

Writer's Name: Example to show on overhead projector

Pros, Cons, and Hooks for Jobs other than Pirates

Inspired by How I Became a Pirate by Melinda Long

Instructions: Today you will be writing a descriptive and organized piece about a job and its pros and cons.

First, you will do a little bit of research or thinking about a job. In the table below, brainstorm and list 6 interesting pros (good things) about the job you will be writing about. Then, list 6 interesting bad things. Include descriptive words (like adjectives and adverbs and prepositional phrases) in your brainstorm. Also, list six subordinating conjunctions you plan to use in your rough draft.

The job I'll be writing about: <u>Teacher</u>		
Pros	Cons	Subordinating conjunctions I'll use when writing this:
<input type="checkbox"/> You get respect from educated people. <input type="checkbox"/> You get summers off! <input type="checkbox"/> You get Christmas and Spring Break off! <input type="checkbox"/> Good retirement benefits. <input type="checkbox"/> You know lots of stuff! <input type="checkbox"/> Kids are fun to teach.	<input type="checkbox"/> You're hated by the drop-outs. <input type="checkbox"/> The pay isn't great. <input type="checkbox"/> You have to give too many tests. <input type="checkbox"/> You have to grade homework at night. <input type="checkbox"/> You get blamed for kids who don't want to learn. <input type="checkbox"/> Discipline problems!	<input type="checkbox"/> because <input type="checkbox"/> until <input type="checkbox"/> whenever <input type="checkbox"/> while <input type="checkbox"/> as soon as <input type="checkbox"/> if

Next, circle your most interesting pro and con from the list above. (CIRCLE the second pro and the first con above)

Recall Melinda Long's great introduction in *How I Became a Pirate*? "Pirates have green teeth—when they have any teeth at all." Take your most interesting pro and con, and turn them both into two similar sentences that might be an interesting introduction to a story about the job you're writing about. Use a subordinating conjunction somewhere in each sentence.

My pro sentence:
<i>Teachers get summers off <u>because</u> they need the time to recover from filling out report cards.</i>
My con sentence:
<i><u>Whenever</u> a teacher eats fast food, he worries that the kid flipping his burger might have been a drop-out from a past class.</i>

Have a classmate help you decide which of your two sentences would make a better introduction.

Finally, use the graphic organizer below to pre-plan an interesting four-paragraph piece of writing that talks about the pros and cons of being the job you have thought about. Try to use the rest of your subordinating conjunctions in your sentences.

When you have pre-planned your paragraphs, write your actual draft on a piece of notebook paper and prepare to share it with a classmate.

<p><u>Whenever</u> a teacher eats fast food, he or she worries that the kid flipping the burger might have been a drop-out from a past class. Drop-outs sometimes hold a grudge. Drop-outs like to spit in people's burgers.</p>	<p>Paragraph #1: Start with a short introductory sentence that grabs your attention. Use your pro or con sentence from the other page. By itself, is this a good enough introduction, or should you add a sentence or two to follow it?</p>
<p>There are good reasons to become a teacher though. <u>Because</u> you get your summers off, you have ample to time recover from the hard work you do. And don't forget about Christmas and Spring Break! You get respect from educated people <u>as soon as</u> they hear you're a teacher. Most of the kids in your class are fun to teach. Most kids are fun, you see. But the most important benefit of being a teacher is that you have to learn stuff—lots of stuff—in order to get the job, and being smart is its own reward.</p>	<p>Paragraph #2: Which should come first? Pros or cons? Decide. Then, write an interesting paragraph that explains most (or all) of the pros or cons. Can you write so skillfully that your list of ideas doesn't seem like a list at all? Can you make your explanations sound more like a conversation than a bulleted list of ideas?</p>
<p>A teacher's pay is pretty darn low. So much money gets put into our military <u>while</u> it should be put into our schools. Have you ever seen that bumper sticker about how the military should have to host a bake sale to pay for missiles? Teaching is also bad when you have to give standardized tests <u>until</u> there's almost no time left to teach anything fun and interesting. Plus, it can be a big headache <u>if</u> certain kids' parents want to blame you for those kids who don't want to learn anything. No matter how good you teach, there are kids who will not learn or try to learn.</p>	<p>Paragraph #3: Which one is left? Pros or cons? Write an interesting paragraph that explains most (or all) of the pros or cons. Can you write so skillfully that your list of ideas doesn't seem like a list at all? Can you make your explanations sound more like a conversation than a bulleted list of ideas?</p>
<p>But to be honest, the kids who don't want to learn are few and far between those who appreciate a teacher who tries. Weighing the pros against the cons, I still would choose to be a teacher. Besides, staying out of the fast food joints is probably better for my arteries.</p>	<p>Paragraph #4: What sentence (or two) would conclude this writing nicely? Might you create a conclusion that refers back to your first sentence? Or...?</p>