

NAME _____

 **Writing a Well-Developed, Polished Paragraph**

Prompt/ Question: What word or phrase best describes the character of Frankie OR Alpha OR Matthew in *The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks*?

The Writing Process

- 1st step—brainstorm / pick quality from a few. (Don't just pick the 1st one you think of!)
- 2^d step – outline support
- 3rd step – write draft/ add topic sentence
- 4th step – revise to make paragraph clearer or more convincing
- 5th step – edit for grammar, spelling, punctuation

Step 1: Brainstorming

- Collect ideas
- Pick key quality – what word or phrase fits? (You can simply identify the quality precisely, or use a more idiomatic way of phrasing the quality)
- Find three good text examples to support your choice logically. THE BEST set of examples will span the book: they will not be concentrated on just one part of the book. This will show that the trait is one that the character shows consistently over a period of time.
- Explicitly explain how each example shows the quality.

Step 2: Decide on order of examples (usually chronological)

Step 3: Draft paragraph

- Write up the paragraph beginning w/ topic sentence. Discuss the examples and make sure you briefly explain their context. Cite the page numbers of the examples. Close the paragraph with a smooth closure sentence that echoes BUT DOESN'T REPEAT the topic sentence.

Hey, what's a topic sentence?

Topic Sentences

A good topic sentence is a one sentence summary of the paragraph's main point. The topic sentence should be focused so that it identifies the specific topic of the paragraph, but it must be broad enough to cover all material in the paragraph.

☞ Generally it is the 1st sentence of a paragraph because it provides a helpful overview to the reader.

☞ When you write a paragraph that answers a question, include the key words of the question in your topic sentence.

? What are the key words of the prompt/ question that should appear in the topic sentence?

Now, draft your paragraph.

over→

Step 4: Revise → Read your paragraph over s-l-o-w-l-y. Have someone else read it too if you have time.

Ask yourself:

- ✓ Does your topic sentence identify the main point of the paragraph using key words? Does it answer the prompt.
- ✓ Does everything that follows the topic sentence connect to the topic sentence and support it?
- ✓ Have you supported your conclusions with at least 3 specific examples from the text?
- ✓ Are the examples clear?
- ✓ Have you make it clear how the examples prove your conclusion about the character's key characteristic?
- ✓ Are your sentences smooth and easy to read?
- ✓ Does your final sentence wrap up the paragraph by *echoing* the topic sentence?

Hey,
Here's an
example.

Topic sentence = The character of Trish in *The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks* can best be described by the phrase "true-blue" because she is a very loyal friend to the main character, Frankie.

Closing sentence = Clearly, Trish's unwavering loyalty to Frankie throughout the novel makes her a character who deserves the title of a "true-blue" friend.

Step 5: Editing

- ✓ Are your "sentences" full sentences?
- ✓ No *you's* at all! Why would you be mentioning *me* in this paragraph?
- ✓ No *I, me, or my* at all! Why would you be talking about yourself when this paragraph is about a character in the novel?
- ✓ No slang
- ✓ Use spell check
- ✓ Correct any incorrect usage of CCW's

More Practice if you're finished early:

Here's a paragraph without a topic sentence:

Recently I began taking my two-year-old dog to obedience school. After four weeks of lessons and practice, she has learned to follow only three commands--sit, stand, and lie down--and even those she often gets confused. Frustrating (and costly) as this is, I continue to work with her every day. After dog school, my grandmother and I sometimes go grocery shopping. Inching along those aisles, elbowed by hundreds of fellow customers, backtracking to pick up forgotten items, and standing in the endless line at the checkout, I could easily grow frustrated and cranky. But through years of trying times I have learned to keep my temper in check. Finally, after putting away the groceries, I might go out to a movie with my fiancé, to whom I have been engaged for three years. Layoffs, extra jobs, and problems at home have forced us to postpone our wedding date several times. Still, my patience has enabled me to cancel and reschedule our wedding plans again and again without fuss, fights, or tears.

What is the main idea of this paragraph? Tie this paragraph all together with an effective topic sentence.

