

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 1*



#### **Key Passage, p. 5-6**

"I failed miserably the first times I tried to fly the kite, but Mother would not let me give up; and eventually I got quick enough and strong enough and smart enough so that my kite would be flying far overhead ---so far away that I would lose sight of the string I had attached to the kite, and the kite would seem to be some colored patch of rainbow that was following me about" (p. 5-6).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Not only was Father a kite maker he was maker of "marvelous" kites. As Mother began to show Moon Shadow how to fly a kite she instructed him that he need to practice on the "ordinary" ones first and must become wiser before he would be able to fly the elegant ones. She did this so that Moon Shadow could appreciate the art of the kites that his father has made.

Is there anything in your life that you had to learn to appreciate before it became yours; were a part of it, or able to purchase it? For example: practicing hard to make the baseball team, or saving your money to purchase a computer.

**Write a paragraph describing what the item, event, or organization was. Why did you want to be a part of it? Did you appreciate it more after you had to work hard for it? Describe the steps you took in order for you to feel like you were ready and now able to appreciate what you were going to purchase or be a part of.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 2*



#### **Key Passage, p. 13**

“And that was that. I won’t go through the tearful good-byes or the boat ride on the river to Canton, the port city, or the first few days on the demon boat. I was young and I was homesick and I was frightened...” (p. 13).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Moon Shadow has decided to leave the only home he knows with a family that has raised him feed him and loved him. His destination: San Francisco to stay with a father he has never met and a place where he does not know the language.

**How would you feel if you were eight and were on your way to a new country where you don’t know the land, the language, the people, and meeting your dad or mother for the first time?**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 3*



#### **Key Passage, p. 23**

“Suddenly, I felt as if I had come home. I can see the town Tang people even now in the late afternoon sun—not as it is now, full of souvenir shops and neon signs, but as it was then. The houses and the stores had all the right colors and shapes, for they had been built not by demons, but by Tang people. It looked much like the streets in Canton, the city in the Middle Kingdom from which I had sailed. The roofs of the buildings here were tiled and arched, and the walls, windows, and doorways were in gold or red or green...” (p. 23).

#### **Writing Prompt**

The “Land of the Golden Mountain” was not what Moon Shadow expected. The land was brown not golden and full of people that appeared to be full of hatred. An invisible line separates the Tang people from the “demon” people.

**Imagine you are Moon Shadow and write a letter to your mother telling her about the new land. Tell her about what she will see if she were to visit. Write one or two paragraphs describing American as it appears thru the eyes of Moon Shadow.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 4*



#### **Key Passage, p. 49**

“Then, in one of your playful moods, you grew as large as the world and tried to blow out the fires in the sun by fanning your wings. For that great crime, your head was cut off and you were reborn among the softskins. And among them you must remain until you prove yourself worthy once again of being a dragon” (p. 49).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Windrider was once a superior dragon that had the ability to heal the sick and great physician of all the dragons but got big headed or over confident and was beheaded for his crimes. Windrider was caught cheating at dice, criticizing beautiful poems and made terrible puns. As a result he lost everything he loved was killed just to be reborn into the mortal world.

**Write of a situation where you were overconfident and the results ended badly or not the way you wanted. Explain what you could have done different and what was the outcome. Use details to explain the situation.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 5*



#### **Key Passage, p. 60**

“But finally, it was time for me to return to the mortal world. It was reluctantly that the Lord said good-bye to me and added, ‘We will save a place at the banquet table for you. You will be eating with us soon, though, if you just remember to watch for the tests and hold to the dragon-ness within that softskin body. Now fare you well’” (60.)

#### **Writing Prompt**

Many times in this book, Windrider must make hard decisions. Always, he tries to imagine what the Dragon would do.

**Write about a paragraph or two about a time when your integrity was tested- when you had to really consider what the right thing to do was before you acted. Explain the situation. What was the result of your actions? Explain how you felt about the results of your choice or choices?**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 6*



#### **Key Passage, p. 75**

“I leaned forward eagerly. ‘Do you think that was the Dragon in disguise? Do you think it was a test?’

Father gave my queue a friendly tweak. ‘You’re too ready to find tests everywhere.’ He grinned. ‘Why can’t he just be demon?’” (p. 75).

#### **Writing Prompt**

**Moon Shadow thinks that every demon they encounter is a Tang in disguise testing Windrider. Have you ever been in a situation where you thought your integrity was being tested and weren’t sure why? Or maybe you have been in a situation and felt that you were being tested to choose between right and wrong.**

In a paragraph write about a time where you felt that your integrity was called into question. Describe the situation and the outcome.

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 7*



#### **Key Passage, p. 83**

“We got a paper saying that I was a partner in the store and owned a thousand *dollars* worth of property: but that was only for the demons. I actually don’t have a share in the store.

‘But you could bring Mother over with that piece of paper.’

Uncle cleared his throat. He did not like what he had to say. ‘Not while I’m the head of this Company. I’d go to the demons and tell them that the paper was a lie.’

‘But if the demons knew that Father wasn’t a real partner in the store, they might send me home as well,’ I said. ‘And maybe the demons would even send Father back home because he lied’” (p. 83).

#### **Writing Prompt**

In today’s reading Moon Shadow finds out that Father lied in order to bring him over. Moon Shadow wants Father to bring Mother over using the same paper. Uncle doesn’t want Windrider to bring his wife over and tells him that if he tries to bring his wife over that he will tell the demons Father lied.

**Is it ever ok to lie? Windrider lies in order to bring his son over. Is there ever a *good* reason to lie? Write a paragraph explaining whether or not you think there is ever a good reason to lie? Is a *good* lie a show of integrity or lack of integrity? Explain why or why not.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 8*



#### **Key Passage, p. 108**

“If you won’t go to the demons, there’s only one other way to make sure that justice is done,’ Father said. ‘And that’s to do it myself.’ There was something about his posture and the look of his eye that reminded of dragons. All the others in the room could feel it, too.

Then I realized that to be a dragon meant more than just taking an interest in the magic of machines. It was also to live by the spirit of dragons, and Father felt that no dragon would let such as act go unpunished.

‘Dragons,’ Father went on, ‘protect their own brood’” (p. 108).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Windrider is deeply distressed by the behavior of Black Dog towards his son. He feels that the Company should go to the Demons police and file a complaint. The Company wants to keep in the “family” and allow the Sleepers to take care of Black Dog.

**Write a paragraph in which you write a letter to Windrider explaining how it is important to have integrity in such difficult situations. Explain in the letter that integrity requires him to do difficult and new things not just easy and accustomed things.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 9*



#### **Key Passage, p. 119**

*"I feel like I've just woken form some long dream. I can follow the dragon's ways better among the demons than among the Tang people" (p. 119).*

#### **Writing Prompt**

Windrider must now live among the demons but appears to not mind. He is not as worried about living among his enemies as the people in the Company. Have you felt that you belonged someplace else then your current position?

**Write a paragraph detailing a time where you believed you didn't fit in someplace? How did it make you feel? Explain what you did about it. Do you still feel that way? If so, what do you think you can do to fix the situation.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 10*



#### **Key Passage, p. 134**

“Father and the demoness talked politely about the neighborhood—where was the best place to shop for what. The demoness seemed genuinely to want to help us, and I began to think that she was one of the good demons. I looked about her kitchen—curiosity got the better of politeness. When I finally finished looking around her kitchen, I realized I had gone through four more of the cookies” (p. 134).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Moon Shadow was hesitant regarding meeting new demons that different than Windrider. Moon Shadow has never seen a demon up close and personal until he meets Miss Whitlaw. Miss Whitlaw and Moon Shadow have only their first impression to decide whether or not they believe the other is good character. Moon Shadow decides that Miss Whitlaw is of good character and genuinely wants to help them.

**Have you ever encountered a person like Miss Whitlaw, different from you in every way, and yet sees you as a person not as someone that is different than them? Write a paragraph explaining why you think it is important not to judge people based on your differences but on their similarities. Make sure to include a time where you were judged by the color of your skin and not what is on the inside. Explain how it made you feel. Use that example to aid in your answer.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings*, Day 11



#### Key Passage, pg. 149

*“A dragon do terrible thing, yes,’ I said, struggling for the right words. ‘But dragon, they do good thing too. Bring rain for crops. They king among all...all reptile. They emperor of all animal” (p. 149).*

#### Writing Prompt

Moon Shadow is shocked to learn that Miss Whitlaw thinks that dragons eat people and destroy towns. Moon Shadow has decided he is going to educate Miss Whitlaw about the “true” identity of dragons and explain to Miss Whitlaw that not all dragons are bad.

**Have you ever felt the need to change a person’s perspective of something or someone? Write a paragraph describing a time where you wanted to change someone else’s thoughts about a person. Explain why it was so important for you to change their mind. How did you convince him/her/them? Were you successful? Explain how did you felt afterward?**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 12*



#### **Key Passage, p. 148-149**

“Another thing to say for the demoness was her genuine interest in learning about people as people. Where some idiot like myself would have been smug and patronizing, the demoness really wanted to learn. And like father, she was not afraid to talk to me like an equal. *‘I don’t think I understand’*” (p. 148-149).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Even though Miss Whitlaw has grown up with the idea that dragons are bad and eat people she is open minded to what Moon Shadow has to say to her about dragons.

**Are you an open minded or closed-minded person? Can anyone change your perspective about a certain issue or subject? Write a paragraph explaining why you think it is important to be open-minded. Use examples to support your reasoning.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings*, Day 13



#### **Key Passage, p. 158**

“Then he turned the glider over in his hands. I took some more scraps of paper with clean backs out of his pocket. It was my turn to take notes (and also get some writing practice in demonic). ‘*It need more wing surface*,’ Father mused. And he went into a lot of jargon about *center of gravity* and *wing configuration*” (p. 158).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Windrider has a passion about flying, science and aeronautical books. His passion has become an obsession for him. He works and read only to improve his understanding of how airplanes are able to fly like kites.

**Write a paragraph about Windrider explaining his love for model airplanes. Provide an introduction, a body and a conclusion. Use the five W’s and consider the following questions. Where does Windrider’s love for flying come from? How did he get his name? How does he know so much about airplanes when he has never flown? What sources has he used to gain information? Do you think he will ever actually fly?**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 14*



#### **Key Passage, p. 182**

“Robin stood at the steps. She heard the shrill voices of the boys and suddenly she nodded her head as if she understood. I did not want to be patronized.

*‘Well, why don’t you go fly your glider?’ I demanded.*

*‘Oh, I don’t know,’ she said airily. ‘It’s a little too late to do it. I guess I should get dinner ready, too.’ She kicked me lightly. ‘Curse you for being a good influence on me’” (p. 182).*

#### **Writing Prompt**

Robin and Moon Shadow have been spending a lot of time with each other, each learning the other’s mannerisms, behavior, and personality. Moon Shadow does not have to tell Robin that he is scared to go outside, yet she understands why when she hears the voices of the boys.

**Write a paragraph explaining how Robin amplifies the word integrity. What difficult thing did she do? Give three examples in which Robin has shown integrity in the novel.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings*, Day 15



#### **Key Passage, p. 191**

“I can see that she really wanted to make herself feel better. No sense taking chances with the supernatural, and so on. I could tell her train of thought because I sometimes carried the little cross she had given me in my picket--- just as insurance. I mean maybe *American* demons could be scared off by *American* charms” (p. 191).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Everyone has something they keep around the house or wear around their neck that reminds them of being safe, or maybe something that reminds them to stay motivated. For example, some one may keep a rock in there purse to remind that they things are not has hard as it appears. Some have pictures that remind them that some issues are bigger then them. And some have pictures and items that are for cultural and other personal reasons.

**Is there anything that you wear or carry in your purse or pocket that reminds you to stay positive or protects you from evil? Write a paragraph explaining what this item is and its significance. Finally explain why it is important to you.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings*, Day 16



#### **Key Passage, p. 213**

*“There’s a fire south of Market,’ the demon said. Market Street was the main street of the city and ran diagonally across it. Dividing the city in half. ‘There’s no water for the hoses. They’re still going to try to make a stand on Market, but I don’t see what they can do. The fire will just spread and spread’” (p. 213).*

#### **Writing Prompt**

You have been selected as a writer from the San Francisco Gazette to do a story of the earthquake.

**Write a paragraph in which you retell the events and aftermath of the earthquake. Include as much detail as possible. Include the five W’s. Draw some conclusion for your readers and explain what can be learned from this horrible disaster.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 17*



#### **Key Passage, p. 223**

“The demons we passed had the strangest looks on their faces, too. Once they had been rich and wealthy, and now all they owned were the clothes on their backs and their lives, and they were in danger of losing those, too. They looked shocked, as if not quite believing that all of this could happen to them. I could not help remembering what fine houses and mansions had once been there, and what richly dressed demons had eaten and drunk within them. And now they were all gone in less than a minute. The demons we met would have been grateful now for a crust of bread or cup of water—things they would have turned their backs on just twelve hours ago” (p. 223).

#### **Writing Prompt**

It is amazing how within one second, one minute, one hour, or one day everything that we have can be stripped from us without warning. In the reading today, the rich and wealthy are now poor and dirty. The people that they once ignored or mocked will now be their neighbor and/or rescuer.

**Write a paragraph explaining the importance of being appreciative of the things and people in our lives. Why is it important? Explain the relationship between being appreciative and having integrity.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 18*



#### **Key Passage, p. 248-249**

“Poor Miss Whitlaw had lost her house in the fire, and so had lost her chief financial support. The money in her cash box was meant to help Robin through college. Miss Whitlaw’s land might be worth something once the city was rebuilt, but that meant holding on to it for quite a while. In the meantime, she would have to support herself some other way. Miss Whitlaw had borne her losses with a courage that I had come to expect of her. She had cheerfully taken a job as a housekeeper to some demons over in Oakland across the bay” (p. 248-249).

#### **Writing Prompt**

The aftermath of the earthquake marks the end of a very important chapter in the Whitlaw’s and the Lee’s life. It also marks the beginning of a new chapter.

**Pretend you are Miss Whitlaw or Windrider and write a paragraph explaining and reflecting on how this difficult experience has changed you in a lasting way. What is one thing that you appreciate more now than you did before the earthquake and the fires? Explain why. If you are Windrider, do you wish you had stayed in the Middle Kingdom with your wife? Explain why. If you are Miss Whitlaw, what will you do now that you have lost your home and your financial support?**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 19*



#### **Key Passage, p. 254-255**

“A superior man admits the truth,’ Uncle snapped. I could see Father was beat. He hung his head for the longest time, staring down at his hands. I could only think of some immortal who had suddenly woken one morning to find himself in a man’s body and realized he was being punished. For the second times in my life, I made an important decision to be with him” (p. 254-255).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Moon Shadow has agreed to follow his father’s dream of flying even if it means working and leaving his family behind.

**Pretend you are Moon Shadow. Write a paragraph describing and explaining your process of deciding whether or not to follow your father into exile. Use inner dialogue to show the reader what you are thinking.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings, Day 20*



#### **Key Passage, p. 274**

“To be honest, it did not sound like much of a plan to me. Father was more of a mechanical artist than a businessman. He wanted so badly to fly that it never occurred to him that people might not pay to see him fly. Sometimes people want a thing so much that they lose their common sense” (p. 274).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Windrider gave up everything safe, comfortable, and stable to fulfill his dream of flying. In the process going hungry, being cold, and not knowing if his dream of flying will pay itself off.

**Have you ever wanted something so bad that you were willing to give up everything so you can have it? Write a paragraph explaining what you wanted. What did you give up? Looking back, was it worth it? Would you do it again? Explain why or why not.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings*, Day 21



#### **Key Passage, p. 282-283**

“We had to go, but how? Dragonwings was too big to be carried on our backs and we had no money to hire a wagon. We tried all the next day, but no one would rent us one on credit—no to the *Crazy Chinaman*. Even my employer in the store refused, saying it was too much money. It looked like were stuck. We would be able to take away only what we could carry” (p. 282-283).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Make a list of things you would take with you if you in a suitcase. Imagine that you are going to be moving around from place to place for the next years. What are the most important things you have?

**How would you feel if you were told you have three days to pack everything you own in one suitcase and move? What personal items would you bring with you? Write a paragraph describing what things you would bring with you and explaining why you chose these items. Remember everything you take has to fit in one suitcase.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Dragonwings*, Day 22



#### **Key Passage, p. 293**

“Don’t worry about losing it either,’ Uncle said. ‘We’ll give you the money to pay your rent, too. Call it a loan, compensation.’ He wagged a finger at Father. ‘And don’t give me any pigheaded reasons why you can’t take it. Pride’s always been the great sin of our family.’

‘Look on it as an act of charity to accept our money,’ White Deer said. ‘It would make us all feel much better.’

Father considered that for a moment. He set down his cup and looked around with a smile. ‘It’s not a shameful thing to take money from friends, and you are my friends. I thought I ought to go it alone with just my son, but I was wrong. I’ll own up to it’” (p. 293).

#### **Writing Prompt**

In today’s reading *both* Uncle and Windrider realize that it was pride and pride alone that has caused them both pain, sadness, and almost a friendship. But it was also pride that has brought them together so that as a *family*, they can help Windrider in his time of need. Not only do they pay his rent so that he can avoid eviction but they also help him bring his Dragonwings to the top of the hill so that he may fly.

**Write a paragraph in which you describe and explain in detail a time where you had to swallow your pride and show integrity in a situation. Are you glad you did? Explain why or why not. Or maybe you didn’t swallow your pride and you lost someone important to you. Explain what happened.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Dragonwings*, Day 23



### Key Passage, p. 313

“It was not until the next summer that Father got the paperwork straightened out and the proper demon officials bribed, and then he sailed for the Middle Kingdom to bring back Mother. He sailed on a Saturday, so I was able to see the Whitlaws on the very next day” (p. 313).

### Writing Prompt

Windrider is on his way to go pick up his wife and bring her to San Francisco. It has been about seven years since Moon Shadow has seen his mother and about fifteen years since Windrider has seen his wife.

**In two paragraphs retell Windrider’s journey in San Francisco and explain how integrity played a vital role in him becoming a real partner in the Company and his ability to finally bring his wife over to San Francisco.**

### Final Writing Assignment

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As a final writing assignment, students will create an Emergency Preparedness document. Your document should include important telephone numbers, local and nearby shelters, and your community evacuation routes. The plan should also include what do with the old and injured and meeting point just in case you get separated from your group or family members. Included in your plan should be a list of items you should always have stowed away in case of a disaster such as first aid kit, water, food, radio and flashlight. Don’t forget a plan for meeting parents or children.

Resources:

<http://www.ready.gov/plan-for-your-risks>

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/plan/>