Where do we get our VALUES?

Do you remember where you learned that honesty is the best policy? Or that hard work pays off? We get our values from a patchwork of different sources, including important people in our lives, the communities around us, and mass media. The boy in the story you’re about to read gets many of his values from his grandparents, but as you’ll see, these values are put to the test.

LIST IT Take one minute to list some of the values that are important to you. Circle the value that most influences how you live your life. Then, as a class, generate a list that reflects the group’s responses, and discuss where you learned these values.
TEXT ANALYSIS: CULTURAL CONTEXT
Authors write within a cultural context, which includes the events, social problems, traditions, and values in the world around them. This cultural context is often reflected in the themes, or messages about life, that authors share and in the characters they create.

Read the biography on this page to learn more about the cultural context in which Joseph Bruchac writes. Then, as you read “The Snapping Turtle,” notice how Bruchac’s themes and characters reflect his background.

READING SKILL: COMPARE AND CONTRAST
When you compare two or more things, you identify ways in which they are alike. When you contrast them, you find ways in which they are different. Thinking about characters’ similarities and differences can help you recognize their qualities and values. In “The Snapping Turtle,” you will compare and contrast
- the narrator and other boys
- the narrator’s grandmother and grandfather
As you read, use Venn diagrams to compare and contrast these characters’ attitudes, backgrounds, and values.

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT
Restate each sentence, using a different word or phrase for the boldfaced word.
1. My philosophy is “Leave nothing but footprints.”
2. The memorial garden seemed to give the hero immortality.
3. Amy and I like to trapse around the meadow.
4. I have no inclination to go indoors when it’s nice outside.
5. It takes craftiness to successfully trick a raccoon.
6. I cache my camping gear behind a tree while I hike.
7. Following their migration route, the geese flew north.
8. The thick undergrowth made the forest impregnable.
9. The basking sunbather enjoyed the afternoon breeze.
10. Undaunted, the bird flew on in search of food.

Complete the activities in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
My grandmother was working in the flower garden near the road that morning when I came out with my fishing pole. She was separating out the roots of iris. As far as flowers go, she and I were agreed that iris had the sweetest scent. Iris would grow about anywhere, shooting up green sword-shaped leaves like the mythical soldiers that sprang from the planted teeth of a dragon. But iris needed some amount of care. Their roots would multiply so thick and fast that they could crowd themselves right up out of the soil. Spring separating and replanting were, as my grandmother put it, just the ticket.1

Later that day, I knew, she would climb into our blue 1951 Plymouth to drive around the back roads of Greenfield, a box of iris in the back seat. She would stop at farms where she had noticed a certain color of iris that she didn’t have yet. Up to the door she would go to ask for a root so that she could add another splash of color to our garden. And, in exchange, she would give that person, most often a flowered-aproned and somewhat elderly woman like herself, some of her own iris.

It wasn’t just that she wanted more flowers herself. She had a philosophy. If only one person keeps a plant, something might happen to it. Early frost, insects, animals, Lord knows what. But if many have that kind of plant, then it may survive. Sharing meant a kind of immortality. I didn’t quite understand it then, but I enjoyed taking those rides with her, carrying boxes and cans and flowerpots with new kinds of iris back to the car. “Going fishing, Sonny?” she said now.

Of course, she knew where I was going. Not only the evidence of the pole in my hand, but also the simple facts that it was a Saturday morning in late May and I was a boy of ten, would have led her to that natural conclusion. But she had to ask. It was part of our routine.

1. just the ticket: the perfect solution.

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UNIT 7: HISTORY, CULTURE, AND THE AUTHOR

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CULTURAL CONTEXT

What is one attitude or belief expressed in lines 10–22? Tell whether you think this belief reflects the cultural context in which the work was written.
“Un-hun,” I answered, as I always did. “Unless you and Grampa need some help.” Then I held my breath, for though my offer of aid had been sincere enough, I really wanted to go fishing.

Grama thrust her foot down on the spading\(^2\) fork, carefully levering out a heavy clump of iris marked last fall with a purple ribbon to indicate the color. She did such things with half my effort and twice the skill, despite the fact I was growing, as she put it, like a weed. “No, you go on along. This afternoon Grampa and I could use some help, though.”

“I’ll be back by then,” I said, but I didn’t turn and walk away. I waited for the next thing I knew she would say.

“You stay off of the state road, now.”

In my grandmother’s mind, Route 9N, which came down the hill past my grandparents’ little gas station and general store on the corner, was nothing less than a Road of Death. If I ever set foot on it, I would surely be as doomed as our four cats and two dogs that met their fates there.

“Runned over and kilt,” as Grampa Jesse put it.

Grampa Jesse, who had been the hired man for my grandmother’s parents before he and Grama eloped, was not a person with book learning like my college-educated grandmother. His family was Abenaki Indian, poor but honest hill people who could read the signs in the forest, but who had never traipsed far along the trails of schoolhouse ways. Between Grama’s books and Grampa’s practical knowledge, some of which I was about to apply to bring home a mess of\(^3\) trout, I figured I was getting about the best education a ten-year-old boy could have. I was lucky that my grandparents were raising me.

“I’ll stay off the state road,” I promised. “I’ll just follow Bell Brook.”

Truth be told, the state road made me a little nervous, too. It was all too easy to imagine myself in the place of one of my defunct pets, stunned by the elephant bellow of a tractor-trailer’s horn, looking wild-eyed up to the shiny metal grill; the thud, the lightning-bolt flash of light, and then the eternal dark. I imagined my grandfather shoveling the dirt over me in a backyard grave next to that of Lady, the collie, and Kitty-kitty, the gray cat, while my grandmother dried her eyes with her apron and said, “I told him to stay off that road!”

I was big on knowledge but very short on courage in those years. I mostly played by myself because the other kids my age from the houses and farms scattered around our rural township regarded me as a Grama’s boy who would tell if they were to tie me up and threaten to burn my toes with matches, a ritual required to join the local society of pre-teenage boys. A squealer. And they were right.

I didn’t much miss the company of other kids. I had discovered that most of them had little interest in the living things around them. They were noisier than Grampa and I were, scaring away the rabbits that we could creep right

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2. **spading**: digging.
3. **a mess of**: an amount of (food).
up on. Instead of watching the frogs catching flies with their long, gummy
tongues, those boys wanted to shoot them with their BB guns. I couldn’t
imagine any of them having the patience or **inclination** to hold out a hand
filled with sunflower seeds, as Grampa had showed me I could, long enough
for a chickadee to come and light on an index finger.

Even fishing was done differently when I did it Grampa’s way. I knew for
a fact that most of those boys would go out and come home with an empty
creel. They hadn’t been watching for fish from the banks as I had in the weeks
before the trout season began, so they didn’t know where the fish lived. They
didn’t know how to keep low, float your line in, wait for that first tap, and
then, after the strike that bent your pole, set the hook. And they never said
thank-you to every fish they caught, the way I remembered to do.

Walking the creek edge, I set off downstream. By mid-morning, my bait
can of moss and red earthworms that Grampa and I had dug from the edge of
our manure pile was near empty. I’d gone half a mile and had already caught
seven trout. All of them were squaretails, native brook trout whose sides were
patterned with a speckled rainbow of bright circles—red, green, gold. I’d only
kept the ones more than seven inches long, and I’d remembered to wet my
hand before taking the little ones off the hook. Grasping a trout with a dry
hand would abrade the slick coat of natural oil from the skin and leave it open
for infection and disease.

As always, I’d had to keep the eyes in the back of my head open just as
Grampa had told me to do whenever I was in the woods.

“Things is always hunting one another,” he’d said.

And he was right. Twice, at places where Bell Brook swung near Mill Road
I’d had to leave the stream banks to take shelter when I heard the ominous
 crunch of bicycle tires on the gravel. Back then, when I was ten, I was smaller
than the other boys my age. I made up for it by being harder to catch. Equal
parts of **craftiness** and plain old panic at being collared by bullies I viewed as
close kin to Attila the Hun kept me slipperier than an eel.

From grapevine tangles up the bank, I’d watched as Pauly Roffmeier,
Ricky Holstead, and Will Backus rolled up to the creek, making more noise
than a herd of hippos, to plunk their own lines in. Both times, they caught
nothing. It wasn’t surprising, since they were talking like jaybirds, scaring
away whatever fish might have been within half a mile. And Will kept lighting
matches and throwing them down to watch them hiss out when they struck
the water. Not to mention the fact that I had pulled a ten-inch brook trout
out of the first hole and an eleven incher out of the second before they even
reached the stream.

I looked up at the sky. I didn’t wear a watch then. No watch made by man
seemed able to work more than a few days when strapped to my wrist. It was
a common thing on my Grampa’s side of the family. “We jest got too much
’lectricity in us,” he explained.

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4. Attila the Hun: a barbarian leader who successfully invaded the Roman Empire in the A.D. 400s.
Without a watch, I could measure time by the sun. I could see it was about ten. I had reached the place where Bell Brook crossed under the state road. Usually I went no further than this. It had been my boundary for years. But somewhere along the way I had decided that today would be different. I think perhaps a part of me was ashamed of hiding from the other boys, ashamed of always being afraid. I wanted to do something that I’d always been afraid to do. I wanted to be brave.

I had no need to fish further. I had plenty of trout for our supper. I’d cleaned them all out with my Swiss Army knife, leaving the entrails where the crows and jays could get them. If you did that, the crows and jays would know you for a friend and not sound the alarm when they saw you walking in the woods. I sank the creel under water, wedged it beneath a stone. The water of the brook was deep and cold and I knew it would keep the flesh of the trout fresh and firm. Then I cached my pole and bait can under the spice bushes. As I looked up at the highway, Grama’s words came back to me:

“Stay off the state road, Sonny.”

“Under,” I said aloud, “is not on.”

Then, taking a deep breath, bent over at the waist, I waded into the culvert that dove under the Road of Death. I had gone no more than half a dozen steps before I walked into a spider web so strong that it actually bounced me back. I splashed a little water from the creek up onto it and watched the beads shape a pattern of concentric circles. The orb-weaver sat unmoving in a corner, one leg resting on a strand of the web. She’d been waiting for the vibration of some flying creature caught in the sticky strands of her net. Clearly, I was much more than she had hoped for. She sat there without moving. Her wide back was patterned with a shape like that of a red and gold hourglass. Her compound eyes, jet black on her head, took in my giant shape. Spiders gave some people the willies. I knew their bite would hurt like blue blazes, but I still thought them graced with great beauty.

“Excuse me,” I said. “Didn’t mean to bother you.”

The spider raised one front leg. A nervous reaction, most likely, but I raised one hand back. Then I ducked carefully beneath the web, entering an area where the light was different. It was like passing from one world into another. I sloshed through the dark culvert, my fingertips brushing the rushing surface of the stream, the current pushing at my calves. My sneakered feet barely held their purchase on the ridged metal, slick with moss.

When I came out the other side, the sunlight was blinding. Just ahead of me the creek was overarched with willows. They were so thick and low that there was no way I could pass without either going underwater or breaking a way through the brush. I wasn’t ready to do either. So I made my way up the

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5. **entrails** (ənˈtrālz): the internal organs.
6. **culvert** (kərˈvərt): a drain that passes under a road.
7. **the willies**: a feeling of fear and/or disgust.
8. **held their purchase**: gripped; refrained from slipping.
bank, thinking to circle back and pick up the creek farther down. For what purpose, I wasn't sure, aside from just wanting to do it. I was nervous as a hen yard when a chicken hawk is circling overhead. But I was excited, too. This was new ground to me, almost a mile from home. I'd gone farther from home in the familiar directions of north and west, into the safety of the woods, but this was different: Across the state road, in the direction of town; someone else's hunting territory. I stayed low to the ground and hugged the edges of the brush as I moved. Then I saw something that drew me away from the creek: The glint of a wider expanse of water. The Rez, the old Greenfield Reservoir.

I'd never been to the Rez, though I knew the other boys went there. As I'd sat alone on the bus, my bookbag clasped tightly to my chest, I'd heard them talk about swimming there, fishing for bass, spearing bullfrogs five times as big as the little frogs in Bell Brook.

I knew I shouldn't be there, yet I was. Slowly I moved to the side of the wide trail that led to the edge of the deep water, and it was just as well that I did: Their bikes had been stashed in the brush down the other side of the path. They'd been more quiet than usual. I might have walked up on them if I hadn't heard a voice...
I picked up some of the dark mud with my fingertips and drew lines across my cheeks. Grampa had explained it would make me harder to see. Then I slid to a place where an old tree leaned over the bank, cloaked by the cattails that grew from the edge of the Rez. I made my way out on the trunk and looked. . . .

“It’s not gonna come up,” Ricky said. He picked up something that looked like a makeshift spear. “You lied.”

“I did not. It was over there. The biggest snapper I ever saw,” Will shaded his eyes with one hand and looked right in my direction without seeing me.

“If we catch it, we could sell it for ten dollars to that man on Congress Street. They say snapping turtles have seven different kinds of meat in them.”

“Hmph,” Pauly said, throwing his own spear aside. “Let’s go find something else to do.”

One by one, they picked up their fishing poles and went back down the path. I waited without moving, hearing their heavy feet on the trail and then the rattle of their bike chains. . . . All I could think of was that snapping turtle.

I knew a lot about turtles. There were mud turtles and map turtles. There was the smart orange-legged wood turtle and the red-eared slider with its cheeks painted crimson as if it was going to war. Every spring Grama and Grampa and I would drive around, picking up those whose old migration routes had been cut by the recent and lethal ribbons of road. Spooked by a car, a turtle falls into that old defense of pulling head and legs and tail into its once impregnable fortress. But a shell does little good against the wheels of a Nash or a DeSoto.9

Some days we’d rescue as many as a dozen turtles, taking them home for a few days before releasing them back into the wild. Painted turtles, several as big as two hands held together, might nip at you some, but they weren’t really dangerous. And the wood turtles would learn in a day or so to reach out for a strawberry or a piece of juicy tomato and then leave their heads out for a scratch while you stroked them with a finger.

Snappers though, they were different. Long-tailed, heavy-bodied and short-tempered, their jaws would gape wide and they’d hiss when you came up on them ashore. Their heads and legs were too big to pull into their shells and they would heave up on their legs and lunge forward as they snapped at you. They might weigh as much as fifty pounds, and it was said they could take off a handful of fingers in one bite. There wasn’t much to recommend a snapping turtle as a friend.  

Most people seemed to hate snappers. Snappers ate the fish and the ducks; they scared swimmers away. Or I should say that people hated them alive.

Dead, they were supposed to be the best-eating turtle of all. Ten dollars, I thought. Enough for me to send away to the mail-order pet place and get a pair of real flying squirrels. I’d kept that clipping from Field and Stream magazine

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9. Nash . . . DeSoto: car brands that were popular during the 1950s.
thumbtacked over my bed for four months now. A sort of plan was coming into my mind.

People were afraid of getting bit by snappers when they were swimming. But from what I’d read, and from what Grampa told me, they really didn’t have much to worry about.

“Snapper won’t bother you none in the water,” Grampa said. If you were even to step on a snapping turtle resting on the bottom of a pond, all it would do would be to move away. On land, all the danger from a snapper was to the front or the side. From behind, a snapper couldn’t get you. Get it by the tail, you were safe. That was the way.

And as I thought, I kept watch. And as I kept watch, I kept up a silent chant inside my mind.

*Come here, I’m waiting for you.*
*Come here, I’m waiting for you.*

Before long, a smallish log that had been sticking up farther out in the pond began to drift my way. It was, as I had expected, no log at all. It was a turtle’s head. I stayed still. The sun’s heat beat on my back, but I lay there like a basking lizard. Closer and closer the turtle came, heading right into water less than waist deep. It was going right for shore, for the sandy bank bathed in sun. I didn’t think about why then, just wondered at the way my wanting seemed to have called it to me.

When it was almost to shore, I slid into the water on the other side of the log I’d been waiting on. The turtle surely sensed me, for it started to swing around as I moved slowly toward it, swimming as much as walking. But I lunged and grabbed it by the tail. Its tail was rough and ridged, as easy to hold as if coated with sandpaper. I pulled hard and the turtle came toward me. I stepped back, trying not to fall and pull it on top of me. My feet found the bank, and I leaned hard to drag the turtle out, its clawed feet digging into the dirt as it tried to get away. A roaring hiss like the rush of air from a punctured tire came out of its mouth, and I stumbled, almost losing my grasp. Then I took another step, heaved again, and it was mine.

Or at least it was until I let go. I knew I could not let go. I looked around, holding its tail, moving my feet to keep it from walking its front legs around to where it would snap at me. It felt as if it weighed a thousand pounds. I could only lift up the back half of its body. I started dragging it toward the creek, fifty yards away. It seemed to take hours, a kind of dance between me and the great turtle, but I did it. I pulled it back through the roaring culvert, water gushing over its shell, under the spider web, and past my hidden pole and creel. I could come back later for the fish. Now there was only room in the world for Bell Brook, the turtle, and me.

The long passage upstream is a blur in my memory. I thought of salmon leaping over falls and learned a little that day how hard such a journey must be.
When I rounded the last bend and reached the place where the brook edged our property, I breathed a great sigh. But I could not rest. There was still a field and the back yard to cross.

My grandparents saw me coming. From the height of the sun it was now mid-afternoon, and I knew I was dreadful late.

“Sonny, where have you . . . ?” began Grama.

Then she saw the turtle.

“I’m sorry. It took so long because of . . .” I didn’t finish the sentence because the snapping turtle, undaunted by his backward passage, took that opportunity to try once more to swing around and get me. I had to make three quick steps in a circle, heaving at its tail as I did so.

**undaunted** (ūndəntid) adj. not discouraged; courageous

**Visuals**

What details on the snapping turtle do you notice most? What details are difficult to see?
“Nice size turtle,” Grampa Jesse said.
My grandmother looked at me. I realized then I must have been a sight.
Wet, muddy, face and hands scratched from the brush that overhung the creek.
“I caught it at the reservoir,” I said. I didn’t think to lie to them about where
I’d been. I waited for my grandmother to scold me. But she didn’t.
“Jesse,” she said, “Get the big washtub.”
My grandfather did as she said. He brought it back and then stepped next
to me.
“Leave go,” he said.
My hands had a life of their own, grimly determined never to let loose of
that all-too-familiar tail, but I forced them to open. The turtle flopped down
Before it could move, my grandfather dropped the big washtub over it. All was
silent for a minute as I stood there, my arms aching as they hung by my side.
Then the washtub began to move. My grandmother sat down on it and it
stopped.
She looked at me. So did Grampa. It was wonderful how they could focus
their attention on me in a way that made me feel they were ready to do
whatever they could to help.
“What now?” Grama said.
“I heard that somebody down on Congress Street would pay ten dollars for a
snapping turtle.”
“Jack’s,” Grampa said.
My grandmother nodded. “Well,” she said, “if you go now you can be
back in time for supper. I thought we were having trout.” She raised an
eyebrow at me.
“I left them this side of the culvert by 9N,” I said. “Along with my pole.”
“You clean up and put on dry clothes. Your grandfather will get the fish.”
“But I hid them.”
My grandmother smiled. “Your grandfather will find them.” And he did.
An hour later, we were on the way to Congress Street. . . . In the 1950s,
Congress Street was like a piece of Harlem10 dropped into an upstate town.
We pulled up in front of Jack’s, and a man who looked to be my grandfather’s
age got up and walked over to us. His skin was only a little darker than my
grandfather’s, and the two nodded to each other.
My grandfather put his hand on the trunk of the Plymouth.
“What you got there?” Jack said.
“Show him, Sonny.”
I opened the trunk. My snapping turtle lifted up its head as I did so.
“I heard you might want to buy a turtle like this for ten dollars,” I said.
Jack shook his head. “Ten dollars for a little one like that? I’d give you
two dollars.”
I looked at my turtle. Had it shrunk since Grampa wrestled it into the trunk?

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10. Harlem: a New York City neighborhood that was and is largely African American.
“That’s not enough,” I said.
“Three dollars. My last offer.”
I looked at Grampa. He shrugged his shoulders.
“I guess I don’t want to sell it,” I said.
“All right,” Jack said. “You change your mind, come on back.” He touched his hat with two fingers and walked back over to his chair in the sun.
As we drove back toward home, neither of us said anything for a while.
Then my grandfather spoke.
“Would five dollars’ve been enough?”
“No,” I said.
“How about ten?”
I thought about that. “I guess not.”
Why you suppose that turtle was heading for that sandbank?” Grampa said.
I thought about that, too. Then I realized the truth of it.
“It was coming out to lay its eggs.”
“Might be.”
I thought hard then. I’d learned it was never right for a hunter to shoot a mother animal, because it hurt the next generation to come. Was a turtle any different?
“Can we take her back?” I asked.
“Up to you, Sonny.”
And so we did. Gramp drove the Plymouth right up the trail to the edge of the Rez. He held a stick so the turtle would grab onto it as I hauled her out of the trunk. I put her down and she just stayed there, her nose a foot from the water but not moving.
“We’ll leave her,” Grampa said. We turned to get into the car. When I looked back over my shoulder, she was gone. Only ripples on the water, widening circles rolling on toward other shores like generations following each other, like my grandmother’s flowers still growing in a hundred gardens in Greenfield, like the turtles still seeking out that sandbank, like this story that is no longer just my own but belongs now to your memory, too.
Comprehension

1. Recall What actions does the narrator take to make sure he fishes responsibly?
2. Recall Why does the narrator decide to cross under the state road?
3. Represent How does the narrator get the snapping turtle out of the water? Reread lines 234–243, and sketch the scene.

Text Analysis

4. Visualize How well does Joseph Bruchac help you visualize the characters, events, and settings in the story? Choose a passage that you find visually descriptive and explain what words and phrases help you picture the scene.

5. Compare and Contrast Characters What are the similarities and differences between Grama and Grampa? Consider their backgrounds, values, and traits. Use the notes from one of your Venn diagrams to help you answer the question, and cite evidence from the story.

6. Analyze Influence of Cultural Context Reread Bruchac’s biography on page 789 to remind you of the culture within which he was raised. In what ways do the themes of “The Snapping Turtle” reflect the values of this culture? In a graphic like the one shown, give examples from the story.

7. Evaluate the Ending Reread the last paragraph of the story. How well do you think it wraps up the plot and summarizes the theme? Refer to specific phrases in the paragraph as you explain your answer.

Extension and Challenge

8. Inquiry and Research In Native American cultures, stories are often used to teach children. Find a retelling of a Native American story, perhaps from one of Joseph Bruchac’s collections, and present it to the class. Explain what lesson it is meant to teach.

Where do we get our VALUES?

The narrator and the other boys in the story appear to have different values. Describe the values the boys exhibit. Where do you think they get these values? Explain your answer.
Vocabulary in Context

**VOCABULARY PRACTICE**

Choose the word in each group that is closest in meaning to the boldfaced word.

1. **craftiness**: (a) intelligence, (b) slyness, (c) dishonesty
2. **traipse**: (a) stroll, (b) slither, (c) bounce
3. **cache**: (a) spend, (b) waste, (c) conceal
4. **migration**: (a) relocation, (b) nesting, (c) settlement
5. **impregnable**: (a) frightening, (b) unguarded, (c) impenetrable
6. **inclination**: (a) wisdom, (b) desire, (c) strength
7. **basking**: (a) sunbathing, (b) swimming, (c) cooking
8. **undaunted**: (a) unhurt, (b) unafraid, (c) uncaring
9. **immortality**: (a) birth, (b) death, (c) permanence
10. **philosophy**: (a) belief, (b) style, (c) story

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN SPEAKING**

- contribute - culture - interpret - perceive - similar

Imagine that the narrator has been asked to tell his class how the Abenaki **culture** views nature. What might he say? Give a speech from his point of view, using at least one of the Academic Vocabulary words.

**VOCABULARY STRATEGY: ANALOGIES**

An analogy is a relationship between pairs of words. To complete an analogy, identify the relationship between the words in the first pair. The second pair of words must relate to each other in the same way. One way that words may be related to each other is by function. For example, **feet** are used for the function of **walking**, just as **wings** are used for the function of **flying**. Another way that words may be related to each other is by description. For example, **cold** describes **snow**, just as **soft** describes a **kitten**.

Analogies are often written as follows—**cold** : **snow** :: **soft** : **kitten**. If the analogy is read out loud, you would say, “**cold** is **to** **snow** as **soft** is **to** **kitten**.”

**PRACTICE** Choose a word from the box to complete each analogy.

| sew | rainbow | elephant | dig |

1. fork : eat :: shovel : ____
2. wet : rain :: colorful : ____
3. stove : cook :: needle : ____
4. delicate : spider web :: strong : ____
Language

◆ **GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT: Form Compound-Complex Sentences**

Review the Grammar in Context note on page 797. A **compound-complex sentence** contains two or more main, or independent, clauses and one or more subordinate, or dependent, clauses. (Recall that a subordinate clause cannot stand alone as a sentence and is introduced by words such as *after, because, if,* and *though.*) Compound-complex sentences can help add variety to writing by allowing short, related sentences to be combined.

*Original:* I did something wrong. You were ready to help. You made me feel safe.

*Revised:* Though I did something wrong, you were ready to help, and you made me feel safe.

**PRACTICE** In each item, combine the sentences to form one compound-complex sentence. Use the first word in parentheses to join two main clauses. Use the second word to change one sentence to a subordinate clause. In each new sentence, underline the main clauses and double underline the subordinate clause.

1. You wanted to add a new color to both your garden and hers. You’d ask the woman for her iris roots. You’d give her some of your own. (*and, if*)
2. I was going to sell the turtle. I didn’t. I remembered your lessons. (*but, after*)
3. We’d catch turtles. Then we’d release them. You didn’t want them to die. (*and, because*)
4. The other boys couldn’t catch fish. We could. We were quiet. (*but, because*)

*For more help with compound-complex sentences, see page R64 in the Grammar Handbook.*

**READING-WRITING CONNECTION**

Demonstrate your understanding of “The Snapping Turtle” by responding to this prompt. Then use the **revising tip** to improve your writing.

**WRITING PROMPT**

**Extended Constructed Response: Opinion**

Do you think that modern American society respects the Native American values described in Joseph Bruchac’s story? Explain why or why not in a **two- or three-paragraph response.**

**REVISITING TIP**

Review your response. Did you include a variety of sentence types? If not, revise your writing. Make sure to include at least one compound-complex sentence.