

# BLOSSOM & ROOT

INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS // LEVEL 5

## *The Stories We Carry*

**SUPER SECRET NOTEBOOK GUIDE**

**LEVEL 5**

**Creative Writing, Storytelling, and Foundations for Academic Writing**



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# *Blossom & Root*

Integrated Language Arts,  
Level 5:

## *The Stories We Carry*

Super Secret Notebook Guide

### **Blossom & Root Integrated Language Arts Level 5: The Stories We Carry**

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# Week One: Choosing Your Super Secret Notebook

## Preparing Your Super Secret Notebook

### The Secret Mission:

Choose a book to be your super-secret notebook.

### Supplies You Will Need:

- access to a store (in person or online)
- an adult to help you purchase your notebook

### What To Do:

#### Learn About the Super Secret Notebook

During the year, you will keep a **super secret notebook**. You'll have a prompt each week for an activity to do in your notebook, but you can write or draw in it any time you like--you can write or doodle every day if you want! This is your super secret notebook, and you never have to share anything in it with anyone (unless you want to!) Throughout the year, you will share final drafts of some of the projects you create using this notebook with a parent or another adult, but the final draft (which is what you'll share) isn't even in the super secret notebook--it's always written or typed onto clean, loose paper.

Your notebook is a safe place to keep your thoughts, and all of the fun and messy processes that go into storytelling and writing: brainstorming, planning, drafting, pivoting, revising and rearranging, doodling (of course), editing, and more.

Your notebook is for you, and you alone. If you want to show a friend or family member the work you do in your notebook, that is your choice. All we ask you to share are the final drafts you will create for some of the projects, which are written outside of the notebook itself.

Each week, you have the option to do a page prep. This notebook isn't just for experimenting with words, it's for experimenting with art, too. The page prep gives you a chance to play with paint, markers, collages, and other art techniques. You can skip these, if you like a plain notebook. You can invent your own page prep if you don't want to follow the suggestions. Or you can do the recommended page prep some weeks, and not others. Again, this is your notebook and you get to decide!

*If you did the Level 4 Super Secret Notebook, you will recognize a lot of the page prep ideas from that level, because most of them are the same. But you can create your pages from these prep ideas in new and exciting ways this year!*

# Week One: Choosing Your Super Secret Notebook

## What To Do, cont.:

### Ask a Grown-Up to Help You Choose and Buy Your Notebook

Ask an adult to help you choose and purchase a notebook (from a store or online.) We recommend something bigger, so you'll have a lot of room to write, doodle, and play with paint. We recommend choosing something with watercolor paper or mixed media paper if you plan to do a lot of the page prep work. Regular paper doesn't hold up well to paints and glues in high amounts. A large mixed media sketchbook would be perfect! If you're not planning to do any page prep, any old notebook will do. It doesn't have to be fancy. You'll also want to gather up or purchase the art supplies at the beginning of the guide, if you plan to do the page prep activities.

### The Weekly Format

This **super secret notebook** is designed a bit differently from Level 4. Beginning in week 3, each week's prompt will have four steps:

#### Step 1: Prep Your Page

This step is always optional. If you want to prep your page, you can use the suggested prep prompt, invent your own or look for ideas on the internet (with an adult's supervision.) Conduct a search using terms like "art journal ideas."

#### Step 2: Wake Up Your Storyteller Brain

This step is also always optional. These are short, fun prompts meant to get your "storyteller brain" up and running. If you don't feel like completing a particular prompt--that's fine! You can always journal freely instead, jotting down your thoughts, doodling, writing down favorite song lyrics, anything you like to get your hand and your mind moving.

#### Step 3: The Main Projects

Each week, you'll work on a long-term project. These projects are usually three to four weeks long, and are broken down into mini-steps each week. Follow the instructions in the prompt to see which steps you'll need to complete.

#### Step 4: The Word Collection

Every week, you'll end your writing prompt by adding a new word (or as many new words as you like) to a "Word Collection" in the back of your **super secret notebook**. This week, mark a few pages in the very back of your notebook to save for your "Word Collection." You may want to add a sticky note to the page, so it's easy to find! You (and you alone) get to decide which words make it into your collection. You'll learn more about this in next week's prompt!

# Week Three: All Thoughts on Deck!

## Crafting a Paragraph / Short Narrative Writing

### The Secret Mission:

Think about something you've done that you are very proud of, and plan a paragraph about it.

### Supplies You Will Need:

- your notebook
- pens, markers, or pencils
- sticky notes
- optional (for preparing your page first, if you'd like): washi tape (wide tape will work best)
- optional (for warm-up): a picture of two or more people talking, glue, pen, white paper, scissors

### What To Do:

#### Step One: Prep Your Page

If you want to make a colorful background for your page, try a washi-tape layout this week. Carefully run strips of washi tape across or down the page, covering the entire page. Be sure to go slowly, and smooth each strip as you press it down, so it won't bubble up underneath your words. You can have space between each strip, or keep them all close together. You can use one color and pattern of tape, or mix up several. If you don't want a background, and you like to keep your notebook simple and neat, skip this step! Remember--this is your book and you get to decide what to do!

#### Step Two: Wake Up Your Storyteller Brain

Find a picture of at least two people talking. You can find this in a magazine, on junk mail (ask your parents first), in a newspaper, or using an online image search. Cut the people out and glue them in your journal. Imagine a funny conversation they might be having. Write their words in "speech bubbles" cut out of a piece of paper, and glue them above the people in the picture.

#### Step Three: The Main Project

Your first writing project is called "All Thoughts on Deck." This project will be completed over weeks 3 - 5. During this time, you will write a narrative paragraph about something you have done in the past of which you are very proud.

This week, you'll brainstorm what you want to share, and then plan it out. The first thing you need to do is decide what to write about. This should be something you've done that you are proud of, and that is important to you. It can be anything! It can be something you've built, something you tried that was maybe a bit scary at first, something you did to help someone

# Week Three: All Thoughts on Deck!

## What To Do, cont.:

### Step Three: The Main Project

else, something you created or made, an awesome game you've played or level you've defeated--the sky is the limit.

Once you've decided on your topic, grab a stack of sticky notes and a pen, and find a blank area of a wall or door--it's time to get planning!

Begin by writing a short description of your topic, using 1 - 5 words, on a sticky note and stick the note up on your "planning wall."

Now brainstorm a few details about your accomplishment, using other sticky notes to jot them down. Think about the details: the "why," the "when," the "how," the "what," and the "where." Think about how you felt after this accomplishment. Try to fill up 3 - 5 sticky notes with these details, and stick them under your "topic" note on your "planning wall."

Step away from your planning wall for a bit (a day or two if possible.) When you come back to it, organize your "detail" notes into a row, in the order you feel is most logical to explain the topic. Grab one more sticky note and decide how you'll end this paragraph-length story. We'll call this the "closing thought." You don't have to have a sentence in mind yet, just the idea of how you want to wrap up your narrative paragraph. Place the "closing thought" beneath the "details" row. You should now have a plan, ready to guide you next week. You can (optionally) move this organized collection of sticky notes into your notebook now. Be sure to attach them in order. (You may need to use tape or glue to get them to stick in your notebook.)

**Narrative Paragraph:** This first project involves writing a narrative paragraph. A paragraph is a collection of sentences (or ideas) with a common subject or topic. In this case, the common topic is the accomplishment you've selected. These sentences work together to tell us about the topic. Next week, we'll break down the role each sentence plays in a paragraph.

### Step Four: Add to Your Word Collection

To wrap up this week's prompt, don't forget to choose at least one new word to add to your collection! Be sure to include a definition or an original sentence that includes the word, as well as any other notes you like (pronunciation, origin, etc.) You are also welcome to add a doodle or a drawing.



# Week Three: All Thoughts on Deck!

## The "Planning Wall" in Action

