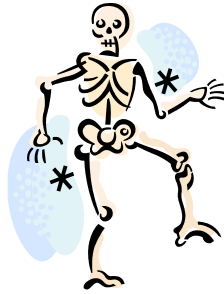


Skeletons



Directions: Explain to students that you are going to give them 4-5 sentences that are the "bones" of a piece of writing. Their job is to add "meat, muscle, fat, etc.." to the bones. They will add examples, descriptions, justifications, evidence, and supporting details. Share a model with students to show them an example of this activity. Direct them to add at LEAST two sentences after each of the skeleton sentence. They can also add sentences before the first sentence. Explain to them that the purpose of this activity is to help them develop support for their ideas. The objective is NOT to have students produce full essays, (though some of these skeletons may lend themselves to essay-length writing,) but to practice adding details and support for their claims. (This activity is adapted from Bay Area Writing Project teacher-consultant Bob Presnall. He teaches 8th grade English at Albany Middle School.)

Examples of history skeletons:

The Revolutionary War and the Civil War were both about freedom. By 1775, the colonists wanted to control their own political future. African American slaves expressed their desire for freedom in many ways prior to the Civil War. Both Wars were also motivated by economic freedom. The lessons these wars teach us about freedom can help us today.

In the 1960s, Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Malcolm X and others tried to change a few things. They had many goals. They used many tactics. They met resistance. They achieved success.

How to address the problem of kids who kill is a hotly debated topic. Should kids who kill be tried as adults? Juvenile law and adult law treat accused murderers differently. There are at least two sides to this issue.

Examples of English skeletons:

There are numerous types of gifts that people enjoy receiving. Many presents are bought, but this particular gift comes from the heart. We all have our own special talents. There are so many reasons why I feel this is the best gift. This gift will bring you happiness into your life and into the lives of your friends.

Today, people want to be rich and famous, but what is a true hero? Bill Moyers said, "We seem to worship celebrities today, not heroes." What is the difference between a celebrity and a hero? Sometimes I workshop celebrities instead of honoring heroes. We could start by examining who are the "true" heroes in our lives. It is a question of values.

Examples of science skeletons:

In our lives, we enjoy everything from computers to cars to heated buildings. Coal, oil, and gas are natural resources we use to make our lives easier. They can become limited from overuse. We have developed some alternate sources of energy, but these sources have drawbacks.

Matter is all around you. Is it possible to prove the things you see around you are made up of matter? All matter has a specific weight. Secondly, let's prove that the things you see take up space. Since air has weight and takes up space, it is clear that it is made of matter.

Example of math skeletons:

Many people have difficulty studying algebra because they have the belief that all of math is about determining answers. Why is the distinction between answer and solution important for students to understand? Many equations do not have a single number for a solution; instead, they have a whole set of numbers.

Many people find percents difficult. It is hard to form a mental picture of 25 percent. To picture 25 percent, you need an example. Making a bar diagram for 25 percent can assist you in comprehending what the percents mean.

Skeleton:

How to address the problem of kids who kill is a hotly debated topic. Should kids who kill be tried as adults? Juvenile law and adult law treat accused murderers differently. There are at least two sides to this issue.

Yesterday, the evening news had a report about fourteen-year-old that shot and killed his seventeen-year-old next-door neighbor. Apparently, the two youngsters were having a disagreement about a basketball game, when the younger child went into his house, got his father's gun, and returned to shoot the other child. **How to address the problem of kids who kill is a hotly debated topic.** Though juvenile arrests account for 15% of all violent crimes, the incident of youth perpetrated violent crime, including murder, has decreased steadily over the last ten years. In Oakland, x cases of homicide last year were committed by people under the age of eighteen. **Should kids who kill be tried as adults?** Many people believe that adult crimes should be treated as such. The severity of the act merits adult treatment. These people argue that if juvenile murderers were treated as adults, the incidents would decrease. They also argue that juvenile murderers should be tried and sentenced as adults in order to protect society. Other people believe that children cannot be held accountable to the same degree as adults since society and adults have failed these children. **Juvenile law and adult law treat accused murderers differently.** The juvenile law focuses on rehabilitation and treatment while adult law is more punitive and many murderers receive life in prison. A juvenile convicted of murder usually are considered for parole when they reach the age of 21. **There are at least two sides to this issue.** Currently, there are inmates on death row and others spending their lives in prison for crimes they committed as youths. This issue will continue to be a hotly debated one until justice is served.