Scope's Write-a-Story Contest

The Contest:

Gordon Korman is looking for ideas for his next book, and he is looking to you for help! All entries must be submitted in .pdf format to scopemagazine@scholastic.com by March 1. If Gordon Korman selects your story as the winner, you will receive $100 and have your story published on the Scope's Magazine website.

The Rules and Requirements:

Choose your favorite story starter and write a short story between 800-3000 words. Stories must begin with one of the "first lines" provided. Stories will be judged on character and plot development, originality, and grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Fiction authors write about events that are not real. Sometimes, the people or events of the story are based on real life though. Fiction writers use their knowledge and experiences to come up with storylines and characters. Sometimes, they just use their imaginations to create fantasy stories.

You will be working independently to research, plan, and write your own short story. Complete the following tasks in order to write your own fiction story!

Task 1: Learning Contract

Write your initials on the line. You will need to agree to all of the following in order to work on your project.

___ I will work hard every day.

___ I will try my best.

___ I will leave my project to work on full class activities or lessons when the teacher tells me- without arguing.

___ I will not bother anyone during work time.

___ If I get stuck, I will look at my planning list for ideas of what to do or talk through next steps with a peer.

___ I will do everything I can to help myself and others learn.

___ I will stay on task and manage my time.

___ I understand that I may keep working on my project if I follow all of the rules.

Student's signature: _____

Parent's signature: _____

Teacher's signature: _____

Task 2: Pick an idea

The First Lines... (Choose one to start your story)		
In the darkness, all I could see of the creature were its glowing tentacles and long purple teeth.	Getting rich was the last thing on our minds.	The Haunted Science Lab was more than just a nickname.

Now let's brainstorm!

Now that you've selected your first line, it is time to plan out your story. Below, brainstorm different ideas that you have for characters, problems and solutions. Remember, when you brainstorm, there are no bad ideas! Keep the ideas coming. If you run out of room, use another sheet of paper. Fill out at least five boxes in each category before moving on to the next step.

Character: Don't write names here. Write descriptions of possible characters.	Problems: What internal or external problems may your character(s) face?	Solutions: How will the problem be solved? What lessons might the character learn? How might the character grow?

Look at your list. Below, you will come up with 3 different ideas for your story. Write a ONE-SENTENCE summary of your story. (For example: An adult who was bullied as a child travels back in time to 4th grade to confront his bully.)

Each one-sentence summary should be 15 words or less.

1. _____

   _____

2. _____

   _____

3. _____

   _____

*Now put a star next to your favorite storyline.

Task 3: Character Development

Readers are often drawn to fictional stories because of the characters. Authors intentionally make rich characters who struggle with decisions and often undergo some type of growth throughout the story. Before you write the first draft of your story, you will need to complete the character description below. In your story, you may want to have 1-2 main characters.

Character's Name: _____

Begin to develop your character by thinking about things like his or her collections, favorite clothes, special places on earth, treasures, worries, quirks, secrets, relatives, ways of walking/talking/gesturing, best friends, and phone calls. List your ideas below.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Character's traits (Do the traits make sense within one person and fit together in a believable way? How does each trait help or hurt your character?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Character's goal (What does the character ultimately want?)

_____
_____
_____

Character's motivation (Why is the character doing this?)

_____

_____

_____

Lesson learned (What will the character learn? How will he/she change/grow?)

_____

_____

_____

If you have more than one main character, fill out the next page.

Character's Name: _____

Begin to develop your character by thinking about things like his or her collections, favorite clothes, special places on earth, treasures, worries, quirks, secrets, relatives, ways of walking/talking/gesturing, best friends, and phone calls. List your ideas below.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Character's traits (Do the traits make sense within one person and fit together in a believable way? How does each trait help or hurt your character?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Character's goal (What does the character ultimately want?)

_____
_____
_____

Character's motivation (Why is the character doing this?)

_____
_____
_____

Lesson learned (What will the character learn? How will he/she change/grow?)

_____
_____
_____

Task 4: Plot Development

Now it's time to expand that one-sentence summary into a sequence of events. In fiction stories, there are always problems. Often, we see one of the characters trying to remedy those problems, only to fail and cause other problems (RISING ACTION). Every book has an ending (TURNING POINT), however. Usually the character grows in some way or a lesson is learned. In this task, you will turn the sentence you wrote in Task 2 into a sequence of events using the Shape of a Story organizer. You will use this as a guide for when you write your story.

<<<Insert Shape of Story organizer>>>

Task 5: First Draft

By this time, you should have a good idea of the big picture of your story. You have problems and solutions. You have a plan for how many of your characters will develop over the course of your story.

It's okay if you go back and revise your one-sentence summary. This is a process that ALL authors go through. You will need to decide how to use the previous steps to make a draft of your story.

A helpful format to follow is to split your story into thirds:
- First third: Introduction of characters, setting, and problem. (PARTS A & B: Introduction and Problem/Conflict)
- Middle third: Develop characters and rising action. (PART C: Rising Action)
- Final third: Resolve problems (PART D: Climax and Turning Point)

You will create a rough draft on your Google Drive. Use the following format to **title your document**:
- Your initials Gordon Korman Writing Contest (i.e. CC Gordon Korman Writing Contest)

Share the document with wrodriguez@sd25.org AND your homeroom teacher ccioni@sd25.org or lsalsinger@sd25.org

Now you are ready to write your story!

REMINDER: Your story must be a minimum of 800 words, and no longer than 3000 words. Use command+shift+C to check your word count. "Word count" can also be found under "Tools". This word count is a requirement of the contest.

Good authors constantly go back over their work to make sure they have spelled everything correctly and that the order of the story makes sense.

Task 6: Revise/Edit/Peer Feedback

Now that you have completed your first draft, it's time to revise the story. Authors go back and revise their stories time after time. They also work with people called editors to help create the best books they can.

First, read through your first draft. Use the <u>Story Checklist</u> to help you self-assess. Be sure to note your areas of strength and what you could improve at the bottom of the story checklist.

Then, have a peer read through your first draft. They should also use the <u>Story Checklist</u> to assess your first draft AND complete the <u>PQP Peer Feedback Form</u>.

After you and a peer have completed the checklists, you will edit (spelling, punctuation) the story and create a final draft.

Story Checklist

Structure				
Overall	I wrote the important part of an event bit by bit and took out unimportant parts			
		Not Yet	Starting To	Yes!
Lead	I wrote a beginning in which I showed what was happening and where, getting readers into the world of the story			
Transitions	I showed how much time went by with words and phrases that make time such as *just then* and *suddenly* (to show when things happen quickly) or *after a while* and *a little later* (to show when a little time passed).			
Ending	I wrote an ending that connected to the beginning or middle of the story			
	I used action, dialogue, or feeling to bring my story to a close.			
Organization	I used paragraphs to separate the different parts or times of the story or to show when a new character was speaking.			
Development				
Elaboration	I added more to the heart of my story (the most important part), including not only actions and dialogue but also thoughts and feelings.			
Craft	I showed *why* characters did what they did by including their thinking.			

	I made some parts of the story go quickly and some slowly.			
	I included precise and sometimes sensory details and used figurative language (simile, metaphor, and personification) to bring my story to life.			
	I used a storytelling voice and conveyed the emotion or tone of my story through description, phrases, dialogue, and thoughts.			

What were your areas of strength?

-

-

Where/what could you improve?

-

-

PQP Peer Feedback Form

Title of Story: _____

Author's Name: _____   Peer's Name: _____

Peer Editors should thoughtfully complete each prompt. Then, return this sheet to the author, along with his or her story.

P is for *praise*. Be specific. Tell the writer one thing she or he did well:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Q is for *question*. What questions do you have after reading this piece? If so, write down the most important question for the writer here:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

P is for *polish*. Tell the writer ONE thing she or he can do to make his or her story better. (Use the checklist to help you give specific feedback.):

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Task 7: Contest Checklist

Complete the <u>Write-a-Story Contest Checklist for Writers</u>. Make any last revisions and edits needed.

<<<Insert <u>Write-a-Story Contest Checklist for Writers</u>**>>>**

Task 8: Publish and Submit Your Story

Once you have completed the <u>Write-a-Story Contest Checklist for Writers</u>, revised all ideas, and edited your work, you are ready to submit your story to the contest judges. Your teachers will help you do this. You will need to fill out the <u>Writing Contest Entry Form</u> provided to submit with your story.

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SCOPE WRITING CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Note: Google Docs will not be accepted. Please send a .pdf or .doc file.

Write-a-Story Contest

Read page 32 of the November 2017 issue of *Scope*. Choose one of Gordon Korman's three story starters and use it to begin your own original short fiction story. If Gordon picks YOUR story as the winner, you'll win $100 and have your story published on our website (plus prizes for your teacher and classmates)!

Entries will be judged on:

⇨ character and plot development
⇨ grammar, spelling, and punctuation
⇨ originality
⇨ length (800-3,000 words)

My name: _____

My home phone number: _____ My grade: _____

My teacher's name : _____ My teacher's email: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

School phone number: _____

Students under age 18 must include the following:
My parent or legal guardian consents
to my participation in this contest.
Parent's or legal guardian's signature: _____

Parent's or legal guardian's email: _____

Include this sheet with your typed short story and send both to: scopemag@scholastic.com
Or mail to: Write-a-Story Contest, c/o Scope, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 1, 2018!

There is a HARD DEADLINE of MARCH 1, 2018 for contest entries. If you don't make the deadline, you are still welcome to finish your story and share it with the class.

<<<Insert <u>Writing Contest Entry Form</u>>>>