



## FUEL Sentence Starter Cards (Printable Format)

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### F – Focus (Topic Sentence)

Use these to state your opinion or main idea clearly.

- I believe that...
- In my opinion,...
- I think that...
- \_\_\_\_\_ should / should not be allowed because...
- One reason I agree/disagree is that...

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### U – Understand (Explain Your Thinking)

Use these to explain why your opinion matters.

- This is important because...
- This matters since...
- One reason this idea makes sense is...
- This helps people because...
- This affects students because...

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## ● E – Evidence (Support Your Idea)

Use these to add facts, examples, or reasoning.

- For example,...
- According to \_\_\_\_\_,...
- I remember when...
- A fact that supports this is...
- One time, \_\_\_\_\_ happened and it showed...

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## ● L – Link (Wrap It Up)

Use these to restate or connect back to your opinion.

- This proves that...
- That's why I believe...
- All of this shows...
- For these reasons...
- In conclusion,...

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## ⭐ Tips for Use in Small Groups

- Let students **draw one card per FUEL step** if they need help.
- Display one sentence starter card per step on a **mini anchor chart ring**.
- Place these in a “**Writer’s Toolbox**” bin for independent access.
- Pair cards with **color-coded highlighters** or markers that match FUEL colors.



# FUEL Writing Assessment – Student + Teacher Tools

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## 1. Student Self-Assessment Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Prompt: \_\_\_\_\_

After writing your paragraph, check each part of your writing:



### FUEL Step

### I Did This...

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>F – Focus</b>	I started with a clear opinion or answer to the prompt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>U – Understand</b>	I explained why my opinion or idea is important.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>E – Evidence</b>	I gave a fact, example, or quote that supports my opinion.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>L – Link</b>	I ended by connecting back to my opinion.

**What part was easiest for you?**

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**What part was hardest for you?**

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## 2. Teacher Assessment Rubric (Quick-Check)

FUEL Step	4 – Strong	3 – Developing	2 – Emerging	1 – Needs Support
<b>Focus</b>	Clear, specific topic sentence that directly answers the prompt	Topic sentence is present but may be vague or off-topic	Attempted topic sentence but unclear	No clear main idea
<b>Understand</b>	Explains thinking with relevant reasoning	Some explanation, may be general	Explanation is vague or confusing	No explanation or unrelated
<b>Evidence</b>	Strong, relevant detail or example	Some support; may be general	Evidence unclear, not well connected	No evidence given
<b>Link</b>	Wraps up with a strong conclusion that connects to main idea	Conclusion present but may be weak	Attempt at conclusion; unclear link	No conclusion or off-topic

**Total Score (out of 16):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Feedback Notes:**

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## Optional: Holistic Scoring Categories

You can also use simple 1–4 scoring for grading or conferencing:

- **4 = Excellent:** All 4 parts are clearly written and well-connected
- **3 = Good:** Most parts present with some detail
- **2 = Needs Work:** Missing or unclear parts
- **1 = Incomplete:** Little structure or off-topic



# FUEL Writing Strategy Worksheet – 6th Grade

## Reading Passage:

### **“The Power of Helping Others”**

*Adapted for Grade 6*

When Maya saw her neighbor, Mr. Thompson, struggling to carry groceries up the stairs, she didn't hesitate. She ran over, grabbed a few bags, and helped him reach his door. Mr. Thompson smiled and thanked her. “You've made my day,” he said. Later that week, he brought cookies to Maya's house to say thank you. That small moment inspired Maya to keep helping others. She started organizing clean-up days at the park and even helped classmates who needed support with schoolwork. Helping others made Maya feel proud, connected, and happy.

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## Writing Prompt:

### **Why is helping others important?**

Use the passage and your own thinking to support your answer.

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## FUEL Paragraph Planner

- ♦ **F – Focus (Topic Sentence)**

Restate the question and clearly answer it.



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♦ **U – Understand (Key Words from the Prompt)**

Highlight and list 2–3 important words from the prompt.



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♦ **E – Evidence (Text Details or Quotes)**

Find 1–2 details from the passage that support your answer.



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♦ **L – Link (Explain and Wrap It Up)**

Explain how your evidence proves your answer.



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**Final Check**

- ✓ Did I include all 4 parts of FUEL?
- ✓ Did I use complete sentences and correct punctuation?
- ✓ Did I stay on topic and explain my thinking?



## FUEL Exemplar Paragraph

**Prompt:** Why is helping others important?

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### **Focus (Blue):**

Helping others is important because it makes people feel supported and creates a kinder community.

### **Understand (Green):**

When someone offers help, it shows that they care and are willing to make a positive difference in someone else's life.

### **Evidence (Orange):**

For example, in the passage it says, "She ran over, grabbed a few bags, and helped him reach his door." Later, Mr. Thompson brought cookies to say thank you, which shows how a small act of kindness can make a big impact.

### **Link (Purple):**

This proves that helping others not only makes people feel good, but also encourages more kindness in return.

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### **Legend (for color coding or highlighters):**

- **Focus** = Blue
- **Understand** = Green
- **Evidence** = Orange
- **Link** = Purple



# Evidence Sort Game: Recycling and the Environment

**Grade Level:** 4th–7th

**Skill:** Distinguishing between **text evidence** and **non-evidence**

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## **Reading Passage: Why Recycling Matters**

Every year, humans create billions of tons of trash. Much of this waste ends up in landfills or the ocean, where it harms wildlife and pollutes the environment.

Recycling is one way to reduce the amount of waste we produce. It involves turning old materials like paper, plastic, and metal into new products. This process uses fewer natural resources and less energy than creating items from scratch.

For example, recycling aluminum cans saves up to 95% of the energy needed to make new ones from raw materials. When people recycle, they also help reduce air and water pollution caused by factories. Still, not all recycling programs work the same way, and not everyone knows what can and cannot be recycled. Education about recycling is just as important as the action itself.

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 **Sentence Strips for Sorting**

Cut or display these statements for students to sort into two categories.

 **TEXT EVIDENCE**

“Every year, humans create billions of tons of trash.”

“Recycling aluminum cans saves up to 95% of the energy needed to make new ones from raw materials.”

“Recycling is one way to reduce the amount of waste we produce.”

“Education about recycling is just as important as the action itself.”

“When people recycle, they also help reduce air and water pollution caused by factories.”

## NOT EVIDENCE

“I think everyone should recycle more often.”

“My family recycles every Thursday.”

“It’s unfair that some people don’t care about the planet.”

“Schools should give prizes to kids who recycle.”

“In the future, we might have robots that do all the recycling.”



### Student Instructions

1. Read the passage carefully.
2. Sort each sentence strip into the correct column on the sorting mat.
3. For each “text evidence” choice, point to where the information came from in the passage.
4. For “not evidence” choices, explain why it doesn’t count as support.

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## Sort Mat (for printing or use on whiteboard)

1. Use the **Sort Mat**:


Discuss your choices and explain how you know a sentence is real evidence from the text.



## Optional Reflection Questions

- What makes a sentence strong evidence?
- Why is it important to use information from the text?
- Can a personal opinion ever count as evidence?

## FUEL Writing: Gradual Skill-Building Steps

Step	Focus Area	Student Task	Support
<b>1. Identify</b>	Focus	Highlight or circle the topic sentence in a sample paragraph.	Use modeled examples, sentence frames.
<b>2. Match</b>	Understand	Match reasons to claims or topics.	Use visuals and simple matching cards.
<b>3. Sort</b>	Evidence	Sort sentences into “evidence” or “not evidence.”	Use guided practice with sentence strips.
<b>4. Fill In the Blank</b>	Link	Choose the correct closing sentence from 2–3 options.	Provide scaffolded choices.
<b>5. Build Together</b>	FUEL	Write one part at a time with the class.	Teacher models, students help write.
<b>6. Sentence Starters</b>	FUEL	Fill in each section with support.	Use sentence starters and a FUEL template.
<b>7. Independent Try</b>	Full Paragraph	Write a full paragraph with FUEL.	Use checklists, graphic organizers, and conferencing.

### Teacher Reminders:

- Teach **one step at a time**.
- Model each part clearly and repeatedly.
- Use **mini-lessons** for each FUEL component.
- Celebrate partial success (“Great job using evidence today!”).
- Give students time to **practice orally** or with partners before writing.



# How to Link Ideas – Worksheet

**Skill Focus:** Linking ideas to create cohesion and strengthen argumentation

**Grade Level:** 4th–7th

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## What Is a Link Sentence?

A **Link** sentence connects your **evidence** back to your **main point** (Focus).

It explains **how** or **why** your evidence supports your answer.

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## Example (FUEL Paragraph)

**Prompt:** *Why is it important to protect bees?*

**F (Focus)** **It is important to protect bees because they help plants grow.**

**U** Bees spread pollen so that fruits, vegetables, and flowers can grow.  
(Understand)

**E (Evidence)** The article says, “Bees pollinate over 75% of crops that humans eat.”

**L (Link)** **This shows that bees are essential to our food supply and the environment.**

 The **Link** ties the evidence back to the Focus and explains its importance.

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## Practice #1: Match the Link

Read each Focus and Evidence pair. Choose the best Link.

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1. **Focus:** Recycling helps protect natural resources.

**Evidence:** Recycling aluminum cans saves up to 95% of the energy used to make new ones.

**Which Link works best?**

- a) I like to recycle when I have time.
- b) This shows that recycling uses fewer resources and helps conserve energy.
- c) Some people forget to recycle their soda cans.

Correct Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. **Focus:** Exercise is important for mental health.

**Evidence:** The article says, "People who exercise regularly report feeling less stress."

**Which Link works best?**

- a) This proves that working out helps your mind stay healthy.
- b) Running is hard for me, but I try.
- c) Stress can make people grumpy.

Correct Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Practice #2: Write the Link

**Write your own Link sentence to explain how the evidence supports the focus.**

1. **Focus:** Reading every day helps improve vocabulary.

**Evidence:** A study found that students who read 20 minutes daily knew thousands more words by 6th grade.

**Link:**

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2. **Focus:** We should plant more trees in our community.

**Evidence:** Trees remove pollution from the air and give off clean oxygen.

**Link:**

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## Sentence Starters for Linking Ideas

- This shows that...
- This proves that...
- This supports the idea that...
- Because of this...
- As a result...
- Therefore...



## Evidence Sort Game: Why Bees Matter

### Reading Passage: *The Buzz About Bees*

Bees are small insects, but they do a big job. Bees help plants grow by spreading pollen from flower to flower. This is called pollination. Without pollination, many plants wouldn't grow fruits or vegetables. In fact, bees pollinate about 75% of the crops people eat every day, like apples, almonds, and blueberries.

Bees also live in busy communities called hives. Inside the hive, every bee has a job. Worker bees gather nectar, while others clean, protect the hive, or care for baby bees. Although many people are afraid of bees, they usually only sting if they feel threatened. Scientists say bee populations are shrinking, and this is a problem for the environment.

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### Sentence Strips for Sorting

Cut these apart and have students sort them into the correct category:

 **TEXT EVIDENCE**

"Bees pollinate about 75% of the crops people eat every day."

"Bees help plants grow by spreading pollen from flower to flower."

"Worker bees gather nectar, while others clean, protect the hive, or care for baby bees."

"Scientists say bee populations are shrinking, and this is a problem for the environment."

"Although many people are afraid of bees, they usually only sting if they feel threatened."

 **NOT EVIDENCE**

“Bees are really fun to watch.”

“I think bees should be kept in every backyard.”

“My cousin was stung by a bee last summer.”

“It’s sad that bees don’t live as long as dogs.”

“If I were a bee, I’d want to be the queen!”

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 **Directions for Students**

1. Read the passage as a group or independently.
2. Work with a partner or small group to sort the sentence strips.
3. Use the **Sort Mat**:


4. Discuss your choices and explain how you know a sentence is real evidence from the text.

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### **Optional Reflection Questions**

- How do you know when something is evidence?
- What makes some statements “not evidence”?
- Why is it important to use evidence when writing or answering questions?



## FUEL Writing Strategy Worksheet: Color-Code and Write

### 🔥 Part 1: Review the FUEL Steps

Step	What It Means	Color	Example Starter
■ <b>F – Focus</b>	State your answer clearly.	Green	"I think..." / "The main idea is..."
■ <b>U – Understand</b>	Explain your thinking.	Blue	"This means..." / "In other words..."
■ <b>E – Evidence</b>	Use a quote or example.	Yellow	"For example..." / "The text says..."
■ <b>L – Link</b>	Connect your idea and evidence.	Red	"This shows..." / "So that means..."

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### 📚 Part 2: Color-Code the Paragraph

**Directions:** Read the paragraph below. Underline or highlight each sentence in the correct color:

- Green = Focus
- Blue = Understand
- Yellow = Evidence
- Red = Link

**Prompt:** Why should kids play outside every day?

Kids should play outside every day because it helps them stay healthy.  
This means they get fresh air and exercise instead of sitting all day.  
For example, doctors say that just 30 minutes of outside play can improve mood and fitness.  
This shows that going outside is good for both the body and the brain.

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### ✍ Part 3: Write Your Own FUEL Paragraph

**Prompt:** Should students be allowed to use technology in class?

Use the boxes below to plan and write each FUEL step.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Sentence</b>
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 **Focus:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 **Understand:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 **Evidence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 **Link:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 🔥 Daily FUEL Warm-Up Routine Using Quick Writes or Exit Slips

### 📝 Format Template (Students Write Using These Prompts)

You can provide this as a printed or projected template:

#### 1. Focus

➢ *What is the main idea or prompt today? Restate it as a clear topic sentence.*

📝 : \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Understand

➢ *Briefly explain what it means in your own words or why it's important.*

📝 : \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Evidence

➢ *Give an example, fact, or quote (from reading, class, or your own experience).*

📝 : \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Link

➢ *Connect your evidence back to the main idea or explain what it shows.*

📝 : \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Prompt	Subject
Monday	Why is it important to check your work before turning it in?	SEL / ELA
Tuesday	What is one way heat affects matter?	Science
Wednesday	How did the character show bravery in the story?	ELA
Thursday	Why was the Revolutionary War a turning point in U.S. history?	Social Studies
Friday	What strategy helps you solve word problems?	Math

 **Teacher Tips:**

- Use as **bell ringers** or **exit slips**.
- Keep student responses in a **FUEL notebook or folder**.
- Use sentence starters or visuals for students who need support.
- Review 1–2 responses per day with the class to reinforce structure.
- Differentiate: Allow drawings for “Understand” or “Link” for emerging writers.

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## Teacher Modeling Example: FUEL Strategy

**Prompt:** *Why is it important to protect sea turtles?*

**Text:** An informational article about sea turtles and conservation efforts.

FUEL Step	Teacher Says/Models	Student Sees/Writes	Explanation
<b>F = Focus</b> (Topic Sentence)	"I need to restate the question and give my answer clearly."	<i>It is important to protect sea turtles because they help keep the ocean ecosystem balanced.</i>	Answers the prompt with a clear opinion or claim.
<b>U = Understand</b> (Explain the Reason)	"Now I will explain why I think this. What does it mean to 'keep the ocean ecosystem balanced'?"	<i>Sea turtles eat jellyfish and sea grass, which helps control the population and keeps the ocean healthy.</i>	Shows understanding by explaining the reason in their own words.
<b>E = Evidence</b> (Support with the Text)	"I need to find a quote or fact from the article that supports my reason."	<i>According to the text, 'Sea turtles prevent jellyfish from overpopulating and damaging fish populations.'</i>	Backs up reasoning with a direct quote or paraphrased evidence.
<b>L = Link (Wrap it Up)</b>	"Now I'll connect my evidence back to the main idea."	<i>This shows that sea turtles are an important part of the food chain and we must protect them.</i>	Wraps up the paragraph by linking back to the focus.



### Final Paragraph (Modeled Version)

It is important to protect sea turtles because they help keep the ocean ecosystem balanced. Sea turtles eat jellyfish and sea grass, which helps control the population and keeps the ocean healthy. According to the text, "Sea turtles prevent jellyfish from overpopulating and damaging fish populations." This shows that sea turtles are an important part of the food chain and we must protect them.

### Tips for Modeling in the Classroom:

- Use a **think-aloud**: Narrate your thought process aloud as you write.
- Color-code each part of FUEL on a projector or anchor chart.
- Repeat the modeling with different prompts and texts over time.
- Invite students to help you fill in parts of the paragraph as guided practice.

# FUEL Writing Strategy Worksheet

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## Reading Passage:

### The Turtle and the Rabbit

One day, a turtle and a rabbit decided to have a race. The rabbit was very fast and sure he would win. The turtle was slow but steady. The rabbit ran quickly and then decided to take a nap because he was confident. The turtle kept moving slowly without stopping. When the rabbit woke up, the turtle was already at the finish line. The turtle won the race!

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## Writing Prompt:

Why did the turtle win the race? Use details from the story to explain your answer.

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### FUEL Paragraph Planner

- ♦ **F – Focus (Topic Sentence)**

Restate the question and clearly answer it.



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- ♦ **U – Understand (Key Words from the Prompt)**

Highlight and list 2–3 important words from the prompt.



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- ◆ **E – Evidence (Text Details or Quotes)**

Find 1–2 details from the passage that support your answer.



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- ◆ **L – Link (Explain and Wrap It Up)**

Explain how your evidence proves your answer.



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# FUEL Writing Strategy Worksheet – 7th Grade

## Reading Passage:

### **“Standing Up for What’s Right”**

*Adapted for Grade 7*

In seventh grade, Jordan noticed that a group of students often laughed at a classmate, Leo, for the way he dressed. At first, Jordan stayed quiet, afraid of being targeted too. But one day, Jordan saw Leo sitting alone, visibly upset. Jordan decided to sit next to him and ask how he was doing. The next day, Jordan spoke to the teacher about the bullying and encouraged classmates to include Leo in group activities. Over time, others followed Jordan’s example. The bullying stopped, and Leo became more confident. Jordan learned that speaking up can change a situation for the better, even if it feels scary at first.

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## Writing Prompt:

### **Why is it important to stand up for others, even when it's difficult?**

Use evidence from the passage and your own thinking to support your answer.



## FUEL Paragraph Planner

### ♦ **F – Focus (Topic Sentence)**

Restate the question and clearly answer it.



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### ♦ **U – Understand (Key Words from the Prompt)**

Highlight and list 2–3 important words from the prompt.



◆ **E – Evidence (Text Details or Quotes)**

Find 1–2 details from the passage that support your answer.



◆ **L – Link (Explain and Wrap It Up)**

Explain how your evidence proves your answer.





## FUEL Model Paragraph – 7th Grade

**Prompt:** Why is it important to stand up for others, even when it's difficult?

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### **F – Focus:**

It's important to stand up for others because it helps stop unfair treatment and shows true courage.



### **U – Understand:**

Even though it can be scary, standing up for someone shows leadership and can inspire others to do the right thing.



### **E – Evidence:**

In the passage, Jordan chose to sit with Leo and later told a teacher about the bullying. His actions helped stop the bullying and made Leo feel more confident.



### **L – Link:**

This proves that when one person speaks up, it can lead to positive change and create a more respectful environment.

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### **Student Activity (Optional Extension):**

- Highlight each sentence in a different color using the FUEL anchor chart legend
- Underline the sentence starters
- Compare to your own paragraph using the checklist



## FUEL Writing Strategy Worksheet

**Grade Level:** 4th Grade

**Skill Focus:** Reading comprehension and paragraph writing

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### Reading Passage: "The Busy Beaver"

Beavers are some of nature's best builders. They use sticks, mud, and rocks to build homes called lodges in rivers and ponds. These lodges have underwater entrances, which help keep beavers safe from predators. Beavers also build dams across streams. These dams stop the flow of water and create ponds where they can build their lodges.

Beavers are helpful to other animals, too. When beavers create ponds, they also make homes for frogs, fish, and ducks. By changing the environment, beavers help many different animals survive.

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### Writing Prompt:

**How do beavers help other animals?**

Use information from the passage to support your answer.

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### FUEL Paragraph Planner

#### ♦ F – Focus (Topic Sentence)

Restate the question and clearly answer it.



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- ◆ **U – Understand (Key Words from the Prompt)**

Highlight and list 2–3 important words from the prompt.



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- ◆ **E – Evidence (Text Details or Quotes)**

Find 1–2 details from the passage that support your answer.



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- ◆ **L – Link (Explain and Wrap It Up)**

Explain how your evidence proves your answer.



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# FUEL Writing Strategy

**F** = Focus

**U** = Understanding

**E** = Evidence

**L** = Link

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## Word Bank

**Focus words:** topic, main idea, question, answer, prompt

**Understanding words:** think, believe, explain, understand, idea, meaning

**Evidence words:** example, quote, text, detail, information, proof

**Link words:** connect, relate, show, explain, prove, answer

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## Step 1: Focus

**What is the question or topic? Write a sentence to show your main idea.**

Sentence starters:

- The topic is \_\_\_\_\_.
- I will write about \_\_\_\_\_.
- The question asks \_\_\_\_\_.



## Step 2: Understanding

**Explain your idea or answer in your own words.**

Sentence starters:

- I think \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
- My idea is \_\_\_\_\_.

- I believe \_\_\_\_\_.



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### Step 3: Evidence

**Find one or two details from the text to support your idea.**

Sentence starters:

- For example, the text says, “ \_\_\_\_\_.”
- One detail is \_\_\_\_\_.
- The text shows \_\_\_\_\_.



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### Step 4: Link

**Explain how your evidence connects to your idea or answers the question.**

Sentence starters:

- This shows that \_\_\_\_\_.
- This proves \_\_\_\_\_.
- This means \_\_\_\_\_.



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# FUEL Writing Strategy Worksheet

(Focus, Understand, Evidence, Link)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Text Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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## F — Focus

*State your answer clearly.*

**Sentence Starters:**

- I think the answer is...
- The main idea is that...
- In my opinion...

**Write your Focus sentence:**

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## U — Understand

*Explain the question or prompt in your own words.*

**Sentence Starters:**

- This question is asking me to...
- What this means is...
- To answer this, I need to think about...

**Write your understanding of the question:**

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 **E — Evidence**

*Support your answer with details from the text.*

**Sentence Starters:**

- According to the text...
- One example is...
- The author writes, “...”

**Write your evidence:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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## L — Link

*Explain how your evidence supports your answer.*

**Sentence Starters:**

- This shows that...
- As a result...
- This supports my answer because...

**Write your Link sentence:**

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## **Praise for Using Evidence:**

- “Great job using details from the text to support your idea—that shows you’re really understanding what you read!”
- “I’m impressed! You found strong evidence to back up your thinking.”
- “Look at you go! Including a quote like that adds power to your paragraph.”
- “Your evidence connects well to your topic sentence—keep it up!”
- “You’re using the text like a detective—excellent work finding proof!”

## **Praise for Linking Ideas Clearly:**

- “You’re doing an amazing job tying everything together—your last sentence really explains your thinking!”
- “That link sentence shows your brain working like a writer’s—connecting ideas clearly and confidently.”
- “You didn’t just stop at the evidence—you explained it. That’s what strong writers do!”
- “Nice job making your reasoning clear at the end—it helps the reader understand your thinking.”
- “Your paragraph ends with a strong link back to the focus—awesome progress!”

## **Combined Effort Praise:**

- “You’re showing real growth—using evidence and explaining it clearly in your own words!”
- “Wow! You focused on the question, found evidence, and made it all connect—that’s FUEL writing in action!”
- “I can see you’re thinking deeply and writing with purpose—your evidence and link make a great team!”
- “You’re on the right track—each part of your paragraph works together to support your idea.”