

SECTION

2b

English/Language Arts

In this section you will read a writing prompt and complete a writing activity based on the passage you read in Section 2a. While you complete the writing activity, you may look back at the passage as often as you like.

Your writing will not be scored on your personal opinions or choices, but will be scored objectively on

- how clearly you address the prompt
- how well you organize your ideas
- how effectively you express yourself
- how consistently you use correct paragraphing, grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Be sure to use the rules of Standard English. Standard English is the English commonly used in formal writing. It does not include slang or jargon.

NOTE: Only your writing on the lined pages in this book will be scored.

STOP! **STOP!** **STOP!** **STOP!**



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Directions

Read the excerpt "Brick" from *All the Way Home*. Then answer the questions.

"Brick" from *All the Way Home*

by Patricia Reilly Giff

Brick Tiernan is walking home while a storm is coming. As Brick approaches his neighbor Claude's apple orchard, lightning streaks across the sky.

- 1 But the smell of electricity stung the inside of his nose. He walked faster, glad he had just a few minutes more to reach home. Supper would be on the table: beans, sweet with molasses and chunks of pork, soft and meaty on his tongue, the ball game on the radio, playing Michigan with Mom and Pop afterward.
- 2 The sky exploded with light. The boom of thunder that followed was so fierce the road shook. It seemed to go on forever, a huge angry rumbling that filled his ears. Another bolt of lightning and in front of him, a tree blew apart. Great hunks of it crashed onto the ground beneath, and branches flew over his head, almost weightless. He dropped the bat and took a step backward and then another.
- 3 A smudge of gray came up over Claude's orchard, quickly turning to black, a rolling greasy cloud high above him. The next streak of lightning lit up the woods; every tree stood out sharp and clear. Bits of dried grass burst into flame, and the flame jumped a foot, reaching out to him.
- 4 He began to run. The fire ran with him, taking a twisted path closer, then farther away, then zigzagging back toward him again.
- 5 Noise crackled overhead, and he thought of Claude's apple trees, and then their own, the young trees his family was counting on to change their luck.
- 6 It was hard to keep going with almost no air, almost no breath. "One more hill," he whispered to spur himself on. "A small hill, just have to get myself

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past Claude's."

- 7 Claude was at the edge of his orchard, one hand over his head against the flying bits of flame and dust, the other dragging a hose that was too big, too heavy for one old man alone. He was trying to wet down the trees as the leaves curled up and turned gray and apples popped off the branches; at the same time, he shouted something at the sky, or at the fire, or even at the trees.
- 8 Brick hesitated for the barest moment. The air was smoky and smelled like the apples Mom baked. He remembered the day he and Pop had planted their own apple trees, Pop grinning, his face dripping with perspiration. *"In a few years we'll have our own harvest. No more moving around."* He threw out his hand. *"Just like Mom says. Forever."*
- 9 But Claude could never save his trees alone. Claude's wife, Julia, ran outside, wrapping a towel around her head. And then Brick was in back of Claude, lifting the hose to snake around the trees, as Julia covered his head with a wet cloth that seemed to dry almost immediately.
- 10 He pulled the hose until he could hardly lift his arms. He knew Claude was tired, too; he could see his large hands on the nozzle, red and raw. Brick's eyes stung from the smoke, his throat burned, his mouth so dry there was nothing left to swallow.
- 11 It seemed to go on forever, the fire, the pulling, Claude in front of him, Julia in back. But at last he looked over his shoulder to see the fire veering away from them, strangely jumping the river, and the sound of the bells clanging in town and the fire trucks coming.
- 12 Finally the rain began to fall. He could feel it on the cloth over his head and his hair, running down his nose and cheeks, cool on his upturned face.
- 13 Nothing ever felt as good as that water, bathing him and the bark of the trees and the leaves, bathing Claude in his straw hat and Julia in her towel, washing the heat away from the orchard.

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3. In the excerpt, you read about how Brick assists his neighbor Claude. Think about Brick's motivation for helping Claude put out the fire. Write an essay about how Brick's thoughts and actions support the idea that he is a caring person. Use details from the excerpt in your essay.

Be sure to include

- details about Brick's character traits
- an explanation of how Brick's traits demonstrate that he is kind
- an introduction, a body, and a conclusion to your essay

Use the following Prewriting/Planning page to help you plan your writing. Then write your final draft on the lined pages.

GO ON 

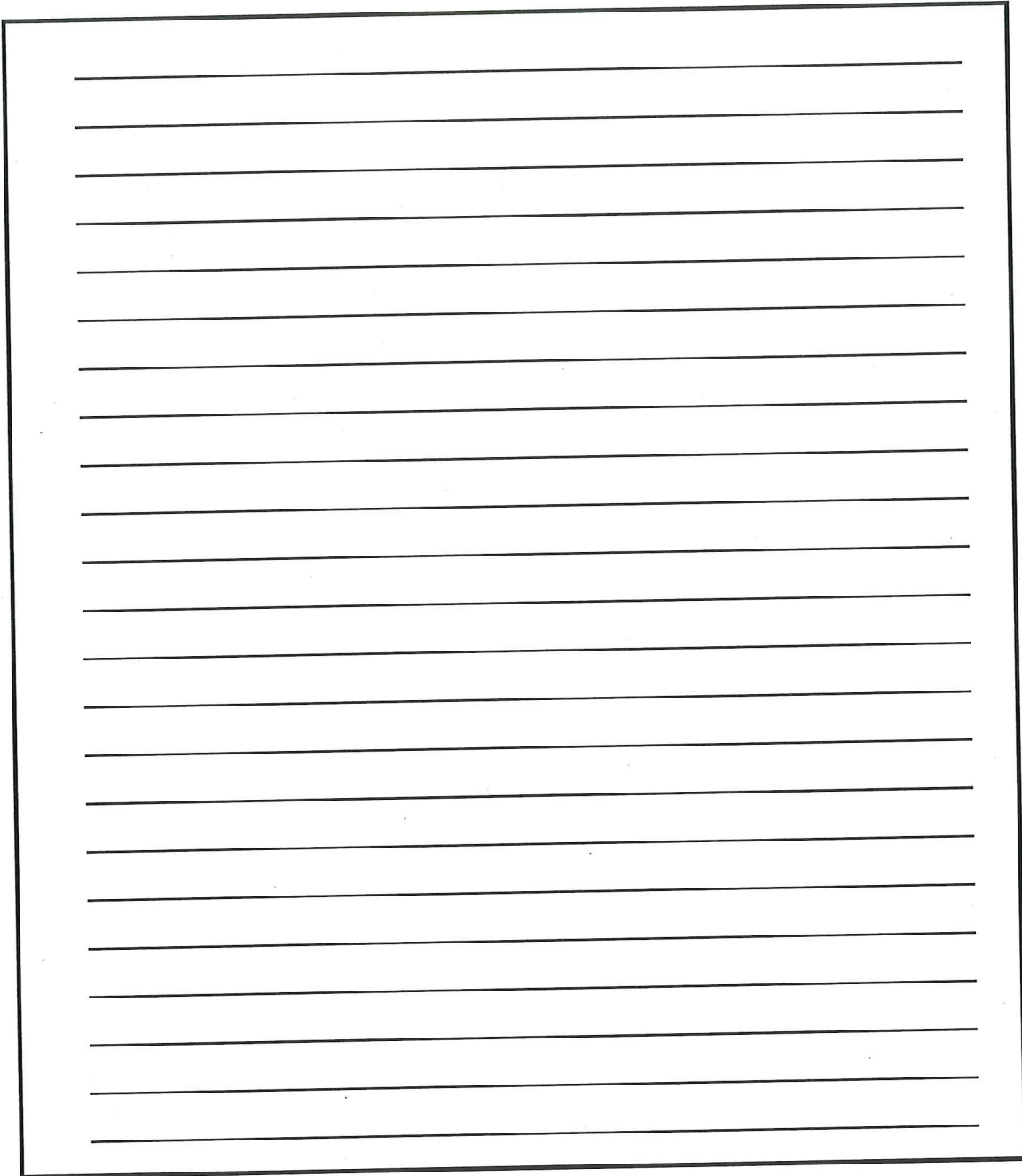
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Use the blank Prewriting/Planning space below for notes, lists, webs, outlines, or anything else that might help you plan your writing. If you need additional paper for planning, raise your hand and your teacher will give you more paper. **You must write your final draft on the lines beginning at the top of the next page.**

Prewriting/Planning

GO ON 

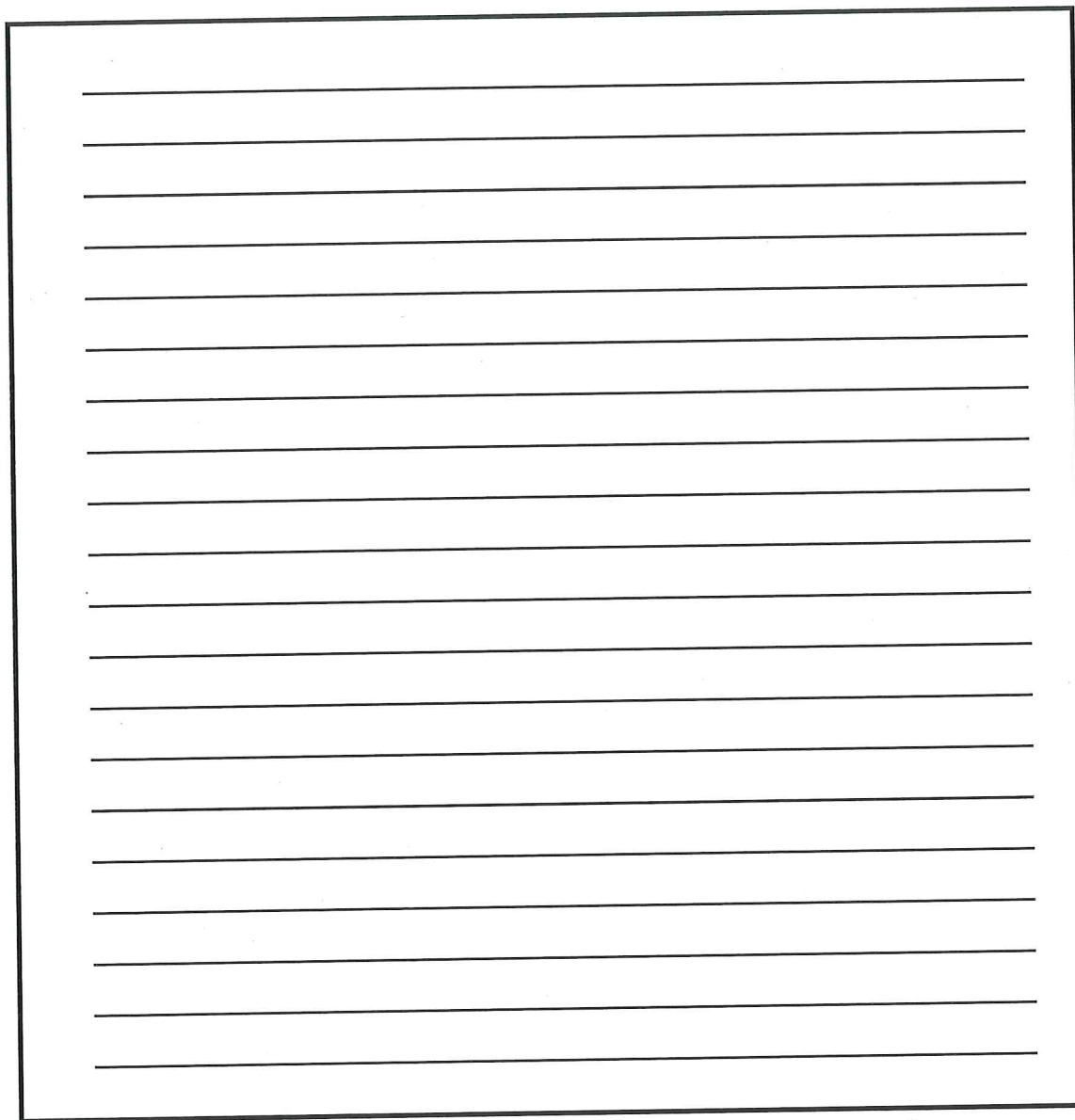
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Use the Editing Checklist at the end of this section. Check your essay for correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. **Remember, your essay should be well organized.**



GO ON 

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Now check your writing using this Editing Checklist.

Editing Checklist

- 1** Check your capitalization and punctuation.
- 2** Spell all words correctly.
- 3** Check for sentence fragments or run-on sentences.
- 4** Keep verb tense consistent.
- 5** Use words according to the rules of Standard English.
- 6** Remember to paragraph correctly.

STOP! **STOP!** **STOP!** **STOP!**

