

BACK TO SCHOOL MATTERS

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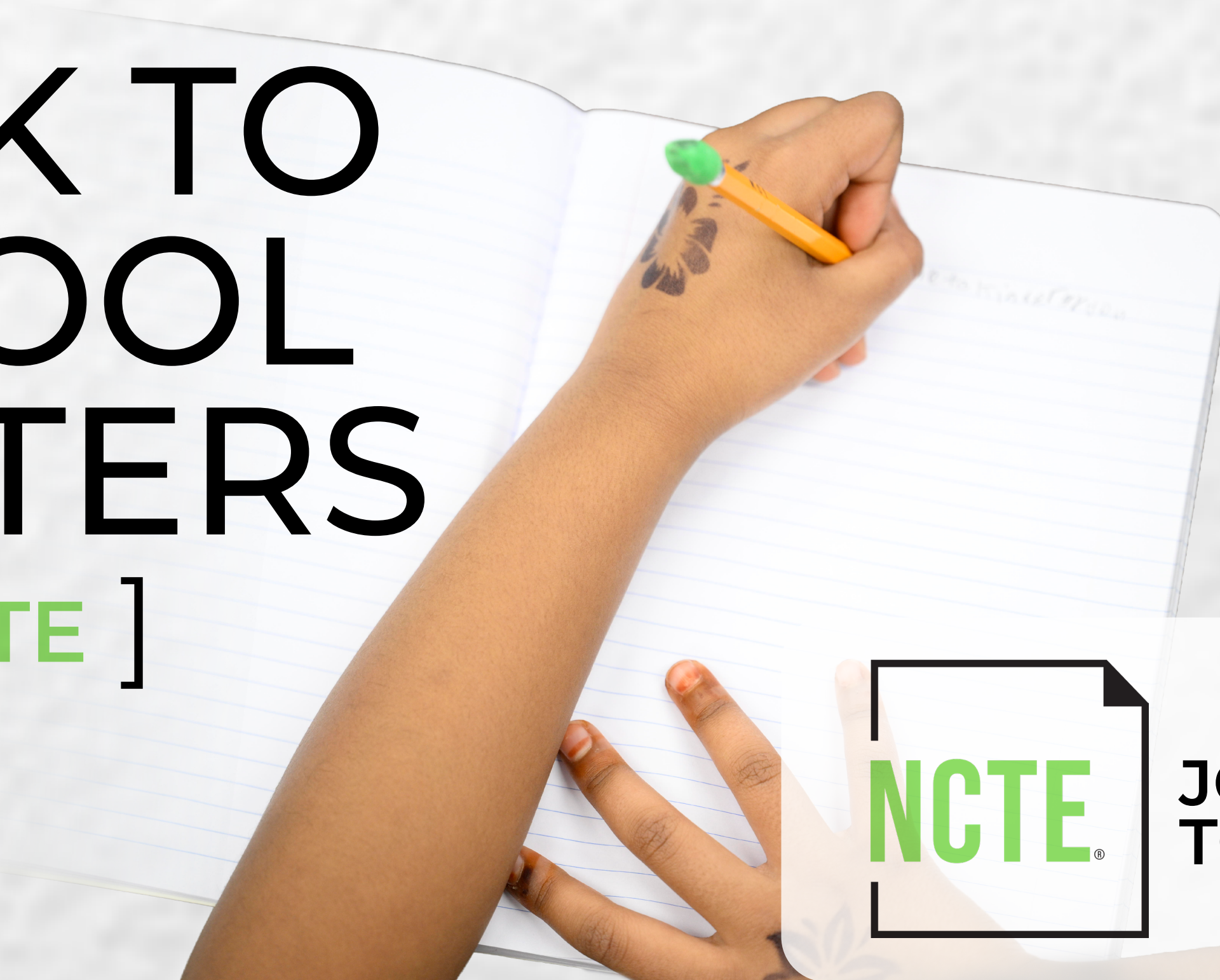


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56 ♦ NUMBER THE STARS

But she didn't. Instead, Kirsti pointed at her friend from the train. "I wish we could have stopped to visit the castle. Kings live there. And queens."

Annemarie sighed in exasperation with her little sister. "They do not," she said. "They did in the old days. But there aren't any kings there now. Denmark only has one king, anyway. And he lives in Copenhagen."

But Kirsti had pranced away, skipping along the sidewalk. "Kings and queens," she sang happily. "Kings and queens."

Mama shrugged and smiled. "Let her dream, Annemarie. I did the same when I was her age." She turned, leading the way along a tiny, twisting street, heading toward the outskirts of the village. "Things have hardly changed here since I was a girl," she said. "My Aunt Gitte lived there, in that house" — she pointed — "and she's been dead for years. But the house is the same. She always had wonderful flowers in her garden." She peered over the low stone wall and looked at the few flowering bushes as they passed the house. "Maybe they still do, but it's the wrong time of year — there are just those chrysanthemums left."

Mama looked at her watch. "I wonder if Henrik will be back yet. But it doesn't matter. The house is always unlocked. Come on, girls, we'll walk. It isn't far, just a little under two miles. And it's a nice day. We'll take the path through the woods instead of the road. It's a little longer, but it's so pretty."

"Didn't you love the castle when we went through Helsingør, Ellen?" Kirsti asked. She had been talking about Kronborg Castle ever since they had seen it, sprawling massive and ancient, beside the sea.

IS THE WEATHER GOOD FOR FISHING? ♦ 57

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