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Study Skills Worksheet

Read the passage below and complete the following tasks.

SUSIE'S COMPOSITION

Susie Smith came home from school one day, and had no sooner entered the sitting room than she **burst** into tears. "What is the matter, my dear child?" said her mother, drawing her daughter to her side and smiling.

"O mother, matter enough," sobbed Susie. "All our class must bring in **compositions** tomorrow morning, and I never, never can write one. We must write twelve lines at least, and I have written only a few words after trying nearly all the afternoon. See what work I have made of it!"

Mrs. Smith took the **rumpled, tear-stained** paper which Susie held in her hand, and glanced at what she had written. In a careful hand she had tried to write upon three themes: "Time," "**Temperance**," and "**Industry**."

"Time is short. We should all improve our time." "Temperance is a very useful thing." "We should all be **industrious** if we wish to do anything in the world." These sentences were all she had written.

"Now," said Susie, "I can't think of another word to say upon any of these subjects, and I know I shall have to go to school without a composition, for I won't be so mean as to copy one from a book, or to ask you or papa to write one for me."

"That is right, my dear," said her mother. "You will be far happier with a poor composition, if it is all your own, than with a fine one written by somebody else. But cheer

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up. You have not begun right—you have been trying to write upon subjects that you know nothing about. Run into the garden and play. I will call you in half an hour.”

“But my composition,” began Susie. “Don’t think about your composition while you are gone,” said Mrs. Smith, “but have as **pleasant** a time as you can.”



It seemed but a few minutes to Susie before she heard her mother’s voice calling her. She went into the house at once—her hands full of sweet flowers, and her cheeks rosy with exercise.

“Now, Susie,” said her mother, “I want you to sit by the window with this nice sheet of paper and a pencil, and write something about what you can see.” “But my composition, mother,” said Susie; “when shall I begin that?” “Never mind your composition, my dear; do this to please me, and we will talk about that by and by.”

Susie thought her mother’s request was a **strange** one; but she knew that she always had a good reason for everything she did: so she took the paper and pencil, and sat by the window.

“Do not talk to me at all,” said her mother. “Look out of the window, and then write down your thoughts about everything you see.”

Susie could not help laughing, it seemed such a funny thing to be doing. As she looked out, she first saw the western sky and some bright, sunset clouds. “O mother!” she **exclaimed**, “what a **splendid** sunset!” “Don’t talk,” said her mother, “but write.”

“I’ll write about the sunset, then,” said she, and the pencil began to move **rapidly** across the paper. In a few moments she said, “Mother, shall I read you what I have written?” “No,

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not now,” answered her mother; “I am going into the dining room. You may sit and write until I return.”

As Susie went on writing, she became very much interested in her **occupation**, and for a time forgot all about the **dreaded** composition. She wrote about the sunset clouds, the appearance of the **distant** hills, the trees, the river, the garden with its gay flowers, and the birds flying past the window.

Just as she had reached the bottom of the page, her mother came in. “Well, Susie,” said she, with a smile, “how does that composition come on?”

“Composition!” **exclaimed** Susie; “you told me not to think about my composition, and I have not thought of it once; I have had such a nice time writing about what I could see from the window.”

Mrs. Smith took the paper and read aloud what Susie had written: “I am sitting on a low seat at the bay window, one half of which is open, so that I can smell the sweet flowers in the garden. The sky is all bright with sunset; I can see purple, and pink, and golden. I do not believe that anyone on earth has a paint box with such lovely colours in it.”

“I can see one cloud, far above the rest, that looks like a ship sailing in the blue sea. I should like to sail on a cloud, if it would not make me **dizzy**. Now, while I have been writing, the clouds have changed in colour and form, but they are just as beautiful as they were before.”

“The green hills are tipped with light, and look as if they were wearing golden crowns. I can see a river a great way off, and it looks quite still, although I know it is running as fast as it can to get to the ocean.”

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“The birds are flying past the window to go home and take care of their little ones. I am glad the birds are not afraid to live in our garden, and to build nests in our trees.”

“Our garden is full of flowers—pinks, lilies, and roses. Mother calls this the month of roses. My birthday will come in a week, and we can have all the flowers we wish for **wreaths** and **bouquets**.”

“There, Susie,” said Mrs. Smith, “that is a very nice composition, indeed.” “A composition!” exclaimed Susie, “is that a composition?” “Yes, my dear, and a very good one, too,” replied her mother. “When it hasn’t even a subject?”

“We can find one for it, and I do not doubt it will please your teacher, as it does me. You see, my dear,” continued her mother, “that it is easy enough to write if you have anything **interesting** to write about.”

The next morning Susie copied her composition very neatly, and started to school with a happy heart, saying, as she gave her mother a kiss, “Just think how funny it is, dear mother, that I should have written so long a composition without knowing it.”

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DICTIONARY SKILLS 2

1. Tell where each word may be found in the dictionary. Write “front” (or words between a to i), “middle” (j to q), or “back” r to z) .

burst =	exclaimed =	dizzy =
compositions =	splendid =	nteresting =
temperance =	rapidly =	bouquets =
industry =	occupation =	wreaths =
industrious =	dreaded =	rumpled =
pleasant =	distant =	tear-stained =
strange =	exclaimed =	

2. Place the following words in alphabetical order.

distant	_____

dreaded	_____

occupation	_____

exclaimed	_____

splendid	_____

compositions	_____

industry	_____

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3. Select from the list below the words that are closer to the **front** of a dictionary.

☐ exclaimed

☐ pleasant

☐ wreaths

☐ occupation

☐ burst

☐ compositions

☐ dizzy

4. Select from the list below the words that are closer to the **middle** of a dictionary.

☐ distant

☐ interesting

☐ industrious

☐ tear-stained

☐ pleasant

☐ occupation

5. Select from the list below the words that are closer to the **back** of a dictionary.

☐ distant

☐ tear-stained

☐ rapidly

☐ interesting

☐ bouquets

☐ dizzy

☐ wreaths

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6. Match the meaning of the following words. Write the meaning next to the word.

WORD ELEMENTS

regarded with great fear.

give a creased, ruffled, or dishevelled appearance to something.

an arrangement of flowers, leaves, or stems

diligent or hard-working

abstinence from alcoholic drink.

temperance	
industrious	
wreaths	
rumpled	
dreaded	