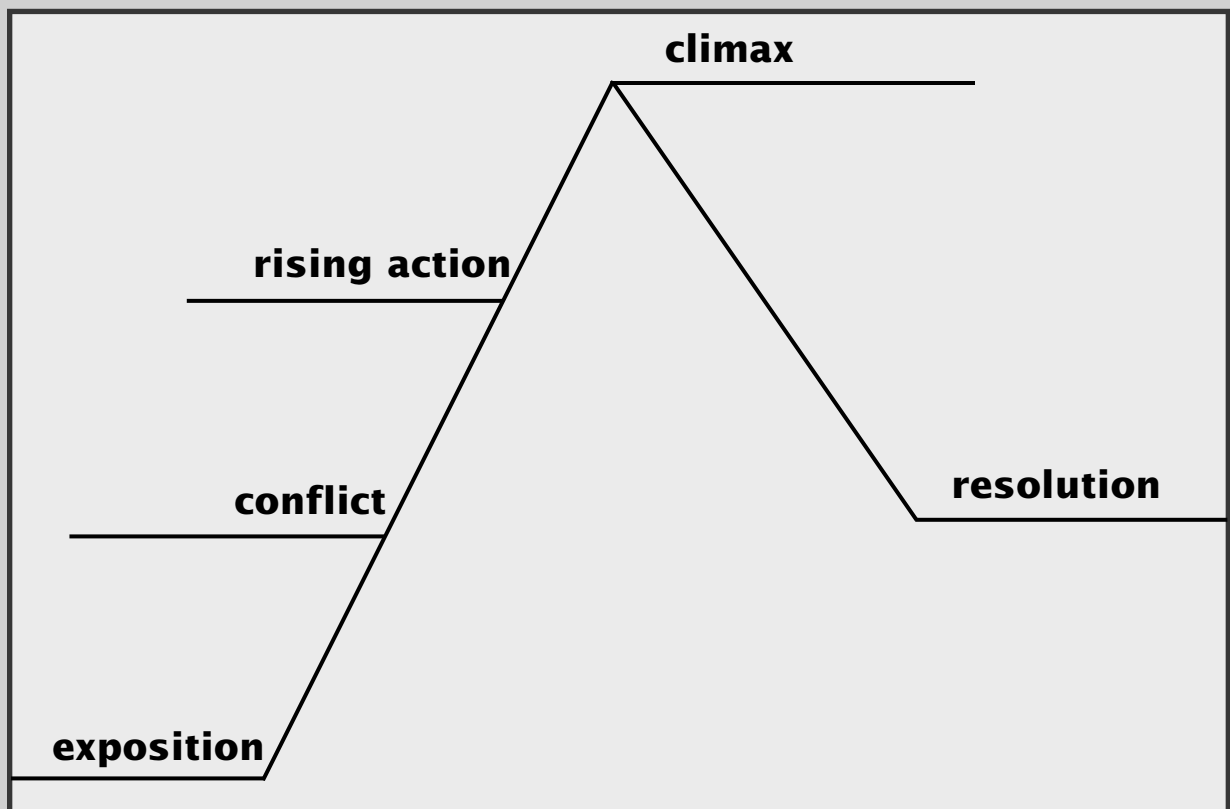


The **plot** is the sequence of events in a story. Each event causes or leads to the next. Events of the plot reveal a problem called the **conflict**.

The situation and the characters involved are revealed in the exposition of the plot. Tension builds through **rising action**, as events caused by the problem develop and sharpen the problem. Everything comes to a head in the **climax**, the point of greatest interest and emotion. Then the story action falls off and the tension drops. The **resolution** shows how the problem is solved.

Use the graphic below to sum up the main event that occurs at each stage of the plot of a story you have recently read.



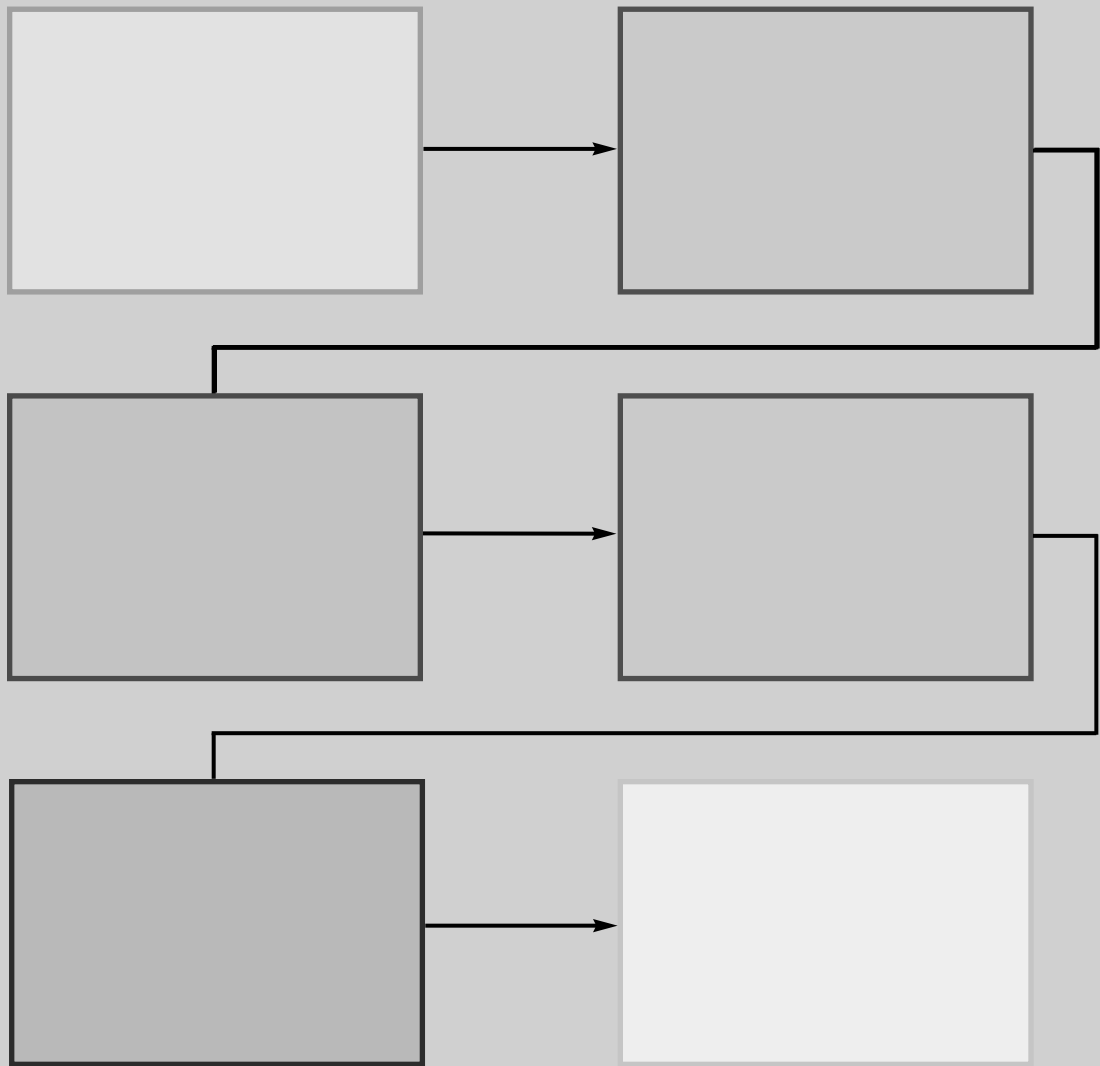
READING STRATEGIES AND  
LITERARY ELEMENTS TRANSPARENCY

1b

FOR USE WITH FOCUS LESSON 1: NARRATIVE STRATEGIES I

Writers show **movement** in a story by describing characters doing things and moving from place to place. This makes the story more interesting. Sometimes the characters' actions create a conflict that requires resolution.

Think of a story you have read. Complete the flowchart below by listing the places the characters go and the things they do.



READING STRATEGIES AND  
LITERARY ELEMENTS TRANSPARENCY

1c

FOR USE WITH FOCUS LESSON 1: NARRATIVE STRATEGIES I

**Description** includes details that help a reader imagine people, places, things, and events. Descriptive details often appeal to the reader's senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.

List descriptive details from a story you have read. Tell how the details appeal to different senses.

<b>Descriptive Details</b>	<b>How Appeal to Senses?</b>

**Suspense** is a feeling of curiosity, uncertainty, or even dread about what is going to happen next. Suspense is part of the rising action of a story. Each additional problem, setback, or danger raises the level of suspense and interests readers in the story's outcome.

Think of a suspenseful story you have read. On the rungs of the ladder below, list events that caused the suspense to mount. At the top of the ladder, write the story's outcome.

<b>Outcome</b>	
4.	
3.	
2.	
1.	

Many stories contain **dialogue**, or conversations between characters. Dialogue records the actual words that people say. Think of a conversation you have read and record what the people said.

“ ”

“ ”

“ ”

“ ”

What does the dialogue reveal about the characters' traits and personalities?

**Gestures** are the motions that a person makes to communicate. Sometimes people use gestures while they talk, and sometimes they use them in place of words. In a story, gestures are clues to the characters' emotions.

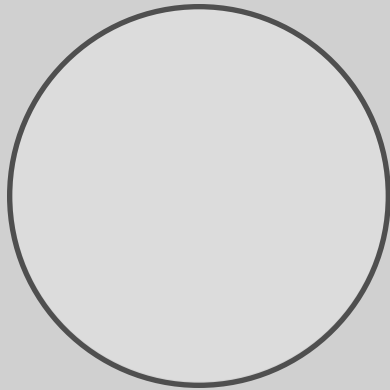
List some emotions and the gestures that people sometimes make to accompany them.

Emotions	Gestures

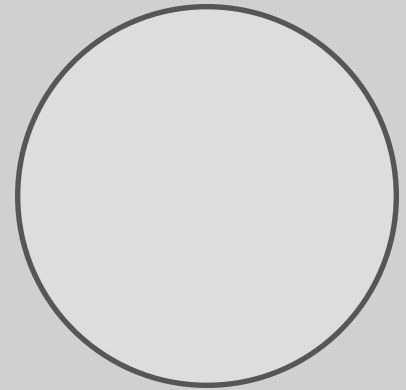
Think of a story in which a character uses distinctive gestures. What insight do the gestures give into the character's emotion?

People's facial **expressions** reveal their emotions. Writers show characters' emotions by describing their expressions.

Draw faces with different expressions, and tell the emotions they reveal.



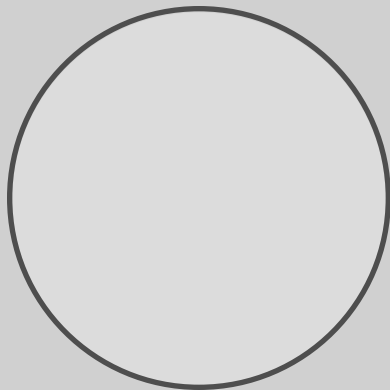
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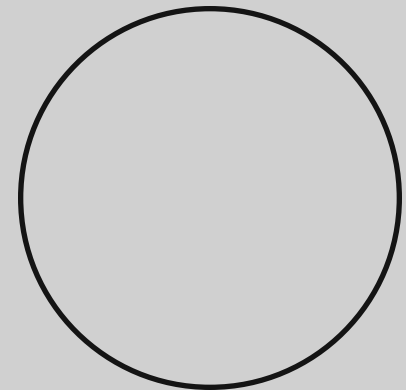
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Think of a character in a story you have read who uses distinct expressions. What do the expressions reveal about the character?

**Flashbacks** are stories within a story. They tell about a character's memory of something that happened in the past.

Think of a story or play that contains a flashback. Describe the action in the story before the flashback, the flashback itself, and the action in the story after the flashback.

**Action Before**

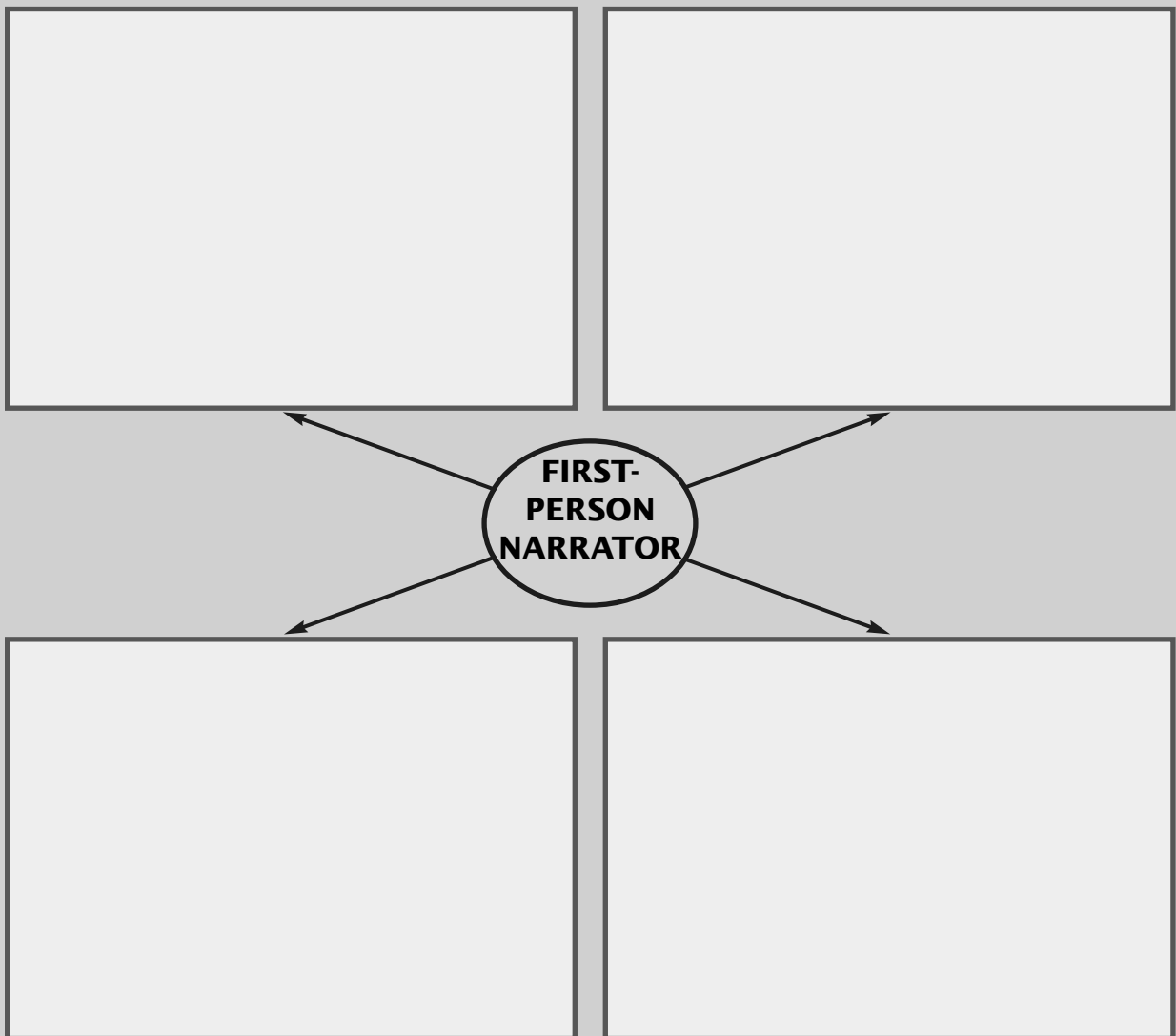
**Action After**

**Flashback**



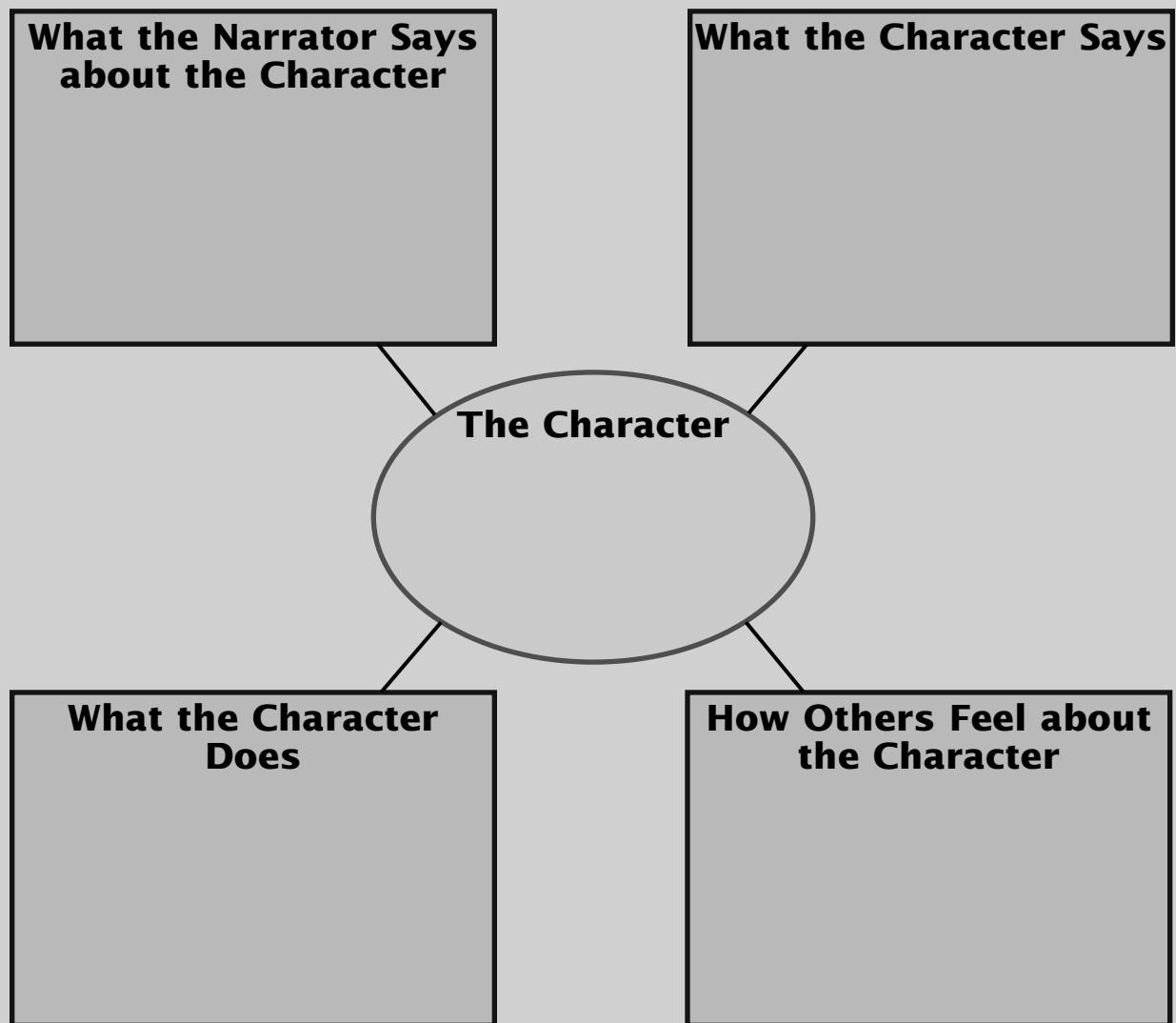
**Point of view** is the relationship of the narrator to the story. A story using **first-person point of view** is told by one of the characters. The narrator is referred to as “I.” The reader sees everything that happens through the narrator’s eyes.

Think of a story you have read that is told in the first-person point of view. What are some ways you can tell that the narrator is one of the characters?



**Characterization** is the method a writer uses to reveal the personality of a character. Sometimes a writer develops the characters in a story by having the narrator make direct statements about the characters' personalities. This is **direct characterization**. Sometimes a writer chooses to show what the characters do and say and what others say and think about them. This is **indirect characterization**.

Think about how a writer develops a character in a story you have read. Fill in details for each category shown on the web.



Writers often use **figurative language** to describe things in new ways. By using figures of speech, a writer can take an ordinary object or idea and make it seem original by comparing it to something surprising. Three kinds of figurative language are similes, metaphors, and personification. A **simile** is a comparison of two things using the words *than*, *like*, or *as*. A writer could say that ice cream tastes “like a dream.” A **metaphor** compares two things without using *than*, *like*, or *as*. A writer could say that a steep hill is a “bear” to climb. **Personification** is a figure of speech in which a writer gives human form or characteristics to an animal, object, or idea. A writer could say that a tree “bowed down before the wind.”

Make up some examples of figures of speech, and list them below.

Similes	Metaphors	Personification

# READING STRATEGIES AND LITERARY ELEMENTS TRANSPARENCY 7

FOR USE WITH FOCUS LESSON 7: MOOD

**Mood** is the emotional quality or atmosphere of a poem or story. The mood of a poem or story affects how the reader feels while reading the piece. Writers create mood with the rhythm they create, the details they give, and the words they choose.

Fill in the chart below with different feelings. Then list some words and details that you can use to create these feelings.

<b>Feeling I Want to Create</b>	<b>Words and Details</b>

READING STRATEGIES AND  
LITERARY ELEMENTS TRANSPARENCY **8**

FOR USE WITH FOCUS LESSON 8: THEME

**Theme** is the main idea of a story. Sometimes an author states the theme of a story in a sentence or two. More often, the reader figures out the theme by thinking about the characters and events and then deciding whether the story has a message. All of the elements in a story—characters, plot, setting—can work together to reveal the theme.

At the top of the graphic, state the theme of a story you have read. In the columns below the theme, write details that develop or support this theme.

<b>Theme:</b>		
<b>DETAIL:</b>	<b>DETAIL:</b>	<b>DETAIL:</b>

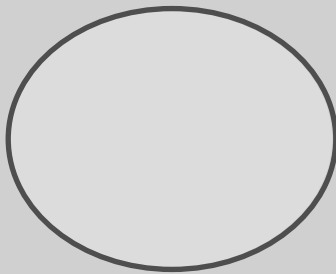
The **style** of a story or poem tells the reader how to feel about certain events and characters. By using a certain style, a writer can show many attitudes, such as humor, disgust, or wonder. Writers create different styles through the words they choose and the kinds of sentences they use.

What are some different attitudes found in stories or poems you have read? How did the writer create this style?

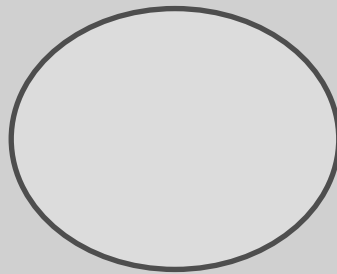
**Words**

**Sentence Types**

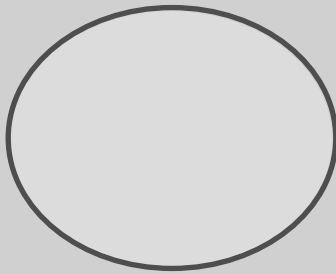
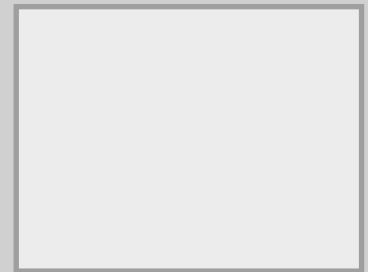
**Attitude**



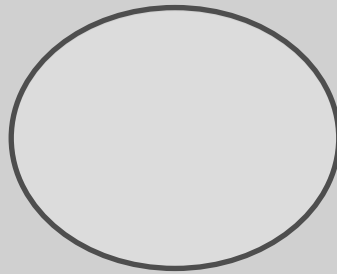
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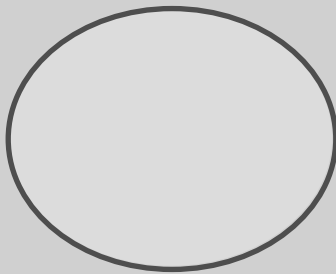
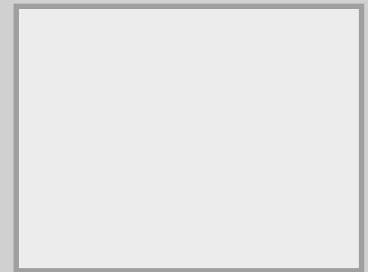
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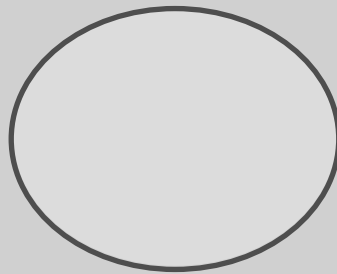
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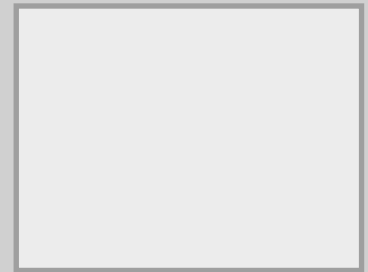
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Sometimes writers don't make clear statements of important ideas. They give the reader clues that hint at a certain conclusion. Figuring out what the writer means in these cases is called **making inferences**. Some inferences are about characters or events in a story. Some inferences involve facts. The writer gives the reader several facts and expects the reader to understand a larger idea.

Think of a story you have read. List some facts or clues that the writer gives and some inferences that you can make from those facts and clues.

**Facts and Clues**

**Inferences**





An **author's purpose** may be to inform, to entertain, or to persuade—or a combination of these purposes. An author may present factual information to inform and tell a story to entertain. Authors who hope to persuade present ideas to influence readers.

Think of nonfiction selections you have read. In the **To Inform** section, list some of the information you learned. In the **To Entertain** section, tell how a writer has entertained you. In the **To Influence** section, tell how a writer has tried to influence you.

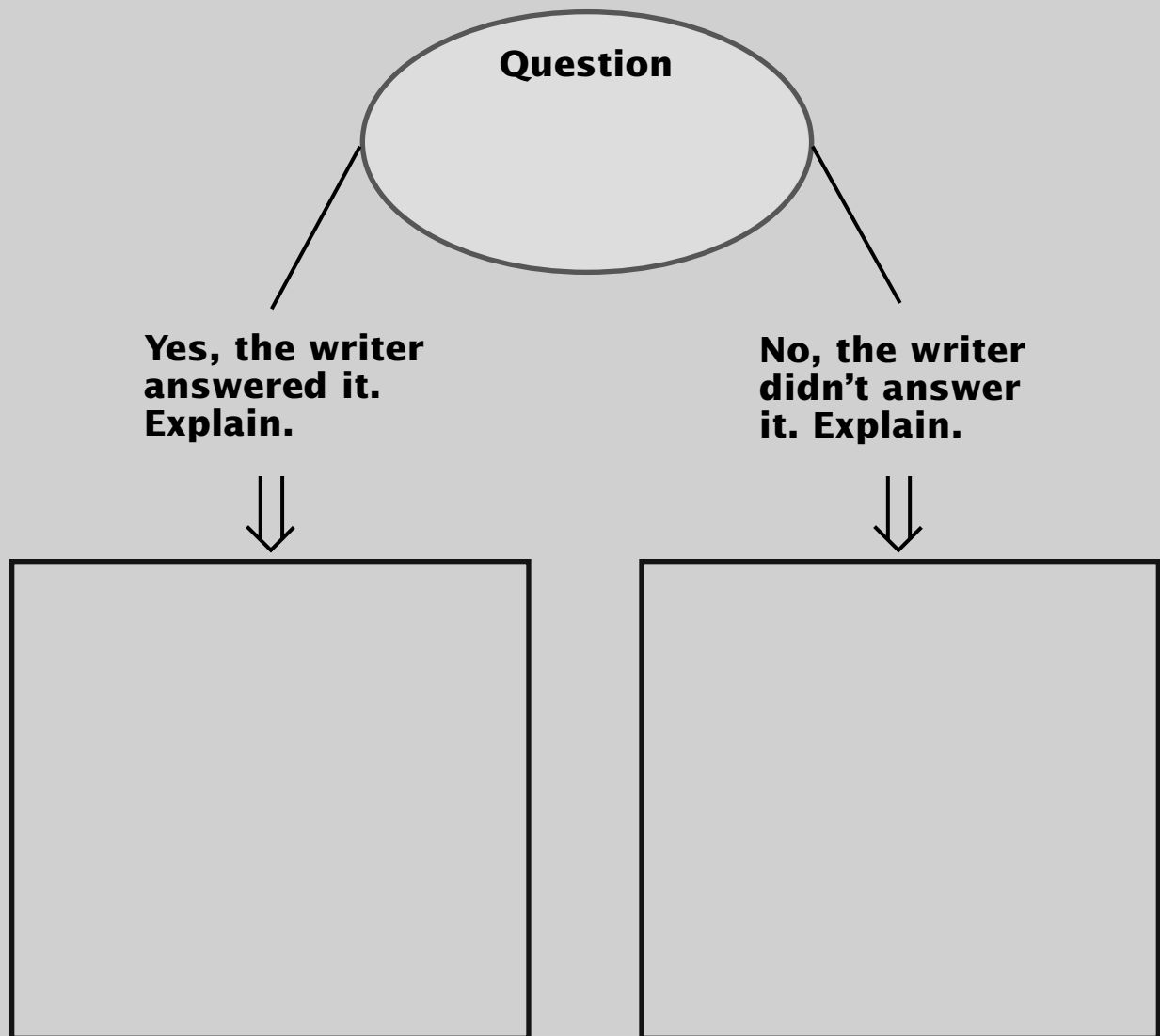
To Inform	To Entertain	To Influence



Active readers think about what they are reading while they read. They are curious about the subject, **generating questions** about it.

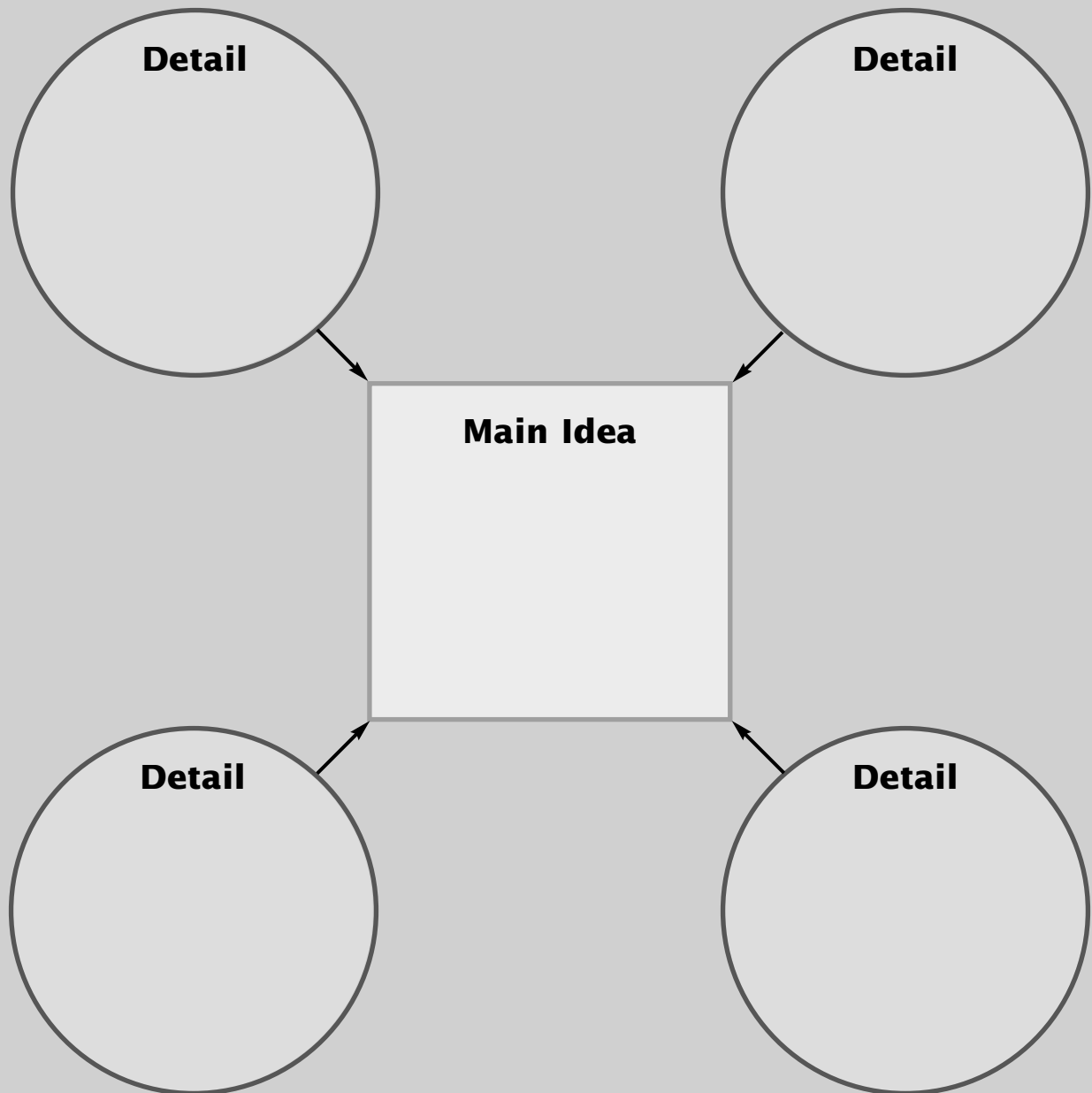
Choose a nonfiction selection. Before you read the selection, think of a question you would like to have answered while reading. Did the writer answer your question? How? If not, where can you look for the answer?

Use the graphic below to help you organize your thoughts.



Most stories and articles have a **main idea**. This is what the writer wants to say about the subject of the story or article. Every detail that the writer includes should support this main idea.

What is the main idea of a story or article you have read? What are some details from this story or article, and how do they contribute to the main idea?



Often we are curious about a subject and want to learn more about it. We can learn more by **conducting research**. There are many sources available for conducting research. Different sources provide different kinds of information.

What are some kinds of information you might find in each of these sources?

**Encyclopedia**

**Almanac**

**Atlas**

**Internet**

**Dictionary**

**Nonfiction  
Books  
and Articles**