

Elementary Level Grades 3 & 4
Narrative Stimulus-Based Prompt
New Neighbor

Introduction

You have just learned that the house across the street has been sold, and in fact, the moving van has just driven into the driveway. As a ten year old, what is your wish about the family that might be moving in? You watch from you front steps, anxiously awaiting to see if there are any kids your age. Having a friend in the neighborhood makes getting together after school or on weekends so easy.

Prompt

Think about how Samuel becomes friends with Roger in the story. Samuel does not expect to become friends with his new neighbor.

Write a story about two characters who become friends in an unexpected way. Include events and details that show how the two characters meet, what they might have in common, and how they begin a friendship. Use ideas from the narrative to create your story.

Passage: **Welcome to the Neighborhood**

- 1) Samuel was bored. It was Saturday afternoon, and he had nothing to do. His friend James from school was at his grandparents' house for the weekend, so there was no one to play with. He was jiggling a rock in his hand as he sat on his front stoop. He suddenly heard a noise and spotted a moving van pulling into the driveway across the street.
- 2) The house had been empty for months after the Janowskis moved to California. Samuel used to be friends with Collin Janowski; they were inseparable and did everything together. But since Collin moved away, there were no other kids to play with in his neighborhood. Samuel wondered who would be moving in. *Maybe it will be a new kid*, he hoped.
- 3) A car pulled up behind the van. Samuel peered at the car hoping he would see a kid come out. He saw an elderly couple come out of the car. He was immediately disappointed when he did not see a kid. *Great, no one to play with*, Samuel thought to himself. The man noticed Samuel and waved. He wore a baseball cap and a sweater vest. Samuel was polite and waved back. He then threw his rock into the bushes and stomped into his house.
- 4) "Ugh!" Samuel groaned. His mother, who was working on her laptop in the living room, looked up.
- 5) "What's wrong, Sammy?" she asked.
- 6) "I saw a moving truck pull into the Janowski's driveway, and I was hoping there would be a kid in the car, but no such luck. I *still* don't have anyone to play with in the neighborhood!" Samuel complained.
- 7) Samuel's mother looked at him. "I'm sure you will find someone soon, Sam. Why don't you go and do something? Get busy. What about working on your model?"
- 8) Samuel loved building model airplanes. He was working on a particular model, the North American P-51 Mustang. It was flown in World War II, and Samuel read books all about it. He often imagined he was an ace flyer soaring through the skies, darting in and out of the clouds to avoid the enemy.
- 9) He reluctantly made his way into the garage. Although he wished he had a friend to play with, when he took one look at his model, he began to feel better. Samuel opened the

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garage door so he would have more light, and he began to work on his plane.

10) After a while, he was ready to put the finishing touches on his plane. He began to paint the stripes along the side of its body when he heard a man's voice.

11) "That's a Mustang if I ever saw one."

12) Samuel looked up. He saw his new neighbor from across the street standing in the doorway of the garage. The man reminded Samuel of his great grandfather, Grandpa Charles, who was almost 95 years old.

"Oh...uh...hi. Yes. Yes, it is, sir."

"Call me Roger. The name's Roger Coleman. And what's your name, son?"

"Samuel."

13) "Pleasure to meet you, Samuel. My wife Peggy and I moved in across the street. I was coming over to introduce myself to your folks when I noticed you here. She really is a beauty," Roger said, pointing to the plane.

14) "Yes, she is. No other fighter planes could fly higher or faster during World War II," Samuel explained.

15) "That's the truth," Roger replied. "Did you know that in the 1940s these planes got a makeover? They put Rolls-Royce¹ engines in them and a bubble cockpit² so the pilots could see better. That made her something else³ to fly."

16) Samuel immediately looked at Roger. *How did he know how it felt to fly them?* he wondered. Samuel then looked at the letters on Roger's baseball cap.

17) "USAAF," Samuel read the letters aloud as he pointed to Roger's cap, "What does that stand for?"

"The United States Army Air Forces," Roger answered.

"You were in the air force?"

"I certainly was," Roger responded. "And I even flew this very plane, the North American P-51 Mustang."

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18) Samuel was astonished. He could not believe that the man standing before him was actually an ace flier back in his day. He could not grasp the fact that he flew the very plane he was making a model of in his garage!

19) “Wow,” was all that Samuel could say. He had so many questions for Roger. He wanted to know everything, what it was like to fly the Mustang, what it sounded like, if he was scared – everything.

20) Roger looked down at his watch and frowned. “Looks like I’m going to have to go now, Samuel. I would certainly love to talk to you some more about the Mustang. How about I come by another day?”

Samuel smiled widely. “How about tomorrow?”

“Tomorrow it is,” Roger replied as he turned and slowly began to walk down the driveway.

21) Samuel entered his house enthusiastically. His mother immediately stopped typing and looked up at him. She noticed he was smiling.

“All done with the model, I see?” she asked.

“Not quite,” Samuel answered.

“Then, why so happy?” she asked curiously.

22) “Let’s just say I’ve finally made a new friend in the neighborhood,” he said as he glanced out the window at Roger’s house.

By Vanessa Genova DeSantis

¹ **Rolls-Royce:** a British company that builds engines for airplanes.

² **cockpit:** the place in an airplane where the pilot sits.

³ **something else:** idiom meaning wonderful or unusual

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Prewriting Suggestions

- 1) Create an event where two characters meet unexpectedly.
- 2) What are the events in your story that shows how these two characters become friends?
- 3) What feelings do these characters show at the beginning of your story and how these characters develop a friendship?
- 4) Be sure to include details that make your story interesting, descriptive, and creative

Editing and Revising Suggestions

- 1) Make sure that your story has a beginning, middle, and end.
- 2) Be sure that your story is clear and well organized so that others can understand what happened and when.
- 3) Have you included dialogue and interesting details to make the story and characters come to life?
- 4) Have you used linking words or phrases (such as, First, Next, Finally), when needed, that clearly connect your ideas?
- 5) Make sure your sentences are clear and complete.
- 6) Take time to check that your spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation are correct.