

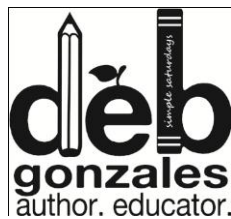
A Common Core State Standards Aligned Analysis  
and  
Post-Presentation Discussion & Writing Lesson  
Application Guide for



Author Margo Dill's School Visit Programming  
Appropriate for Grades 2 to 6

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Document prepared by Debbie Gonzales



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## Document Overview

In this document, author Margo Dill's school visit programming - **Being a Children's Writer: The Writing Process and More!** - has been aligned with the Common Core State Standards and adapted to meet the needs of students from grade 2 to 6.

In the course of her presentation, Ms. Dill covers the following topics in an inspirational, age-appropriate, and entertaining manner:

- Story Structure/Plotting
- Characterization
- The Establishment of Setting
- Theme
- The Use of Primary and Secondary Sources as Research Tools
- The Production of Coherent Writing Skills
- The Editing and Revision Process
- The Road to Publication

Age-appropriate follow-up discussion and writing activities are provided in latter portion this document. These activities are designed to complement the subject matter included in Ms. Dill's presentation.

Upon completion of the group discussion questions and the activities offered in this document, students will have developed enough information to write a story in the same manner presented during Ms. Dill's talk.

Ms. Dill is very eager to stay in touch with students and is interested in reading and commenting upon the follow-up pieces crafted by the students. If possible, she and the school visit organizer might coordinate an effective way for Ms. Dill to obtain copies of the students' work. She will, in turn, respond with encouraging comments for the student authors.



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## Post-Presentation Discussion Questions

Ms. Dill stated that story ideas should be original.

- Define the word “original.”
- Explain why story ideas should be original.
- Tell where Ms. Dill finds inspiration for her original stories.
- Explore your world. Tell where inspiration for your original stories lie.

Recall Ms. Dill’s message regarding research for her books.

- Explain how research helps in writing a good story.
- Describe the different ways Ms. Dill researches her stories.
- Tell of ways that researching topics helps an author to better understand their characters and the world they live in.

Consider Ms. Dill’s comments regarding planning out her stories’ theme, setting, and plot.

- Define the word “setting.”
- Explain what the theme of a story is.
- Define the word “plot.”
- Explain why it is important to plan out a story before writing.
- List elements of a story that a writer should think about before beginning their story.
- Recall ways that Ms. Dill makes plans for her writing.
- Discuss the methods for developing setting Ms. Dill described in her presentation.

Explore Ms. Dill’s statements regarding the revision and editing process.

- Define the term “revise.”
- Recall some of the ways Ms. Dill has revised her stories.
- Discuss the revision process. Tell why all writers must practice their revision skills.
- Explain what a “Critique Group” is.
- Tell why working with others during the revision process can be a helpful, and even fun, thing to do.
- List friends that might be good critique partners and have some fun today!



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## Post-Presentation Follow-up Lessons and Activities

### Original Story Research Guide

**Objective:** To develop a topic or setting through analysis of known facts, information interested in researching, and by listing facts learned as a result of the research process.

**Materials:**

- Original Story Research Guide Graphic Organizer (Guide, pg. 6)
- Pencil
- Age-appropriate research materials – primary and secondary sources

**Procedure:**

- Explain to the students that, as Ms. Dill described, research is an important part of telling a good stories. Through effective research, a writer can gather details that will make their story interesting and original.
- Note that students may use this activity to either develop their characters or to get a better sense of the setting in which their story takes place.
- Ask the students to consider the following questions as they make important decisions regarding their stories.
  - Who is someone that they admire? Are there traits in that person that they'd like to explore in their own characters?
  - Is there someone they'd like to know more about?
  - Are there animals that they find to be of interest? Animals that might make interesting characters in a story?
  - What events in history have occurred that they'd like to know more about?
  - Are there places that they have visited on vacations? Places that they'd like to explore as settings for their own stories?
  - What subjects in school do they especially enjoy? Are there aspects of those subjects that they'd like to explore?
  - What sorts of people or places are interesting to them?
- Once the student has decided upon a topic – either person or place – give them a copy of the Original Story Research Guide Graphic Organizer (Guide, pg. 6)
- In the first column, under the word “Know,” instruct the student to list everything that they already know about that topic.
- In the second column, under the words “Want to Know,” instruct students to list things that they would want to know about the topic.
- In the third column, under the words “Learned,” instruct the students to write things that they learned about their topic while researching it. Quite often, these facts can be quite surprising!
- Instruct the student to use this information to develop important and original key details to be revealed in their stories.

**Reference:** Allen, Camille Ann. *The Multigenre Research Paper: Voice, Passion, and Discovery in Grades 4-6*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001. (pg. 31-2).

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## Original Story Research Guide Graphic Organizer

Know	Want to Know	Learned



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## Plot Point Planning

**Objective:** To determine the plotting by defining key ideas through the use of a storyboard-like format.

**Materials:**

- Plot Planning Graphic Organizer (Guide, pg. 8)
- Pencil
- Markers or colored pencils

**Procedure:**

- Print one or two copies of the Plot Planning Graphic Organizer (or as many as needed).
- Instruct students to imagine an opening scene or inciting incident for their story. Ask them to describe the setting, the characters present, and the action taking place in the scene.
- Instruct students to draw their vision of the opening scene in the box labeled (1).
- Below their drawing, instruct students to write a brief statement telling why this scene is important to the rest of the story.
- The box labeled (2) can represent the next, most critical scene in their story.
- The box labeled (3) can represent the crisis point of the story. Here students can plan for the big, dramatic moment in their tale.
- The box labeled (4) can represent their story's concluding scene.

**Note:** This lesson is also quite effective in guiding students through an analysis of a familiar story, as well. In this case, instruct the students to select a story of their own choosing and then represent key points of that tale in the same manner listed above.

**Reference:** Allen, Cindy. *The Book Club Companion: Fostering Strategic Readers in the Secondary Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2006. (pg. 121).



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### Plot Point Planning Graphic Organizer

(1) This event is important because...

---

---

---

(2) This event is important because...

---

---

---

(3) This event is important because...

---

---

---

(4) This event is important because...

---

---

---



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## Developing Setting & Character Traits

**Objective:** To describe and illustrate a character's motivation, traits, and contribution to the sequence of events and their connection within the setting of the story.

### Materials:

- Character Study Graphic Organizer (Guide, pg. 11)
- Setting Description: Sensory Words Graphic Organizer (Guide, pg. 12)
- Character & Setting Building Blocks Graphic Organizer (Guide, pg. 13)
- Character & Setting Illustrated Scene (Guide, pg. 14)
- Pencil
- Markers

### Procedure:

- **Character Study Graphic Organizer** (Guide, pg. 11):
  - Choose a character or character to develop.
  - Print one or several Character Study Graphic Organizer(s).
  - Explore the questions printed in the boxes. Encourage the students to let their imagination loose!
  - Once graphic organizer is complete, using the back of the paper, encourage students to write one or two paragraphs using the information they developed. Suggest that they craft the paragraphs in such a way as to introduce the character as if it were the beginning of the story.
- **Setting Description: Sensory Words Graphic Organizer** (Guide, pg. 12)
  - Print out a **Setting Description: Sensory Words Graphic Organizer**.
  - Instruct the students to name the setting of their story.
  - Explain that sensory words help to bring the setting and their story to life.
  - Using the **Setting Description: Sensory Words Graphic Organizer**, instruct the students to list three descriptors for each sensory aspect of their setting - sights, sounds, smells, and feelings/mood.
  - On the back of the sheet, instruct students to write a short paragraph or two describing their setting, making sure to include the sensory aspects listed on the graphic organizer.
- **Character & Setting Building Blocks Graphic Organizer** (Guide, pg. 13)
  - Print out a Character & Setting Building Blocks Graphic Organizer.
  - Study the example at the top of the page. Note that, following the instruction listed on the left, with each line, a new element of the sentence has been added.
  - In the block and spaces below, instruct the students to use their main character as the subject of each sentence. Have them write the character's name in the bank space provided.



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- **Character & Setting Illustrated Scene** (Guide, pg. 14)
  - Using all of the information developed in the prior exercises as reference; illustrate a scene from the story.
  - Make an attempt to include the elements of craft described in Ms. Dill's presentation.
    - Character
    - Setting
    - Theme/Mood
  - In the space below the frame, write a caption deserving the action in the illustrated scene.



**Reference:** Behrman, Carol H.. *Hooked on Writing!: Ready-to-use Writing Process Activities for Grades 4-8*. West Nyack, N.Y.: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1990, (pgs. 1-3. 2-1, 2-4A).



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## Character Study Graphic Organizer

State your character's name and age:

Describe your character's appearance—size, hair, eye-color, hair, etc.:

What does your character want more than anything in the world?

What is your character's greatest strength?

What is your character's greatest struggle or worry?

What is your character's deepest, darkest secret?

Describe your character's nature. Are they brave? Shy? Silly? Smart?



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## Setting Description: Sensory Words Graphic Organizer

Sights
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sounds
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Smells
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Feelings/Mood
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



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## Character & Setting Building Blocks Graphic Organizer

<b>Example:</b>	<i>The baby cried.</i>
ADD WHEN	1. Last night, the baby cried.
ADD SIZE OR COLOR	2. Last night, the tiny baby cried.
NAME A PLACE	3. Last night, the tiny baby cried in her crib.
ADD A FEELING	4. Last night, the tiny baby cried in her crib angrily.

**Note:** Be certain to use your character's name in the blank spaces provided. Try to keep your comments true to the plans for your storyline.

	_____ <i>played.</i>
ADD WHEN	1. _____
ADD SIZE OR COLOR	2. _____
NAME A PLACE	3. _____
ADD A FEELING	4. _____



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### Character & Setting Illustrated Scene



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## Common Core State Standards Alignment

### English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature

		Presentation	Discussion Questions	Research Guide	Plot Point Planning	Setting & Character
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3	Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.	✓	✓	✓		✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.5	Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.	✓	✓		✓	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.7	Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.				✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.3	Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events	✓	✓	✓		✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.7	Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)				✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).					✓

### English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>grade 2 topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.		✓			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.2	Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.		✓			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.3	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.		✓			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.6	Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.		✓			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 3 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.		✓			



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## English Language Arts Standards » Speaking &amp; Listening (cont.)

		Presentation	Discussion Questions	Research Guide	Plot Point Planning	Setting & Character
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 4 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.		✓			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.3	Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.		✓			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 5 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.		✓			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.		✓			

## English Language Arts Standards » Writing

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.3	Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.			✓		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.			✓		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.			✓		



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## English Language Arts Standards » Writing (cont.)

		Presentation	Discussion Questions	Research Guide	Plot Point Planning	Setting & Character
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.7	Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.			✓		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.			✓	✓	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.			✓		



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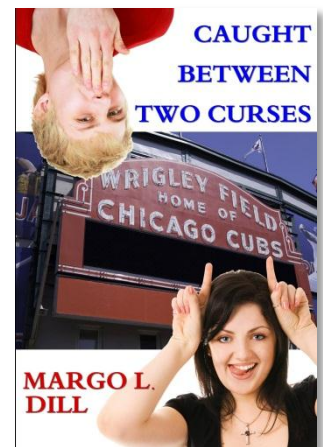
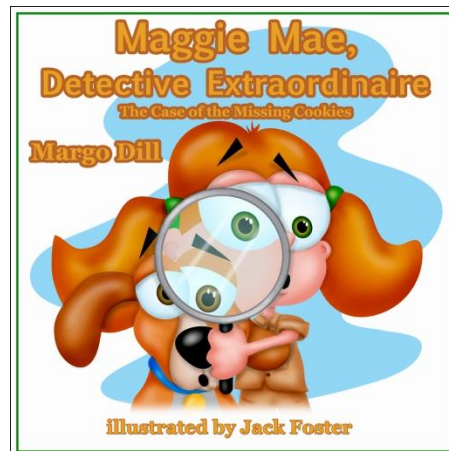
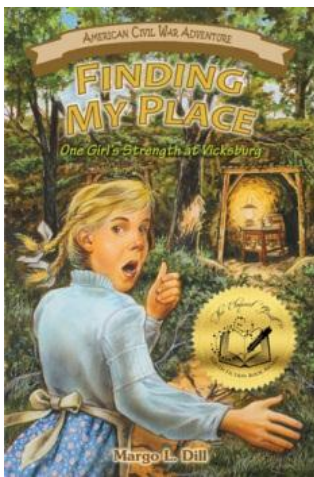
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## Acknowledgements

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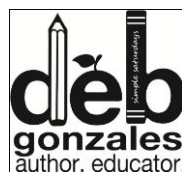
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