PRACTICE DECONSTRUCTING PROMPTS
Do What? “T” Charts

Directions: Provide students with the writing task/prompt. Copy and cut each prompt. Glue to paper and copy one for each student. At first, you may wish to provide the “Do what? ‘T’ Chart” organizer. Release the responsibility by asking students to draw their own. Students will deconstruct the prompt using the “Do what? ‘T’ Chart.” Then, they will create a “hand plan” that includes the elements (expectations) for the writing.

1. You have read two articles about helping others. You learned that many students enjoy doing something special for their family and friends. For example, they may take care of their younger sibling or help to cook a favorite meal.

After reading an article about helping others, write an essay that explains the benefits of helping others. Explain why this would be something special for you and for those who you help. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your ideas.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

2. You have read two stories about how the main characters succeeded by trying hard. Think about a time you succeeded at something that was hard for you to do. It could be something you finally learned how to do at school or in a game. It could also be a new way of behaving at home.

Write about this event. Show your readers why it was hard for you to do and how you succeeded at doing it. Share how you felt after the event.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

3. You have just read two sources about amphibians particularly frogs and toads. Your teacher has asked you to create a diagram and explanation about how the two amphibians are different. Think about what you have learned about frogs and toads.

Explain how frogs and toads are similar. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your writing.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

4. “The Tale of Peter Rabbit” and “The Tale of Benjamin Bunny” are from the same collection of short stories. In each story, Peter visits Mr. McGregor’s garden.

Compare and contrast his experiences in the garden. Use evidence from the sources to support your response.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

WRITE UP A STORM!®2010
5. You have read “Amazing Animals.” In this text, you learned these famous animals are very different. Think about the one you find the most interesting. Why?

After reading “Amazing Animals,” write an essay in which you give your opinion as to which animal has the most amazing facts. Support your response with evidence from the text.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

6. You have read articles describing inventions that have changed society. Your teacher believes the “telephone” is the best invention ever made. He/she wants you to research the most significant invention ever made. Television, computer and telephones are inventions. Think about other inventions that you are familiar with. Your teacher has asked you for your opinion. What do you think is the most significant invention ever made and why do you think so?

Write a letter to your teacher explaining your opinion of the most significant invention ever made. Support your opinion with evidence from the text/s.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

7. You have been studying folktales from around the world. You have just read two stories, which are both folktales. One folktale is from Africa and the other is from Asia.

Write an essay that compares and contrasts the topic, themes, and plot of the stories. Support your response with evidence from the text.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

8. Your class has surveyed students at your school asking them what their favorite subject is and why. You have also read an article containing data about favorite subjects in school and why they like them. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay answering the question, "Why do students have favorite subjects?"

Now write an essay explaining the reasons students have favorite subjects. Be sure to use details to explain your reasons. Support your opinion with evidence from the text/s.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

9. You have read “Should Schools Be Year-Round” and “Will You Go to School This Summer?” both written by Readworks.org. These two articles explain different points of views of year round school. How do you distinguish your own point of view from that of the authors’ point of view?

After reading the two articles, write an opinion essay in which you explain your own point of view. Do you think students should go to year-round school? Why or why not? Be sure to support your opinion with evidence from the text.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

WRITE UP A STORM!®©2010
10. Your animal club at school is deciding whether or not to participate in a project with the local zoo. With this in mind, you read “Are Wild Animals Meant to Be Wild?” and “Zoo Pros.” Before you decide whether your club at school should participate with the local zoo, you must decide whether or not zoos are good for animals.

After reading the two articles, take a position and give your opinion on whether or not zoos are good for animals. Use specific evidence the author’s present within the sources to support your opinion.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

11. In the past, the term “service animal” was left up to interpretation. A service animal could include a variety of animals from monkey to cat. Recently, the government has passed a new law that allows only service dogs to go with their owners into public places. You are working on a school newsletter, and you have been asked to write on this topic.

After reading “Animals Helping People” and “Service Animal Laws”, write an essay in which you give your opinion on whether this new law is fair. Do you think only dogs should be considered service animals? Support your opinion with reasons that are thoroughly developed using information from the text.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

12. Physical education classes have been a part of the school curriculum for many years. Recently, there has been much debate about the weather or not all students should be mandated to take physical education courses while in school. Do you think all students should be required to take P.E. as a course of study?

After reading the selected sources, write an essay in which you determine which author has the strongest argument and why? Include how the authors use reasons and evidence to support their arguments and claims.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

13. Your class has been studying ways of improving our environment. One of the articles you have read includes the importance of recycling household items. These items might include an empty paper towel roll, empty milk carton, or an old telephone book. Before you start writing, think about the articles you have read.

Write an essay explaining the importance of recycling. Support your response with evidence from both texts.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995
14. You have read “Robots to the Rescue” and “Where Is My Robot?”

Write an essay that compares and contrasts the two stories. Explain how each setting affects the plot and the theme.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

15. You have just read “Operation Robot Rescue” and “A Birthday Brainstorm.”

Write an essay that compares and contrasts the settings of “Operation Robot Rescue” and “A Birthday Brainstorm.” Explain how each setting affects the plot of the passage. Use evidence from the text to support your response.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

16. You have been researching healthy eating habits for kids. Sometimes students don’t make good choices. They’ll eat too many sugary foods and not enough fruits and vegetables.

It is your responsibility to write an explanation of three ways to stay healthy. Be sure to use details to explain your reasons. Support your opinion with evidence from the sources.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

17. There has been much debate about the role of sleep and the role of napping. How many hours of sleep is enough? What is too much sleep? What is too little sleep? How do naps fit into sleep cycles?

The issue of “napping” will be one of the topics for an upcoming school debate club. To prepare for the debate, and to decide which side of “napping” you are on, you have been conducting research on the topic. As part of your research, you have found two articles and a newspaper column about sleep.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

17. You have just read viewed a video and read two sources. They all explore the role dogs play in rescuing people.

Write an essay that compares and contrasts the text format of each source. Explain how each source reveals information and details about the characters.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

WRITE UP A STORM!®2010
18. After reading the selected sources, write an essay in which you trace and evaluate the author’s arguments for and against napping. Which one has the strongest argument and why? Support your response with evidence from the text.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

19. You have read an excerpt from “Lost in the Woods.” Write a story in which you maintain the tone and Jim’s character traits. Be sure to use details and descriptions in your story.

Based on the information in the text “Biography of Amelia Earhart,” write an essay that summarizes and explains the challenges Earhart faced throughout her life. Remember to use textual evidence to support your ideas.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

19. Think of a powerful character in a literary work that you have read. Suppose that this character could decide to change the plot. Imagine what actions the character would take to change the plot, so that it would have a more favorable ending for him or her.

Write a narrative in which you describe a particular character in a story, novel, or play, outlining the ways in which this character might act to change the events and the outcome of the plot. Describe the character and his or her actions so vividly that your readers will feel they have read this revision of the literary work.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

20. You belong to a history club and are very concerned that people are unaware of history. To increase awareness of history, your group would like to commission a mural to be painted on a large wall in the high school cafeteria. The mural would depict significant scenes from either local, U.S., or world history. You have been placed in charge of writing the letter to the school board proposing this idea.

Write an essay in the form of a letter to the local school board, persuading the members to embrace the history club’s plan for a mural depicting scenes from local, U.S., or world history. Provide specific examples and sufficient vivid details to make your position as convincing as possible.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995
21. You have just read “Thanksgiving” and “Another Case of Ingratitude.” Both explore the theme of gratitude in very different ways. 

Write an essay in which you analyze and compare how these texts develop this theme. Be sure to cite textual evidence and draw inferences from each text to support your analysis.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

23. You have just read “The Emperor’s Test” and “The Mystery Ingredient.”

Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the themes, characters, and language in “The Emperor’s Test” and “The Mystery Ingredient.” Explain specifically how the plot and details of the modern story update the traditional story and why these changes have been made. Be sure to include examples from the texts that support your analysis and conclusion.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

24. Consider what it means to be a “public servant,” a person who is elected to political office and who serves the people who elected him or her. A politician who is a true public servant has a number of traits that make him or her responsive to the voters.

Write a narrative in which you describe what an ideal public servant would do once elected. Provide examples of how such a public servant would govern once elected and just what this person would accomplish. Describe this public servant so vividly that your readers will feel they have met this politician.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

25. In the passage, the author developed a strong character named Miyax. Think about Miyax and the details the author used to create that character. The passage ends with Miyax waiting for the black wolf to look at her.

Write an original story to continue where the passage ended. In your story, be sure to use what you have learned about the character Miyax as you tell what happens to her next.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995
26. You have read excerpts from two novels focused on survival in the wilderness.

These excerpts are from:

- *Brian's Winter* by Gary Paulsen
- *Call of the Wild* by Jack London

Consider how the main character in each excerpt reacts to the incidences that occur, and write an essay in which you analyze how each character's thoughts and actions reveal aspects of his personality.

You do not need to compare and contrast the characters from the two texts. You may consider each one separately. Be sure to include evidence from each excerpt to support your analysis and understanding.

27. The James Auto-manufacturing Company, a major auto-manufacture, has hired you and your team members to create a car. The goal for your team is to create a prototype of a vehicle that will run on alternative energy. Forces Auto-manufacturing Company has been in a decline since the mid 1990's. They are hoping that through new ideas, this will put them back on the map. You have researched alternative energy and auto-manufacturing.

Write an report for the James Auto-manufacturing executives describing how your car will use alternative energy.

28. A group of English speaking Japanese students is visiting your school for two weeks as part of an international exchange program. The principal has asked your class to plan and budget a four-day tour of California to help the visitors understand the state’s history. Plan your tour so that the visitors are shown sites that best capture the ways that history has influenced the state’s development.

You should prepare a written itinerary, including an explanation of why each site was selected. Include a map tracing the route for the four-day tour and a budget for the trip.
29. Your teacher has announced that you will be having a new desk buddy - a student from Panama. You hear she is sad about moving to Minnesota because it is winter and she feels there will be nothing to do outside. Using *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats and your experiences with winter, come up with some ways you can help your new friend understand about possible winter fun.

Write a letter to your friend explaining your ideas. Be sure to provide reasons, explanations, examples, and elaboration as to why winter is fun besides those provided in the book.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

30. While rereading the story “Peter’s Challenge”, you remember how Peter has a dream. Why do you think he dreamt as he did? Have you had similar dreams? Tell what happened and why he reacted to the other characters as he did.

Write an essay in which you show your understanding of the story (plot), character traits, your ability to reread for details (evidence). Be sure to provide reasons, explanations, examples, and elaboration.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

31. Your friend is going through a difficult time. You have tried talking about the issue but to no avail. After much thought, you research the concern and found a book where the character went through a similar experience as your friend. How might the book help your friend deal with the problem? (problem/solution) What might be some strategies your friend could use from the book?

Use your writing skills to compose a letter to your friend as to why he/she should read the book or resources you have collected. Be sure your letter contains reasons, explanations, examples from the readings and elaborate with your feelings and encouragement.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

32. Your school parents have collected money to be used to purchase books for the schools in need in South America. By reading source #1, you can tell not all are in agreement on how the funds will be spent. Speculate on what the various points of view may be. You have also read two sources that explain the needs of the schools.

Use your knowledge of the research to write two letters to two of the parents who have differing viewpoints. Advocate for the list of books you have developed and why they should be purchased. Be sure to compose your letters to the audience in such a way to elicit their support.

WRITE UP A STORM!®©1995

WRITE UP A STORM!®2010
I DO

After reading an article about pets, you have learned that people have pets of all types. They have dogs, cats, birds, lions, and many more. Some pets are better than others. For example, having a lion might present some problems like the amount of food it takes to feed a lion. Think about what makes a good pet. Write an essay explaining what makes a good pet. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your ideas.

“DO WHAT?” “T” Chart

“Hand Plan”
“DO WHAT?” CHART
DECONSTRUCT A PROMPT

Text Type:______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do (verb)</th>
<th>What?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Topic:______________________________________________

Draw the “hand” here.