

## Sample Lesson Plan - Deconstructing a Prompt

### E/LA Standard: CCSS Writing – 1

*Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.*

**Learning Objective:** Students will be able to 1.) deconstruct a prompt by identifying directional verbs and the accompanying content using a “Do-What?” T-chart graphic organizer, and 2.) correctly score a sample essay using rubric provided.

### Materials Needed:

- 4 prompts: 2 - on transparency/hard copy for document camera; 1 – on a ½ sheet for partner work; 1 – ½ sheet for individuals
- white boards/markers/erasers (1 set for each partner)
- green, yellow, and pink highlighters...preferably one set per student
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade CST released student sample essay (1 per student) NOTE: 1.) This can be retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/documents/g4wrtng06.pdf> 2.) Before copying, number the paragraphs for easier reference.

**Key Vocabulary:** prompt, support, connect, explain, text, evidence, verb (These terms were explicitly taught previously in the year when working on paragraph construction.) **New term:** deconstruct

### Formative Assessments During Class Period:

- white board responses charted on the seating chart
- visual check of class for color-coded highlighting
- individual student responses on paragraph 5—collected sample essay
- random responses following structured student interaction
- one-on-one student/teacher exchanges during monitoring

**Description of Instruction** (Note: The italicized text exemplifies the verbiage of the teacher.)

- **Introduce learning objective** (1 min.)
- **Fist to Five** – *Deconstructing a prompt is the focus of our learning today. Think about how successful you might be if I gave you a writing prompt and told you to deconstruct it. When I ask you, show me using fist to five what you think your success would be—a fist to demonstrate that you have no idea what you would do to complete the task through a five to represent you would ace the task.* (1 min.)
- **Introduce new vocabulary term:** deconstruct (2 min.)
- **Deconstructing a prompt, teacher model** – **“I do.”** (5 min.) – *We discussed verbs and identified several common verbs that appear in school classrooms. We posted those on our word wall. Now I’m going to show you how to apply your knowledge of verbs to do the first step of deconstructing a prompt. We will be **deconstructing a prompt**. What will we be doing? [visual cue—hand to ear—students chorally respond “Deconstructing a prompt.”] Your job is to listen to the steps and what happens in my head when I am figuring out what to do. Afterwards, be prepared to deconstruct your own prompt.*

*To get ready I’m going to make a T-chart. On the top left side, I’m going to write “DO” since active verbs tell us something that is an action. On the top right side, I’m going to write “WHAT?” since I need to ask myself a question after I identify all the verbs. Hmm...let me read this prompt and figure out which active verbs give me directions for what to do.*

### “Shadow of a Bull” (4<sup>th</sup> grade) Unit 3 – Lesson 7

Describe how and why Manolo’s attitude and feelings changed about bullfighting. Support your idea with details and examples from the text. Connect your evidence to your main idea. Check your work for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar when complete.

**[Teacher is holding a light bulb while speaking as a visual cue for a think aloud.]** *Well the first word “describe” tells me something right away that I must DO, so I’m going to circle it. It seems like it’s an imperative sentence that my teacher taught me about last year. “...how and why Manolo’s attitude and feelings changed about bullfighting”—wait, the word changed is an active verb but it’s not telling me as a writer to DO something. Instead, it’s talking about Manolo, so I’m not going to circle it. “Support”—hey, there’s another active verb; let me circle it and see if there’s any more in this sentence. “...your idea with details and examples from the text.” No, there are no active verbs left. “Connect”—wow, that’s the third sentence that started with an active verb. I wonder if there’s a pattern here of active verbs being used in imperative sentences. Let’s see if there’s more. “...your evidence to your main idea”—no, just the word connect. I bet the next sentence starts with a verb too. Yes, “check” is giving me a direction, and it seems like the rest of the sentence does not have any other verbs giving me a direction, just like the other sentences before it. **[Put down the light bulb to signal the think aloud is over.]***

*Scholars, I’ll give you three seconds of think time before I have you read the four active verbs that I circled. **[silently count to 3]** Ready, begin. STUDENTS:...describe...support...connect...check. TEACHER: Compare those words to the verbs we have listed on our word wall. We have already listed “describe” and “support.” We’ll add the words “connect” and “check” since you will see those words often in a writing prompt. **[Write the words with space between them on the left side of the T-chart.]***

**[hold light bulb]** *Now I need to ask myself a question: “Do WHAT?” I need to figure out WHAT I am supposed to describe, support, connect, and check. I’m going to underline those words in the prompt and then write only the most important words on my T-chart. Hmm...in the first sentence I need to describe what? When I read that sentence, the words “how” and “why” stand out but they seem to mean almost the same thing, so I’m going to choose just “how.” I think that “Manolo’s attitude and feelings changed” are also the most important because that’s what I’m supposed to describe, so that’s what I’ll underline. **[Teacher continues with that type of think-aloud for the rest of the sentences. Teacher scribes words on T-chart.]***

- **Deconstruct Prompt #2 – Facilitated by teacher, students practice in partners or triads using whiteboards. “We do together.”** (6 minutes)  
Teacher puts prompt #2 on the overhead and asks guiding questions sentence by sentence. The process is done first with verbs and then repeated for the “What?” portion of deconstructing a prompt. Students write the action verb for each sentence on their respective whiteboards, one at a time. Teacher follows clear protocol where s/he gives students 30 seconds to discuss which of the words in the sentence are the active, directional verb before writing it on a whiteboard. The protocol for sharing whiteboards is to keep it covered until the teacher’s verbal cue when all show their boards simultaneously. Wrong answers are kept track of with tally marks on a seating chart. Those students will be either pulled for a quick “huddle group” or are the first for the teacher to check in with during the next phase of student practice. Using some random call-on strategy, students are asked to defend their answers and explain rationale.
- **Deconstruct Prompt #3 – Students practice in partners “You do together.”** (6 minutes)  
Teacher provides each pair of students with a third prompt. They are to complete the T-chart with no intervening directions from the teacher who will be wandering the room reiterating the think-aloud processes or questions if necessary. At two minutes, teacher does a quick, whole-class white board check to monitor progress and see that all verbs appear to be written on the left side of the T-chart. At four minutes, each pair of students is to share the completed white board with another designated pair. They may change their answers based on the pair collaboration. At one time, all white boards with their completed T-charts are shown. Teacher creates a “master” t-chart based on the student responses. Thumbs up/down can be used concurrently to check with agreement of teacher’s corrective feedback.

➤ **Deconstruct Prompt #4 – Students work independently “You do alone.”** (3 minutes)

Teacher provides students with a fourth prompt. They are given 3 minutes to deconstruct the prompt and transfer into a T-chart below the written prompt. The results of this independent practice will be quickly reviewed prior to tomorrow’s lesson, and plans will be adjusted accordingly to the students’ demonstrated abilities.

➤ **Introducing the Response to Literature rubric** (3 min.)

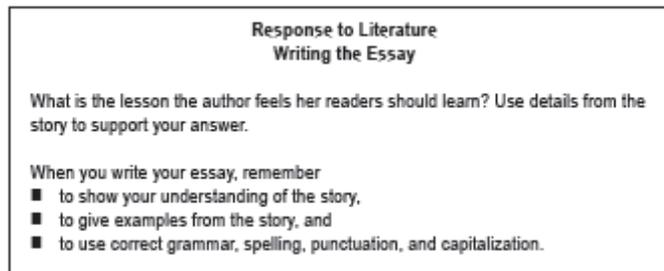
Teacher distributes the rubric. Students are told that the Focus/Opinion boxes are the only ones that will be examined at this time. Teacher explains the general organization of the rubric (e.g., the criterion categories and that “CCSS...” indicates the specific standards that are being assessed in those portions of the rubric. The bold line divides a “4” from a “3” because the “4” indicates that a student is actually demonstrating achievement of the next grade level standards. A “3” indicates that a student is demonstrating mastery of his/her own grade level standards which is where we want all students to get to by the end of the year. A “2” is getting close, and a “1” indicates that we need to do some targeted growth and the goal is to improve in every category.

Teacher has students read chorally for the first bullet only across the span of 4 through 1. That’s the only thing that will be looked at since it will give students an opportunity to apply the T-charts that they created in order to assess if “all aspects of the prompt were addressed.”

➤ **Fist to Five** – *We have gone over how to deconstruct a prompt. Think about how confident you would be if you had to do this by yourself for a new essay prompt. Think time...ready...show me.*

➤ **Apply the skill of deconstructing an essay to the Response to Literature rubric** (Note: Several variations of this plan could occur depending on the level of student achievement. Two variations are as follows: 1.) The prompt provided with the sample student essay from the state could be rewritten and already deconstructed. 2.) Instead of portions of essays where the teacher follows the routine described below, entire essays could be used as part of the gradual release of responsibility model.) As written below, steps 1-5 should take approximately 15 min.

Teacher passes out the highlighters, student sample of released essay, and the prompt (if rewritten/deconstructed, the T-chart could be projected on the overhead/doc cam).



1. **Create a T-chart with the state prompt.** This is done as a class since the skill of deconstructing has been explicitly addressed with the G.R.R. model at the beginning of this plan. Teacher will use very structured think-pair-share to determine what verb should be written to represent “What” for the prompt question, “What is the lesson the author feels her readers should learn?” (3 min.)

EXAMPLE T-CHART:

DO	WHAT?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identify</li> <li>➤ Show</li> <li>➤ Give</li> <li>➤ Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Author’s lesson</li> <li>➤ Understanding of story</li> <li>➤ Example</li> <li>➤ Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization</li> </ul>

2. **Teacher think-aloud for “identifying” the author’s lesson. “I do.”** – T uses green pen and doc cam to model thinking process. [**Hold light bulb or indicate think-aloud visually.**] *Okay, the first verb in my t-chart is “identify,” and the “identify WHAT?” is the author’s lesson. Therefore, I am going to highlight any sentence or part of a sentence that identifies the author’s message. I WON’T highlight any explanation—only where the student identified the message the author wanted the reader to learn. So, in the first paragraph it looks like the first sentence just says that the author has some lessons, but the writer didn’t identify them yet. My guess is that the next sentence might identify some of those because the first sentence wasn’t specific. Yes! The whole second sentence tells what the youngest brother learned, so I’m going to highlight that sentence green. Lastly, just to remind myself, I’m going to highlight “identify” and “author’s lesson” on the T-chart green also.*[**Teacher continues process for second paragraph.**]
3. **Highlight/identify author’s message together as a class. “We do together.”** – T asks guiding questions and has partner or table groups discuss with highly conservative time limits (30 sec.-1 minute) to identify any reference to author’s message in paragraph 3. T randomly selects several students to share what the partners decided along with a reason. Use the following language frame. *The writer identifies the author’s message in \_\_\_\_\_ sentence, and we think that because \_\_\_\_\_.* The teacher continues the green highlighting on the master copy (which are the topic sentences of the body paragraphs. Those topic sentences align with the first highlighted thesis sentence in paragraph 1.) (3 min.)
4. **Highlight/identify author’s message in partners/triads/table groups for paragraph 4. “You do together.”** – T monitors the room while students work cooperatively to find at identification of author’s lesson. (90 seconds) TEACHER: *Time is up. I’m going to count down for three and then say “show me,” at that time you will all hold up your papers at your chin so that I can see what everyone ended up highlighting. Ready...three...two...one...show me.* Teacher checks for accuracy and solicits random responses to explain rationale of choice. T highlights master copy visible on doc cam. (3 min. total)
5. **Highlight/identify author’s message as individuals for paragraph 5. “You do alone.”** – T explains to students that they will work alone on paragraph 5 to identify any mention of the author’s lesson to the reader. Students will be given 1 minute to complete their task. T repeats same process for checking for understanding by having students hold up their papers at chin-level. T debriefs correct answer. (2-3 minutes)
6. **Repeat steps 2-5 using a yellow highlighter and looking for the third thing on the T-chart: examples from the text** (12 min.)
7. **Repeat steps 2-5 using a pink highlighter and looking for the second thing on the T-chart: show understanding which would be demonstrated in any inference made** (16 min.)
8. **Use rubric to score the sample essay.** T uses table groups to decide on the score that the first bullet would get based on the tasks set forth in the deconstructed prompt and the highlighting that was done to determine completion by the student of the tasks. Groups decide on a score, write it on the white boards, and show when directed by the teacher. (Score is a 4 primarily because of the amount of text evidence used as well as the demonstration of analysis and understanding of the story.) Discuss if there is great diversity of answers. (5 min.)
9. **Collect student essay samples to check for individual understanding based on paragraph 5.**