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To the Teacher

These writing-starter exercises are designed to be used for practice in paragraph writing and in simple expository writing.

Students write best if they write from their own experiences, and these writing starters provide that opportunity. Each page has the beginning of a paragraph on a subject with which most elementary-school students will be familiar.

Students also write well if they are first guided through a very structured exercise. Here, they are given a beginning. They must provide a continuation and an ending. Later, they can begin as well as complete their own paragraphs and short compositions.

The beginning of the paragraph on each page is about four or five sentences long. The beginning of the next sentence is then given. Students are to complete the sentence and continue writing a cohesive paragraph.

It would be best to reproduce a page for each student and allow him or her to write directly on the reproduced copy. This form of presentation should help students go right into writing a continuation that "flows" from what they are given. You should expect at least five full sentences.

Use these exercises wherever and whenever they fit into your own writing lessons.

Variations

- 1. Give copies of the same page to all members of the class. After they write, have a number of students read their papers aloud. Point out the variety of responses created by different authors.
- 2. Give copies of different pages to all members of the class. After they write, have a number of students read their papers aloud. Discuss each paper in terms of logical continuation and ending, as well as clarity.
- 3. Have copies of different pages available to students to use for "extra credit" when they have finished with other class assignments. Students may select the ones they want to do from your stack of reproduced copies. (These exercises are a good length for moments that need to be filled; they also can be done on an individual basis, and there is a wide choice of topics.)
- 4. Use these exercises as class "openers." They can be done in just a few minutes, so they can be used as an opening exercise to focus students' attention and to get them quiet and working.

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1.	In	the	Futu	re
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Jimmy went to the country fair with his family. While there, he noticed a stand with a sign that read: "Learn Your Future, Mrs. Potter's Palm Reading, \$1.00." Jimmy asked his parents what the sign meant. They explained to him that for \$1.00, Mrs. Potter would tell him his future by looking at the palm of his hand. Jimmy took a dollar out of his pocket and walked over to Mrs. Potter's table. He sat down and showed her his palm; she took a look at his hand and told him

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22. Help from a Teacher

Over the holiday break from school, Jada's parents sat her down and told her that they were going to get a divorce. Jada was very depressed even though she pretended that it did not bother her too much. When school started again, Jada's teacher noticed that Jada's grades were starting to slip. Jada's teacher knew about her parents' divorce and told Jada that she knew how to help her though this. She

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50. Sandcastle Building

Margo and her brother, Brad, were at the beach on vacation with their family. Margo saw a sign for a sandcastle-building contest and decided to enter with Brad as a team. Margo told Brad that she had the perfect design for a castle. She told him all about it. She

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69.	Dinosaurs
17 ? 7 .	Dillopaalp

Jackie's class is learning all about dinosaurs—when, where, and how they lived. Jackie has been interested in dinosaurs ever since she can remember. She sleeps with a plush stegasaurus, and she has shelves of books and movies about dinosaurs. For homework, Jackie's class has to invent a dinosaur and tell all about its life. Jackie			

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83. The Most Beautiful Things

Marsha's teacher often calls on students during class so that the kids won't be shy or afraid to speak up. The teacher asks questions that don't have a right or wrong answer; it is all opinion. Today the teacher has called on Marsha and has asked her what she thinks is the most beautiful thing in			
the world. Marsha			

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100. My Own Planet

Rasheed's class was learning about the solar system. All of the students seemed to be interested, so their teacher gave them a fun assignment to do. They had to invent a planet. They had to give it a name and describe the kind of creatures that lived there. Rasheed		