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THINK & WRITE

Sequencing
Observing
Comparing
Classifying
Imagining
Evaluating

Activities for Grades 4-6

Hilarie N. Staton

 GOOD YEAR BOOKS

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Contents

Introduction	vii
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GET YOUR THOUGHTS IN ORDER

Teacher's Guidelines: Sequencing	1
Activities	
Next	Criteria Sequencing 3
Size, Color, And Speed	Criteria Sequencing 5
E.T. For President!	Ranking Sequencing 7
That's The Pits!	Ranking Sequencing 9
Drmsbclae Orwsd	Letter Sequencing 10
Alphabet Soup	Letter Sequencing 11
Who Bit Whom?	Word Sequencing 13
A Big Red Run	Word Sequencing 15
The One With A Limp	Word Sequencing 17
When?	Word Sequencing 19
Finally!	Word Sequencing 21
Gobble De Gook	Word Sequencing 23
Do It My Way	Instructional Sequencing 24
Building A Whatchamacallit	Instructional Sequencing 25
Bake Me A Cake As Fast As You Can	Instructional Sequencing 27
Over The River And Through The Woods	Instructional Sequencing 28
Pirate's Gold	Instructional Sequencing 29
Garbage In The Refrigerator . . . Dinner Down The Drain	Routine Event Sequencing 30
Every Day Is A Little Different And A Little The Same	Routine Event Sequencing 31
If . . . Then . . . Oh, No!	Logical Sequencing 33
It Happened Because	Logical Sequencing 34
It's Not My Fault	Logical Sequencing 35
Smoothing The Ride	Sentence Sequencing 37
Let's Get One Thing Straight	Sentence Sequencing 38
Punch Lines	Sentence Sequencing 39
Bare Bones	Paragraph Sequencing 40
How To Breathe Life Into A Skeleton	Paragraph Sequencing 41
The Spice Of Life	Paragraph Sequencing 43
A Day In My Life	Paragraph Sequencing 45
A Life Of Crime	Paragraph Sequencing 46

APPLES, ORANGES, AND "VROOTFRUITS"

Teacher's Guidelines: Observing/Comparing/Classifying/Imagining	47
Activities	
I Spy	Observing 49
Five Minutes	Observing 51
I Thought I Saw A Pussycat	Observing 52
Guess Who	Observing 53
Oh, What A Beautiful Morning	Observing 55
Meow, Purr, Meow	Comparing 57
Careful! Words Have Feelings, Too	Comparing 59
Mosey, Stride, And Scamper	Comparing 61

But I Want To!	Comparing	62
Driver Is To Car As	Comparing	63
Roar Like A Lion	Comparing With Figurative Language	65
Fred's Head Went Dead	Comparing With Figurative Language	67
He's So Small	Comparing With Figurative Language	68
I'd Rather Die Than	Comparing With Figurative Language	69
Capering Colors	Criteria Classifying	70
Where Should I Go?	Criteria Classifying	71
Groups Big And Small	Criteria Classifying	73
How Real Is Real?	Imagining	75
Somewhere Over The Rainbow	Imagining	76
A Barlatom Followed Me Home	Imagining	77
Slimy Sid And Santa	Imagining	78
Meet Extet	Imagining	79
Long Ago, In A Castle On A Hill	Imagining	81
Let's Meet For Lunch On Mars	Imagining	83

NO PHONY BALONEY

Teacher's Guidelines: Evaluating		85
----------------------------------	--	----

Activities

Ready, Action	Using Facts In Writing	87
From <i>Family Circle</i> To <i>Sports Illustrated</i>	Using Facts In Writing	89
Where, Oh Where, Is My Little Black Book?	Using Facts In Writing	91
I'll Prove It!	Using Facts In Writing	93
Pillars And Posts	Using Facts In Writing	95
Facts, Facts, And More Facts	Using Facts In Writing	96
The Facts And Only The Facts	Watching For Opinions	97
The World Is Flat And That's That	Watching For Opinions	99
It's Right . . . And Wrong	Watching For Opinions	101
Please Come	Persuasive Writing	103
Definitely The Greatest	Persuasive Writing	104
I Don't Agree	Persuasive Writing	105
Yesterday, In Washington	Persuasive Writing	106
Convince Me	Persuasive Writing	107
I Give You The Next President Of The United States, Mr. Moo!	Persuasive Writing	109
New, Improved Crud	Persuasive Writing	111
You'll Love This One	Persuasive Writing	112
The House On The Corner	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	113
The Proper Time And Place	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	114
Dear Ann Landers:	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	115
Dear Sir:	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	116
You Should Have Been There!	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	117
A Reporter's Job	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	118
Disaster	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	119
Thank Heaven	Emotive Vs. Objective Writing	120

GET YOUR THOUGHTS IN ORDER

Teacher's Guidelines: Sequencing

The activities in this section relate to sequencing. Sequencing puts thoughts in order, a necessity in writing if what appears on paper is to make sense. All writing must possess an overall structure that gives order — e.g., a time frame, logical development — and sentences and paragraphs must have their own well-developed sequence. Good writers often go back over their work, seeking to strengthen the structure and revising passages where the sequence could be expressed more clearly.

Students must be taught to organize (and reorganize!) their ideas and their words so that their papers achieve maximum coherence and clarity. Ideas must flow smoothly and culminate in a logical conclusion. To this end, students will find that they can alter any existing structure in their papers, play with a number of alternatives, and arrive at new sequences of words, sentences, and paragraphs that make better sense.

The following activities approach sequencing in several different ways. Here is a brief preview of the various ways the **THINK & WRITE** activities can help your students “get their thoughts in order.”

Criteria Sequencing

Students need to learn that they can put the same material into an entirely different order by altering the sequencing criteria. Perhaps the best way to introduce criteria sequencing is to have the students organize themselves in a number of different ways: by height, by hair color, by birth date, etc. When they understand the concept, they can enjoy the criteria sequencing activities — “Next” and “Size, Color, And Speed.”

You may want to expand upon these activities by turning your students loose in a brainstorming session. Have them develop lists of criteria by which animals, colors, noises, jobs, clothing, and other everyday items can be sequenced.

Ranking Sequencing

“E.T. For President!” and “That’s the Pits!” are the **THINK & WRITE** activities that teach students to put likes and dislikes into a meaningful order. Although the ordering of our preferences is often unconscious, it is an integral part of our decision-making processes. Participating in a survey that requires the ranking of preferences is a good way to bring this thinking skill to the conscious level.

As follow-up to these activities, encourage students to pick a topic and develop their own lists for ranking, the actual ordering of items to be done by parents, peers, or the public in addition to themselves. Conducting a survey is a good small-group activity, especially if group members draw conclusions and judgments from the data they collect.

Letter And Word Sequencing

Activities involving scrambled words and sentences can make clear the importance of proper sequence to clear meaning. “Drmsbclae Orwsd (Scrambled Words)” and “Alphabet Soup” are **THINK & WRITE** activities in letter sequencing. You can use the same concept — putting letters in a specific order — to reinforce new vocabulary words in any subject area.

“Who Bit Whom?,” “A Big Red Run,” “The One With A Limp,” “When?,” “Finally!” and “Gobble De Gook,” deal with word sequencing. Students work not only to keep meaning clear but also to keep sentences interesting as they learn the proper placement of modifiers (single words, phrases, and clauses) within a sentence.

Writing complex sentences that include adverbial clauses, for example, will help students recognize how important such clauses can be in denoting sequence. Writing

the same basic sentence but shifting the position of the modifier will show students how varieties of word sequence can alter the tone and personality of their writing. “When?” and “Finally!” are activities that encourage variety in sentence composition by having students place adverbial modifiers in different locations.

Instructional And Routine Event Sequencing

Giving clear, concise directions is never easy. Students must learn how to describe a sequence of steps so that each item in the sequence is totally comprehensible in itself and so that the order of discrete steps leads smoothly from start to finish. “Do It My Way,” “Building A Whatchamacallit,” “Bake Me A Cake As Fast As You Can,” “Over The River And Through The Woods,” and “Pirate’s Gold” provide practice in creating and sequencing step-by-step directions. “Garbage In The Refrigerator . . . Dinner Down The Drain” and “Every Day Is A Little Different And A Little The Same” reinforce the importance of proper sequence in describing commonplace events.

These activities also teach something else that good writers must keep in mind: Nothing is to be taken for granted. Writers must take care to provide every step in a sequence and to make certain that each step conveys all the information the reader needs to know.

Logical Sequencing

The **THINK & WRITE** logical sequencing activities — “If . . . Then . . . Oh, No!,” “It Happened Because,” and “It’s Not My Fault” — teach cause/effect relationships as logically related sequences. Students should be encouraged to generate their own cause/effect situations and then develop those situations into stories. Alternative historical possibilities and scientific discoveries lend themselves especially well to if . . . then treatment.

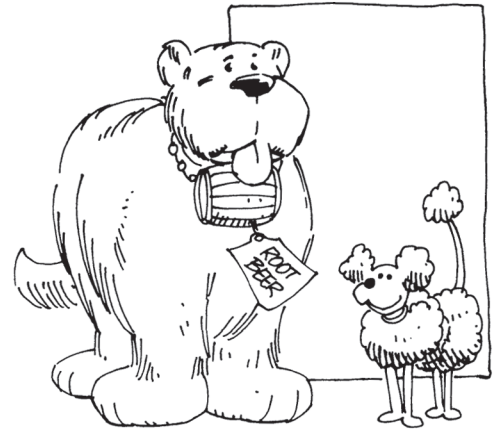
Sentence And Paragraph Sequencing

Ordering ideas within sentences, sentences within paragraphs, and paragraphs within articles or stories is ultimately what sequencing in writing is all about. The final portion of *GET YOUR THOUGHTS IN ORDER* consists of activities that emphasize finding the main ideas (“Bare Bones”), putting those ideas into a well-organized outline (“How To Breathe Life Into A Skeleton”), reordering the ideas to create a different story (“The Spice Of Life”), constructing well-ordered paragraphs (“Smoothing the Ride” and “Let’s Get One Thing Straight”), ordering paragraphs in a time sequence (“A Day In My Life”), and, finally, organizing chronological material into a brief biography (“A Life Of Crime”).

Sequencing takes many forms, and often — in the hands of skilled writers — it is a very subtle art. Yet a comprehensible sequence must be present in everything we write. Learning a variety of ways to sequence will not only stretch a student’s internal thought processes, but will also make him or her better able to communicate those thoughts to the outside world.

Name _____

Next



THINK

Have you ever thought about all the different kinds of dogs in the world? They're all dogs, but they don't look or act the same. The dogs in the list below are arranged by size, starting with the biggest and going down to the smallest:

Saint Bernard
Dalmation
Spaniel
Toy Poodle
Chihuahua

Now, suppose you wanted to list the same dogs by the length of their hair, from longest to shortest. Your list would look like this:

Saint Bernard
Spaniel
Toy Poodle
Dalmation
Chihuahua

Both lists put the dogs in order, but they use different standards for judging the dogs. These standards are called "criteria." Here are some other criteria that you could use to list breeds of dogs: speed, friendliness, beauty, bark, color, and usefulness to people. Some criteria, like beauty, involve personal preference. Other criteria, like size, are based on objective measurements.

WRITE

In the space below, list as many animals (at least 20) as you can.

Now, list some criteria by which you could put a list of animals in order:

Pick one of the criteria and ten of the animals you listed. Think about the sequence — first, second, third, etc. — before you begin writing. Then list the animals in the proper order.

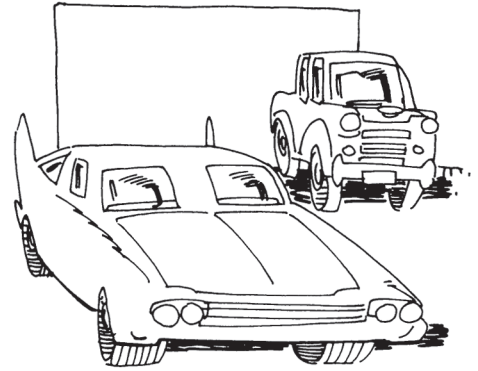
- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

After you finish that list, pick another one of your criteria and make a new list so that the same animals appear in a different order.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Name _____

Size, Color, And Speed



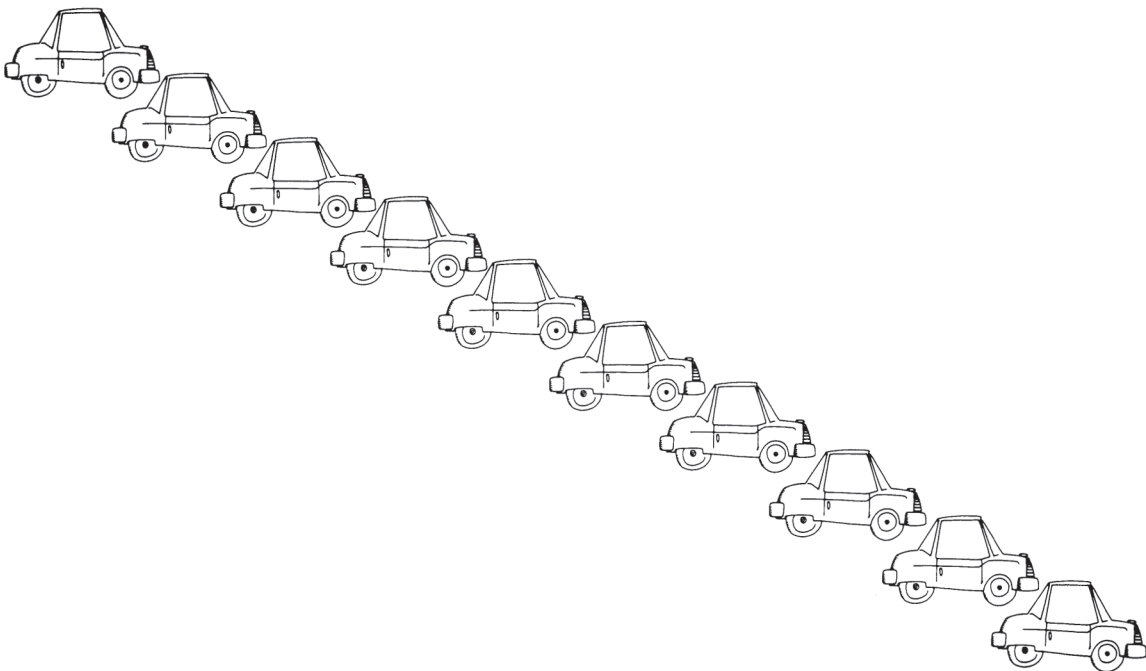
THINK

Imagine that you are in charge of an important auto race, the BUZZ 2000. It is your job to assign the starting positions. To figure out who goes where, use these three criteria IN THIS ORDER: 1. car speed 2. car size 3. car color.

The slowest cars go first. If two or more cars go the same speed, then the larger car goes first in its speed group. Finally, if cars have the same speed and size, then the car with the lighter color goes first.

Here are the cars entered in the BUZZ 2000. Arrange the lineup by putting the number of each car in its correct position.

Car Number	Trial Speed	Size	Color
1	150 m.p.h.	midsize	red
5	150 m.p.h.	sports	white
7	150 m.p.h.	sports	dark blue
2	200 m.p.h.	midsize	yellow
6	180 m.p.h.	midsize	yellow
3	183 m.p.h.	midsize	brown
4	160 m.p.h.	sports	light green
8	160 m.p.h.	sports	dark green
9	115 m.p.h.	fullsize	black
10	120 m.p.h.	midsize	brown

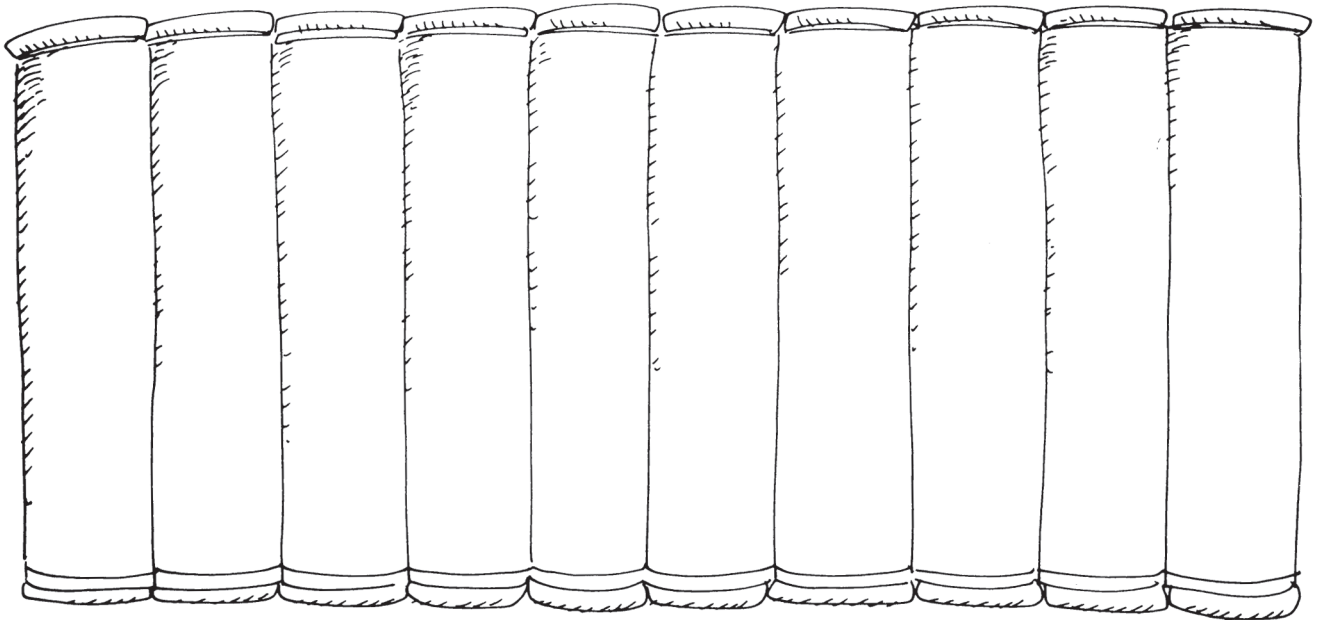


WRITE

Below you will find ten books that must be put on a shelf in some kind of order. Study the list. Develop three criteria that you could use to put the books in order. Decide how you can use all three criteria in one sequence.

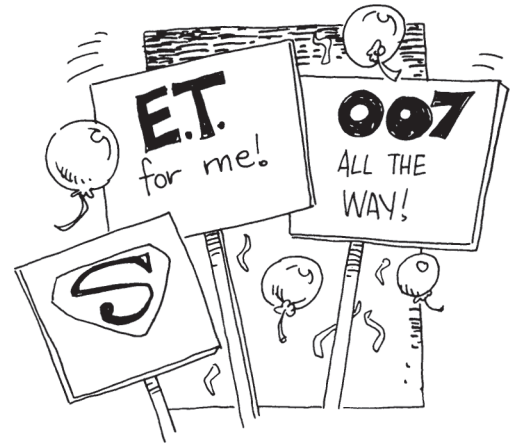
Put the books in order using your different criteria. Remember, you must use all *three* criteria to create *one* sequence. When you find the solution, write the title and author's name on each book at the bottom of the page.

Author	Title	Illustrations	Fiction/ Nonfiction
Hart, A.	<i>Rabbits and Bunnies</i>	Illustrated	Nonfiction
Hart, A.	<i>Dogs and Puppies</i>	Illustrated	Nonfiction
Hart, A.	<i>Rain Everywhere</i>	Not illustrated	Fiction
Jones, J.	<i>Covered Wagons</i>	Illustrated	Nonfiction
Jones, T.	<i>Clouds and Snow</i>	Illustrated	Nonfiction
Smith, C.	<i>Jane's Journey</i>	Not illustrated	Fiction
Brown, B.	<i>Mommy's Money</i>	Illustrated	Fiction
Turner, T.	<i>Timothy Turtle</i>	Illustrated	Fiction
Zip, M.	<i>Pioneers</i>	Not illustrated	Nonfiction
Abbot, Q.	<i>The Quiet Man</i>	Illustrated	Fiction



Name _____

E.T. For President!



THINK

You can learn a great deal about people by conducting a survey. A survey can tell you about their likes and dislikes. Some surveys ask people to list likes and dislikes in order, putting the most liked thing on top of the list and the least liked at the bottom.

Look at the three lists below. For each list, put your favorite (#1) at the top, followed by your next choice (#2), with your least favorite choice (#3) last.

A. For president, I'd vote for: E.T., Superman, James Bond.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. Around the house, I'd pick these chores: take out the garbage, clean my room, wash the dishes.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

C. If I had great news, the first person I'd tell would be a: parent, teacher, friend.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

You can learn something about how your class thinks by making a tally sheet like the one below for each survey list.

Survey A

	1	2	3
E.T.	_____	_____	_____
Superman	_____	_____	_____
James Bond	_____	_____	_____

Put the number of 1's, 2's, and 3's your class gave each choice on the appropriate line. Then examine the tally sheet. Discuss the reasons why certain choices were popular. Think about other choices you could ask people to list in order.