

Bay City Public Schools Sample Mentor Texts to Teach 3-5 Opinion Reading and Writing

“By using mentor texts, the reader can virtually position him or herself to sit beside the author and study how the text is constructed and how it communicates. It is a powerful teaching and learning strategy...”

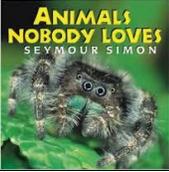
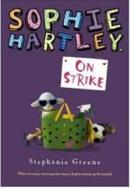
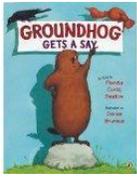
--The Writing Thief, Ruth Culhum

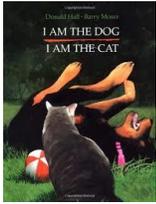
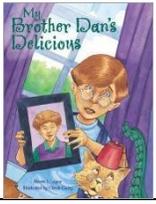
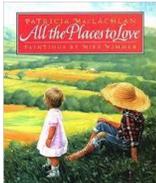
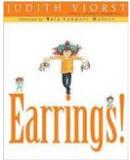


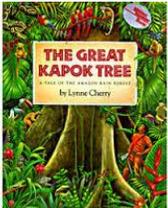
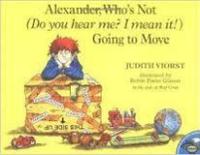
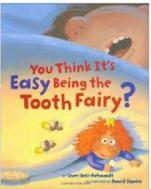
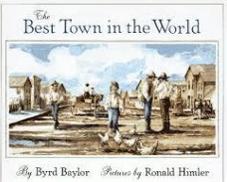
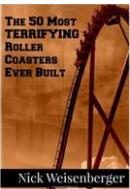
Sample 3rd-5th Grade Opinion Mentor Texts

The mentor texts listed below are samples of picture books that could be used in the classroom when teaching students how to write an opinion.

Using a specific set of questions to analyze the craft within a mentor text can open students to new ideas to consider in their own writing. The questions/prompts listed on the following page assists students with comprehension, analyzing and evaluating opinion pieces as well as developing opinion writing skills.

Opinion Texts	Additional Information
<p><i>Animals Nobody Loves</i> by Seymour Simon</p> 	<p>In 26 giant photographs-of a roaring grizzly, a piranhas razor-sharp teeth, a rattlesnakes poisonous fangs- Seymour Simon reveals the truth about nature's most misunderstood animals and lets the reader decide what to really think about natures grossest, fiercest, and most fascinating survivors.</p>
<p><i>Sophie Hartley, On Strike</i> by Stephanie Greene</p> 	<p>Sophie is supposed to help out around the house, and that's bad enough. But then her mother comes up with a job chart, and all of a sudden Sophie has a whole list of new chores to do. Some of them, like cleaning the downstairs toilet, are gross! "Menial," says big brother Thad, who somehow manages to avoid doing any of his own new jobs. "No fair!" says Sophie. Sophie's father went on strike when his beliefs were on the line. Now Sophie sees no alternative but to stand up for what she believes in.</p>
<p><i>One Word From Sophia</i> by Jim Averbeck and Yasmin Ismail</p> 	<p>Sophia tries varied techniques to get the giraffe she wants more than anything in this playfully illustrated story about the nuances of negotiation. Sophia has one true desire for her birthday. But she has Four Big Problems in the way: Mom, Dad, Uncle Conrad...and Grand-mama. Will her presentations, proposals, and pie charts convince them otherwise? Turns out, all it takes is one word.</p>
<p><i>Groundhog Gets a Say</i> by Pamela Curtis Swallow</p> 	<p>There's so much more to being a groundhog than just putting on a show once a year, and Groundhog has decided it's time to tell the world the Hog truth. With the help of a few of his fans, Groundhog is ready to tell everything about himself, from how loud he can whistle (loud), to how fast he can run (not fast), to how many things he uses his teeth for (a lot).</p>

Opinion Texts	Additional Information
<p><i>I Am the Dog, I Am the Cat</i> by Donald Hall</p> 	<p>Distinguished poet Donald Hall and award-winning artist Barry Moser have teamed up to create a hilarious, affectionate portrait in contrasts of our companions, and often best friends, a cat and a dog. With evocative words and masterful paintings, they delineate the doginess and catlike qualities that everyone will recognize.</p>
<p><i>My Brother Dan's Delicious</i> by Steven L. Layne</p> 	<p>Joey, left at home alone one night, sees and hears strange things, but he has the superior wit to convince any and all possible monsters that his brother, Dan, is the better choice for dinner.</p>
<p><i>All the Places to Love</i> by Patricia MacLachlan</p> 	<p>Within the sanctuary of a loving family, baby Eli is born and, as he grows, "learns to cherish the people and places around him, eventually passing on what he has discovered to his new baby sister, Sylvie: 'All the places to love are here . . . no matter where you may live.</p>
<p><i>Earrings!</i> by Judith Viorst</p> 	<p>She wants them. She needs them. She loves them. <i>Earrings!</i> What won't a girl do to finally get her ears pierced? Find out in this delightful tale that perfectly captures the yearnings of a young girl in desperate need of beautiful, glorious earrings!</p>
<p><i>Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation</i> by Mark Teague</p> 	<p>As if obedience school wasn't bad enough, Ike now finds himself in jail--wrongly accused (of course!) of terrorizing the Hibbins' cats & stealing their cat treats. Once again, he pleads his case to Mrs LaRue, who's vacationing in France, but to no avail. When a string of canary burglaries stalls the Snort City Police force's investigation--and reveals their crime-solving ineptitude--Ike flees custody and takes matters into his own paws.</p>
<p><i>Cats Vs. Dogs</i> National Geographic Readers</p> 	<p>Chocolate or vanilla? Creamy peanut butter or crunchy? Cats or dogs? On some matters in life, every kid must take a stance. Ever since the first youngster in history had a pet, cats vs. dogs has been a hotly debated issue at recesses and lunch tables worldwide. Which one's better? Smarter? This reader presents the facts in fun and informative fashion. Kids will love the stimulating text as they decide the answer to this question for themselves.</p>

Opinion Texts	Additional Information
<p><i>The Great Kapok Tree</i> by Lynne Cherry</p> 	<p>One day, a man exhausts himself trying to chop down a giant kapok tree. While he sleeps, the forest's residents, including a child from the Yanomamo tribe, whisper in his ear about the importance of trees and how "all living things depend on one another" . . . and it works.</p>
<p><i>Alexander, Who's Not (Do You Hear Me? I Mean It!) Going to Move</i> by Judith Viorst</p> 	<p>Alexander is <i>not</i> going to leave his best friend Paul. Or Rachel, the best babysitter in the world. Or the Baldwins, who have a terrific dog named Swoozie. Or Mr. and Mrs. Oberdorfer, who always give great treats on Halloween. Who cares if his father has a new job a thousand miles away? Alexander is not --Do you hear him? He Means it!-- going to move. Alexander's back, facing another of childhood's trials and tribulations with Judith Viorst's trademark humor and keen sense of what's important to kids.</p>
<p><i>You Think It's Easy Being the Tooth Fairy?</i> by Sheri Bell-Rehwold</p> 	<p>All over America, kids are losing their teeth. And who is there to gather them up, leaving coins in their places? The Tooth Fairy, of course! A self-described "action kind of gal" with plenty of attitude, she reveals her secrets at last.</p>
<p><i>The Best Town in the World</i> by Byrd Baylor</p> 	<p>A nostalgic view of the best town in the world, where dogs were smarter, chickens laid prettier brown eggs, wildflowers grew taller and thicker, and the people knew how to make the best chocolate cakes and toys in the world.</p>
<p><i>A Fine, Fine School</i> by Sharon Creech</p> 	<p>One day, Mr. Keene called all the students and teachers together and said, "This is a fine, fine school! From now on, let's have school on Saturdays too." And then there was more. School all weekend. School on the holidays. School in the SUMMER! What was next . . .SCHOOL AT NIGHT?</p>
<p><i>The 50 Most Terrifying Roller Coasters Ever Built</i> by Nick Weisenberger</p> 	<p>Mega roller coasters of today reach heights of over 400 feet and speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour. Roller coasters towering taller than a certain height are terrifying for many individuals but it would be boring to simply make a list of the world's tallest coasters. As a result, most of the bone-chilling machines in this list do not use sheer height to terrify, but instead prey on our fears and emotions in other, more creative ways.</p>
<p>Websites with Reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.toyportfolio.com/ 	<p>The links to the left provide teachers with other resources that can be mentors for opinion writing.</p>

Sample 3-5 Opinion Mentor Text Questions/Prompts

Check grade level reading/writing standards when choosing which questions/prompts to address. Create additional prompts/questions based on the standards for your grade level.

To answer the questions or address the prompts, students should use evidence from the text to support their answers. This can be done by drawing, writing, or orally responding.

Sample Questions:

- Can you tell how the author feels about the topic? How?
- How is the opinion stated or shown? What reasons are given or shown for the opinion?
- Are there other reasons or details the author could include?
- What key words and phrases are used to express the opinion? How does the author introduce the piece?
- Does the introduction begin to draw the reader toward the opinion? How? If not, what other ideas could the author try?
- What reasons does the author use to help convince? Who would be drawn toward these reasons?
- How did the author close the piece? If the closing doesn't move you, what other ideas could the author try?
- How is this piece organized?
- What linking words are used?
- I agree/disagree with the writer about...
-

Sample Prompts:

- The most important thing about this book is...
- I think the main thing the writer was trying to say was...
- In my opinion, the most important (word, sentence, paragraph) in the book would be...
- I would/wouldn't recommend this book to a friend because...
- What happened in this book was very realistic/unrealistic because...

Resource questions were adapted from:

Boyles, N. (2004). Constructing meaning: Through kid friendly comprehension strategy instruction. Gainesville, FL: Maupin House.

Owocki, G. (2013). The Common Core writing book, K-5: Lessons for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.