

Expository Writing Prompt

Read the following quote.

People tend to forget that the joy of the holiday season should be the joy they feel all year long. The holidays bring joy that should be celebrated every day of every year.

Anonymous

Think about what it means to share in the joy of the season.

Write an essay explaining one thing you enjoy during the winter holidays.

Be sure to –

- clearly state your central idea
- organize your writing
- develop your writing in detail
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

Expository Planning Organizer

Sample for Guided Writing

Central Idea

During the winter holidays, I like to bake cookies with my family.

| Main Ideas about the Central Idea | |
|--|--------------------------|
| First Main Idea | Supporting Details |
| Bake different kinds of cookies together | Having fun times at home |
| | Making memories |
| | Special cookies |
| | Give them away |

Concluding Statement

During the winter holidays we warm the house, our hearts, and our tummies with cookies. Happy holidays!

I. Introduction

(hook)

CI - During the winter holidays, I like to bake cookies with my family.

II. Body

MI - We bake different kinds of cookies together.

- Having fun times at home
- Making memories
- Special cookies
- Give them away

III. Closing

CI and PT - During the winter holidays we warm the house, our hearts, and our tummies with cookies. Happy holidays!

Collaborative Interactive Writing Activity

Teacher directions - cut apart each part of the writing plan.

- Provide each group a part of the essay.
- Draft each paragraph using the plan provided.



Add a meaningful hook or lead to grab your readers attention. Use this central idea or develop one with a similar idea.

I. Introduction (hook)

CI - During the winter holidays, I like to bake cookies with my family.

Write a topic sentence with the MI. Then add sentences with the supporting details.

II. Body

MI - We bake different kinds of cookies together.

- Having fun times at home
- Making memories
- Special cookies
- Give them away

- You may add other supporting details. Use detail moves to make your writing interesting and engaging.

Use the restated central idea or develop one with fresh new words. Use the parting thought or develop a new one to leave your audience with a thoughtful closing.

III. Closing

CI and PT - During the winter holidays we warm the house, our hearts, and our tummies with cookies. Happy holidays!

Planning Guide

Expository

I. Introductory paragraph

- A. Topic and central idea of the composition
- B. Main ideas of the composition

II. Body paragraphs

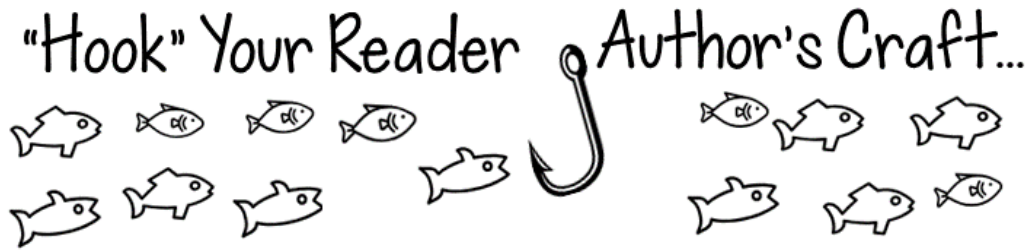
- A. Main idea stated in a topic sentence*
- B. Supporting detail**
 - 1. Examples
 - 2. Cause and effect
 - 3. Personal experiences

III. Concluding paragraph

- A. Topic and central idea of the composition
- B. Main ideas of the composition
- C. General parting thought

* No set number of ideas or details

** Other elaboration methods may be equally effective.



A mentor text activity

Directions: As a collaborative activity, have students read and choose one sample “hook” or “parting thought.” Students may choose to use the exact “hook” or “parting thought” as stated or may choose to change some of the words.

Hook #1

“Whooopeee!” I yell as the school bells rings. Soon it will be time to warm up the oven, get the ingredients, and put on our chef aprons.

Hook #2

There are many fun things about the winter holiday break. Some like to watch television all day long. But for me and my family, the best thing about winter break happens in the kitchen.

Hook #3

When the temperature outside drops, the oven temperature goes up, up, up, in my house. That’s because we do something special every winter break to keep warm.

Parting Thought #1

“Let’s do this! I’m ready to be the Cookie Monster!” I say to my mom when I see her get the ingredients.

Parting Thought #2

I’m proud of all the cookies we bake. The best part is I get to “bake” up some warm memories with my family.

Parting Thought #3

Baking dozens and dozens of cookies takes work. But, I will always have a special place in my heart for the memories of my family and I baking cookies. It’s our very own special holiday break activity.



Sample Essay

When we have two weeks off for winter break, my family does many things together, but one activity is deliciously special. During the winter holidays, I like to bake cookies with my family.

We bake different kinds of cookies together. I bet you think the best thing about baking cookies are THE cookies. But it's not. The best thing is that we do it together because my family makes it a fun time at home. We laugh a lot, and we joke around. Sure, we make a mess sometimes, but my mom never gets mad or upset (although she makes us clean it up.) We also make a lot of memories when we bake cookies. Of course, the cookies are special too. We make simple sugar cookies. Those just take dough and sugar sprinkles. They're the easiest to make. Mostly we make holiday shape cookies like Christmas trees, stars, and holiday wreaths. Those type of cookies take a long time to decorate, but they are the most fun to make for sure! We usually have to make different colored frosting, and we also use other decorating things like colored sprinkles and sugar beads. Baking cookies sometimes takes more than one day. There have been times when we bake over twelve dozen cookies during the holidays. Usually when we bake this large amount, we give them away to our cousins or neighbors.

Everyone always likes our cookies. Baking dozens and dozens of cookies takes work, but, I will always have a special place in my heart of the memories and a special place in my tummy for the cookies. It's our very own special holiday break activity.

Planning Organizer

Expository

Topic and Central Idea _____

| Main Ideas about the Central Idea | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| First Main Idea | Supporting Details |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Second Main Idea | Supporting Details |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Third Main Idea | Supporting Details |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Concluding Statement

Revision Checklist Expository

| Introductory Paragraph | | | | Concluding Paragraph |
|------------------------|---|--|--|----------------------|
| Topic ____ | Main Ideas | | | Topic ____ |
| Central Idea ____ | 1 st Idea ____ E____ CE____ PE____ Other____ | 2 nd Idea____ E____ CE____ PE____ Other____ | 3 rd Idea____ E____ CE____ PE____ Other____ | Central Idea ____ |
| Main Ideas 1.____ | | | | Main Ideas ____ |
| 2.____ | | | | Parting Thought ____ |
| 3.____ | | | | |
| | | | | |

Sentence Variations

Compound Sentence with correct comma usage before the FANBOYS _____

Complex Sentences with correct comma, based on subordinate conjunction placement

BONUS! Compound Complex Sentences with correct comma usage _____

Detail Sentence Leads – Author’s Craft: Place checkmarks next to the detail leads.

| Details that Describe | Action Details | Persuasive Details | Details that Inform | Dialogue Details |
|--|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| State the obvious | Act and think | If...then | State the opposite | “Dialogue” with tags |
| Just like that | But, why??? | Take the opposite side | What’s Next? | Instead of <i>said</i> |
| Action, action, action clues | Numbers date/time/value | Good insightful question(s) | High Interest – what’s next | Talking and thinking |
| In the middle | Location transition | Imagine this... | Positive sweet with a negative sour | Action and words |
| Zoom in & describe | Adverb comma | It’s complicated and complex | For the first time ever.. | Tell me about it |
| Intentional repetition | <i>ings</i> phrases present participles | Now...Then | Define it | |
| Pop culture | Eds phrases | We... statements of unity | AKA – proper nouns | |
| Personification people characteristics | Onomatopoeia (sound) | Call to action | In other words (restatement) | |
| Set the stage | | Hyperbole exaggerate! | Important or significant | |
| I, we, they think | | | Love, love, love | |
| | | | Historical reference | |

Make writing meaningful before the prompt.
These ideas make this prompt fun!



Informal Writing Activity Springboard: Have your students list fun things they do during the holidays on a post-it note. Discuss and share their ideas orally with the class.

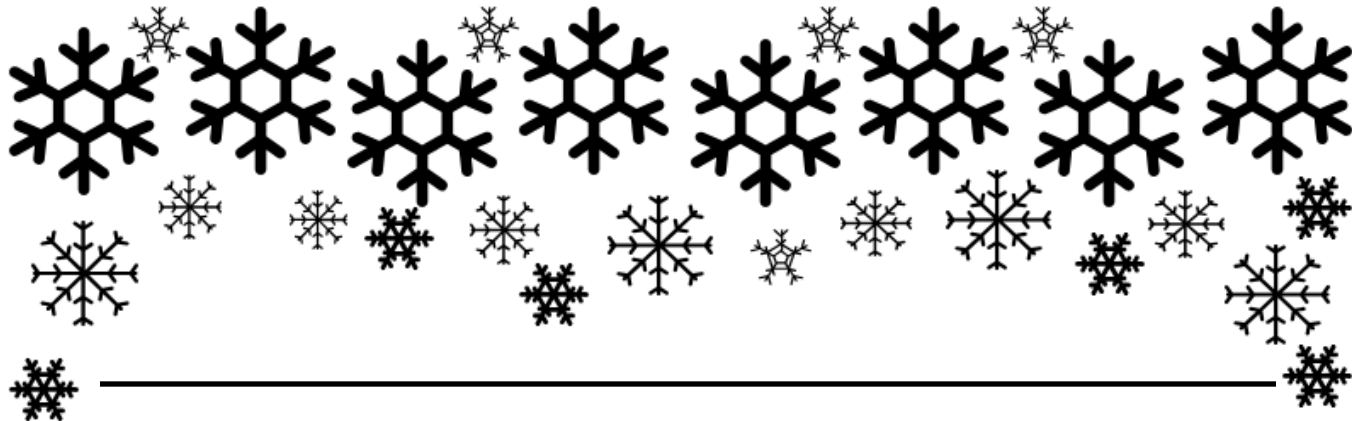
After sharing, ask students to use **ONE** idea in a complete, detailed, well-written sentence. Students can then use this sentence as the central idea of their essay for this prompt. See sample below.

List fun things you do during the holidays.

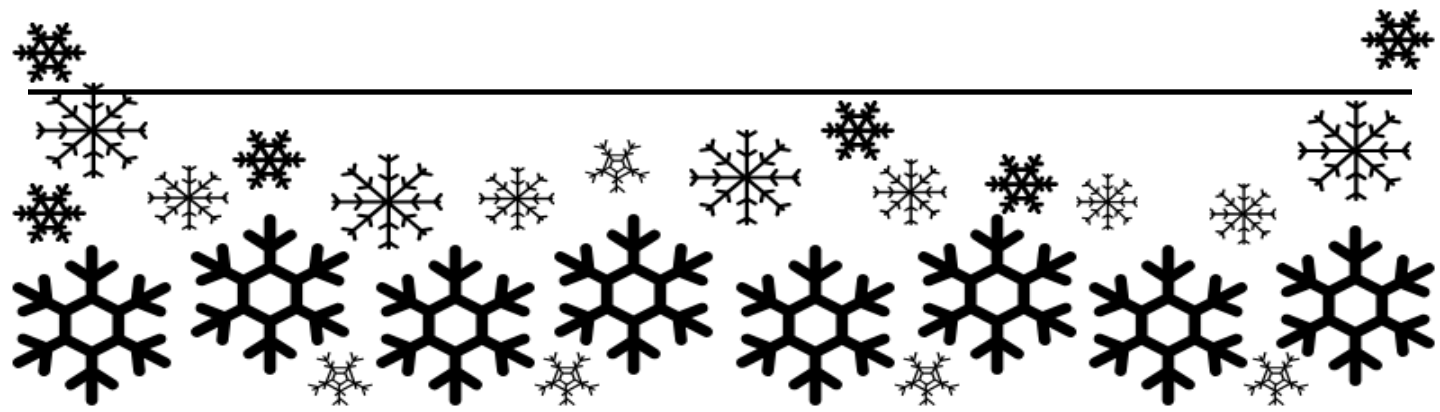


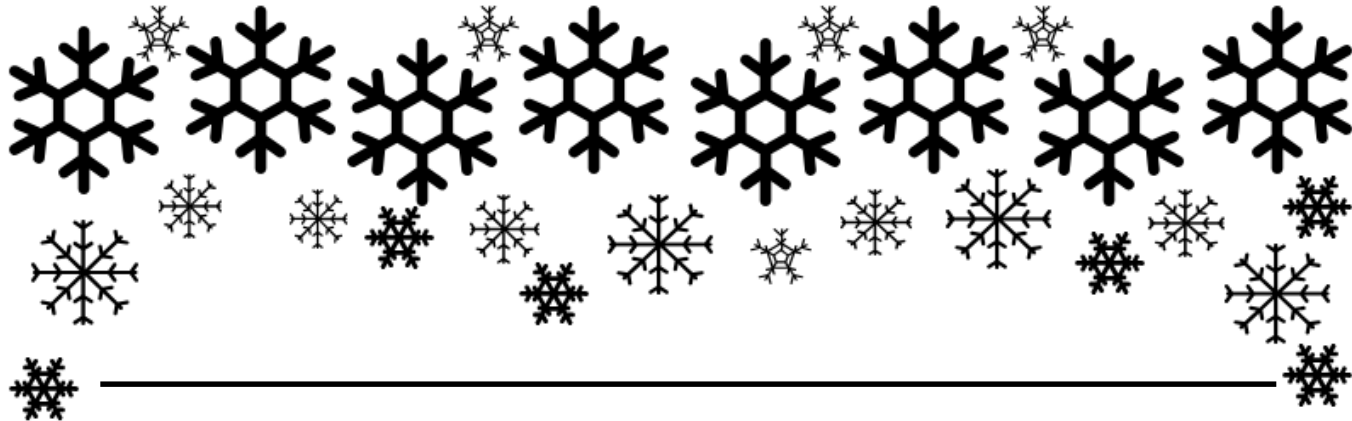
Central idea sample sentence:

I can almost smell the wonderful aroma of gingerbread in the air when I think about my favorite winter holiday activity - baking cookies with my mom!



Four sets of horizontal lines for writing, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.





A series of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of 18 evenly spaced lines that span the width of the page.

