

LESSONS *for the* WRITER'S NOTEBOOK

by **Ralph Fletcher** and **JoAnn Portalupi**

Each of the *Notebook's* 20 lesson cards provides a complete lesson. The front of each card presents a straightforward lesson in a concise three-part structure. The back of each card presents exemplar text or other lesson-specific teaching resources.

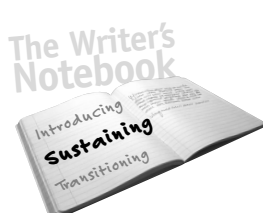
Thinking Point introduces the strategy being taught and explains how it fits within the writing process.

Prep Point lists the materials you and your students will need.

The **●** icon tells you that this specific exemplar text, organizer or related resource is on the back of the lesson card. It also locates where in the lesson this resource is used.

Follow Up Point suggests ways to extend the teaching point and provides realistic advice on what to expect from teaching it.

Exemplars from writers' notebooks model the concept being taught and show how others have applied a strategy.




THINKING point Nurturing a "seed idea" is a kind of directed, purposeful writing that takes place within the covers of the writer's notebook. This is not playful writing for writing's sake but writing with an eye to a possible finished product. Though we categorize this as a sustaining lesson, it foreshadows the transitioning lessons that will come later.

PREP point

- "Harvest Moon" notebook excerpt by Ralph Fletcher
- Audio segment #4

Starting a Seed Idea



N-11

TEACHING point Often you'll find that you're just writing entries, experimenting, and collecting ideas in the writer's notebook. But at certain times you'll hit on an idea where you say to yourself: "Hey, I know I can really do something with this one." When that happens, you've got what we'll call a "seed idea." It's your job to help that seed idea grow.

Ralph Fletcher had a seed idea in his writer's notebook that was related to the harvest moon. Let's take a look at it.

- Show students the "Harvest Moon" notebook excerpt.

Ralph Fletcher eventually wrote a picture book about the harvest moon. Do you think he used all these entries in the finished book? Some? Which ones do you think he used? Let's hear Ralph Fletcher talk about developing a seed idea.

- Play audio segment #4 and discuss as appropriate.

Let's say you've got a seed idea you're excited about: "Going Mushrooming with Grandpa." You're thinking maybe that could be a picture book or a collection of poems. The first thing you'll want to do is give yourself space in your writer's notebook. Write that title at the top of an empty page, and then leave the following two or three pages blank so you can continue adding entries about mushrooming.

With a seed idea, you probably won't write everything down in one sitting. A seed idea develops over time. In other words, you might write about a mushrooming memory today. Then tomorrow, when you go visit your

FOLLOW UP point The process of nurturing a seed idea doesn't always go smoothly. Don't be surprised when some seed ideas fizzle out.

If you have time, share the published picture book *Hello, Harvest Moon* with your students. They'll notice the lines from the author's notebook that ended up in the finished book.

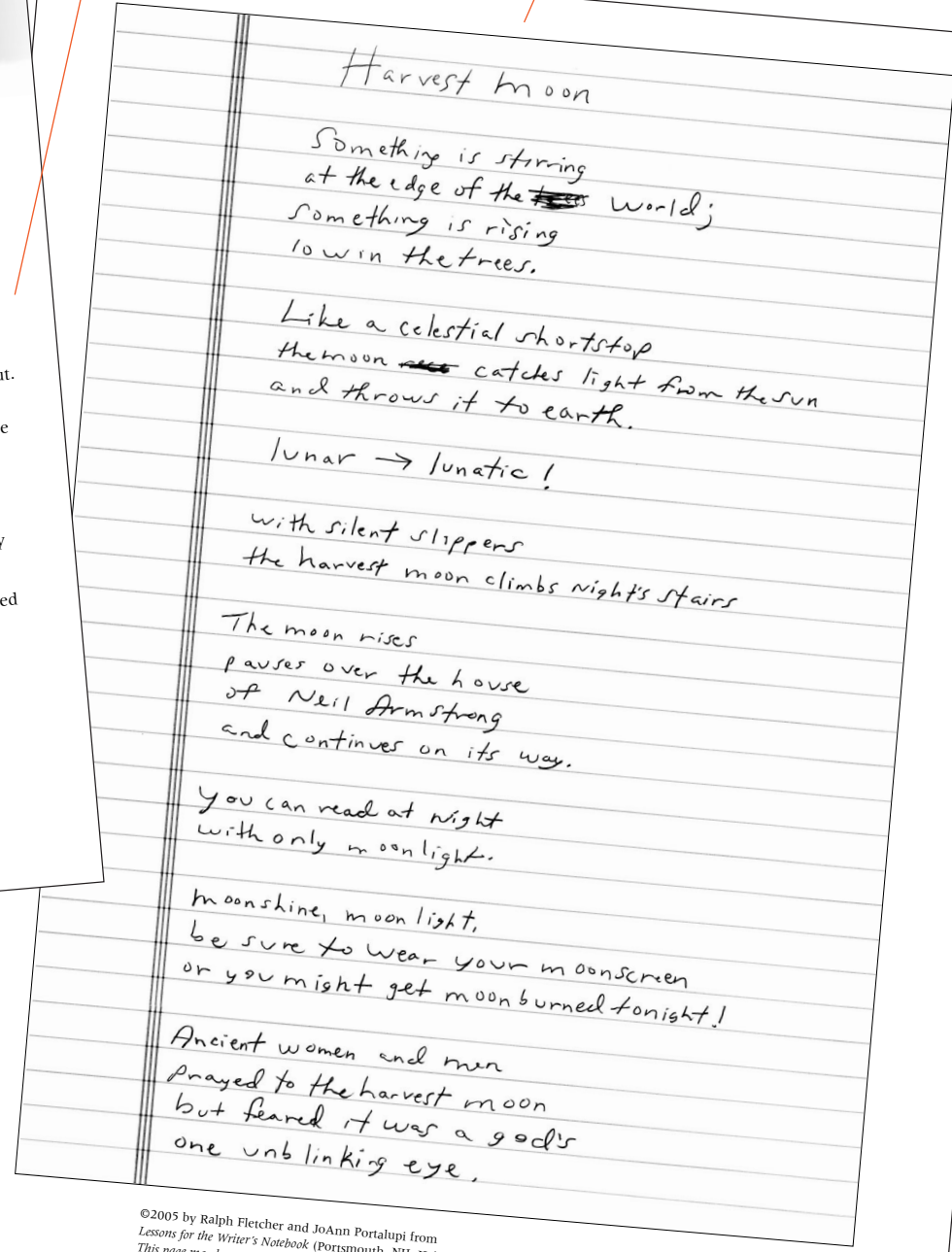
Conference Questions:
You have many entries in your writer's notebook. Why did you choose this one as a possible seed idea?
What other entries might you write that are connected to this idea?



The Author Chats CD supports select lessons with short talks from Ralph on how he uses his notebook to explore different writing strategies. Transcripts of the chats are provided in their entirety in the Teacher's Guide.

Teaching Point shares Ralph and JoAnn's carefully crafted language for explaining concepts and techniques.

Conference Questions suggest ways to bring the strategy from the lesson into your conferences with students.



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Starting a Seed Idea
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