

Name: _____ Date: _____

6B- _____

Writing: Notes on Insight Statements

Insight: An insight is a wise understanding of the deeper aspects of something. In other words, an insight is an intelligent idea; a unique way of looking at something; a clever understanding; or a meaningful observation about life or human nature.

Insight Statement: In writing, an insight statement is a sentence (or two) that shows a wise understanding about life or human nature. When you write an insight statement about something you've read, you make a text-to-world connection. In other words, you tell your reader what the text taught you about real life. In doing so, you're answering the question "So what?" for your argument. In a way, this is like a reward for your reader. You're giving your reader an ounce of wisdom about the real world in exchange for his or her having read your thoughts.

Insight Statements Include the Following:

- Relevance to Your Argument: Make sure your insight statement relates to the rest of your writing. It should be a logical conclusion, based on the details you've discussed in your argument.

Form:

1. A Conclusive Transition: Start your statement with a word or short phrase that signals to your reader that you're preparing to wrap up your argument.
Examples: Ultimately, so, basically, essentially, etc. (See rest of notes.)
2. A Text Reference: Refer to (mention) a key part of the text (book, story, poem, article, etc.). Usually, a writer can refer to her main idea and quote here because they are the focus of her writing.
3. A "Springboard": Use a word or phrase that "launches," or "springs," you from your text reference to your real-world insight.

Examples: reveals, demonstrates, illustrates, suggests, indicates, etc.

4. A Real-World Insight: Provide your own clever and distinct point-of-view about the real world. Say something new and creative in a *general* statement that addresses a *universal*, broad, widely accessible concept — one that appeals to "a universe" of people — and that goes beyond the specific details

of the text. This idea should be one that many people can relate to, not one that only a small set of people would understand. Basically, write for a general audience, not a specific one. Also, importantly, you should include a “softener” of some kind. A “softener” is not black or white; it’s “gray.” A softener indicates that you know you’re making a generalization and that there are usually exceptions to generalizations; it tells your reader you realize a book can rarely express something that is *always* true in life.

Examples: often, sometimes, can, in some cases, many times, etc.

Insight Statements *Do NOT* Include the Following:

1. Clichés: Over-used, worn out sayings that people have heard many times.

Examples:

- Don’t judge a book by its cover; Nice guys finish last.
- Look before you leap; What goes around comes around.
- Treat people the way you would like to be treated.
- Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you’ll land among the stars.
- It’s best to let sleeping dogs lie; Curiosity killed the cat.
- Don’t bite the hand that feeds you.

2. Specific, Text-Only Observations: Statements that relate to the text but not to the real world.

Examples:

- When kids from communes try to fit in to life in a public school, the popular kids will tackle them and make fun of their shoes.
- In life, teenage girls will often watch *Trigonometry and Tears*, completely failing to realize that the new kid who’s living with them represents an opportunity to change for the better.

3. Absolutes: Statements that suggest life is *always* or *never* a particular way.

Examples:

- Kids who are different are actually not strange but heroic.
- Popular kids deserve to be humiliated by unpopular kids.
- When you open your mind, good things happen.

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4. Advice / A Moral: Statements that tell readers *how to behave* or *what to think*. Morals give instructions about how to live and what to do; they tell what is good or bad.

Examples:

- Try new things and open your mind to people who are different from you; Kids who are insecure should try to be themselves.
 - Don't bully people; If people tease you, ignore them.
 - Look for ways to relate to people rather than looking for ways to separate yourself from others.
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Formula for an Effective Insight Statement

1. Conclusive Transition 2. Text Reference 3. "Springboard" 4. Real-World Insight

Examples of Effective Insight Statements

1. Ultimately, Brad's relationship with his mother demonstrates that sometimes young people rebel against authority figures only because they have a need for independence, even if they're not ready for it.
2. Essentially, Rachel's search for her father suggests that sometimes intelligence resides in exploration and curiosity, not just in certain knowledge.
3. So, by climbing the mountain, Valerie illustrates that in many cases facing our worst fears can help us accomplish our most amazing achievements.
4. Basically, when Roger runs away, he learns that we can escape our houses but that we can't escape our consciences, where our sense of right and wrong resides.
5. In the long run, the Byron Bay Bulldogs reveal that a win is rarely a victory if it comes unfairly.

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6. In effect, when Tommy's parents divorce, he realizes that true love and true happiness don't necessarily share the same roof.
7. Fundamentally, the storm that rages in Brookville epitomizes the idea that tragedies can bring people together because, in the worst of times, people often realize that their concerns are shared by others.
8. On the whole, Archie's failure to win the game for his team uncovers a deep truth about commitment — that our promise to play together is also a promise to lose together, if that should happen.
9. Overall, when Meg loses her best friend, she comes to understand that friendship sometimes teaches us two things — how to laugh and how to cry.
10. For the most part, Ben's experience in his new school exemplifies the way that a new situation can lead people to uncover surprises in themselves.

