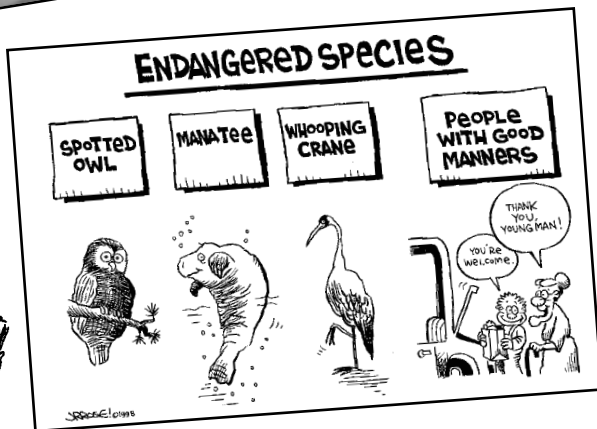
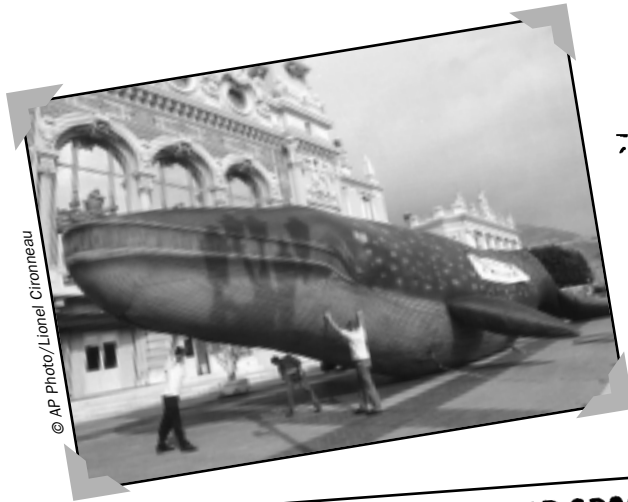


101 Picture Prompts to Spark Super Writing

Reproducible Photographs, Cartoons & Art Masterpieces to Intrigue, Amuse & Inspire Every Writer in Your Class!

By Karen Kellaher



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Dedication

To Kristen, who has always known
that a picture paints a thousand
words.



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Introduction

As a child, I loved to dig through the bottomless boxes of photographs my mother stored beneath the beds in our house (organizing them into albums is still on her “to do” list). Scrutinizing a faded black and white print of my grandparents, I would imagine the night they first met. Other snapshots reminded me of my family’s most treasured times: the births of my siblings, vacations on the New Jersey shore, my first day of school. These forays into the photo boxes kept me entertained for hours.



A few years ago, I rediscovered the power of pictures as a graduate student in a fiction-writing workshop. I was struggling with a major case of writer’s block, and the professor prescribed a remedy that had always worked for him: a worn copy of the children’s classic *The Snowman* by Raymond Briggs. “Just look at the illustrations,” the professor suggested, “and write whatever story comes to mind.”



It worked. That beautiful picture book cured my writer’s block. It also got me thinking that illustrations, photos, and other kinds of pictures would be a wonderful way to motivate young writers. That is the premise behind this book, the latest in Scholastic’s popular line of writing prompt collections. I wrote *101 Picture Prompts to Spark Super Writing* as a resource for busy teachers who value writing—and want to make it fun and engaging for their students.

Why Use Writing Prompts?

As teachers, we want all of our students to be able to express themselves creatively and cogently. Writing is not only necessary for communicating in daily life; it is also frequently the means through which we digest new information in all subject areas. Leading educators have been discussing the importance of writing skills for years. In fact, many state and national standardized tests now include segments that require students to write paragraphs and essays.

How can we make sure students get the practice and inspiration they need as emergent writers? One teacher-tested solution is to use exciting writing prompts like the ones in this book. These prompts cover a wide spectrum of kid-friendly topics, from special effects to sports bloopers. They are also connected to your curriculum. There is such a rich variety of topics, you are bound to find one to connect perfectly with a given day’s lesson.



Real-Life Photos



We are surrounded by photographs in our daily lives—family snapshots, colorful advertisements, newspaper images of war and peace. Because children are often naturally drawn to photos, they make excellent writing prompts. The prompts in this section encourage students to:

- use higher-order thinking skills to interpret photographs critically and creatively.
- write imaginative fiction.
- apply and appreciate humor in writing.
- collaborate with peers in creative problem-solving.
- much, much more!



© AP Photo/Charles Bennett



© AP Photo/Amy Sancetta



© AP Photo/Sesame Place

Name _____



A Whale Tale

What's a whale doing in the middle of town? Pretend you are a news reporter on the scene, and you have to write an article to tell what is happening. You can choose one of the following news headlines to help you get started. Use your imagination!

- Whale Invades Main Street, Takes Over City Hall
- New School Is Shaped Like a Whale
- Whale Gets Lost in City



© AP Photo/Lionel Cironneau

Mini Prompts **Language Arts:** List at least five adjectives to describe the whale in this photograph.



Kids and Collections

Which of these messages do you think the cartoonist is trying to get across? (Put a check by your answer.)

- It is fun to collect sports cards.
- It is better to collect stuffed animals than toy cars.
- Kids' collections can get out of control.

Do you have a collection? If so, what do you like about it? If not, what might you like to collect? Why?



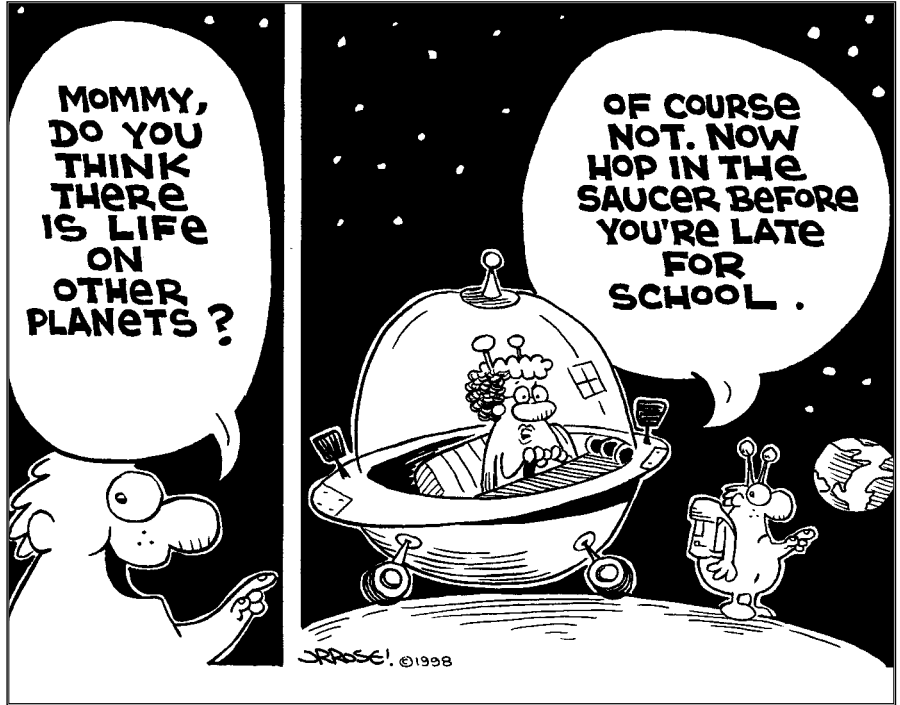
Mini Prompts

Math: Do you think kids who collect things are wasting their money or investing in the future? Explain.



Alien Alert

Describe at least two clues in the cartoon that tell you the mother and son are from another planet. Make up a name for their planet, and write a story about what life is like there.



Mini Prompts

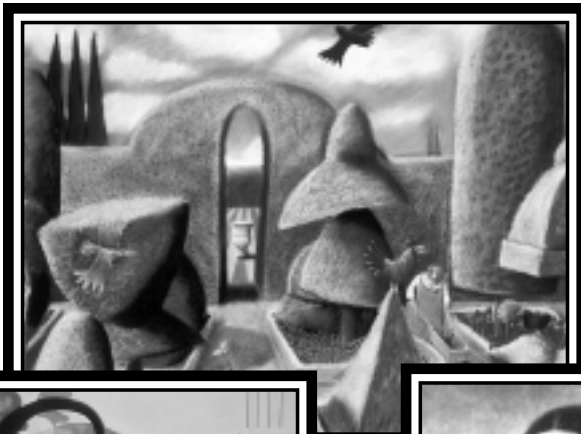
Science: Do you think there are life forms on other planets? If so, how do you think they are similar to human beings? How do you think they are different from humans?

Masterpieces



Fine art has captured the human imagination for centuries. The pieces highlighted in this section represent some of the greatest masters as well as some talented unknown artists (including two young winners from Scholastic's annual Art and Writing Awards). In responding to the prompts in this section, your students will:

- experience and respond thoughtfully to some of the world's greatest works of art.
- compare and contrast artistic styles.
- think about how particular works of art connect to students' own lives.
- imagine themselves in the role of artist, deciding what to create and how to create it.
- much, much more!



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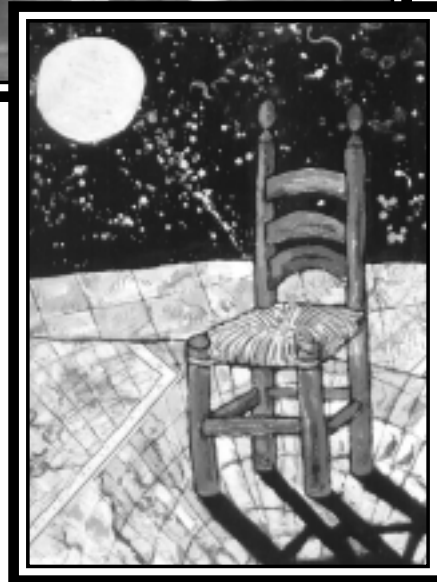
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Name _____



A Space of My Own

This painting is *Van Gogh's Bedroom at Arles* by Vincent van Gogh. It was painted in 1889. The picture shows the artist's bedroom in his house out in the country. That house and that bedroom were among van Gogh's favorite places, and he painted a lot while he was there. Do you have a place that is all yours? If you were going to paint any room in your home, which one would you choose? Close your eyes and imagine the room. Then describe the room.



© Musee d'Orsay, Paris/Giraudon, Paris/SuperStock

Mini Prompts **Collaborative Writing:** Rooms can tell a lot about the people who use them. This room tells us that van Gogh kept his room neat and liked to have paintings all around him. If a stranger saw a picture of your classroom, what would he or she learn about your class?

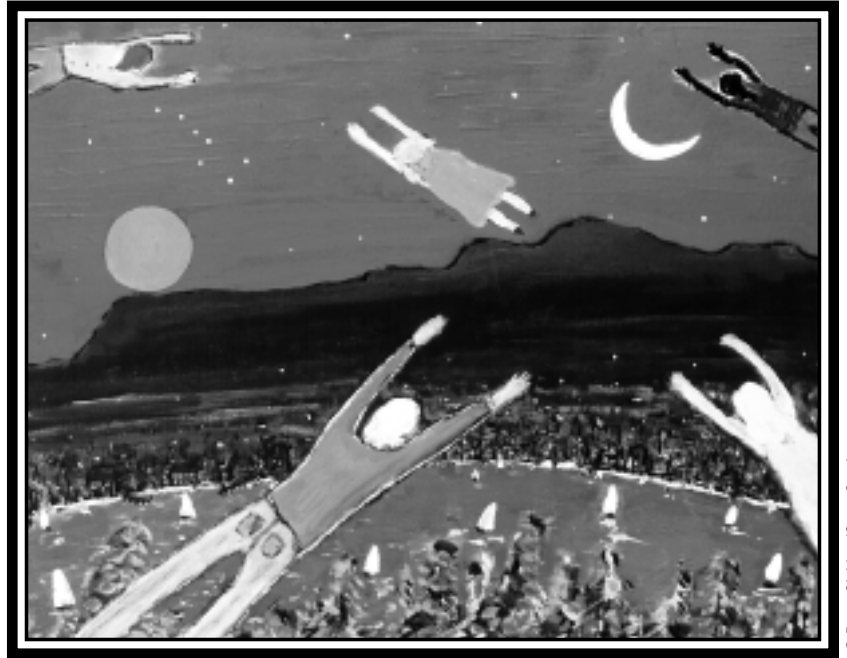
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Name _____

Fly Away

An American artist named Peter Sickles painted this piece in 1995 and called it *People Flying*. What do you think of the painting? Do you ever wish you could fly? If you could fly, where would you go? How would your life be different?



© Peter Sickles/SuperStock

Mini Prompts **Language Arts:** Choose one of the people in this painting and pretend you are he or she. Write a story about your flying experience. How did you get the power to fly? Where are you?

Name _____



The Dream Tree

Daniel Nevins, a modern-day American artist, created this work of art in 1993. It is called *The Dream Tree*. Do you have a special place where you go to daydream? What makes it special? Do you think daydreaming is important—or a waste of time? Explain.



© Private Collection/Daniel Nevins/SuperStock

Mini Prompts

Language Arts: When you have something on your mind (for example, a big game coming up or an argument with a brother or sister), do you like to be by yourself or around other people? Why?



Name _____

Degas' Dancers

French artist Edgar Degas is famous for his paintings of ballet dancers. This one is called *Dancer With Bouquet Curtsyng*. Degas painted it in 1877. Why do you think Degas decided to paint dancers? If you were going to paint the same thing over and over again, what might it be? Horses? Football games? Use your imagination! Tell why you chose this subject.



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Mini Prompts **Math:** Today, a painting by Degas costs millions of dollars. What do you think the same painting will cost in 100 years? Why do you think people are willing to pay so much for a piece of art? Would you ever spend that much on a painting?

Name _____



Cat and Bird

This painting is *Cat Gripping a Bird* by Pablo Picasso. Picasso painted it in 1939 in France, where he was living. At that time, Germany was getting ready to attack Poland and France vowed to protect Poland. This conflict was the start of World War II. Picasso painted *Cat Gripping a Bird* to show how he felt about the coming war. Can you tell from the picture what Picasso was thinking? If you were going to draw or paint something going on in the world today, what event would you choose? Why?



© Musée de Picasso, Idem/SuperStock

Mini Prompts

Language Arts: What are some other ways (besides painting) that people express their feelings about war and other problems?

About the Art

You and your students may be interested in the following facts about the artwork in this book.

REAL-LIFE PHOTOS

Who “Nose” What This Is? (page 8)

This sculpture to Sioux hero Chief Crazy Horse is being carved in the Black Hills of South Dakota. In the 1800s, Crazy Horse led the Sioux in a struggle against white settlers. When completed, the Crazy Horse monument will be the largest sculpture on Earth. The face portion of the art was completed in summer 1998.

What a Workout! (page 9)

This humorous scene was staged for the purposes of this photograph.

A “Bear-y” Nice Car (page 10)

A black bear searches for food left by campers at the top of a mountain in Tucson, Arizona.

A Whale Tale (page 11)

Animal conservation groups placed this 90-foot inflatable whale in Monaco in October 1997. They wanted to remind the International Whaling Commission that it is important to protect whales from hunters. The Commission, made up of representatives of 43 countries, was meeting in Monaco at the time.

Penguin Crossing (page 12)

A group of people in Montreal, Canada, dressed as penguins to attend a press conference announcing the city’s annual Santa Claus parade.

Ready for Landing (page 13)

A Gyr falcon took off and landed on this 8-year-old’s head at a “Birds of Prey” show in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Monkey Business (page 14)

Bul Bul the gorilla lived at Tokyo’s Ueno Zoo. He was the world’s oldest male gorilla in captivity. He died in 1997 at age 44.

Happy Birthday, Rover! (page 15)

Eleven Labrador retriever puppies have a one-year

birthday celebration with their dad, Harvard (the dog at right getting his hat adjusted).

Top Job (page 16)

A window washer is hard at work in Atlanta, Georgia. The building is five stories high. It takes a cleaning crew two days to clean all the windows.

Head Over Heels (page 17)

A football player faces a rough landing.

Doctor, Doctor! (page 18)

Fifth graders at Alama Schrader Elementary School in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, examine a preserved human brain. A surgeon brought the brain to the school as part of the class’s unit on the human body.

Friends Forever (page 19)

A goat and cat make friends at a farm in Ohio.

Birdie and the Beast (page 20)

This lovebird and iguana are among 100 pets belonging to a couple in Alabama.

Going Buggy (page 21)

A brave 7-year-old allows two Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches to walk on his shirt during a show at Sesame Place in Pennsylvania.

Save My Home (page 22)

Northern cricket frogs make their home in wetlands areas. The frog in this photo lives in Rocky Gap State Park in Maryland.

Rise and Shine (page 23)

This adorable picture of a dog being nurtured by a baby doll is from an old collection of photographs taken in the 1950s or 1960s.

POLITICAL CARTOONS

All of the cartoons in this book were created by John Rose, a Virginia-based professional cartoonist. Rose has published material for both children and adults.

MASTERPIECES

Mona Lisa (page 46)

Leonardo da Vinci's famous *Mona Lisa* is housed in the Louvre in Paris. The woman in the painting is believed to be the wife of a Florentine merchant, Francesco di Bartolommeo del Giocondo.

Gardeners (page 47)

Judy Byford is a contemporary British folk artist.

Good Neighbors (page 48)

Jane Wooster Scott is among the leading painters of American folk art. Many of her paintings, including *Good Neighbors*, show the country at the very beginning of the 20th century. Scott lives in Idaho's Rocky Mountains.

Global Seat (page 49)

Contemporary artist Christianne Pierre is well known in her home state, Florida. Pierre's work is noted for its sense of optimism, strong use of color, and realism.

Van Gogh's Bedroom at Arles (page 50)

Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh moved to Arles, in the south of France, in 1888. He hoped to establish an artists' colony there. Van Gogh loved the bright colors of this Mediterranean region. He completed many works during his year-long stay. But he eventually grew very depressed, leading to the infamous episode in which van Gogh mutilated his ear.

The Thinker (page 51)

The idea for this sculpture came from a decorated door that French sculptor Auguste Rodin was creating for an art museum. Although Rodin never finished the door, he was inspired to sculpt a series of marble and bronze human figures that reflect a wide range of emotions.

People Flying (page 52)

Peter Sickles is a contemporary American artist. He lives and works in New Jersey.

The Dream Tree (page 53)

Daniel Nevins is known for painting on wood rather than canvas, allowing the natural grains to show through.

Yellow, Red, and Blue (page 54)

Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky lived from 1866 to 1944. This work is an example of the abstract style for which the artist is best known.

Dancer With Bouquet Curtsyng (page 55)

Edgar Degas was first introduced to the world of dance and theater by a friend who played the bassoon in the French opera. By the mid 1870s, dancers had become a favorite theme in Degas' work.

Cat Gripping a Bird (page 56)

French artist Pablo Picasso completed this work in April 1939, a few months before the start of World War II. (The war began when Germany invaded Poland and France and England responded by declaring war on Germany.) This piece of art expresses Picasso's anxiety about the escalating violence.

Native American petroglyph (page 57)

A petroglyph is a carving or inscription in rock. Early Native Americans, particularly those living in what is now the American southwest, frequently drew figures on rocks to represent important deities and things in nature.

The Starry Night Over the Rhone (page 58)

Like *Van Gogh's Bedroom at Arles*, this painting was completed at Van Gogh's home in the south of France. It should be noted that Van Gogh created another work with a similar name, *The Starry Night*, one year later, while a patient at a French asylum.

Curiosity (page 59)

Carlee Freeman received an award for this work in the 1996 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. At the time, Freeman was a high school student in Asheville, North Carolina.

Self Portrait (page 60)

This piece by Emily Netten won a silver award for computer graphics in the 1996 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Netten was a student in Storm Lake, Iowa.

Notes