

## **Paragraph on Guidance and Wisdom in “Hamadi”**

In the two scenes listed below from the short story “Hamadi,” by Naomi Shihab Nye, Susan’s friend Tracy feels bad and is suffering because of relationship-problems. The first scene occurs at school, when Susan tries to help Tracy by offering her some carefully-considered advice. The second scene occurs during the Christmas-carol outing, when Saleh Hamadi attempts to do the same thing.

**Carefully reread both scenes. Then choose one of the scenes, and discuss your chosen scene in a fully-developed paragraph that answers the writing prompt. Support your ideas with clearly-explained reasoning and specific evidence from the scene.**

**Writing Prompt: In your chosen scene, what important *advice* or *guidance* is Tracy given, and why is this advice *wise, important, or worth knowing*—especially for teenagers?**

- For a “B,” use one significant quotation effectively, and follow the format in the example below.
- For an “A,” use two significant quotations effectively, and follow the format in the example.

### **Scene 1 – Susan Tries to Help ( pg.247)**

Tracy’s eyes looked steamy. “You know that place where Gibran says, ‘Hate is a dead thing. Who of you would be a tomb?’”

Susan nodded. Tracy continued. “Well, I hate someone. I’m trying not to, but I can’t help it. I hate Debbie for liking Eddie and it’s driving me nuts.”

“Why shouldn’t Debbie like Eddie?” Susan said. “*You* do.”

Tracy put her head down on her arms. A gang of cheerleaders walked by giggling. One of them flicked her finger in greeting.

“In fact, we *all* like Eddie,” Susan said. “Remember, here in this book—wait and I’ll find it—where Gibran says that loving teaches us the secrets of our hearts and that’s the way we connect to all of Life’s heart? You’re not talking about liking or loving, you’re talking about owning.”

Tracy looked glum. “Sometimes you remind me of a minister.”

Susan said, “Well, just talk to me someday when *I’m* depressed.”

### **Scene 2 – Hamadi Tries to Help (pg.250)**

Two thin streams of tears rolled down Tracy’s face. Eddie had drifted to the other side of the group and was clowning with Cameron, doing a tap dance shuffle. “While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy . . .” Susan and Saleh Hamadi noticed her. Hamadi peered into Tracy’s face, inquiring, “Why? Is it pain? Is it gratitude? We are such mysterious creatures, human beings!”

Tracy turned to him, pressing her face against the old wool of his coat, and wailed. The song ended. All eyes were on Tracy and this tall, courteous stranger who would never in a thousand years have felt comfortable stroking her hair. But he let her stand there, crying, as Susan stepped up firmly on the other side of Tracy, putting her arms around her friend. And Hamadi said something Susan would remember years later, whenever she was sad herself, even after college, a creaky anthem sneaking back into her ear, “We go on. On and on. We don’t stop where it hurts. We turn a corner. It is the reason why we are living. To turn a corner. Come, let’s move.”

Above them, in the heavens, stars lived out their lonely lives. People whispered, “What happened? What’s wrong?” Half of them were already walking down the street.

## Guide for Organizing Your Paragraph:

In your paragraph, make sure that you do these things well:

1. Begin with a clear claim or topic sentence that directly answers the writing prompt.
2. Transition to your first supporting quotation by introducing the passage's context (the speaker and situation).
3. Give the quotation (and parenthetical page citation), and punctuate it all properly.
4. Explain the significance of the quotation (or passage, description, statement, evidence, conversation, etc.) or what it shows us. (However, do NOT say, "This quote...")
5. Transition to your next quotation, and repeat steps 2-4 again for it.

Use the example paragraph below as a model.

| What to write in each section of your paragraph | An example from <i>The Call of the Wild</i> , by Jack London   |
|---|--|
| 1. Claim / Topic Sentence                       | <p><b>In <i>The Call of the Wild</i> by Jack London, the protagonist is Buck, a dog who must mature and learn to take care of himself after he is kidnapped from California and taken to the harsh and primitive environment of Alaska.</b></p>  |
| 2. Transition #1                                | <p>Buck begins to change when he arrives in Alaska and attacks the men responsible for kidnapping him. He repeatedly charges one man and attempts to bite him, but the man is holding a club, a weapon Buck has never encountered before.</p>  |
| 3. Quotation #1 (with page number)              | <p>"A dozen times he charged, and as often the club broke the charge and smashed him down.... He saw, once for all, that he stood no chance against a man with a club. He had learned the lesson, and in all his after life he never forgot it. That club was a revelation. It was his introduction to the reign of primitive law" (34).</p>   |
| 4. Explanation #1                               | <p><b>This passage reveals that</b> Buck must face some harsh facts of life. He is not home anymore, and he has no one to protect him—not his former master, Judge Miller, nor society's laws of right and wrong. In order to survive on his own in the gold-rush country of Alaska, Buck must use not only his strength, but also his intelligence, to fight his enemies and adapt to his new, primitive reality.</p>   |
| 5. Transition #2                                | <p>Later in the story, Buck continues to learn and change when he defeats and kills his chief rival, a dog named Spitz, and takes Spitz's place as leader of the pack.</p>   |
| 6. Quotation #2 (with page number)              | <p>The narrator explains: "Buck had lessoned from Spitz... and knew there was no middle course. He must master or be mastered; while to show mercy was a weakness. Mercy did not exist in the primordial life. It was misunderstood for fear, and such misunderstandings made for death. Kill or be killed, eat or be eaten, was the law; and this mandate, down out of the depths of Time, he obeyed" (68).</p>   |
| 7. Explanation #2                               | <p><b>The narrator's words reveal that</b> Buck is not only strong enough, but also wise enough, to take care of himself in one of the most primitive and hostile environments on Earth. In the wild, Buck cannot afford to show mercy or compassion to his main rival, because doing so could lead to Buck's death. In this sense, Buck's coming-of-age encompasses everything he learns in order to take care of himself and survive in one of the harshest environments on Earth.</p> |

