

# Lesson Skill: Using the RAFTS strategy to unpack the prompt

---

## Strand Writing

**SOL** 6.7  
7.7  
8.7

## Materials

Copies of the attached Released English Writing SOL Test Prompts

## Lesson

1. As students prepare for SOL tests involving direct writing prompts, remind them that the RAFTS prewriting strategy can be an excellent tool for planning writing. Explain that the RAFTS strategy helps the writer know his/her role (R) as a writer, the audience (A) for whom he/she is writing, the form (F) the writing will take, and the topic (T) of the writing. Use of strong verbs (S) should also be considered. For more about the RAFTS strategy, see <http://www.readingquest.org/strat/raft.html>.
2. Model several possibilities for using the RAFTS prewriting strategy to write a response to the following writing prompt from the released 2004 Grade 8 SOL English Writing test.

### Prompt No. 951

**Your principal is considering replacing all physical education classes with study skills classes. Write to explain why you agree or disagree with this idea.**

Role	Audience	Form	Topic	Strong verb
Parent of a student at this school who disagrees with replacing physical education classes	The entire school district	Letter to the editor in the newspaper	Physical education is necessary for students.	<i>persuade</i>
Student trying to get in shape for wrestling tryouts	The school Principal	Personal letter	I need physical education class so I can increase my strength.	<i>beg</i> <i>plead</i>

3. Divide the class into three groups, and give each group one of the attached “Released English Writing SOL Prompts.” Ask each group to come up with three ideas for their prompt, using the RAFTS strategy.
4. Have the groups share their prompt and their ideas for writing with the whole class.

5. Have students individually pick one of the prompts and one of the prewriting ideas for it and draft a response to the prompt.

.

## **Released English Writing SOL Test Prompts**

---

### **Prompt No. 980**

**You have been asked to plan an after-school program for your school. Think about activities that students might enjoy, and write about this after-school program.**

---

### **Prompt No. 881**

**Imagine that your school will soon be adding something new. What do you think should be added? It may be a new club, or a new class that you would like to take. It might be before school, during school, or after school. Write to convince your principal that your idea is the one that should be added. Be sure to be specific and explain your reasons.**

---

### **Prompt No. 906**

**Imagine you have a time machine and you are able to transport one person from the past to the present for one day. Whom would you choose? Write about why you chose this person and your visit with this person.**

---