

Year 3 Sample Lesson

Grammar & NAPLAN-Style Practice — Term 1, Lesson 5: Building a Narrative Orientation

Lesson Focus

In this lesson, students learn how to write an engaging orientation for a narrative, establishing character, setting, and time. Students will analyse a model orientation, practise sentence variety, and plan their own narrative opening.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify the key elements of a narrative orientation (who, when, where)
- Use a variety of sentence openers to engage the reader
- Apply descriptive vocabulary to establish setting and character
- Plan an original narrative orientation

Warm-Up: Analyse the Model

Read the model orientation below and underline the parts that tell you WHO is in the story, WHERE it is set, and WHEN it takes place.

"Just before sunrise, Maya crouched at the edge of the old quarry, her torch flickering against the damp stone walls. She had never been allowed this close to the site before, but today everything was different."

Element	Evidence from the Text
Who	_____
Where	_____
When	_____

Activity 1: Sentence Openers

Good writers vary how they begin sentences. Rewrite each plain sentence below using a different sentence opener (e.g. a time phrase, a description, or an -ing word).

- 1 Plain: Tom walked into the cave. Improved: _____
- 2 Plain: The wind blew through the trees. Improved: _____
- 3 Plain: She found a strange key. Improved: _____

Activity 2: Plan Your Orientation

Plan the opening of your own narrative. Fill in the table below, then write 2–3 sentences that introduce your character, setting and time.

Character	_____
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Setting	
Time	

My orientation:

NAPLAN Tip

In NAPLAN writing tasks, markers look for an orientation that quickly establishes character, setting and situation without wasting time. Aim to 'hook' the reader in the first one or two sentences using varied sentence openers and specific detail.

This page is a sample taken from the Year 3 Skill Mastery curriculum book, used in small-group classes at The Writing Club, Castle Hill and Thornleigh.