

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 4, PREPARE, Module 3: Choose the Route and the Planning Strategy

A warm, plain language guide to what your student is learning this week, with easy ways to talk and work together at home. **Every page is in English and Spanish.**

Welcome, families. This week your student continues the Grade 4 PREPARE unit. The focus is planning, writers choose not only a genre but also a planning strategy, brainstorming, freewriting, or mapping, that fits the thinking a job requires. We are reading the richest versions of "Dream" and "Serve," and your student will plan and write a personal narrative about a time they recognized a way to make a positive difference. This packet shows you what is happening in class, the words your student is learning, the thinking tool your student uses, and simple ways to help from home. You and your student can work through it together in about ten minutes.

Ask your student to teach you what they learned. Teaching it out loud is part of how the learning sticks.

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3 Key Words

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En español

Todo este paquete también está disponible en español.

1 Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your student continues the Grade 4 PREPARE unit. The focus is planning, writers choose not only a genre but also a planning strategy, brainstorming, freewriting, or mapping, that fits the thinking a job requires.

We are reading the richest versions of "Dream" and "Serve," and your student will plan and write a personal narrative about a time they recognized a way to make a positive difference. A planning tool is useful only when it helps organize the thinking the selected genre needs.

Please try this at home. When your student has something to write, ask how they will plan it first. Would it help to list ideas quickly, write freely to find ideas, or draw how ideas connect? Choosing a plan on purpose is the habit we practice this week.

With appreciation,

[Classroom teacher signature]

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR A DEMONSTRATION

Ask your student to teach you the planning strategy chart. If your student can say when to brainstorm, freewrite, or map, the skill is sticking.

2 Family Tip Sheet

The skill, in plain words

Your student is learning that choosing a planning strategy is part of preparation. Different writing jobs call for different ways of organizing thought. Brainstorming generates possibilities quickly, freewriting uncovers thoughts and a meaningful moment, and mapping connects people, events, and ideas. The writer chooses the strategy that helps organize the thinking the selected genre needs.

The standard, in plain words

The work connects to the Texas standards for planning and composing. Your student plans a first draft by selecting a genre for a topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and mapping, and composes literary texts using genre characteristics and craft. In plain words, your student learns to match the plan to the job.

The planning strategy chart your student uses

Strategy	Best thinking fit
Brainstorm	Generate possibilities quickly.
Freewrite	Uncover thoughts and a meaningful moment.
Map	Connect people, events, and ideas.

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask your student to teach you the planning strategy chart. Explaining it out loud is part of how the skill sticks.
- Ask how the student plans to plan, by listing, freewriting, or mapping.
- Ask why that strategy fits the thinking the job needs.
- If your student is stuck, ask about the purpose first. Ask what thinking the job requires.
- Let your student write the answer. Your job is to ask good questions, not to supply the answer.

topic

what the writing is about

Example, my topic is a time I helped.

purpose

what the writing is meant to do

Example, my purpose is to tell what happened.

audience

who will read or hear it

Example, my audience is my class.

plan

an organized preparation for writing

Example, my plan helps me draft.

genre

a kind of writing with recognizable characteristics

Example, the writing job requires a personal narrative.

brainstorm

list ideas quickly to generate possibilities

Example, I brainstormed moments that could become a narrative.

freewrite

write freely to uncover ideas and thoughts

Example, I freewrote to uncover the moment I wanted to tell.

map

draw how ideas connect

Example, I mapped people, events, and the important moment.

justify

give a reason for a choice

Example, I can justify my route with the thinking the job needs.

response genre

the form of writing selected for a particular job

Example, the response genre is chosen after naming topic, purpose, and audience.

craft

deliberate writing choices that shape the reader's experience

Example, details, dialogue, and sentence choices support the narrative.

register

the level and style of language that fits purpose and audience

Example, the writer chooses language that fits the audience.

Tip for reading together. When a new word appears in a passage, pause and let your student use the sentence around it to figure out the meaning before you explain. Naming the guess out loud builds confidence.

4 Our Thinking Tool

This week your student uses the Genre Compass, the planning strategy chart, and TRAILS. The Genre Compass names the response genre, the strategy chart matches the plan to the thinking, and TRAILS develops the narrative.

The Genre Compass

Question	Decision
What is the topic?	Name the content.
What is the purpose?	Name what the job requires.
Who is the audience?	Choose details, style, and register that fit.
What genre fits the job?	Name the response genre.

The planning strategy chart

Strategy	Best thinking fit
Brainstorm	Generate possibilities quickly.
Freewrite	Uncover thoughts and a meaningful moment.
Map	Connect people, events, and ideas.

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Pick something to write about at home. Ask your student to choose a planning strategy, list, freewrite, or map, and to justify the choice.

Answer for families. One strong answer could say a map helps connect people and events for a story, while a brainstorm helps gather many ideas fast for a letter, because each job needs different thinking.

TRAILS When the purpose is to let a reader experience a moment, the writer chooses narrative and develops it with **Topic, Relationships, Actions, Thoughts, and Dialogue, Important Moment, Lesson or Lasting Effect, and Setting.**

5 Conversation Starters and a Simple Family Activity

- Ask what different ways there are to plan before writing.
- Ask when a quick list, or brainstorm, would help more than a map.
- Ask how the student decides which planning strategy fits a job.
- Ask about a time the student recognized a way to make a positive difference.

Three Ways to Plan

Pick something to plan together, such as a trip, a meal, or a party. Try listing ideas, then talking them through, then drawing how they connect. Ask which way helped most and why.

A Positive Difference

Share a time someone in the family noticed a need and chose to help. Name the moment they recognized what to do.

6 What Strong Work Looks Like

Here is a strong answer to this week's writing task. Each piece has its own job.

Prompt. Plan and write a personal narrative about a time you recognized a way to make a positive difference. Select a planning strategy that fits your experience and justify the choice.

Plan (justified)

I freewrote first to uncover the moment I wanted to tell, then used TRAILS to organize it. Freewriting fits because the moment was buried in a busy week.

The important moment

During a busy week, I noticed my neighbor carrying heavy bags alone. "Can I help with those?" I asked. She smiled and handed me one bag, and we carried the groceries together.

Lesson or lasting effect

I learned that a positive difference can begin with one small question. Now I look for small ways to help without waiting to be asked.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ The student names the topic, purpose, audience, and response genre.
- ☐ The student chooses a planning strategy and justifies it with the thinking the job needs.
- ☐ The narrative has a setting, an important moment, and a lasting effect.
- ☐ Actions, thoughts, or dialogue develop the moment.
- ☐ The student revises sentence structure and edits conventions.

7 Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ name the topic, purpose, audience, and response genre of a task
- ☐ choose a planning strategy, brainstorm, freewrite, or map
- ☐ justify the planning strategy with the thinking the job needs
- ☐ develop a personal narrative with TRAILS
- ☐ show an important moment and a lasting effect
- ☐ revise for sentence structure and edit for conventions

Student name

Family signature

Date

Please sign and send this page back to school with your student. The teacher will celebrate the progress together with your student.