara Barton studied the action of the Red Cross in the Franco-Prussian War. On her return home in 1872, she campaigned to organize a branch of the Red Cross in the United States. She succeeded in 1881. For 23 years she directed Red Cross work in every great disaster. She resigned in 1904. Clara Barton died April 12, 1912, in Glen Echo, MD.

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*Compton’s Interactive Encyclopedia.* San Francisco: The Learning Company, Inc., 1998. CD-ROM.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: Clara Barton articles (five of them)

- ☐ Name is on paper as directed.
- ☐ Title is centered.
- ☐ Composition is double-spaced.
- ☐ Dress-ups are marked with underline.
- ☐ Sentence openers are numbered in margin.
- ☐ Topic and clincher sentences repeat or reflect two to three key words (highlighted or bold).
- ☐ Title repeats key words of final sentence.
- ☐ Report includes a Bibliography page.
- ☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline.

<b>Dress-Ups</b> (underlined)	<b>II</b>
strong verb	
-ly adverb	
quality adjective	
when, while, where, as, since, if, although, because clause	
who/which clause or invisible	

<b>Sentence Openers</b> (marked in margin)	<b>II</b>
❶ subject	
❷ prepositional	
❸ -ly adverb	
❹ “-ing” ,	
❺ clausal ,	
❻ V.S.S.	

<b>Decorations</b>	<b>II</b>
(question or 3 S.S.S.)	

<b>Mechanics and Grammar</b> (correct usage)	<b>II</b>
topic/clincher	
bibliographic page	

Banned Words: