

The Write Path

**English Language Arts:
Informing Ourselves and
Others Through Writing and Speaking**

Teacher Guide





AVID PRESS®

Copyright © 2018
AVID Center · San Diego, CA
All rights reserved.
WPELA2S2-20180802

Log on to MyAVID resources frequently, as new items and supplemental materials are available and updated throughout the academic year.

www.avid.org



Table of Contents

Introduction

The AVID College Readiness System iii

Section 1: Writing 1

Writing to Learn 3

Process Writing 46

Pre-Writing 52

Drafting 101

Reader Response 144

Peer and Self-Response 154

Revising 179

Editing 190

Publication of Student Writing 199

Evaluation and Reflection 203

Integrating WICOR: Sample Writing Units 230

On-Demand Writing 264

Focus Lessons 280

Section 2: Oral Language 323

Listening 325

Speaking 337

Discussion and Debate 338

Presentations 378

Interpretation and Performance 389

Speeches and Public Speaking 401

Section 3: Appendices 413

Appendix A: Structuring Collaboration 414

Appendix B: Inquiry and Critical Thinking 424

Appendix C: Rigor and Scaffolding in
Writing, Speaking, and Listening 428

Appendix D: Resources 432

Appendix E: Technology Resources 437

Index 440

About the Authors

Stacie Valdez

Stacie Valdez worked in the Wichita Public Schools for 33 years as a secondary English and AP English Literature teacher. Her experience with AVID since 2001 includes being the first AVID Elective teacher in Kansas and site coordinator at North High School, a site that has received many national awards including the honor of being a National Demonstration Site. She has also worked as a consultant, national staff developer, and curriculum writer. Currently, she serves as an AVID program manager for AVID for Higher Education. Stacie is a National Board Certified Teacher and a past Kansas Teacher of the Year for Region 4.

Acknowledgement

Stacie Valdez: I would like to acknowledge and thank the classroom teachers who contributed student samples for this book, including: Brooke Johnson, Raegan McGinnis, Elizabeth Roberts, and my husband, Rod, who is always willing to try new strategies when I ask. I also want to recognize the dedication and commitment of my teacher colleagues who strive daily to do what is best for students; you make this an honorable profession!

Marcia Carter

Active in supporting and working with AVID since 1992, Marcia has conducted numerous workshops for NCTE, IRA, ASCD, and AVID at a variety of sites across the US and is author and co-author of four Scholastic and Heinemann texts, chapters in textbooks, and various professional journal articles, including NCTE's "English Journal." A former district Teacher of the Year, Marcia has taught a range of English classes from grades six through college and has served as an AVID regional coordinator in California.

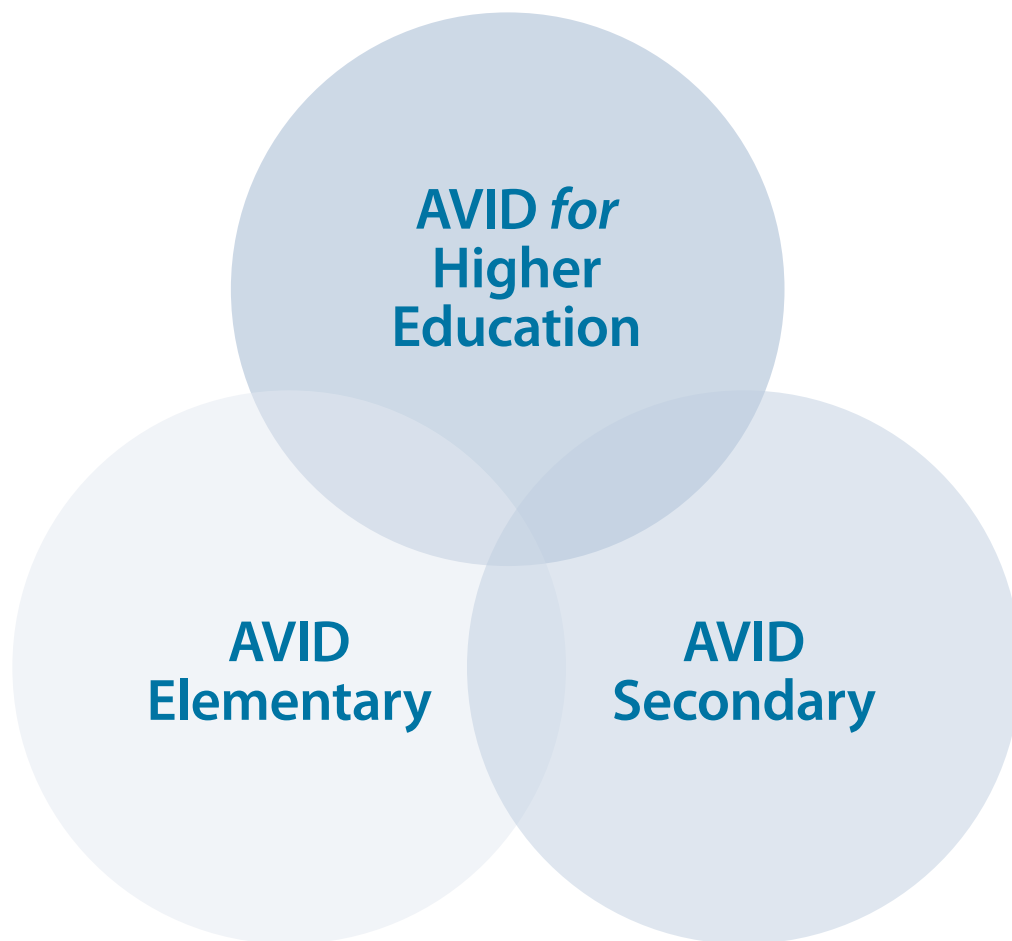
Jami Rodgers

Jami D. Rodgers has been an educator in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) since 1991. He was a middle school English and social studies teacher for 16 years, during which time he served as department chair, AVID teacher, AVID coordinator, mentor, and inclusion teacher. He was twice elected Teacher of the Year where he taught. He implemented AVID in CMS in 1997 as the teacher and coordinator for one of the first four pilot schools in the district. He became a national AVID Staff Developer in 2000 and is currently the Lead Staff Developer and writer for ELA I. After earning principal and curriculum instructional specialist certifications, he has worked in the Teacher Professional Development Department, served as an Academic Facilitator, principal intern, and AVID administrator. He currently serves as a Curriculum Specialist in literacy for the Humanities Department in CMS.

Introduction

The AVID® College Readiness System

The AVID College Readiness System (ACRS) is an elementary through postsecondary system that brings together educators, students, and families around a common goal of AVID's mission: to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. The system is represented by the figure below, which shows how AVID's mission is the foundation of the system.



AVID's Mission

AVID's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society.

The Write Path Library

In keeping with AVID's mission, The Write Path Library is designed to support secondary content-area teachers who, as part of the AVID Site Team, are working to increase student college readiness on their campus. These books, organized by core content areas, show teachers how AVID strategies and best practices in content teaching can be maximized to help students access rigorous curriculum, think critically, and achieve reading and writing skills necessary for college.

The Write Path English Language Arts guides are specifically designed to showcase key strategies for critical reading, thinking, speaking, listening, and writing in middle school and high school classrooms. *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading* focuses on reading strategies and how to unpack text (print and non-print) to discover meaning about ourselves and others. *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* focuses on writing and oral language strategies and how to create print and non-print text for communication and self-expression.

Vertical Teaming

The goal of this book is to offer a variety of strategies that are adaptable for implementation in all classrooms. The Advanced Placement® or honors teacher can use any of the strategies in this book, as can the sixth grade teacher—what will be different will be how the strategies are applied. For instance, while the Advanced Placement teacher might use the RAMP (role, audience, mode, and purpose) Shifting lesson to help students shift written responses appropriate for the task, the sixth grade teacher might use the RAMP strategy to help students identify the necessary elements and considerations for a written response. The goal for both groups of students is the same: to be able to interpret a prompt and produce an appropriate written or oral response. The approach is different based on the level at which students are prepared to work.

Vertical teaming is not just a way to look at articulation across grade levels; it is also a way to think about differentiation within a classroom. The typical classroom contains students at various levels of readiness and skill. To meet these various needs, it is helpful to think about how to make parts of a lesson more foundational or more advanced (the language of vertical teaming) for particular groups of students. Each strategy description in the book includes ideas for how to increase scaffolding and how to increase rigor as the strategy is implemented with students.

Access and Equity

The ultimate purpose for using AVID strategies and best practices in the content areas is to ensure all students have equal access to rigorous curriculum and the development of college readiness skills. If students come to the language arts classroom with little experience in writing or speaking, they may disengage from the class out of boredom, frustration, and even despair. The strategies included in this book, when used in well-designed units and lessons, can help students learn the skills necessary for linking writing to their reading, speaking, listening, and thinking. These skills in turn can give students a foothold into curriculum to which they might not otherwise gain access. Since one hallmark of college-ready students is their ability to handle complex writing assignments, it is paramount that the middle school and high school language arts classroom engage students in successfully tackling progressively more challenging writing tasks.

A planning process that involves a backward mapping approach is necessary to provide the proper support for students: educators should be aware of the complexity of writing and speaking tasks at the college level and the skills necessary for proficiently completing these tasks, so that a continuum can be created. A sixth-grade teacher needs to understand what a student must be able to do, not only in the seventh grade, but also through high school. Many schools utilize pre-



Advanced Placement (AP®) classes to align skills necessary for access and success in AP classes; but that is not the only system. Schools can develop their own continuum as long as the goal remains constant—the development of skills for success in rigorous coursework. Purposefully choosing language strategies that will teach students how to engage with and perform difficult tasks is one of the critical ways language arts teachers can ensure access to rigorous curriculum for all students, and thus help them become college-ready.

For more information about rigor, see Appendix C: Rigor and Scaffolding in Writing, Speaking, and Listening.

Strategic Use of WICOR in Language Arts for Critical Thinking

Brain research shows us that learning has to be organized in such a way that students can build on existing schema to create new neural pathways. Pathways are built only if the brain has an opportunity to “wrestle” with new information—to figure out how the new fits with the old. This “wrestling” is best accomplished when we ask students to work actively with new information—they have to think, talk, write, read, and ask questions. When students are passive recipients of information, there is little cognitive wrestling

and critical thinking and therefore little long-term learning—new pathways are unlikely to be formed. Brain research also helps us understand students’ motivation and engagement. Spencer Kagan tells us that when learning is social, it helps carry rigorous inquiry—it helps make the critical inquiry worthwhile by engaging the social mammalian part of our brain. To maintain interest and motivation, the brain needs that social engagement, but it also needs emotionally engaging, relevant, and thought-provoking topics to excite the amygdala and keep the brain’s attention on the rigorous topic. Daniel Willingham reminds us that we don’t like to think unless the conditions are right: we need the brain to be engaged at all of these multiple levels. Students are more likely to be able to produce appropriate written responses if the language arts teacher provides stimulating opportunities and strategies for them to use writing, speaking, and listening.

In AVID, we strategically embed WICOR (writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading) into our courses to engage students in active learning and critical thinking. Each writing and oral language strategy in this book incorporates WICOR to move students to higher levels of thinking in language arts. Whether using these strategies or ones of your own making, it is imperative to consider WICOR as their foundation.

W: Writing is a cornerstone of the language arts classroom and the key element of this book. The focus in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* includes “writing to learn” activities, process writing, and timed writing. As an extension of critical thinking, writing is seen as a pivotal skill and tool in AVID. Numerous strategies presented here will enable students to master the necessary skills for success in writing and speaking to prepare them for the college campus and the workforce.

I: Inquiry is the foundation upon which all progress is born. It is “the question” that moves the learner to action, whether that be an explicit question or a set of implicit questions that drive the process of working through ideas to a solution. Questioning the text and questioning what is seen, heard, or discussed are at the heart of the language arts classroom, as is the learners’ questioning of their own thinking or learning, making the implicit questions more “visible” in the process. Inquiry is inherent in the acts of creating a visual or written piece, or formulating an oral, physical, or musical response. The key is for teachers to establish an environment where it is safe for students to engage in authentic inquiry, where wondering, questioning, and hypothesizing are fostered, and where students recognize how to push each other’s thinking to higher levels.

To understand what it means to move to higher levels of cognition, AVID uses **Arthur Costa’s Levels of Thinking**. Benjamin Bloom’s Taxonomy is also a point of reference and can be used just as well, but students seem to find Costa’s hierarchy easier to remember (three tiers vs. Bloom’s six tiers). Costa’s levels can be described as:

Level 1: Input:

This is the level at which we find, gather, identify, and recall information; it requires us to think literally.

Level 2: Processing:

This is the level at which we make sense of information, using what we know from our sources to make connections and create relationships; it requires us to think analytically and inferentially.

Level 3: Output:

This is the level at which we apply information and try it out in new situations; it requires us to think creatively, evaluatively, and hypothetically.

See Appendix B: Inquiry and Critical Thinking for a more extensive listing of terms to define each level, to see sample questions to promote each level of thinking, and for suggestions about how to teach Costa’s Levels of Thinking.

C: Collaboration in AVID is about working with others toward common goals and tapping into that mammalian side of the brain discussed earlier to increase motivation and attention to rigor. The strategies in this book demonstrate how to use collaboration to help students learn the language arts content. For collaboration to be truly effective, teachers have to structure such activities to maximize engagement and accountability. See Appendix A: Structuring Collaboration.

O: Organization includes the ability to organize and manage “stuff” and the ability to organize and manage learning and self. In the language arts classroom, teachers can teach/reinforce explicit organizational skills by helping students find systems for recording homework and organizing their materials in a binder, in their backpack, and online. Our primary focus, however, is teaching/reinforcing the more implicit organizational skills that help students see how their brains work, how they make sense of and organize information, how they apply specific strategies and monitor their outcomes and how they take control of their learning. Included in the strategies throughout this book are opportunities for students to think strategically and metacognitively—to understand the steps involved in a task and to think about their thinking and processes. These take the form of written or verbal reflections, learning logs, and journals. Students are regularly asked to debrief experiences, so they understand the learning process, what they have learned, and what skills they have acquired, and so they can identify where they might apply that learning or those skills again.

R: Reading is the primary focus of *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*, and the goal is to help students

read for meaning versus reading for identification. To develop the necessary college readiness skills, students have to practice close and critical reading, and teachers have to model and teach the skills using the Critical Reading Process.

21st Century Skills and College Readiness

In an age where “21st century skills” have become synonymous with “survival skills” for students entering college or a career track, it is important to reference them here. 21st century skills generally refer to a set of interdisciplinary skills that have been identified as important for students to have if they are going to be successful in life and careers in the coming decades. These skills include the ability to:

- **use technology** to gather, decipher, select, and evaluate information in digital, scientific, or verbal formats and use the information ethically;
- **communicate clearly** and to design and share information in diverse environments for a variety of purposes and in multiple formats;
- **work effectively in diverse groups**, compromising and sharing responsibility;
- **think critically and solve problems** by analyzing and reasoning, asking questions, and making sound judgments;
- **think and work creatively**, developing innovative and original ideas and using failure as a stepping stone to success.

For more information about 21st century skills, see www.p21.org.

These 21st century skills are embedded within the strategies in this book, in order to demonstrate how the teaching of these skills can be part of the regular language arts classroom. The language arts have always included a focus on oral and written communication and analysis of reading. However, we must also model how to use these skills for authentic and strategic purposes and then

ask students to think metacognitively about how they’ve developed these skills and will apply them in the future. Only then will we make the best use of our opportunity to prepare students for the world beyond the classroom.

Many teachers have actively embraced the use of technology in the language arts classroom, but quite a few teachers shy away from technology because they are uncomfortable or lack the knowledge about how to adequately use these tools. Where it is appropriate, the strategies in this book highlight possible uses of technology for implementation or for extension.

It is important to realize, though, that technology is not just a vehicle for implementing strategies; it actually provides a different way of “seeing” and making sense of the world. Our high-tech students enter our classrooms with a whole new literacy that we want to engage. Students accustomed to “Googling” a topic for instant research, to texting as a way of creating a shared dialogue, and to creating multi-media images as a means of self-expression have developed very complex literacy skills, some of which teachers might not fully understand. It is incumbent upon us to engage students by bridging their high-tech literacy skills to some of the more traditional literacy skills found in the language arts classroom. Students are poised to engage in rich and complex intertextual study and writing if teachers are willing to seize the opportunity. For this to be possible, teachers need to be willing to use new technology themselves to know where the technology and text intersections fit. For more ideas related to technology, see Appendix E: Technology Resources.

How to Use This Book

The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking is designed to be used as a part of the AVID College Readiness System. An overview of that system, including the AVID mission, WICOR, the Write Path Library, and how The Write Path ELA books fit into the system, was presented in the preceding sections.

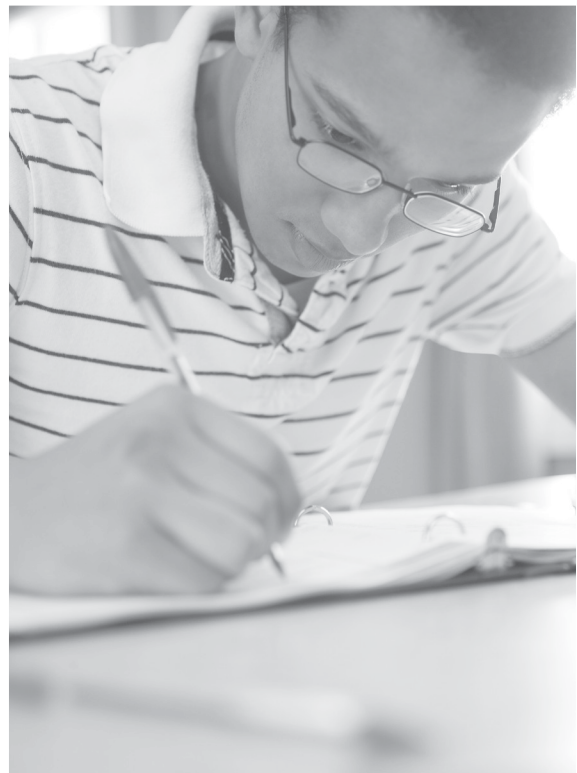
The stages for Process Writing are identified separately in the first section of the book, and each stage contains numerous strategies to engage students in that particular step of the process. Strategies may be repeated for future writing tasks so students can begin to internalize the steps and best practices for completing a writing task. Each strategy description in the book includes ideas for how to increase scaffolding and how to increase rigor, depending on the levels of the students. Other writing sections in this book focus on Writing to Learn and On-Demand Writing. The second section of the book focuses on Oral Language and presents strategies for Listening, Presentations, Discussions, Debates, Speeches, and Performances. Each section presents strategies, teacher tips, and ideas for classroom implementation and differentiation.

It is not intended that you, the teacher, will use all the activities in a given section or use them in the order presented. Rather, you will select strategies and implement them based on your curriculum and your students' needs. Nor should you feel limited by the strategies presented; we hope the models we provide will serve as a jumping-off point for you to begin designing your own WICOR-based activities.

There is also a section of Sample Writing Units, which give clear examples of how to integrate WICOR into typical curriculum units using specific writing strategies. Finally, the Appendices contain

additional resources, ideas, and definitions. These are especially useful in building understanding of how to use collaborative structures, how to develop students' inquiry skills, and how to plan for increased rigor and scaffolding in the language arts classroom.

The goal of this book is to inform you of the "why" behind the AVID approach to English language arts and then support you with the "how" so you can guide your students using effective speaking and writing strategies. Ultimately, you will be providing students the keys to unlock writing for themselves, giving them access to a world of important skills and ideas and the advanced curriculum necessary to be college-ready.





Writing

According to The Nation’s Report Card on writing in 2011, “Writing in the 21st century is defined by its frequency and its efficiency. It is clear that the ability to use written language to communicate with others—and the corresponding need for effective writing instruction and assessment—is more relevant than ever” (US Department of Education, 2011, p. 1). Despite this importance of writing, 54% of eighth graders and 52% of twelfth graders performed at the Basic level on the NAEP 2011 writing test. Clearly, our students will be better served if we can provide them with more writing practice as well as opportunities to learn the sophisticated skills needed for communication in their future. Since AVID’s goal is to prepare students for the rigorous demands of college and for full participation in our democratic society, it stands to reason that writing should be integral to our instruction. While we are teaching writing, we are also teaching thinking and reasoning. We are helping students discover what they think and then how to communicate that thinking.

The writing lessons in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* text practice with many different genres of writing that require students to analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and argue. The lessons also provide students with repeated opportunities to use and internalize various steps of the writing process

that are essential to producing effective writing. Students who understand how they work as writers tend to produce writing that is more developed and sophisticated; in other words, they become successful at harnessing their thinking and using writing as a means of communicating that thinking.

Meeting the challenge of college and career readiness means more than teaching students reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills within a classroom. Being a literate graduate ready for college requires students to be able to utilize all sources of information to build upon what they already know and to utilize that information to collaborate with others, to work within diverse groups, to come to a consensus in a group, and to look beyond their immediate environment to see the worldview. If the students of today are to guide the functioning of government, the balancing of economies, and national planning for the future, they must be able to consider realms beyond their own.

Novice teachers often lament the lack of an explicit step-by-step guidebook for developing student writing. But time and practice reveal there is no explicit guidebook for each situation, and there is little college instruction in teacher education programs outlining a remedy for each obstacle to

classroom writing instruction. It isn't enough to quote "If you can think it, you can write it" to students. We must provide the day-by-day scaffolding that moves students closer to composing fluency. *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* text provides, among other strategies, instruction and practices to use in implementation of the writing process, utilization of rubrics to inform student writing, helpful guidance in teaching students how to respond to a variety of writing genres, and focus lessons to address the many student composing habits that deter understanding.

The practices that refine writing to "inform ourselves and others" are presented and demonstrated in this new Write Path English Language Arts text. Here is where AVID provides strategies that reinforce

the skills used by thinkers and writers. Here is also where the metacognitive practice of reflection is emphasized because reflection is a vital step toward knowing the why and how of planning to write. Here is where practices to encourage development of voice are presented, and here is where the relationship between writing and thinking becomes explicit. Perhaps here is where the true shibboleth is "If you can think about it, it's because you wrote about it."

U.S. Department of Education, NCES. (2011). *The nation's report card: Writing 2011*. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2011/2012470.pdf>.



Writing to Learn

Introduction

Writing to learn is informal writing that helps students record and make sense of their learning. These strategies are usually short, impromptu, or otherwise informal writing tasks enabling students to think through key concepts or ideas presented. Examples include taking notes, reflecting in a learning log, and annotating a text. While all writing is technically “writing to learn” in that it helps to clarify and document thinking, the types of writing strategies included here differ from more formal types of assignments. Writing-to-learn types of writing tend to be more informal and exploratory in nature, and they are not intended for a specific audience.

Writing to learn is a powerful source of self-expression. Writing and learning are directly related. Students cannot write well without thinking critically about the subject matter, their purpose for writing, and their intended audience. Writing well helps students become better thinkers because it involves a series of intentional acts. Writing proficiency requires more than the practice of writing alone, for writing is linked through high engagement strategies with skills in reading, inquiry, speaking, listening, and collaboration. Although this section focuses on writing to learn, many of the writing strategies are designed with a layering of the other WICOR strategies for supporting student writing.

Writing-to-learn strategies are essential to supporting students in their own communication development. Jimmy Santiago Baca writes of the humiliation of being inarticulate and explains how the power of words, of language, and of written and spoken communication transformed and empowered him:

Ashamed of not understanding and fearful of asking questions, I dropped out of school in the ninth grade. . . There was nothing so humiliating as being unable to express myself, and my inarticulateness increased my sense of jeopardy. . . When at last I wrote my first words on the page, I felt an island rising beneath my feet like the back of a whale. As more and more words emerged, I could finally rest: I had a place to stand for the first time in my life. – Baca (2000)

This book will present the following writing-to-learn strategies in detail: Cornell Notes, Graphic Organizers, the Interactive Notebook, Quickwrites, and Learning Logs. Other writing-to-learn strategies can be found in the *Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading* book. The chart on the following page lists the strategies and section numbers for these strategies.

“Never say more than is necessary.”

– Richard Brinsley Sheridan,
The Rivals

Writing to Learn Strategies

Reference *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Strategy	Location
KWL and KNL	Section 1, pages 51 – 53
Cornell Notes	Section 1, pages 105 – 133
Dialectical Journal	Section 1, pages 142 – 147
Graphic Organizers (also included here)	Section 1, pages 172 – 195
One-Pager	Section 1, pages 239 – 242
3 – 2 – 1	Section 1, pages 263 – 267

Graphic Organizers

Goal

Students will learn several ways to visually organize their ideas to facilitate learning.

Rationale

Graphic organizers empower students to facilitate their understanding of key concepts by allowing them to identify key points, classify ideas, and analyze information in a visual way. Graphic organizers may be used to structure writing tasks, to help in problem solving and decision making, or used for studying, planning, researching, or brainstorming. This allows students to master subject matter faster and more efficiently using these writing-to-learn tools.

Teacher References

- Graphic Organizers

Student Handouts

- Graphic Organizers

Instructional Steps

1. Select the appropriate graphic organizer template for use by examining the task or required thinking skill. Choose the tool that best fits the thinking skill or topic. Model the use of the tool for students. Reference the Student Handout: Graphic Organizers. The following is a list of skills targeted for use with graphic organizers:
 - Compare and Contrast
 - Brainstorming
 - Elaboration/Description
 - Sequence/Chronological Order
 - Cause and Effect
 - Claim and Evidence
2. Direct students to focus on the relationships between the template elements and examine the meanings and desired outcomes attached to them. When creating an organizer, the student must prioritize the information by determining which parts of the material are the most important and where each item should be placed in the visual representation. The possibilities associated with a topic become clearer as the student's ideas are classified visually.
3. Show how the process of converting a mass of data/information/ideas into a graphic map can lead to increased understanding and insight into the topic at hand. Support students as they learn to incorporate the use of the information produced graphically into their writing and final products.
4. Use future lessons and tasks for students as opportunities to frequently model and use appropriate graphic organizers. Remind students to use them independently in other classes, during on-demand writing, or any time the tools fit the required thinking skills for a task.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide completed examples of organizers for students to examine and reference. Have students apply the elements of the templates to their own tasks to showcase their thinking.
- Have students draw their own templates to save copies and reinforce the elements of each organizer.

Increased Rigor

- Allow students the opportunity to bring to class their own creative ways to depict graphic representations of their thinking. Students may even create new templates to share with the class.

Using Technology

- Provide electronic copies of templates for students to use and reference on a regular basis.

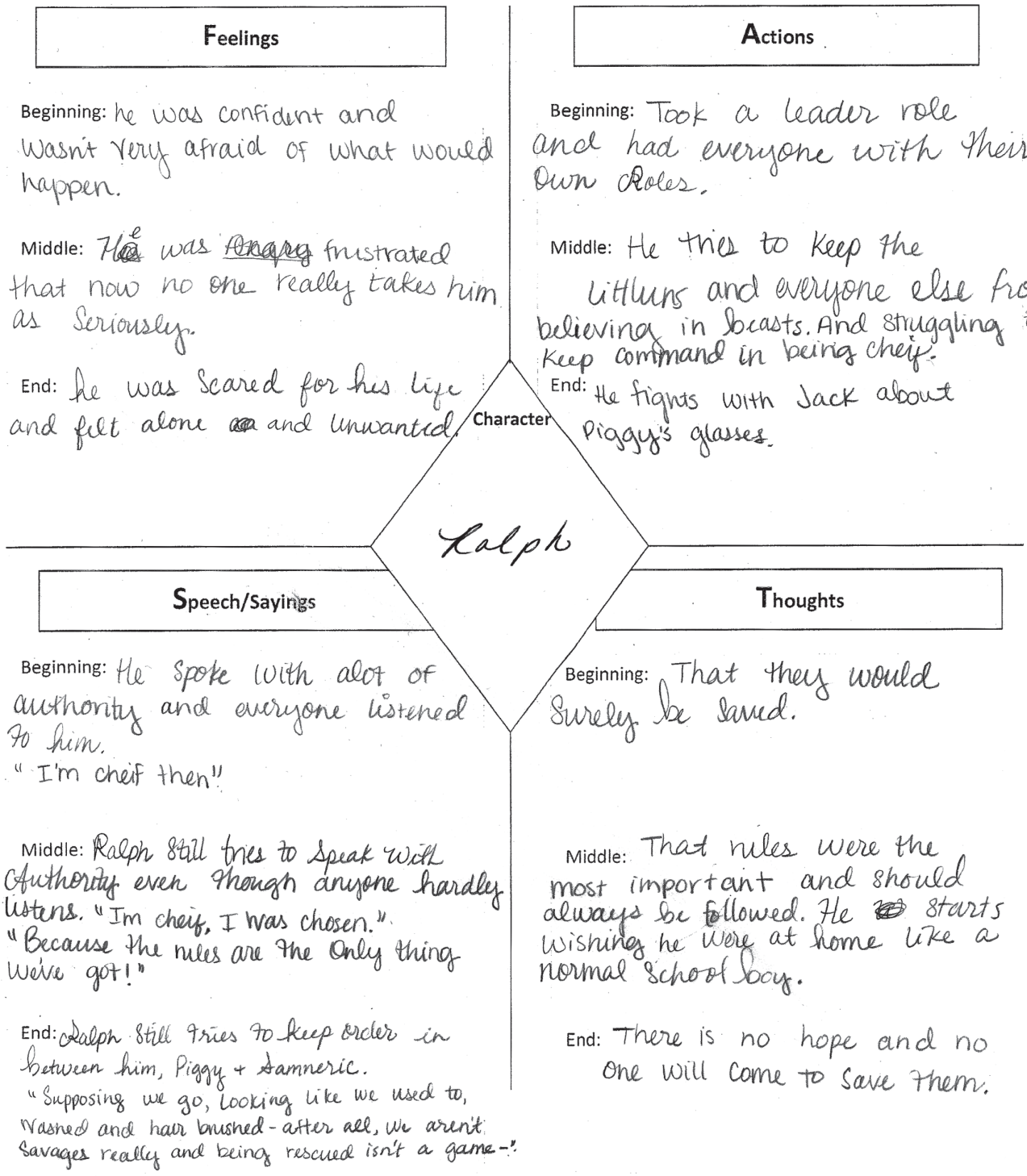
“A great many people think that polysyllables are a sign of intelligence.”

– Barbara Walters

Name: Liliana Fargues Date: 12/6/12

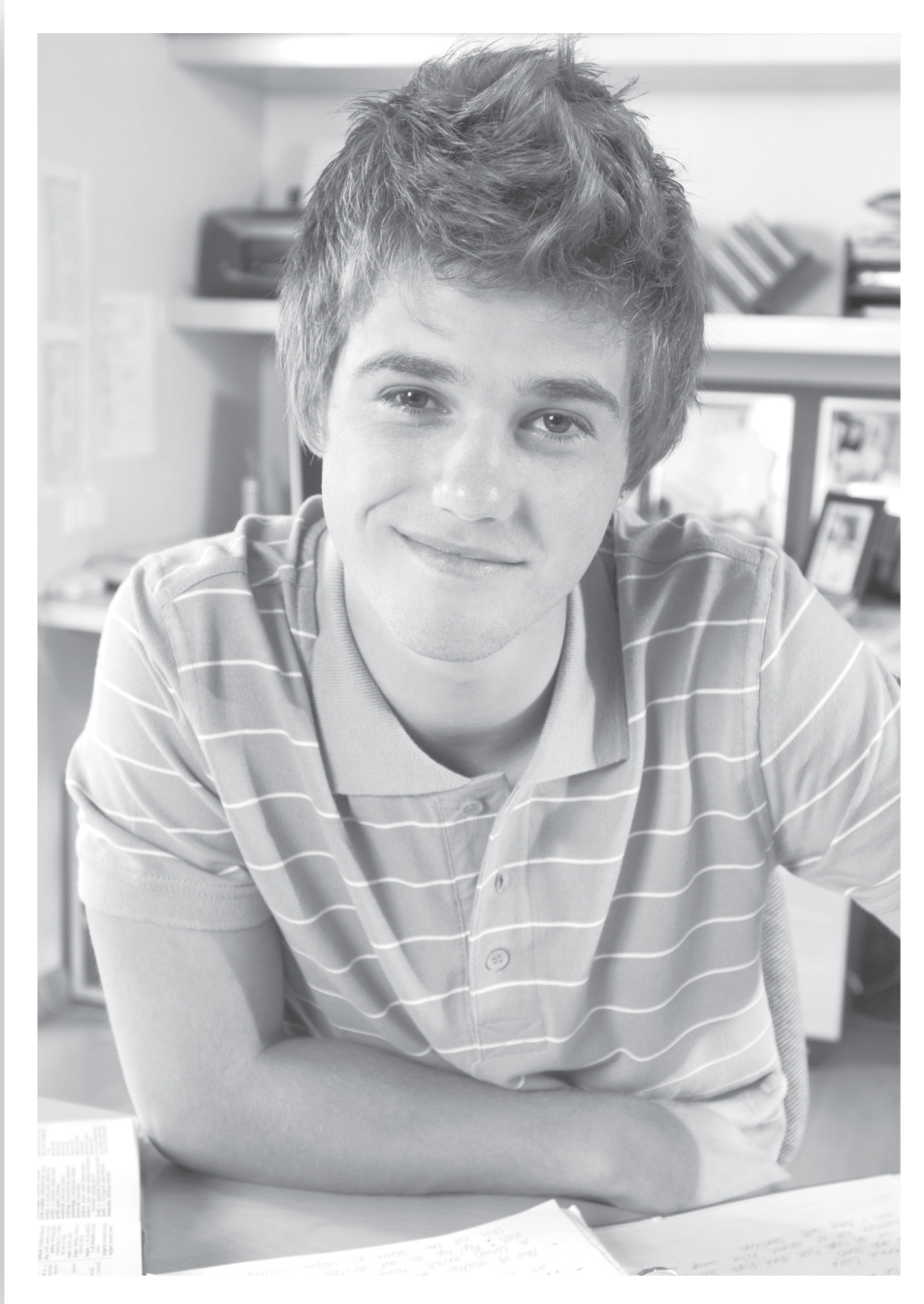
Hour: 1st

FAST: Take a "fast" look at one character to get a big picture idea of how their character changes from beginning to end. Complete each section using specific details & descriptions



“When I’m writing something, I try not to get analytical about it as I’m doing it, as I’m writing it.”

– Quentin Tarantino

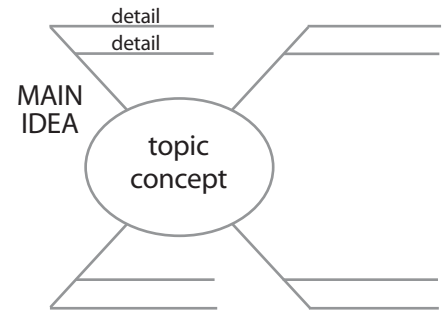
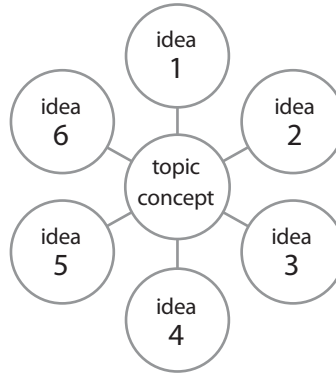


“Truth exists, only falsehood has to be invented.”

– Georges Braque, Pensées sur l’Art

Elaboration/Description

- Describes attributes, qualities, characteristics, and properties
- Explains relationships of objects in space
- Defines level of frequency

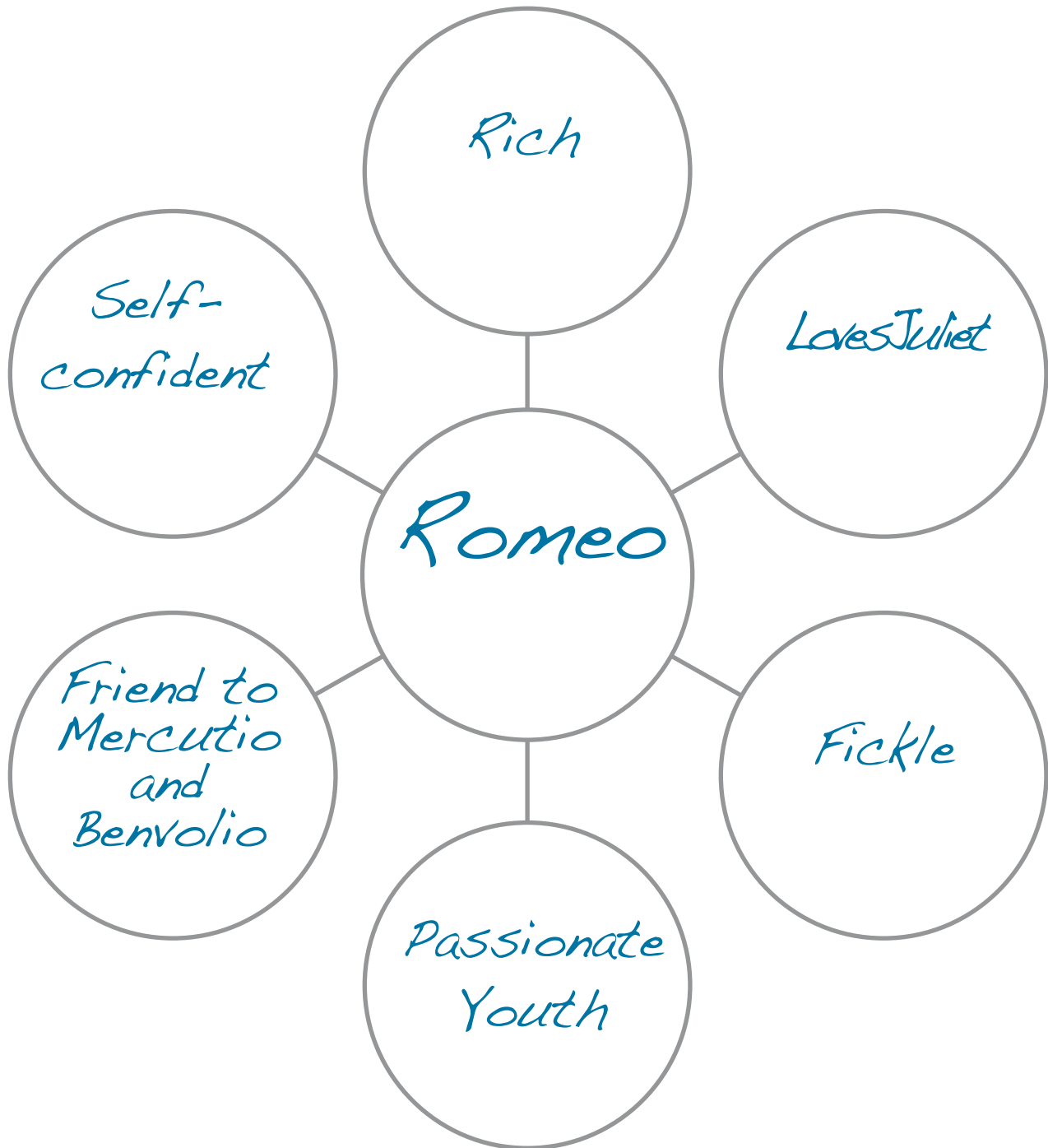


Signal Words		Guiding Questions
<i>includes</i>	<i>explains</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being described? • What are its most important attributes? • What are the characters, places, and objects in the text passage? • Why is this description important? • What is the concept? • To what category does it belong? • How does it work? • What does it do? • How are the pieces related or connected? • What are the functions of its pieces? • What are examples of it? • What are examples of things that share some, but not all, of its characteristics/attributes?
<i>to begin with</i>	<i>shows</i>	
<i>for instance</i>	<i>in fact</i>	
<i>also</i>	<i>in addition</i>	
<i>for example</i>	<i>such as</i>	
<i>to illustrate</i>	<i>furthermore</i>	
<i>another</i>	<i>reflects</i>	
<i>first</i>	<i>second</i>	
<i>in other words</i>	<i>most important</i>	
<i>identified by</i>	<i>associated with</i>	
<i>between</i>	<i>near</i>	
<i>characterized by</i>	<i>among</i>	

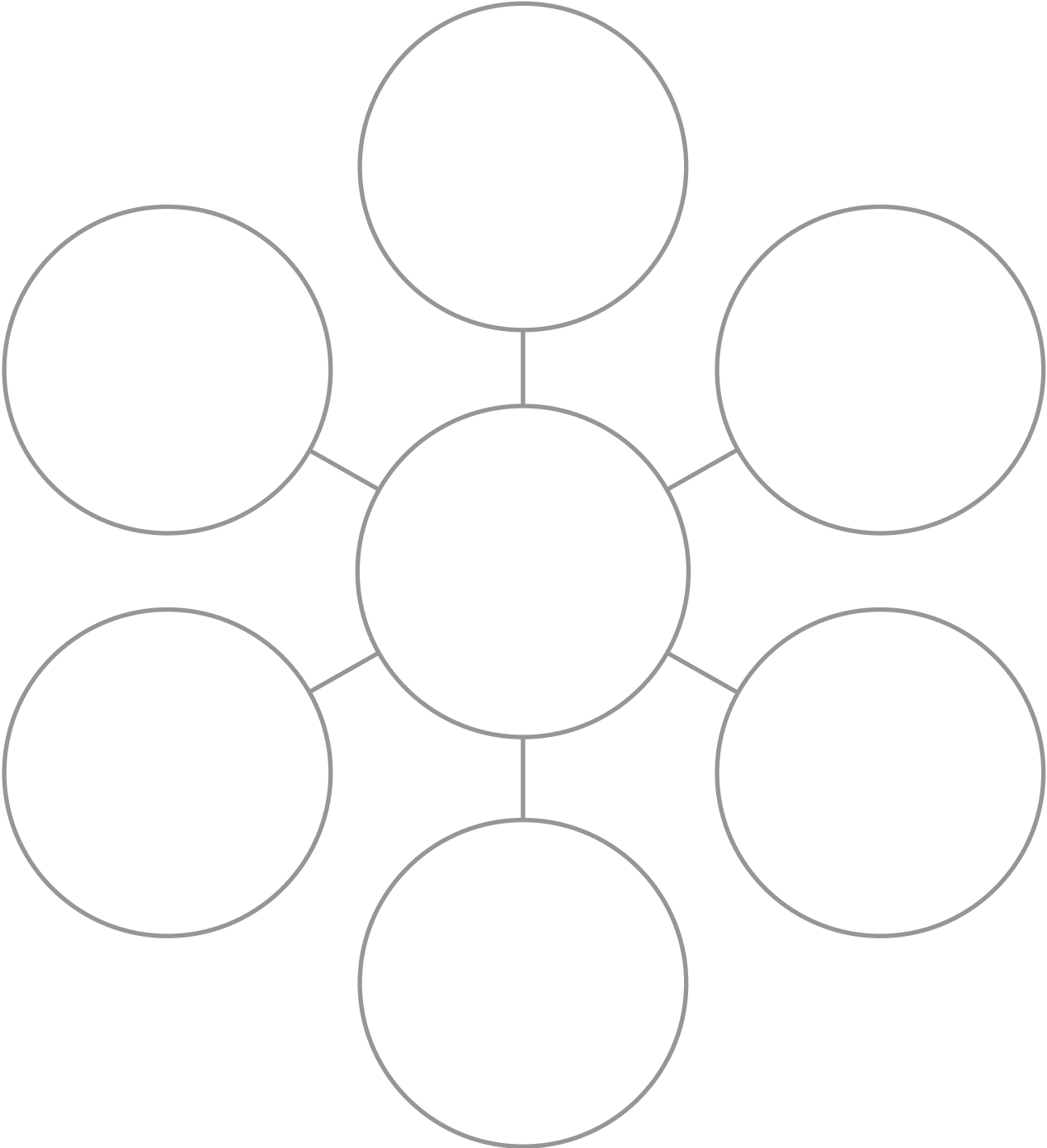
Sample Sentence Frames

- _____ shows _____.
- _____ can be described as _____.
- Usually, _____.
- _____ is called _____ and is related to _____.
- _____ is used to illustrate _____.
- Characteristics of _____ include _____ and _____.
- _____ can be characterized by _____.
- _____; in other words _____.
- _____ can be defined first as _____ and second as _____.
- _____ is _____; for instance,
- _____ happens _____.
- An example of _____ is _____.
- _____ rests among _____ and near _____.

Elaboration/Description

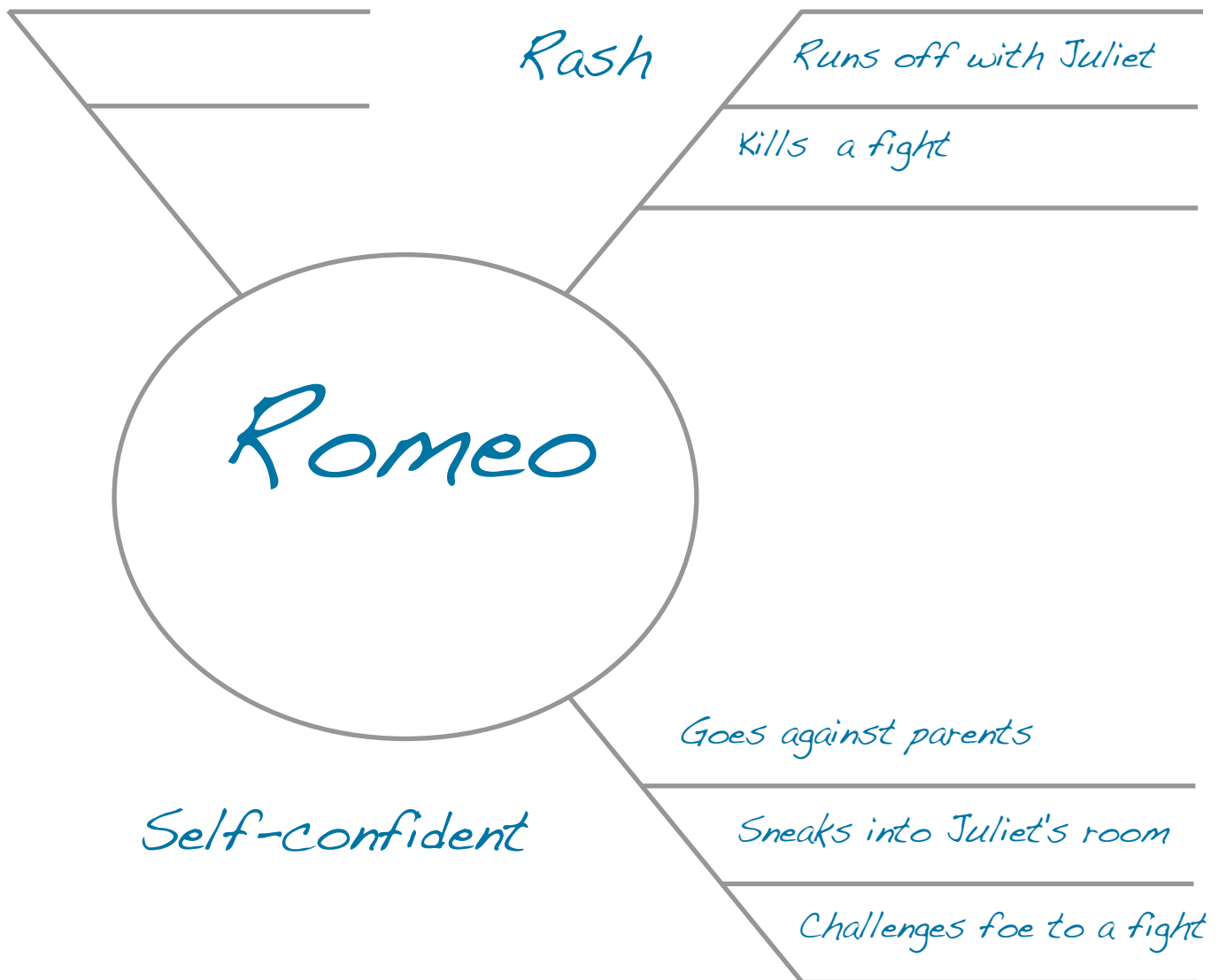


Elaboration/Description

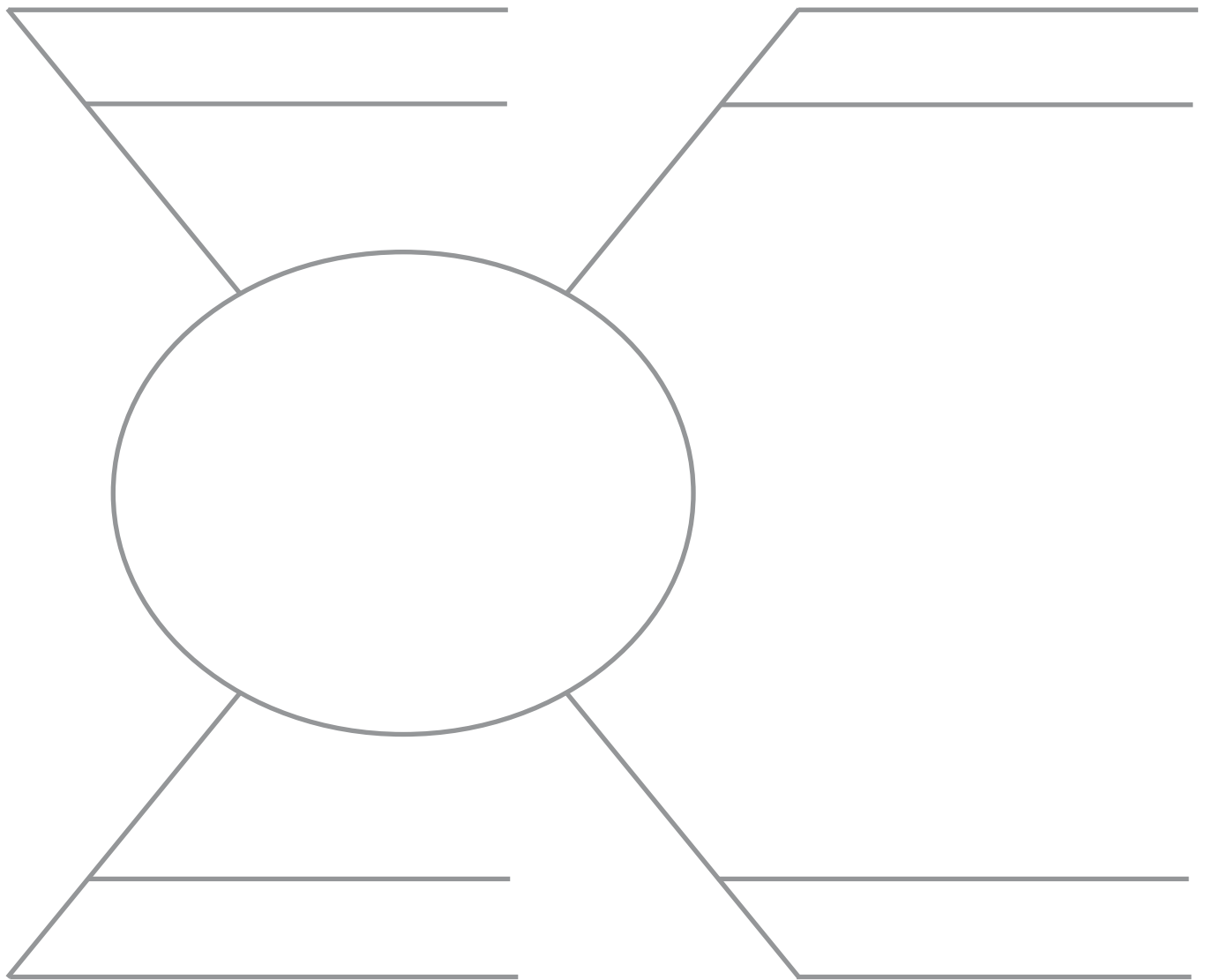


Elaboration/Description

"Oh, I am fortune's fool" - Romeo

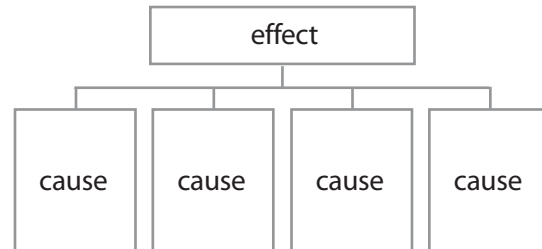
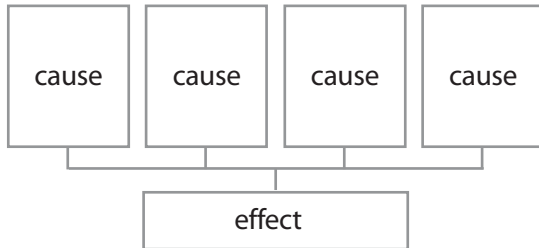


Elaboration/Description



Cause and Effect

- Explain the cause of an outcome
- Express why something occurred

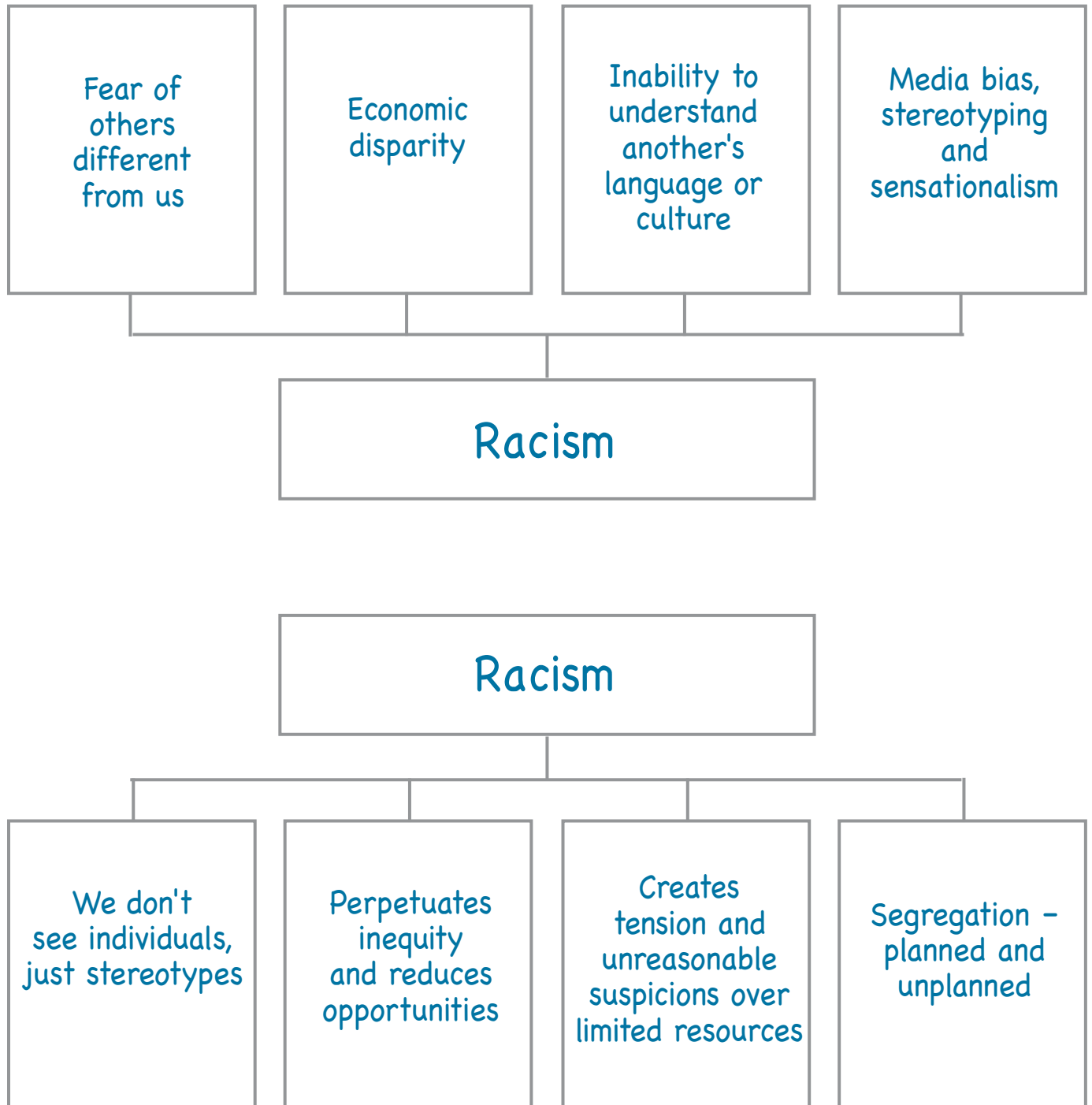


Signal Words		Guiding Questions
<i>because</i>	<i>since</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it that happens? • What causes it to happen? • What is the effect? • What are the important elements or factors that cause this effect? • How do these factors or elements interrelate? • Will this result always happen from these causes? Why or why not? • How would the result change if the elements or factors were different? • What is the cause/effect process the author is describing? Why did a cause/effect structure emerge?
<i>therefore</i>	<i>consequently</i>	
<i>as a result of</i>	<i>this has led to</i>	
<i>so that</i>	<i>nevertheless</i>	
<i>accordingly</i>	<i>if... then</i>	
<i>thus</i>	<i>subsequently</i>	
<i>because of</i>	<i>in order to</i>	
<i>may be due to</i>	<i>effects of</i>	
<i>for this reason</i>	<i>the cause was</i>	
<i>due to</i>	<i>this led to (caused)</i>	

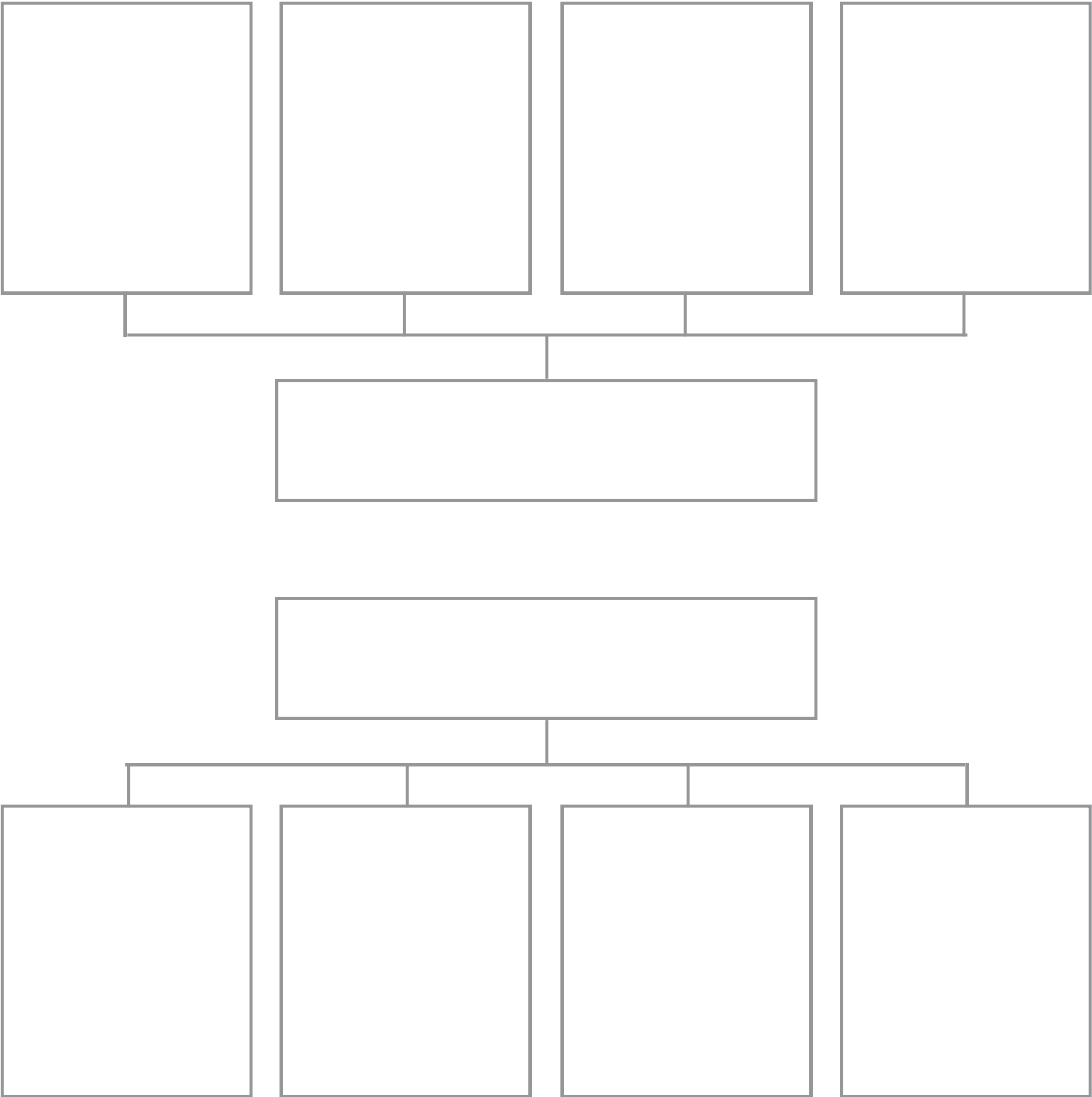
Sample Sentence Frames

- _____ was _____ caused by _____.
- The _____ because _____.
- Because of _____, the _____ is _____.
- _____; therefore, _____.
- As a result of _____, _____.
- If _____, then _____.
- In order to _____, _____.
- For this reason, _____.
- _____ has been caused by _____, thus _____.
- Due to the fact that _____, it seems evident that _____.
- _____ has led to _____. For this reason I believe that _____.
- If _____ is _____, then I predict that _____.

Cause and Effect

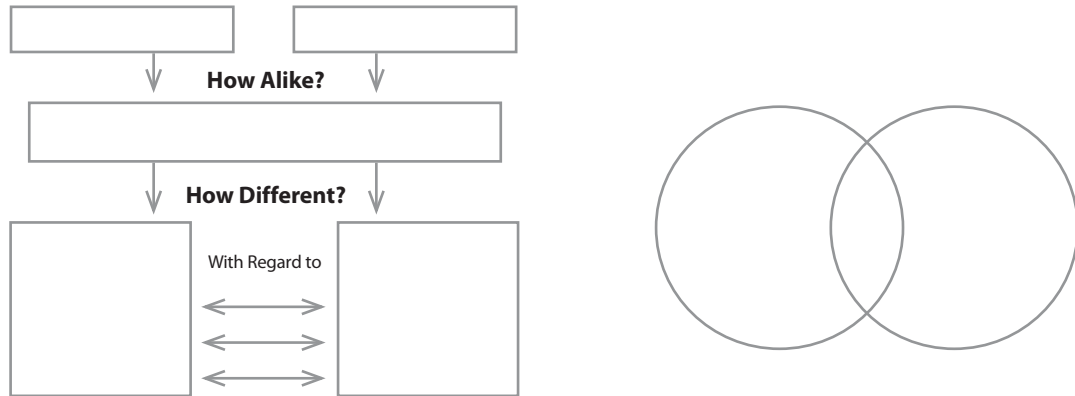


Cause and Effect



Compare and Contrast

- Understand and express how two or more things are similar and how they are different.



Signal Words		Guiding Questions
<i>however</i>	<i>both</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is being compared and contrasted? What categories of characteristics or attributes are used to compare and contrast these things? How are the things alike or similar? How are the things not alike or different? What are the most important qualities or attributes that make them different? What can we conclude about these things or items? Why are these things being compared/contrasted? When did the comparison/contrast structure emerge?
<i>but</i>	<i>unlike</i>	
<i>same as</i>	<i>different from</i>	
<i>-er, -est</i>	<i>-er than</i>	
<i>are similar</i>	<i>just like</i>	
<i>as well as</i>	<i>have in common</i>	
<i>on the contrary</i>	<i>difference between</i>	
<i>as opposed to</i>	<i>whereas</i>	
<i>share common traits</i>	<i>on the other hand</i>	
	<i>not only...but also</i>	

Sample Sentence Frames

- _____ is _____ -er than _____.
- _____ is the _____ -est when compared to _____.
- _____ and _____ are similar because they are both _____.
- _____ and _____ are different because _____ is _____ and _____ is _____.
- _____ is _____; however, _____ is _____.
- Unlike _____, _____.
- While _____ is different from _____, _____.
- _____ is _____, as opposed to _____, which is _____.
- Not only is _____, but _____.
- Although _____ and _____ have some similar characteristics, they are very different _____.
- While _____ is able to _____, _____ does not have that capability/feature _____.
- The most important difference is that _____ has _____, while _____ has _____.
- Just as _____, so too _____.
- By comparing _____ and _____, it is clear that/I realized that/I learned that _____.
- While _____ and _____ are both _____, there are several major differences between them.
- The primary distinction between _____ and _____ can be described as _____.

Compare and Contrast

Setting in *Cry, the Beloved Country*

Ndotsheni

Johannesburg

How Alike?

- People working and following dreams
- Poverty
- Religious conviction

How Different?

- Strong family
- Take care of each other

- Work the land
- Suffering with little water

With Regard to

family



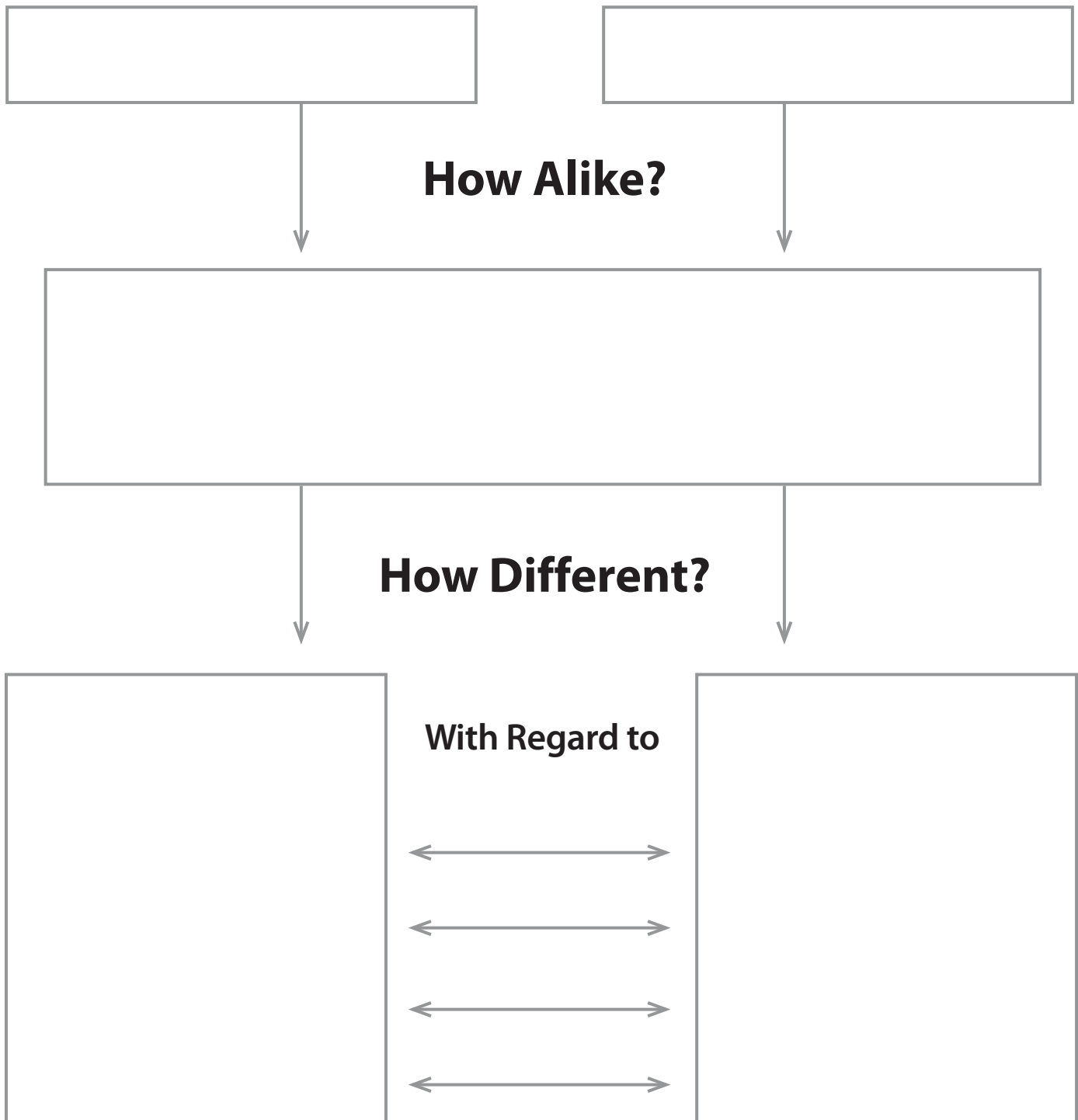
relation to
the land



- Disintegration of family
- Losing traditions

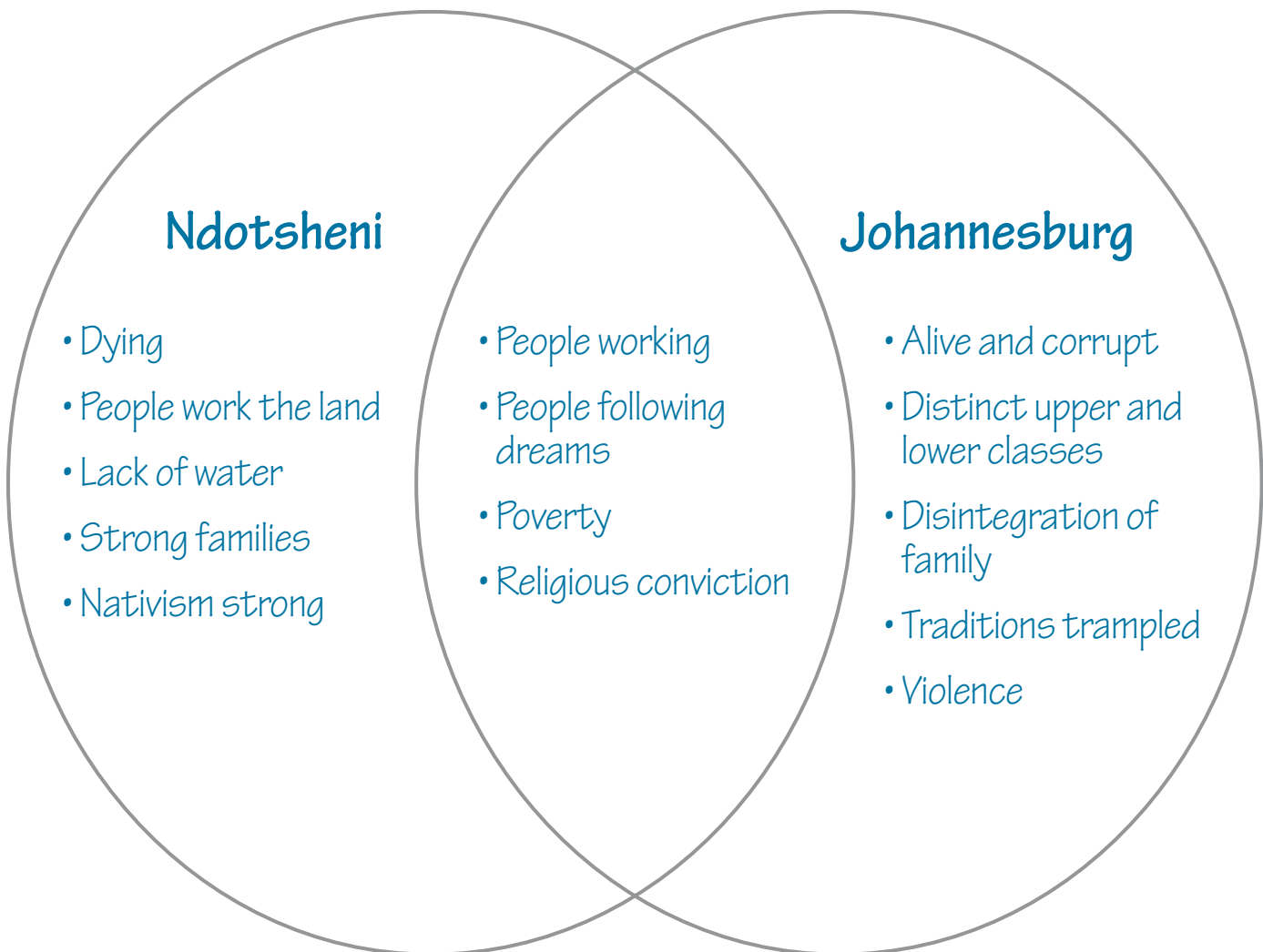
- Separated from land
- Destroying land

Compare and Contrast

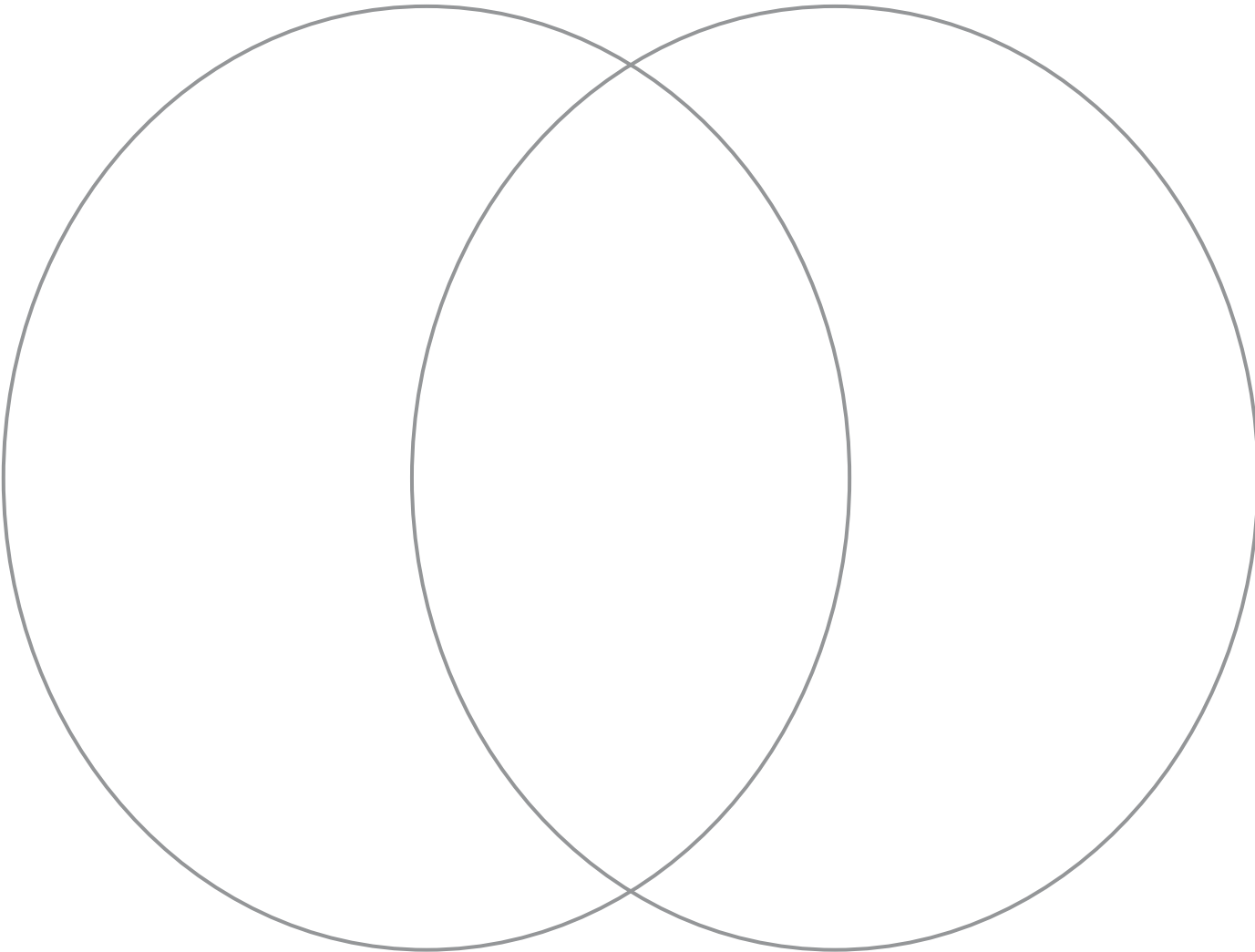


Compare and Contrast

Setting in *Cry, the Beloved Country*



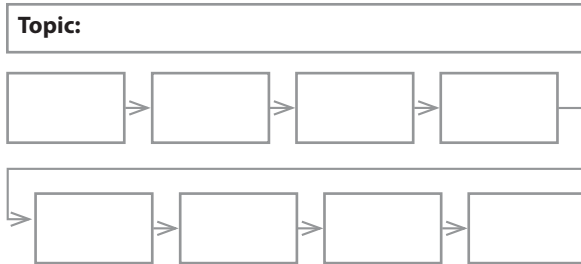
Compare and Contrast



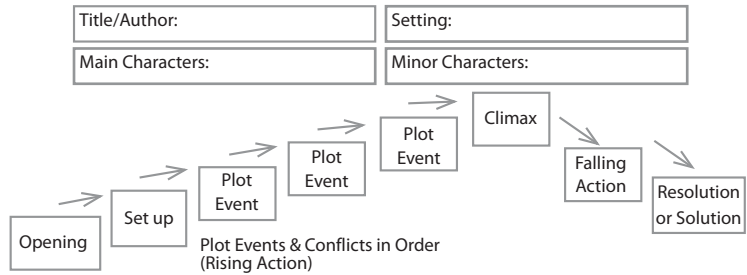
Sequence

- Relate steps in a process
- Express time relationship and actions within a larger event

CHRONOLOGICAL



PLOT



Signal Words

<i>first, second</i>	<i>while</i>
<i>next, later, then</i>	<i>now</i>
<i>before/after</i>	<i>finally</i>
<i>beginning, middle, end</i>	<i>earlier</i>
<i>initially</i>	<i>previously</i>
<i>eventually</i>	<i>following</i>
<i>during</i>	<i>prior to</i>
<i>since</i>	<i>preceding</i>
<i>concluding</i>	<i>meanwhile</i>
<i>subsequently</i>	<i>for the past</i>
	<i>simultaneously</i>

Guiding Questions

- What is being described in sequence?
- Why did a chronological order pattern emerge?
- What are the major steps in this sequence?
- What details should be included (people, places, etc.) with each step?
- Is there a part in the sequence where the events are more important than the others?
- Is there a conflict in this sequence? Where does it get resolved?
- Why is the sequence important?

Sample Sentence Frames

- First, _____. Then, _____. Next, there was _____ and _____.
- First, _____ happened. Then, _____ occurred and _____. Eventually, _____.
- In the beginning/middle/end, _____.
- After _____, _____ and _____.
- Before _____, _____.
- Immediately after _____, _____.
- Once _____ happened, then _____.
- As a result of _____, _____ happened.
- Following _____, _____.
- Previously, _____.
- Initially _____, and then _____.
- Preceding the events of _____, _____.
- Meanwhile _____ was taking place/occurring/happening.
- For the past _____ (set timeframe), _____.
- Immediately following the _____, the _____ took place/occurred.

Sequence

Chronological

Topic:

Article about Amy Biehl's parents and their connection to South Africa

Grief for Amy's death

Visit #1 to see where killed

Visit #2 for trial of killers

Visit #3 for trial again

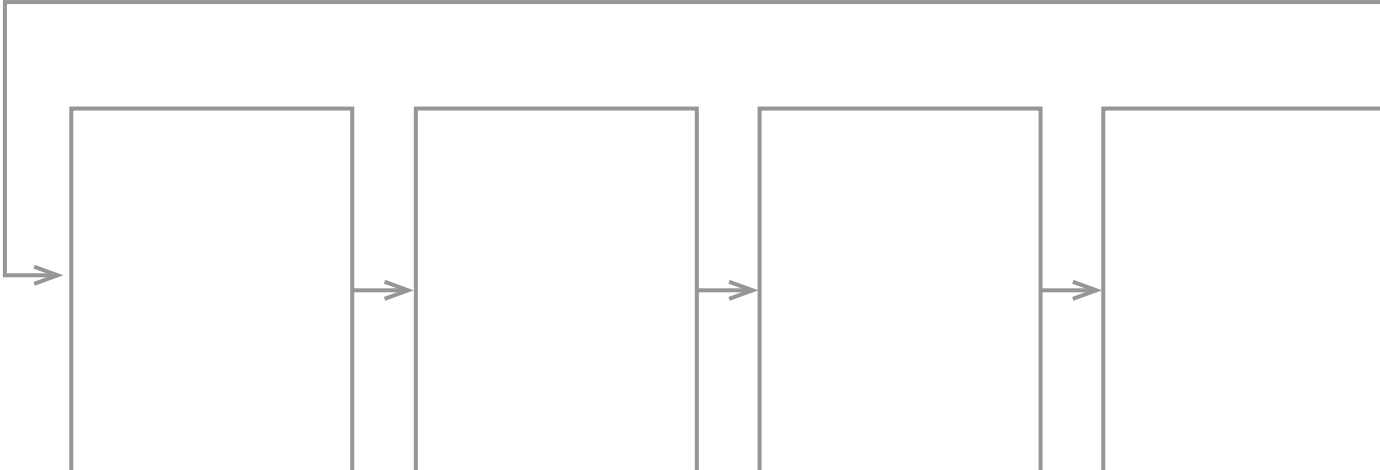
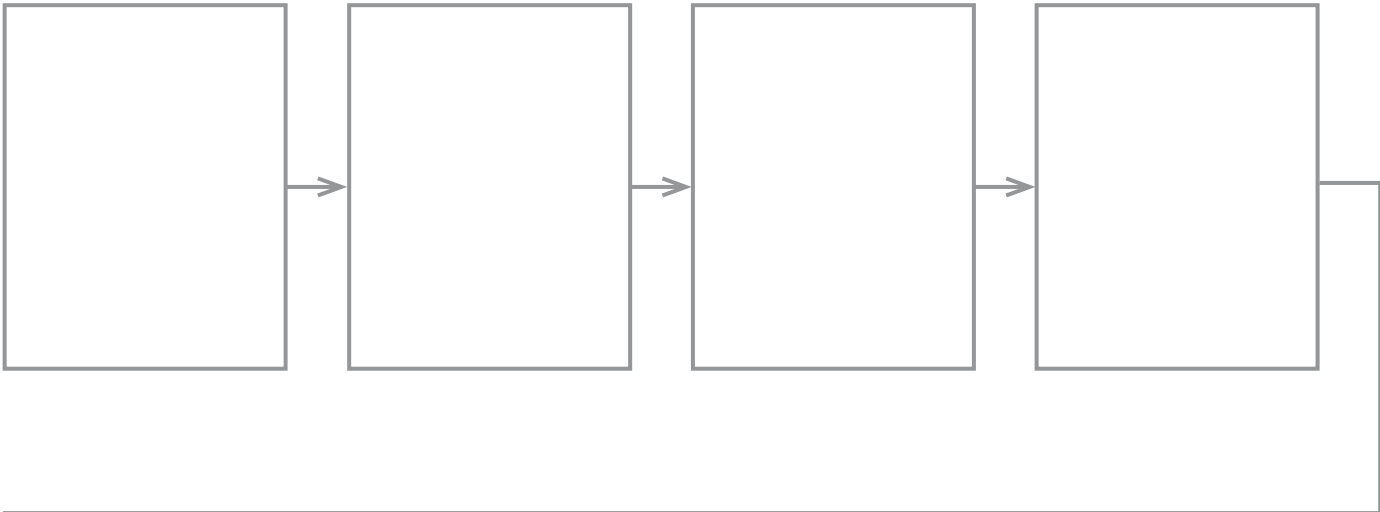
Visit #4 to meet parents of other victims

Visit every year for foundation work

Sequence

Chronological

Topic:



Sequence

Plot

Title/Author:

Ballet Battle by Amanda
(student writer)

Setting:

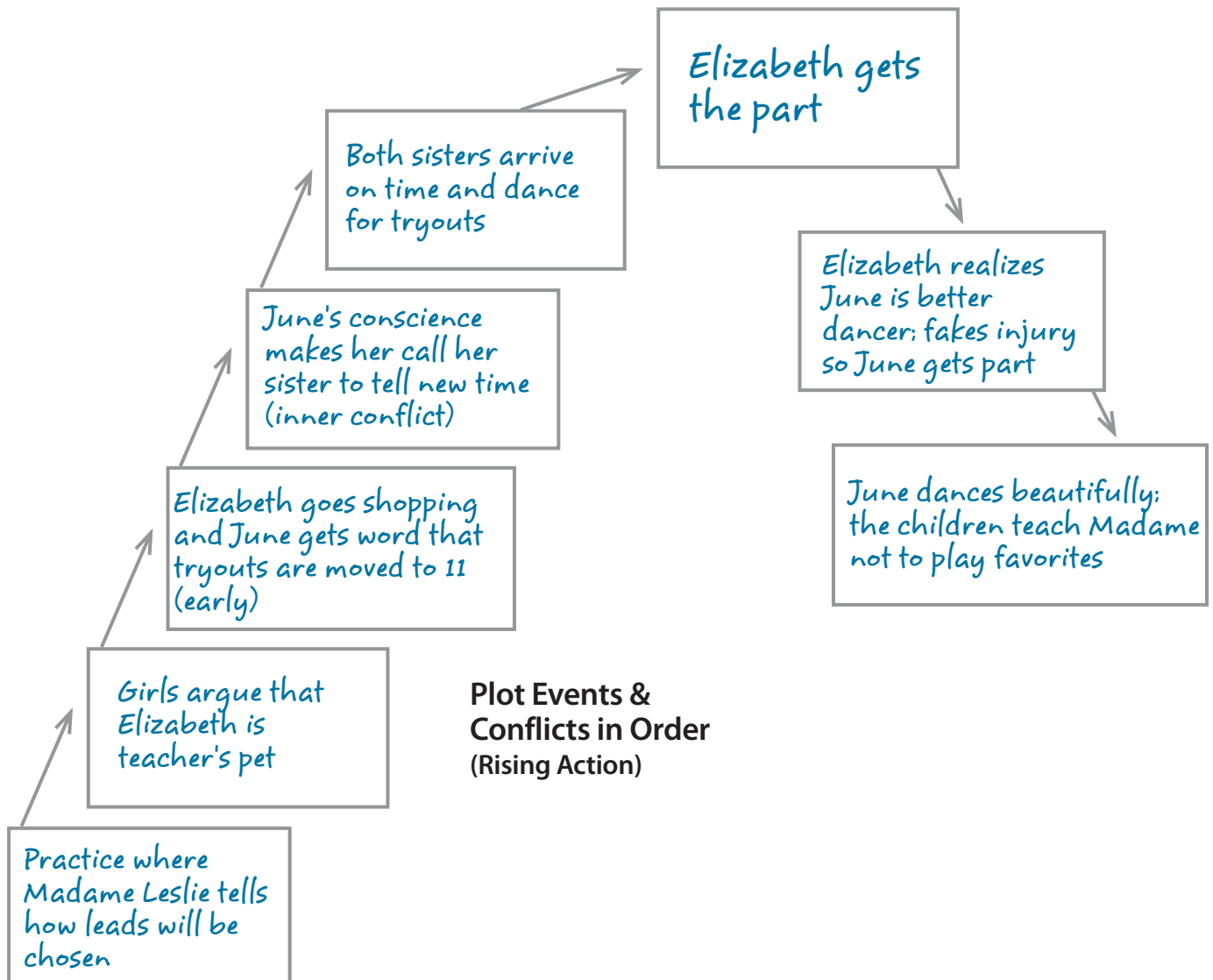
Sunnyville, CA
By ocean
In dance studio

Main Characters:

June and Elizabeth
Satterfield (7th grade twins)
Madame Leslie - ballet teacher

Minor Characters:

Other dance students:
Kendra Sutton and Jo Morris



Sequence

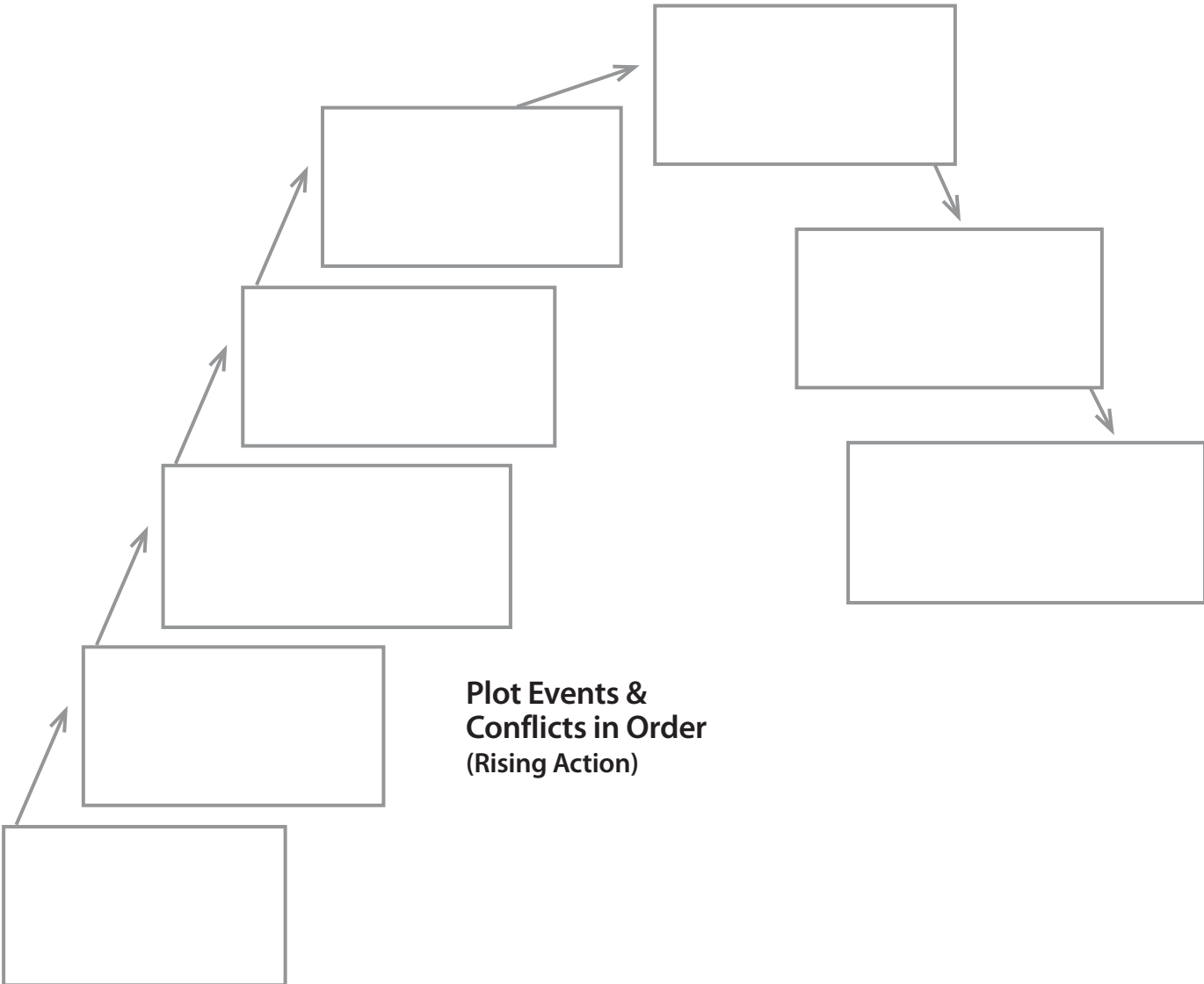
Plot

Title/Author:

Setting:

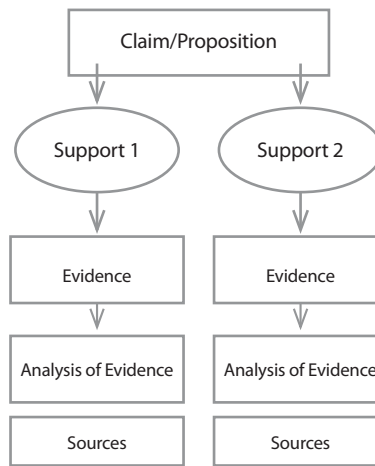
Main Characters:

Minor Characters:



Claim and Evidence (or Proposition and Support)

- Defend an opinion
- Explain reasoning
- Justify a position
- Make a claim/argument/proposition



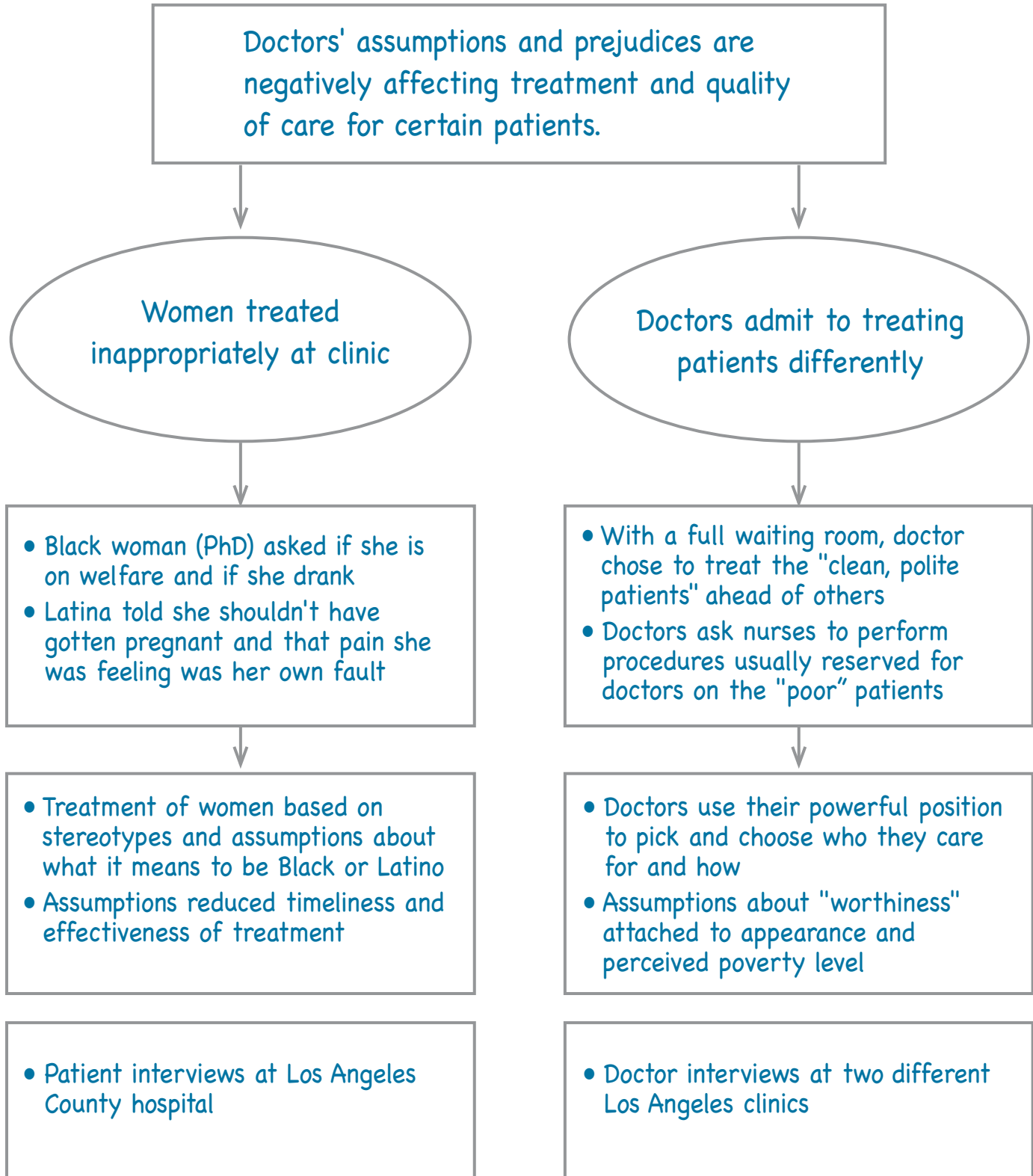
Signal Words		Guiding Questions
<i>believes</i>	<i>the question is</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the claim/proposition? • Why is this important? • Who will this impact? • What evidence is given to support the claim/proposition? • What reasoning is given using the evidence (commentary)? • What might an opponent say against this claim/proposition (rebuttals)? • What arguments can be made against the rebuttals (counterarguments)? • What are the consequences or benefits of this position?
<i>suggests</i>	<i>one answer is</i>	
<i>reasons</i>	<i>therefore</i>	
<i>for example</i>	<i>nevertheless</i>	
<i>states</i>	<i>persuades</i>	
<i>position</i>	<i>opposes</i>	
<i>proposes</i>	<i>argues</i>	
<i>evidence</i>	<i>refutes</i>	
<i>asserts</i>	<i>against</i>	
<i>claims</i>	<i>supports</i>	
<i>defends</i>		

Sample Sentence Frames

- I believe that _____. I believe this because _____.
- I disagree with _____ because _____.
- The evidence suggests that _____.
- _____ proposes that _____. She/he supports her/his position by _____.
- The author's claim is that _____ and s/he supports this claim by _____.
- It is clear that _____; therefore, _____.
- According to _____, _____ is an important issue/serious problem.
- _____ justifies this position by _____.
- While she/he tries to persuade us that _____, the evidence suggests _____.
- Nevertheless, the evidence strongly points to _____.
- _____ argues that _____; however, opponents suggest _____.

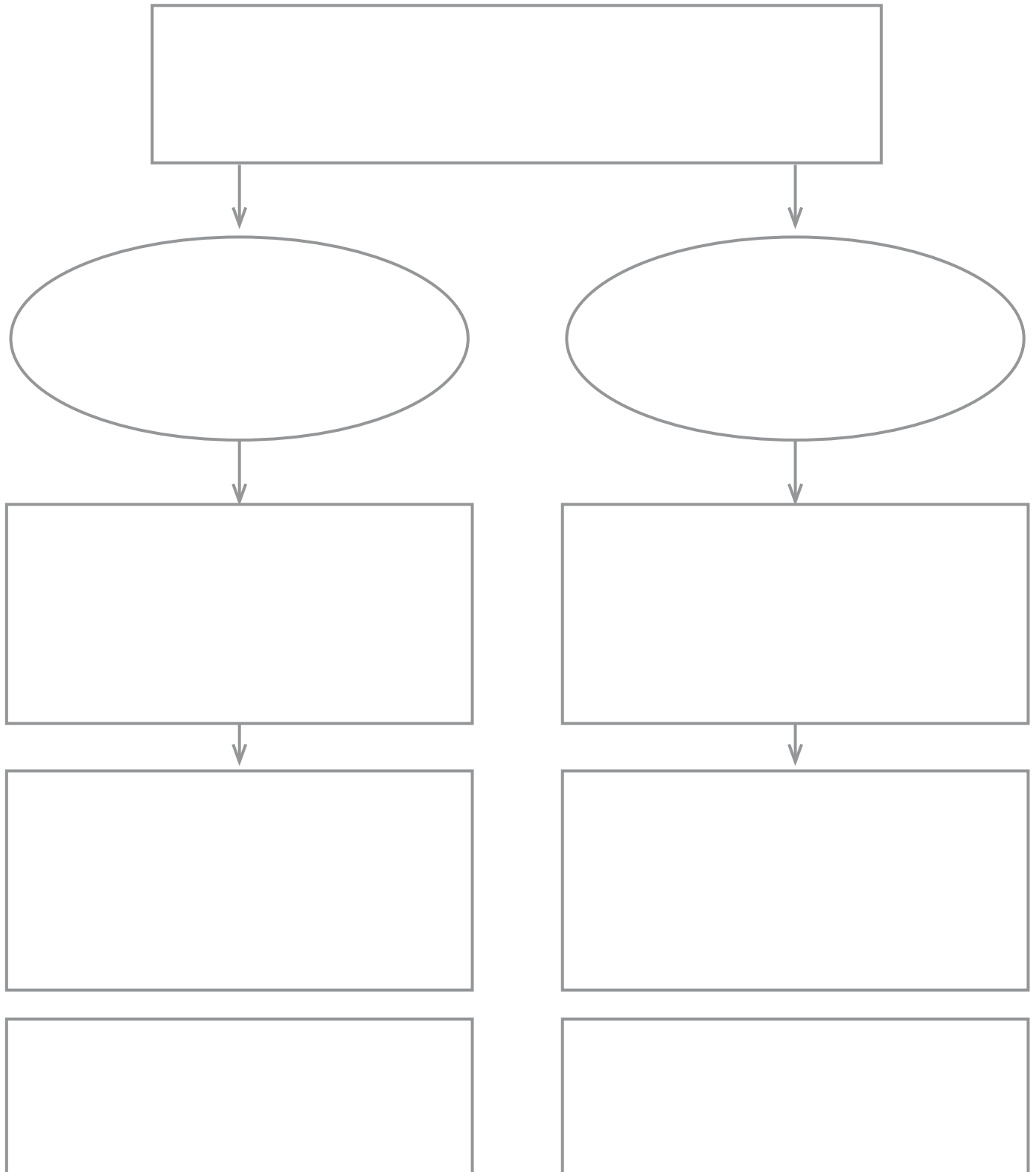
Claim and Evidence

(or Proposition and Support)



Claim and Evidence

(or Proposition and Support)



Interactive Notebook

Goal

Students will create a notebook to serve as a personal learning archive and reference tool.

Rationale

The idea of an interactive notebook originated with a private business, but it was soon recognized to be of great value in other subjects. The value of such a notebook lies in its function as a combination archive and personalized reference text created by students to their teacher's specifications. The subject-specific notebooks hold notes, assignments, reflections, and summaries. Students who keep interactive notebooks and use them daily will not want to loan them or lose them because they are an essential archival tool, an active text in constant use.

Teacher References

- The Interactive Notebook in Use
- Interactive Notebook Rubric
- Parent Signature Page

Student Handout

- Left Side Response Suggestions

Instructional Steps

1. Direct students to use a 50-page spiral binder dedicated solely to being an interactive notebook for English. This number of pages is average for use one semester long.
2. Inform students no doodling or other class material is ever allowed in the notebook.
3. Show them a prepared mock-interactive notebook while demonstrating and directing the creation of their own volumes.
4. Direct students to begin numbering each page of their empty notebook starting six pages in, at the top outside corner of the front and back sides. They will be archiving at the same time they are using the notebooks, so the page numbers are critical to be able to refer to the material at a later date. This process may take some time, but it is important to have the page numbering for reference later. Students will establish sections that are inserted, glued in, or drawn or written such as charts, diagrams, notes, summaries, or reflections.
5. Have students label the first two pages (front and back) as Quick Reference. These will remain blank until students write information they might want to remember or use often. Though the information may also appear in other sections of the notebook, the psychology of having only two pages with easy access will spark consideration of what is important enough to place there.
6. Direct them next to label and dedicate the following four pages (front of one side, its reverse side, and front and back of another page) to the table of contents for use as entries are created.
7. Label and reserve the last four pages of the notebook for each student's personal vocabulary lists. Have them title each of these four pages.
8. Discuss with students the left/right side type of assignments that will be part of the interactive notebook procedures. The right side is similar to the Cornell note-taking processes in that this is generally the "note-taking" page. However students will also be providing the input (charts, rubrics, diagrams, notes, critical questions, and other material as directed). The left side is considered the "response" or commentary side. Commentary might be handwritten notes or pasted-in responses, such as a paper flap book or a one-pager.

9. Have the students use the notebook immediately and daily after its creation. A typical assignment to start is to have students “claim” their new volumes by personalizing the cover with their names and a design.
10. Consider having a printed parent signature copy to have students paste into the inside cover. (See Teacher Reference: Parent Signature Page.) The signatures will indicate parents have reviewed an assignment in their student’s interactive notebook and the page will allow them space to comment. Having other eyes serve as the audience on student work tends to keep the student responses in better shape.
11. Conduct the classroom assignments, discussions, note-taking, and other work as necessary for the goals, outcomes, and standards for the English class, but have students “enter” their work, notes, responses, essays, and tests in the notebook. Then have them enter the titles and dates of entry in the table of contents.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Maintain an updated weekly white board display of materials used and the topics covered each day. Doing so will aid those absent during the week as well as those who need affirmation they are on track. This is in addition to keeping a master list or master notebook of page-by-page contents for student reference.

Increased Rigor

- Encourage students on one or two selected assignments to create responses that have a “footprint” that fits most of the size of the left side page (with reflection space at the bottom) but that could be fold-outs or flip books or illustrate a concept with color. The point is to allow limited teacher-approved authorial license to experiment with method of response. As they do this, remind them they will also need to allow some lines on the page for reflecting on their reasoning.

“The best way to become acquainted with a subject is to write a book about it.”

– Benjamin Disraeli

September 14th, 2012
 CPEH
 Reflection

quick write what have I learn?
 I have learn to Mark the text

Why do we always have to work
 with a partner? I like working time by
 Myself

Rate Myself:
 Work etc I Rate Myself a 4 because
 I do my work just to do it and not a
 grade for it.

behavior; I Rate My
 I do all my work well
 get in trouble

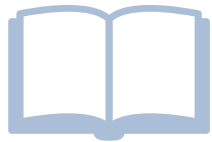
My goal is to tu

This text—written by an AVID senior—was used to create sample responses for the following rhetorical précis activity. Use this text as a reference as you teach the précis.

The Space-Taker Effect Prediction; People fighting over ^{Space}

- ① Despite the push for good education, and the increasing competition in careers and jobs—to the point that it seems you need a college diploma to work at McDonald's—some students are still dragging their feet in school.
- ② One would think that without the guarantee of having a job and a future, every single student would pay attention in school and stop slacking off. However, the fact still remains that an ever-present amount of students are simple "space-takers," or students that come to school for petty reasons and only take up space for the students that are actually dedicated to their education.
- ③ Not only are they an annoying addition to an already stressful environment, they take away valuable teaching time when teachers either scold them for disrupting class or cater to their below average needs. Because of these students, the smart ones actually in a class to learn are being deprived of their education. By the time the class is over, the space-takers might be close to the level of the smart students. However the ones wanting to learn will get nowhere, having to suffer through reviews of material they have already learned day in and day out.
- ④ These space-takers are obviously still required to take the same STAR tests as all the others. So after a fun filled year of doing absolutely nothing, they pick up a test they can barely read, and proceed to drop our scores. When the results come in, teachers are replaced, standards are decreased, and a label of "insufficient" is stamped on the school. Yet the space-takers remain.
- ⑤ Then a wonderful law, aimed at increasing the education of California's students, was passed: the No Child Left Behind Act. Yes, it did have the good intentions of bringing the below average student up to par with the rest. It would create a smarter state because it would virtually destroy below average students. It would create exceptional students in every single classroom. However, all this act created was exceptional students who got frustrated while they waited for the mediocre students to catch up. Teachers must put the good students on hold while holding the hand of the bad. When first proposed, the hope was to raise the education level of the state. However, based on observation at my own school, it seems that this has only weakened our education system.
- ⑥ In a class full of space-takers, I am forced to bear through the teacher's jaded lesson to deaf ears. She is incapable of teaching the lessons she loves to the students who care. And I, and a few others, are denied our education because these students must be as good as the rest of us.
- ⑦ Communistic? In every negative meaning of the word.

Saying	Doing
① student do not know the importance of edu.	① referencing McDonalds as an example
② knowing the fact student should try harder, but dont	② Making personal connection and defining "space-taker"
③ space takers taking time of those who want to learn	③ Discussing what occurs in class



The Interactive Notebook in Use

Materials

For Students

1. Spiral binders with at least 50 pages of lined notebook paper. It is possible to use more than one interactive notebook during a semester. A loose-leaf binder may appear to be more flexible, but numbering pages inserted after creation and in between existing pages must be considered. One teacher has students add a letter (10a, 10b, 10c and so on) to the newly inserted pages while another teacher adds pages at the end of the binder, numbering those pages as the semester progresses. Both will work.
2. Access to glue or paste, small sticky notes, two colored highlighters or colored pencils. Colored pencils do not bleed through the papers to the other side while the effect of most highlighters can be seen from the reverse side of the paper. Staples are not recommended for use in the notebook.

For Teachers

1. A mock interactive notebook for teacher to use for first-time set-up demonstration purposes. The mock volume is probably only needed the first time a teacher sets up and uses an interactive notebook; after that, a master spiral will have been created to show to the next year's students.
2. A master spiral binder to use for a record of the content being inserted daily in the notebooks. Teachers direct students in the continuing process of inserting entries into the volume, so the notebook serves as a record of daily use. Additionally, students who are absent from school will have a visual reminder of what was entered into the notebooks while s/he was away. Display this for reference, but do not allow this master to be removed from the room.
3. Glue, colored highlighters or colored pencils. Additionally, some teachers use small Post-It Note Tabs™ as page markers.
4. The table of contents pages are set up to have the page numbers listed down the center of the table of contents page. This divides the pages in half. Label the left side as LEFT SIDE CONTENTS and the right side as RIGHT SIDE CONTENTS. This will enable better use of space and will reinforce the functions of each side.

5. Evaluating the interactive notebooks should be done weekly, though not all sections need to be scored every time. A walk-by check mark to verify student work is being entered in the book is sufficient for occasional entries in the grade book, and it is possible student aides or tutors can do this type of checking. Occasional peer feedback is another way to provide general notebook oversight. Checking more specifically on content can occur all at once during a week or on a rotating basis with groups of students. It is necessary, though, to have the teacher evaluating the quality of entries just as often as that teacher would evaluate any other assignment. This notebook contains most of the work of the class, so any timeline should include a teacher review at least once every two weeks to adequately serve student effort.
6. Scoring the interactive notebook could be made on the content of the notebooks, though some of the content has already been scored, or on adherence to the format of the notebook. A combination of the two could be useful to the teacher. A rubric based on that logic can be found at the end of this section.

Keeping Track for the Master Interactive Notebook

Because the master notebook is specific to each class taught and not created as the only one for all classes of the same subject, teachers will find it is not difficult to pre-plan the entries before assigning them to the students and to insert them into the master copy notebook immediately before (or after) having the students complete their daily entry. However, if a student aide is available, the aide can set up a *loose leaf* binder as an interactive notebook. This allows some flexibility for the teacher who wishes to copy off pages for absent students, but it is a luxury that time may not permit. The teacher may wish to try this.

Getting Started in Basic Use

1. After students have set up their notebooks and designed their cover, students begin with an assignment requiring a reflective response. This type of assignment as the first entry gives students practice using the format and allows them to also ask questions about design on an easier task for the notebook. Instruct students to write the date and the topic of the assignment. This could be anything from taking notes in a lecture to a writing assignment. If it is notes in Cornell format on the right side, the reflection will be entered on the left side.
2. Then have them enter the assignment name and the date it was created in the table of contents on the correct page designation.
3. The next work to be completed and entered in the table of contents could be a literature assignment requiring a response such as a four-sentence précis. The initial note-taking on the reading is completed on the right side (and may take two pages to finish) with the précis listed on the left. Please note that the left side (response side) does not have to be entirely filled with the response. Again, students need to enter the appropriate data in the table of contents.
4. A good rule of thumb is to have students review their notes daily. The interactive notebook is ideal for reviewing notes because there are no pages out of order.
5. As students continue with entering material in the notebooks, they will occasionally find vocabulary with which they are not familiar. This is an occasion for entry into the vocabulary page in the last part of the notebook. Determine how students are to

enter the unfamiliar word or words and the definition plus any other information the teacher specifies. Then, back in the entry pages in the main notebook, the students should select a highlight color to dedicate to highlighting the word and the definition. Anytime an unknown word is encountered, students will need to highlight it and enter the information in the vocabulary pages.

6. Periodically during the use of the interactive notebook, students will need to review the previously entered pages and read and possibly react to some information that applies to their current work. Or it is also possible students will need to use some information to inform current work. It is these instances in which the notebook functions as a reference text for students to mine for information. Useful past information should be used and referenced in the new notebook pages.
7. When one interactive notebook is filled, another should be labeled as #2 of the class (name the class) and it should be prepared the same way the previous volume was prepared.

How to Add Materials

1. Students should be encouraged to paste or glue assignments into the notebooks rather than stapling them in. In a notebook that is space limited due to the size of the spiral, one item stapled onto a response page may not seem like a problem, but several stapled items within a notebook will make the notebook difficult to close or carry and most importantly, difficult to add many more paper extras, including fold-outs, flip books, finished essays, and the like. Using glue or paste to enter items makes sense in this context.
2. Dedicating a specific color to highlighting vocabulary is helpful, but using many different colors throughout the book will make none stand out. The recommendation is to have two highlighter colors only. A better idea is to use colored pencils for the same function as highlighters. They are less expensive and are not going to obscure other writing on the reverse side.
3. Have students glue folded returned essays or assignments into the notebook. The packet of papers that comprise each returned essay could be several pages long. If that is the case, consider having the returned essays in a separate folder with a listing of the essay contents and physical location listed in the notebook.

Interactive Notebook (INB) Rubric

Trait	4 – Advanced	3 – Proficient	2 – Basic	1 – Limited
Reading & Research	Most entries reflect excellent and accurately displayed personalized notebook entries. The INB shows consistent effort in clearly written information and insightful reflection.	Most entries are generally good, though with less insight than advanced. The INB has a varied quality of reflections or presentation, though all the required entries are present.	Overall presentation of written and visual elements is average or below. There are marginal responses entered offering little insight and fewer original ideas.	Poor reflection entries offer no insight or attempt to interpret the right side entries. May include many blank pages.
Focus/Controlling Idea	Each entry maintains precise focus with consistent accuracy. The assigned topics show strong adherence to the prompt’s direction and with originality.	Each entry maintains focus with slight variation in quality. Original thinking sometimes results in unclear direction.	Most entries show an attempt at establishing a focus but it is not always clearly stated. There is evidence the INB creator may not understand the materials.	The INB contains an inaccurate focus throughout. No attempt is made to analyze or respond to the text.
Content Development	The INB demonstrates a superior systematic collection of accurate details for each response.	Details are sequenced and stated clearly but may not be fully developed. The writer includes all required elements of response.	The INB quality is diminished by ineffective or marginal responses. Some effort is evident in original thinking but is generally unclear.	The INB has poor or weak content development with no support shown from the texts. No insights are offered and little or no effort is evident.
Organization of Ideas	Numbering of pages is neatly displayed and the pages, including the table of contents, all show required format. There is excellent use of color and design throughout. Responses are easy to read and understand.	The INB has legible format with numbering and table of contents. Good design, though lacking in inspiration.	The INB has minimal organizational design or display of strategies. Marginal interaction with other parts of the text is evident.	Organizational strategies lack purpose, are weak or not evident at all. Each section might be skimpy and have missing required entries.
Style & Conventions	Stylistic elements are of original design. Notebook shows superior effort to create a visual and excellent design.	The INB demonstrates appropriate use of conventions and intentional stylistic manipulation, though with less sophistication than advanced status. May have some errors but is generally edited accurately.	The INB may use basic vocabulary or unsophisticated sentence structure, but some attempt to control sentence patterns is evident. Contains errors but not so numerous as to obscure meaning.	The INB has no evidence of editing or stylistic control. Serious errors in grammar and usage.

Parent Signature Page Example

Keeping Interactive Notebooks

The Parent Review

Dear Parent/Significant Adult:

This Interactive Notebook represents your student's learning to date and should contain the work your student has completed in chemistry. Please take some time to look at the notebook with him/her, read his/her reflection, and respond to any of the following:

The work we found most interesting was _____ because...

What does the notebook reveal about your student's learning habits or talents?

My student's biggest concern about this class is...

Parent/Significant Adult Signature: _____

Comments? Questions? Concerns?

Feel free to call _____ or e-mail _____

Left Side Response Suggestions

Response takes many forms. If your teacher has not specified the type of response you need to make or the content of the response, the following are suggestions for use in the Interactive Notebook.

- Graphics that have a purpose (such as showing comparisons between two unlike elements)
- Drawings (used as illustrations of concepts or events)
- Quickwrites
- Reflections
- Summaries
- Brainstorms
- Short paragraphs
- Level 2 and 3 questions
- Diagrams
- Analogies
- Critical reviews
- Origami pop-up books
- Concertina books
- Flap books

Learning Logs

Goal

Students will reflect and write about academic issues to synthesize their learning.

Rationale

The learning log is a reflection strategy to help students think critically about what they are learning in their classes. Learning logs provide students with an opportunity to synthesize their knowledge and to ask unanswered questions. The learning log also provides teachers with insight into their students' perceptions and struggles about the content in the class.

Teacher Reference

- Characteristics of Learning Logs

Student Handouts

- Learning Log Variations
- Learning Log

Instructional Steps

1. Establish a format students will use for their learning logs. See Student Handout: Learning Log for a common format.
2. Define learning logs for students: open-ended, non-threatening writing tasks that help students grapple with ideas in a tentative, exploratory manner. Review the characteristics of a learning log with students. See Teacher Reference: Characteristics of Learning Logs. Since some students are intimidated by writing assignments, they need to understand learning logs are informal pieces of writing.
3. Explain how learning logs will be graded. This is an important step to address with students. Students need to feel free to record their thoughts in a quick, fluent manner; so typically, learning logs receive points for participation or completion.
4. Assign learning logs daily or at regular, frequent intervals.
5. Duplicate or read aloud anonymous learning logs on the same topic but expressed in different ways. Students can see the varieties of ways others are responding to the questions and prompts and understand there are many ways to be "right." Students may not write much at first but fluency will increase as they see and hear many examples.
6. Collect learning logs on a regular basis. Initially, respond to the logs to encourage students and ask genuine questions about what they have to say. This will encourage students to write more and with more honesty.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Begin by using 3 x 5 cards for students to use for learning logs. The smaller space to write is less threatening to struggling writers. The cards can be used as exit cards for students. Before students transition to full-page logs, have them secure them into an interactive notebook, if one is used.
- Use short, accessible topics and gradually move to prompts requiring higher-level thinking. This allows students to learn the process of completing a learning log before moving to the more critical levels of synthesis and evaluation.
- Post several learning log prompts on large sheets of chart paper and post in various places in the classroom. Have students rotate in small groups and record their thoughts on the chart paper.

Increased Rigor

- Ask students to expand several learning log entries into longer, more thorough pieces at various points in the semester.
- Provide students with a copy of the Student Handout: Learning Log Variations once they have become proficient with the format. These are suggestions for topics students can select on their own based on what connections they make to the content and learning in class.

Using Technology

- Have students complete learning logs using Twitter with a specific hashtag developed by the teacher for the class.
- Establish blogs for students to use to record their learning logs.

Other AVID Resources

- *Strategies for Success Teacher Guide*

Characteristics of Learning Logs

Characteristic	Explanation
Regular and Frequent	Allow 3–7 minutes at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a lesson. Learning logs are effective at the beginning of the class as students are settling in or as exit slips to wrap up the learning during the class.
Short	Short, timed writing sessions work best. It is better to leave a few students wanting to express more than to have most of the class struggling with nothing more to say. Build confidence by beginning with short increments of time that can be increased as students become more proficient and comfortable with the reflective process.
Minimally Structured	Encourage students to write what they really think, not what they think the teacher wants them to say.
Academic	Students should focus on an academic challenge or issue.
Uncorrected	To encourage honest responses and reduce apprehension, do not “correct” the writing in a learning log. Instead write comments and genuine questions in a conversational manner.
Credited	Students receive credit for each completed learning log. Set the standards at the start: a certain amount of writing and thought is expected as a minimum. The general expectations, the class environment, and the reinforcement of the importance of the time spent on learning logs should help reduce the tendency for some students to waste the time.
Shared and Responded	To learn the most from their writing, students need both an audience and appropriate models. Sharing learning logs provide both, allowing students to see and discuss a variety of responses as well as reinforcing the lesson’s concepts. Responses to entries may involve oral sharing in pairs, small groups, or a large group, as well as direct comments from the teacher. It is important that teachers inform students prior to writing whether the learning logs will be shared and how that sharing will occur. Spending time in class on learning logs emphasizes the importance of writing, validates the students’ reaction to the lessons, and provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their own learning and thinking.
Managing the Paper Load	Learning logs take time: time to think, time to write, and time to share. Another concern for teachers is the time it takes to read and respond to the writing. Do not read everything students write. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to star entries for the teacher to read. • Skim entries until there is something to respond to, and then comment or question briefly. • Have students share logs in pairs or small groups and then lead the class in a discussion of the ideas expressed. The time spent sharing and responding becomes even more valuable than a written response because the dialogue helps to clarify ideas. • Have students keep their learning logs in the classroom for easy review. This allows for learning logs to be used as a measure of student progress and growth.

Adapted from *Strategies for Success*

Learning Log Variations

A learning log is related to the subject materials in class. In a learning log, you are asked either to talk about what you have been learning in class or reflect on it in some way, or to relate something out of class to what you have been learning in class. By making personal connections with the subject matter, meaningful learning will occur. Learning logs can be used in conjunction with note-taking.

Basic Learning Logs Questions

- What did you do in class today?
- What did you learn?
- What did you find interesting?
- What questions do you have about what you learned?

Analyzing a New Idea

- What were the main ideas?
- What did you understand best?
- What questions do you still have about this information?
- How will you find more information?
- How does this idea relate to what you have already learned in class?

Quickwrites

Write non-stop for 2–5 minutes on a specific topic that you are studying. The purpose of focused writing is for you to find out what you know about a topic, to explore new ideas, and to find out what you need to learn about a topic.

Writing About the News

Part of what makes one literate is being aware of what is happening in the world. Choose an event that is unfolding in the media and is related to what is being studied in class.

- 1) Describe the event in detail.
- 2) What classroom topic does the event relate to and why?
- 3) What are your personal feelings about the event?
- 4) Why does this event interest you?
- 5) What do you predict will be the outcome of this event? Why?

Life Application

Apply the concepts you learned in class today to your life. How do they affect your everyday being? What would happen if they suddenly changed or ceased to exist?

Creative Solutions

You can be creative. Take a real-world problem that relates to what is being studied in class (e.g., air pollution, global warming, trash) and come up with creative solutions for this problem. Allow your solutions to be outlandish and unrealistic. Real solutions have often arisen from activities similar to this one.

Adapted from *Strategies for Success Middle Level*

Learning Log

Directions: Fill out this learning log based on what you learned in class today.

What I did	How I worked and How I learned	What I learned

Quickwrites

Goal

Students will quickly brainstorm and write ideas on academic topics and/or their learning.

Rationale

A **quickwrite** is a brainstorming and processing method in which students are asked to write nonstop for a short time, usually 3–5 minutes. Quickwrites are often used to give students the opportunity to showcase what they are thinking about a topic or what they have learned. This brainstorming tool allows students to process course content while also practicing their writing-to-learn skills.

Teacher Reference

- Quickwrites

“Brevity is the soul of wit.”

– *Shakespeare, Hamlet*

Instructional Steps

1. Assign a topic or question for the quickwrite and set the time limit for the task. Guide students through the thinking process of completing the quickwrite.
2. Encourage students to read or listen to the prompt and determine what they are being asked to do. Model this by asking these questions: “What is the point of this writing task?”; “In what ways might the prompt be addressed?”; “How many ways are there to address the topic?”
3. Brainstorm and complete a sample quickwrite together, with the teacher writing the response guided by input from students.
4. Emphasize the need for continued writing during the set time limit. Also stress that there are many ways for students to be “right” with their responses.
5. Provide commentary on the process of completing the task, the quality of student input, and how the response may eventually be used by students to guide their thinking or as input for the next part of class.
6. Assign a quickwrite topic students will easily be able to write about without much guidance for the first independently completed task.
7. Conduct the first independent quickwrite and allow time for the sharing of student responses.
8. Reassure students that quickwrites will be used in the class (see the Teacher Reference: Quickwrites) as a writing-to-learn strategy.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Work in small groups to respond to sample prompts until students are comfortable responding on their own.
- Select easily accessible prompts for students until they master the process.

Increased Rigor

- Encourage students to write and submit quickwrite prompts to the teacher to consider for class use.

“Keep writing. Keep doing it and doing it. Even in the moments when it’s so hurtful to think about writing.”

– Heather Armstrong

Quickwrites

Quickwrites may be used in a variety of ways to support students in writing to learn for all content area classes. In English language arts, quickwrites may be used in the following ways:

- Critical thinking warm-ups: Use at the beginning of class to get students focused on a new concept, the processing and application of content from the last class session, or in preparation for reading a new text.
- During the lesson: Provide a quickwrite prompt during the lesson directly related to the text, topic, or skill students are learning for the day.
- Student-directed quickwrites: Have students lead the quickwrite session by asking they prepare a question in advance and possible responses. Students then select several classmates with whom to share their writing and to practice responding appropriately.
- Explain the quote: Use quotes from literature or informational texts for students to agree or disagree with and analyze. Encourage them to explain their thinking through elaboration and support.
- Class-closers: Use the quickwrite to prompt reflection through summarizing, synthesizing, explaining, or questioning course content.

Sample Quickwrites

- Reflect on your progress in class this quarter. What have you learned? What are areas of need for you?
- If you only had a few minutes to evacuate your home, what would you take with you? Why?
- Consider *To Kill a Mockingbird* and the actual historical events during the past 50 years since its publication. What exactly has changed in America from the 1930s to now?
- What is the most important thing you learned in class today? Why?
- How do you think you will apply the skills of argumentative writing in your life?
- Respond to the quote: “The difference between failure and success is doing a thing nearly right and doing a thing exactly right.”
–Edward Simmons

NOTE: Quickwrites may not always require sentences or essay-type responses. Quickwrites could also be quick LISTS or quick CATEGORIES. These could be anything that requires students to quickly write a brainstormed response.



Process Writing

Introduction

It may seem as if continuing advances in technology and methods of information transmission have altered the form of written communication. And they have—profoundly. Written communication now has multiple means to be instantly received by the intended recipient. However, what has not changed is the non-linear writing process, and equally as important, the need for providing students with skills that not only chronicle their thinking, but address how to argue, critique, inform, and relate a good story, all modes of writing they encounter moving through a communicative life. Argumentative writing takes the form of literary analysis, argumentative essay, and persuasion. Expository writing includes definition, process analysis, cause/effect, compare/contrast, example research, description, and others. Sometimes “narrative” is thought to be “story” only in the literature sense, but this form can be autobiography, biography, memoir, narrative non-fiction, or description, as well as fiction. Whatever the form, the intent in teaching students the writing process is to help them recognize that communication between the writer and the reader is vital if any writing form is to achieve its goal. It is also important students understand good writing involves a process—it is not a magical one-draft effort.

In working with the writing process, teachers move students through several stages, which are not lock-step jumps from the first stage through the last. Students begin with **Pre-Writing** in which they develop an approach to a subject through strategies such as Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt. In *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking*, we also feature the pre-writing strategies of RAMP (identify role, audience, mode, and purpose), Magnet Words, Brainstorming, Guiding Questions, Structured Talk, and Organizing Text Structure with Graphic Organizers. Pre-writing is the overall term for the numerous strategies to help student writers develop ideas, and it can be performed with equal

effectiveness by one person or in collaboration with others. **Drafting**, the written response to the prompt following pre-writing, is equally distributed through a range of activities in which the writer or writers (individually and/or collaboratively) produce a “cohesive piece of writing ready for response and revision” (*High School Writing Teacher Guide*). During this stage, which focuses on content, logic of presentation, audience, purpose, and form, students are free to experiment with the way words are used to persuade, to argue, or to explain. If students find they are not satisfied with what they have written, they can return to this stage even after moving into other steps. The *Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* book outlines several strategies adding to the store of what teachers can do to help students in this stage. These include Drafting in Chunks, Using Templates and Sentence Frames, plus Using Mentor Texts in order to model their style and structure. Other strategies are: Drafting by Oral Rehearsal, Collaborative Drafting and Round Robin Draft Discussion, RAMP Shifting, and Embedding Research.

Once students are ready to have others look at or hear their drafts, they will move into **Reader Response**. While teachers can and do provide reader response before the final paper is ready for publication, this step, done collaboratively or individually, can benefit from having other students respond to each other’s writing to analyze strengths or areas needing more work. Participating in reader response teaches both the writer and the listener to critically review and implement good composition skills. In this stage, students can move back and forth from readers to listeners (or reviewers) several times, especially if the writers revise their initial work and need another audience to check for additional issues. This Write Path resource provides response strategies such as self-review using a 3-Column Analysis, Highlighting, or using a Rubric Analysis. Peers respond using the Language of Authentic Feedback,

Authentic Questioning, a Whip strategy, and Re-creation Reader Response. Teacher responders will find the Conferencing strategy and Guidelines for Strategic Teacher Response helpful.

Revising follows the input stages of reader response. Students review the information received on their efforts and revise to make sure they have addressed their intended specific audience and achieved their particular purpose. Teachers can help students with using Acronyms for Revision, Developing a Revision Plan, and using any number of focus lessons contained in this *Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking*. Revision hones students' abilities to fine-tune their writing so their message is transmitted and received. Considering the level of global interaction necessary in this 21st century, it is critical that the potential leaders we teach in our classrooms are able to be understood. Another stage in the writing process is **Editing**. It is different from revision. Whereas revision means re-seeing the message of the essay, editing is checking for errors in usage, mechanics, grammar, spelling, punctuation, style, and organization. Students learn to identify their most common errors by keeping editing journals or using Checklist Tracking. Since another pair of eyes is always helpful, they may work with one another in Expert Editing Groups, doing Sentence by Sentence Correction with a partner or collaboratively focusing on Target Areas. Once students have completed the revising and editing stages, they can return to reader responses as often as necessary. Writers **Publish** in the format best described by their teachers. This might be on a display board with other essays, in a public office spotlighting good writing, in a collection of essays for the accrediting committee, in the local newspaper (an editorial for *The New York Times!*), in a teen periodical, or in an essay response for college admission. *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* encourages students to take pride in

their efforts and to publish to the audience they most want to reach. Write and Release, a strategy combining technology, public essay display, and audience feedback, gives students and teachers a chance to see others appreciate students' earnest efforts, a pleasure too often missed.

Writers follow publishing with **Evaluation** and **Reflection**. All people learn from practice and from examining what was successful and what was not. Each stage in the process of writing will only benefit the writer if that writer reviews and stores helpful experiences to apply to the next writing task. To that end, this section in the text offers a variety of reflective strategies. These are: Analogous Reflection, Graphic Organizers as a Reflective Tool, Tracking Infographic Reflection, Portfolios, and Reflection Stems and Reflection Questions to start the dialogue. *Myself as a Writer* and Peer Evaluation Teams offer more insight. Rubrics are also provided to assess students' evaluation and reflection on both the writing process and the writing product.

Long ago, we all learned "Eloquence a hundred times has turned the scale of war and peace at will" (Emerson, *Progress of Culture*), or more popularly, "The pen is mightier than the sword." At the core of both clichés is the enormous value placed on writing targeted to exert influence through carefully composed language that is precisely what we teach our students when we use the writing process to teach how to write in any mode. "Teaching our students and potential world leaders to communicate well is a worthy goal!"— after careful thought, revision, response, and editing, we are ready to publish that!

Planning for a Rigorous Writing Program

Successful writing programs today include several key concepts that are structured around doing a great deal of writing.

First, students must write every day. College- and career-ready students require many and varied opportunities to write. Regular practice builds confidence, and students learn to write through strategic and intentional activities.

Second, it is imperative that a writing program include strategies and requirements for a variety of formats: writing process, on-demand writing, and writing to learn. Many students hold the misconception that writing is a magical process where the writer puts pen to paper and out flows a well-developed, well-organized essay on the first try. Learning that writing is a process of discovering and revising ideas and that good writers learn writing strategies helps students overcome the fear of not having the talent to write well. Students should be asked to write in a variety of modes and with varying times for preparation. Sometimes students simply respond to a question about a piece of literature; sometimes they are asked to write an informational essay; sometimes the teacher provides a prompt and a predetermined amount of time to write the essay; and sometimes students are asked to write an essay developing a claim and utilizing research to support their assertions. Teachers have many purposes in choosing various writing assignments. They might want to ascertain whether the students have read the literature or if all students understand a key point. On other occasions, teachers may need to help prepare students for timed writing tests such as the Advanced Placement exam or a state writing test. Another assignment may be designed to actually teach or reinforce a particular mode of writing and use the entire writing process. A good writing program demands all of these.

Along with providing ample opportunities to write, a writing program must also include strategies for self, peer, and teacher responses. This sharing is fundamental. The teacher must establish a climate

of trust that supports collaboration of multiple peer readers who can help generate ideas to write about, and an equal number of peer editors to help the writer see where he/she is clear or unclear, logical or illogical. Peer readers give writers valuable reactions and advice.

Another key concept is timely assessment to allow students to set goals for continued improvement. Sometimes the burden of grading all of the writing is overwhelming to English teachers. Research has shown that it is not the amount of “red writing” a teacher puts on students’ essays that makes them better writers, but it is the quantity of writing students generate that drives improvement. Multiple opportunities for assessment exist allowing for varied forms of feedback: some essays are assessed holistically, some for grammatical conventions, some for content, and some for the particular skill students are currently learning, whether that is introductions, conclusions, transitions, or any other targeted component of good composition. In addition, experienced teachers find having the students collaboratively score some of their writing builds confidence in both the writer and the student-evaluator. As students gain more confidence and more enjoyment from writing, they move away from needing constant feedback on each assignment and become more proficient in evaluating their own writing. Many of the strategies in the writing section of this book are designed to support multiple approaches to assessment.

Finally, a good writing program demands that students reflect from time to time on themselves as writers, asking what they are doing well, how they have improved their writing over the past semester or year, and in what ways they still need to develop. The Evaluation and Reflection section of the book includes strategies to support students’ metacognitive thinking.

*“Of all those arts in which the wise excel,
Nature’s chief masterpiece is writing well.”*

– John Sheffield, *Duke of Buckingham and Normanby*,
Essay on Poetry

Developing Writing Prompts

Since writing is proof of clear thinking, it is important to provide tools for students to sort out the jumble of ideas and information they have amassed. A detailed writing prompt, developed by the teacher, will guide students as they organize and develop their thoughts. To assist this practice, a sample template for developing writing prompts is included at the end of this introduction. The prompt template utilizes the RAMP approach that is included in several strategies in this section.

Organizing Student Work

Organizing and collecting the work of students regarding their progress in writing is an important task for both teachers and students. This work serves as documentation towards identified standards and objectives as well as evidence of progress in writing skills. Students should be encouraged to periodically reflect on their progress using this evidence to analyze their growth and identify future goals. Teachers may consider using a combination of writer’s notebooks, working folders, and portfolios in class or an electronic format depending on availability of resources and computer access. In this section, several ideas are presented as suggested formats for teacher consideration.

A **Writer’s Notebook** is a place for students to record observations, ideas, quotes, facts, lists, brainstorms, and outlines that may eventually serve as the basis for more formal writings, such as essays, articles, stories, or poems. Just as professional journalists and other writers keep notebooks for inspiration, reminders, and reference, students benefit from this practice as well. To create a writer’s notebook, acquire a composition notebook, spiral notebook, or journal, or create a booklet out of blank or lined paper. Students should keep the notebook handy for frequent writing at a moment’s notice. Remind

students to reference it when formal writings are assigned. For details regarding the use of interactive notebooks, please reference the information in the Writing to Learn section of this book.

Some possible prompts for students to use as they begin their writer’s notebook are as follows:

- Write down questions you have or what you wonder about.
- Make lists for future reference.
- Collect pictures of your favorite things for reference. Why are they favorites?
- Write down quotes you like and credit the source.
- Note new words or phrases used in an interesting way.
- Maintain a list of books you would like to read. Summarize books read, noting your favorite parts.
- Use the notebook to draw sketches or pictures.
- Document special events by writing about what happened.
- Keep a list of possible writing topics you would like to explore. This might include ideas for plot lines, characters, or settings.
- Write down topics or ideas for future research.
- Write down opinions you have as you think of them.

Encourage students to use **Working Folders** in the classroom to document and house writing assignments of all types. This includes writing to learn, process writing, on-demand examples and choice writing options. Provide folders for students to personalize and use in class. If students keep their work in a binder, periodically ask students to transfer evidence of their writing into their folders. A good suggestion is to do this at the end of each quarter. The evidence stored in the folder will assist students in analyzing their progress as writers periodically.

Students would also select work from this folder to place into their portfolios.

The use of **Portfolios** to showcase the progress and best writings of each student is encouraged. Allow students to take ownership in selecting their work samples (from their writer's notebook, working folders, or interactive notebook) and explaining why each sample was selected for their portfolio. Refer to the Writing Portfolios strategy in the Evaluation and Reflection section of this book for more detailed information.

Teachers also have access to a variety of **technology tools** to assist them in both teaching and in the production, collection, and storage of their students' work. Research continues to focus on the impact of technology on student learning. Teachers may capitalize on technology to incorporate multimedia texts and presentations, for access to information and research, and to enhance collaboration. There are numerous sites, computer programs and applications, and online resources to support teachers as they engage students in the use of computers for process and on-demand writing, as well as writing to learn opportunities. Appendix E: Technology Resources provides resources for consideration.

As with any instructional materials, teachers are encouraged to fully explore and approve all electronic sites and software they provide for students.

Using Sample Writing Units

Later on in this volume is a section containing a series of plans for writing units that address various writing genres. These sample plans are intended to be exactly that—samples. Teachers are encouraged to look at them and adapt them for the particular group of students or the type of writing they are teaching. A planning template is also included with the samples to help guide the planning process for supporting students through all stages of the writing process.

“The most difficult and complicated part of the writing process is the beginning.”

– A. B. Yehoshua



“When you write things down, they sometimes take you places you hadn't planned.”

– Melanie Benjamin, *Alice I Have Been*

Developing Writing Prompts Template

<p>Advanced</p> <p>Role:</p> <p>Audience:</p> <p>Mode:</p> <p>Purpose:</p>	<p>Sample: <i>In some novels and plays the experiences of an important character change him/her; in others the experiences of an important character leave him/her almost unchanged. In an essay, apply this statement to the novel. Consider why the character has or has not made the change. Do not merely describe the character or summarize the plot.</i></p>
<p>Intermediate</p> <p>Role:</p> <p>Audience:</p> <p>Mode:</p> <p>Purpose:</p>	<p>Sample: <i>Oftentimes two characters seem to be very different but ultimately turn out to be alike. Conversely, sometimes two characters seem similar but turn out to be different. Choose two characters from the reading and prove one of these statements to be true.</i></p>
<p>Foundational</p> <p>Role:</p> <p>Audience:</p> <p>Mode:</p> <p>Purpose:</p>	<p>Sample: <i>In stories and novels authors show us a character's personality and attitudes by what the character says, what the character does, and what other people say about him/her. Choose one character from the novel and identify 1–2 traits that you believe to be true about this character and explain how you know that. Cite evidence that proves your thesis.</i></p>

Crafting a Prompt

1. A sentence (a simple sentence, if possible) that makes a generalization about the text and is related to the writing topic.
2. A sentence or two that asks students to make a personal connection to the subject matter, or invites analysis, and/or gives them a question to answer.
3. Any specific directions about the form of the writing, the length, or any qualifiers (e.g., "Be sure to use evidence from the text.")

Pre-Writing

Pre-writing is a necessary precursor to creation of thought and to enlargement of student thinking prior to drafting a formal composition of any length. Emerging writers as well as those with more experience gain insight that serves their writing purposes. Spending time on this stage is justified, and teachers will find many strategies in this section that can be adjusted for time and purpose of the task and for the level of the students. The pre-writing stage is a vital start to any writing task, and conscious efforts here will pay off in stronger compositions.

As the initial stage in the writing process, pre-writing can take many forms: paired brainstorming, discussion, listening to others' ideas, charting a text being read, taking field trips, completing a graphic, interviewing subjects, mapping relationships between ideas, using social networks to solicit responses and information, and any number of interactive writing, speaking, listening, and reading activities that are focused on eliciting or creating source material for a writing task. More simply, pre-writing is that stage of the process that helps the writer pull together ideas prior to composing.

During the pre-writing stage, writers consider the **role** of the writer (a reporter? the attorney for the defense? a customer?), the **audience** for the composition (teacher? other adults? peers? self?), and the **purpose** of the composition (to inform, to persuade, relate a story, or argue a point). In thinking about the audience and purpose, writers also decide the **mode** that the writing is going to take, such as a lab report, a blog, a newspaper article, an entry in a writing contest, a reflection, and so on. Writers also need to consider the **organization** of the writing to maximize the desired effect of the piece. According to Common Core Standards, this deliberate planning will produce the “complex and nuanced writing” students need to become college- and career-ready writers.

In preparing students to write, working through strategically planned pre-writing strategies provides valuable payback for both student and teacher and results in stronger, richer drafts. As necessary as this step is, many teachers gloss over this preparation stage, preferring instead to spend the majority of time on composing or even editing, only to despair later when compositions show lack of coherence, lack of voice and style, and lack of attention to development of detail. Writing happens developmentally, in stages, and with much attention to writing in various formats. Because not all students move through the process at the same time, pre-writing allows for the percolation and ordering of ideas, the cross-pollination of individual interpretation, and the determination of a platform or stance. Meaningful pre-writing might take several class periods instead of a short time within one class period. This vital stage goes way beyond listing, clustering, and outlining. When we purposefully plan pre-writing strategies, we are teaching students to become independent writers and thinkers, to generate ideas, to decide what they think about a topic/subject, and to develop their own style. They do not have to depend upon their teachers to give them help in addressing a topic or in thinking of “what comes next” in their writing. The pre-writing strategies in this section include elements of clustering, debating, free writing, visualizing, drawing, talking or discussion, research, note-taking, or fantasizing—activities that are intended to generate ideas for writing. Often pre-writing strategies will occur over the course of a few days, and sometimes pre-writing will start with the kernel of an idea but launch student thinking into a new area. Suzanne Collins, author of *The Hunger Games* trilogy, stated that the idea for her novels began when watching television coverage of the invasion of Iraq. The genesis of the *Harry Potter* books came about while author J. K. Rowling waited for a train. Pre-writing takes many forms!

Brainstorming: It's not just clustering

Goal

Students will be able to use several modes of brainstorming to generate ideas and information.

Rationale

There are many ways to brainstorm, and all are effective ways to elicit information from a variety of sources and using a variety of techniques. Brainstorming is a versatile tool that can be used for reviewing, for test preparation, and for accessing information for essay construction.

Teacher References

- Brainstorming
- Example of Reframing Matrix

Student Handouts

- ABC Brainstorming
- Sample Visual Dramatics/Bodystorming
- Reframing Matrix
- Sample Reframing Matrix

Instructional Steps

Visual Brainstorming with a Bulletin Board Photo (or with a document camera for a shorter version of this activity)

1. Post a photograph connected to your upcoming lesson. Place the photo in the middle of a bulletin board that has been covered with a large expanse of butcher paper (or similar-type paper).
2. Entitle the entire bulletin board with only a large question mark. Or, if you think students need a prompt for comments that will follow, post a question such as: "What is the photographer emphasizing or saying in this picture?"
3. Invite students to post questions or comments about the picture as they enter or leave the classroom throughout the week. Provide sticky notes for this purpose.
4. Allow a sufficient time for comments to be placed on the board.
5. Debrief the posted comments with such questions as "What is the focus of this picture? What is the photographer showing about the subject(s) of this picture? What do you notice about the details?"
6. Use the information the students have brainstormed/listed about the photograph as an introduction to a reading or a writing assignment or as the beginning of research into an event related to the reading. For example, a photograph from the trial of the Scottsboro Boys introduces the atmosphere of the 1930s and is a strong introduction to the *To Kill a Mockingbird* reading.

Visual Dramatics or Bodystorming

(Gray, Brown, & Macanuso, 2010)

Much in the same way television crime programs use re-enactment as a tool to determine how a crime took place, visual dramatics uses participants' bodies to generate ideas or to "bodystorm."

1. Divide the class into groups of four.
2. Explain the object of this exercise: To act out a true/real life situation from their reading so they, the students, discover the possible motivations behind the human behavior in the scenes.
3. Present the "bodystorming" situation to the teams, and give them a list of occurrences that must take place within a dramatic portrayal of a scene.

4. Let them know that since this was a real event, they will have to figure out not only how it happened but the impact of the event on the future.
5. Give the students a reflection assignment at the conclusion of the visual dramatics.

For example, after reading about the Dust Bowl in such books as *Children of the Dust Bowl* by Jerry Stanley, students dramatize three days of the Lewis family's migration from Oklahoma, traveling 2000 miles and three weeks in a flatbed truck.

As the students re-enact what happened scene by scene, they improvise to fit each of the situations listed.

At the conclusion of visual drama, students reflect on the scene and the potential long term effects of the migration.

Reframe the problem

1. Assign students in groups to brainstorm from other perspectives. (See Teacher Reference: Example Reframing Matrix and Student Handout: Reframing Matrix.)
2. Have students record the situation for brainstorming in the center box of the Student Handout: Reframing Matrix.
3. Ask students to list possible "perspectives" (i.e., people or roles) for the graph. For example, in the Teacher Reference: Reframing Matrix sample, the mayor is one such perspective.
4. Using a document camera, display the brainstormed list of people or roles for the matrix.
5. Select one such perspective (such as the mayor in the sample) and debrief with students how that person might view or react to the situation they placed in the center box.
6. Ask students to complete the matrix and to use the information in the brainstorming and debriefing as information for follow-up assignment (an essay, a discussion, a further reading assignment, a Socratic Seminar, etc.)

ABC Brainstorming

(Ricci & Wahlgren, 1998)

1. Have students use one whole sheet of notebook paper, turned landscape style, to create a grid of boxes with one letter of the alphabet in A to Z order in each box. (See Student Handout: ABC Brainstorming)
2. Pair students (or have them do this individually) to list as many terms or facts on a topic as they can, but the terms must begin with the letter in the box. Give students a specific number of minutes to complete the task.
3. Call time when the time allotment is up, and ask students to count the number of terms or words in their boxes. The student(s) with the most terms correctly listed reads the words in each box. Those students who do not have the words or terms may write them in their boxes because the goal is for everyone to access

information. Have the same person answer any class questions regarding use of specific terms from his/her alphabetic listings. If there are no questions, the teacher asks some.

4. Begin the debriefing process with the entire class, asking various students to explain their answers.
5. Use the information gathered from sharing to begin class debriefing. The ABC Brainstorming can be used as a test preparation tool, a brainstorming list for a specific assignment, or as a pre-writing tool for a formal essay.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Use smaller groups to assist the process, and make sure the focus is clearly stated to ensure participation in the process.
- Ask students to consider only one carefully worded idea instead of a multi-task brainstorm.
- Guide students through the process by scribing their answers and guiding their use of the brainstormed list.
- Model the use of “List-Group-Label” as a method of creating/utilizing support in an essay. For more detailed information on “List, Group, Label,” see *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*.

Increased Rigor

- To increase rigor, vary the process, the content, or the product.
- Participants can perform more advanced brainstorming by using visual processes rather than verbal procedures. Having students focus on **the rhetorical occasion** (for example, who created the visual, why the artist created the visual and what specific audience is being targeted) helps all students generate more creative responses.
- See “Analyzing Non-print Text” in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading* for visual processing suggestions.

Using Technology

- Try using <http://www.realinnovation.com/content/c070604a.asp>. This site dispenses simple brainstorming advice and offers suggestions of various ways to implement.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*
- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

ABC Brainstorming

San Diego Chargers

STUDENT HANDOUT: ABC BRAINSTORMING

Directions: List as many terms or facts as you can recall in each box. Each term/fact must begin with the letter that is indicated in the box.

A Aggressive	B Built	C Critical	D Dynamic	E Epic	F Fantastic
G Golden	H Hardworking	I Intelligent	J Justice	K Kudos	L Luxurious
M Muscle	N Noticed	O Obtain	P Powerhouse	Q Quick	R Resistant
S Superior	T Teamwork	U unique	V Victories	WX Winning	YZ yards

(Adapted from Ricci, et al, 1998)

ABC Brainstorming

Directions: List as many terms or facts as you can recall in each box. Each term/fact must begin with the letter that is indicated in the box.

A	B	C	D	E	F
G	H	I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	WX	YZ

(Adapted from Ricci & Wahlgren, 1998)

Sample Visual Dramatics/Bodystorming

Elmer Lewis's Family

Directions: You have read about the Dust Bowl and the migration of families leaving Oklahoma in search of work and a home. The information is fictional but represents very similar stories of what actually happened to many people. The Elmer Lewis family of four is driving a flatbed truck with everything they own, including a goat and a dog. When the family reaches Holbrook, Arizona, they are out of food, have blown a tire, and have no money. Use the list of scenes below and act out the scenes in order.

Rules: Since you are re-enacting the scenes as you think they would happen, you may discuss as you go along anything that would help you make it authentic. You may change your body positions as necessary to make the scene realistic.

Setting: The side of the road near Holbrook, Arizona, Route 66. It is hot and dry, and the wind blows constantly. There are no trees, just scrub pinion bushes about 10 feet tall amid lots of barren land. It is 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Scenes:

1. Pa has just seen the flat tire on the truck. Ma is on the back of the truck, sitting on a trunk. Helen, their daughter, is sitting on two bedrolls tied with string, and her brother Emmet is beside her. The dog is tied on top to the upside-down table. They haven't eaten anything since yesterday when the children ate coffee grounds that had perked coffee for the adults that morning. That was all there was. The goat is in a pen on the running board of the truck. Pa must tell Ma about the tire. How does he look? What does Ma say? What do the children do?
2. Pa has walked and tried to hitchhike on to Holbrook, 16 miles west of the car. He is going to see if he can get some kind of odd job for fifty cents so they can get the tire repaired and some food. He is also carrying something. What is he carrying? What is he planning to do with it? Where are the children and Ma? What are they doing? Where is the dog? What does Ma say to the children and how do they answer?
3. It is early afternoon the next day. Pa is not back. Many more cars and trucks loaded down with furniture and lashed down bags and boxes have passed by. Ma and the children watch each truck and car. Some people wave and others just stare. What is the Lewis family saying? How do they feel? What does their side-of-the road camp look like?
4. It is now late night of the second whole day. A passing truck had given them water and some coffee and a cup of flour and a spoonful of lard for biscuits. The children are asleep in their bedrolls beside the truck. Ma is doing some thinking out loud. What are her thoughts? What does she think might be the best thing to do if Pa doesn't come back soon?
5. It is now morning of the third day. The wind has not died down since they've been here. Pa has not returned. Ma is repacking the truck, taking out some things and putting them aside. Why is she doing this? What is she taking out? What is going to happen? What are the children doing? What has Ma decided to do? How does she show what she's decided?
6. It is the night of the third day, and Pa has just returned. He has a box he is opening up. What is in the box? How does his family react? What does he say? What does Ma tell him about the things off the truck? What does Pa say they will do? What are the children doing as Pa is talking about their plans? What does Pa notice has changed since he's been gone?

Reflect on the scenes you created. What has happened? How will the family make a home when they get to the fields of California? Where has all the other road traffic gone? What will they find at the end of the journey? What is the long-term effect of so many people migrating away from a known area to an unknown future? If this were a scene in a movie, what would you say is the message the author wants us to know?

Adapted from Gray et al., 2010

Brainstorming

General information:

Before starting this activity, first clarify the reason for the brainstorm. Students need to have a simple, clear purpose and a stated goal before they can begin.

The Process:

Traditional brainstorming relies on prior knowledge as a foundation for idea creation. As widely practiced, it is performed by one person for the pre-writing stage in the writing process or by a group focused on one topic or idea. Brainstorming is not only clustering or mind mapping, though popularly, these are two effective methods to brainstorm.

Three generally agreed-upon standards for brainstorming are:

- all ideas are welcome
- all suggestions are posted and judgment is suspended
- debriefing/listing occurs after the brainstorming session has finished.

When students have completed the brainstormed list, they group and label the results to organize into a focused response. The value of grouping and labeling after brainstorming is in the discussion. Students gain from sorting brainstormed responses and from others voicing their perspectives. The process of discussion afterward is itself a type of brainstorming.

It is messy and often disorganized but negotiating with each other helps all students understand and develop ideas.

The grouping and labeling can also be performed using technology:

A Classroom Wiki or website: Use Google Sites to create a secure class website.

Pinterest, a social media tool, facilitates “pinning together” pictures, videos, links that can be theme-, interest-, task- or goal-focused for many classroom uses. An explanation and suggested lesson idea is featured in a Read, Write, Web article at http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/a_guys_guide_to_getting_going_on_pinterest.php.

Twitter: From the website <http://www.grouptweet.com>: “Leverage content from multiple contributors to create a more dynamic Twitter account”

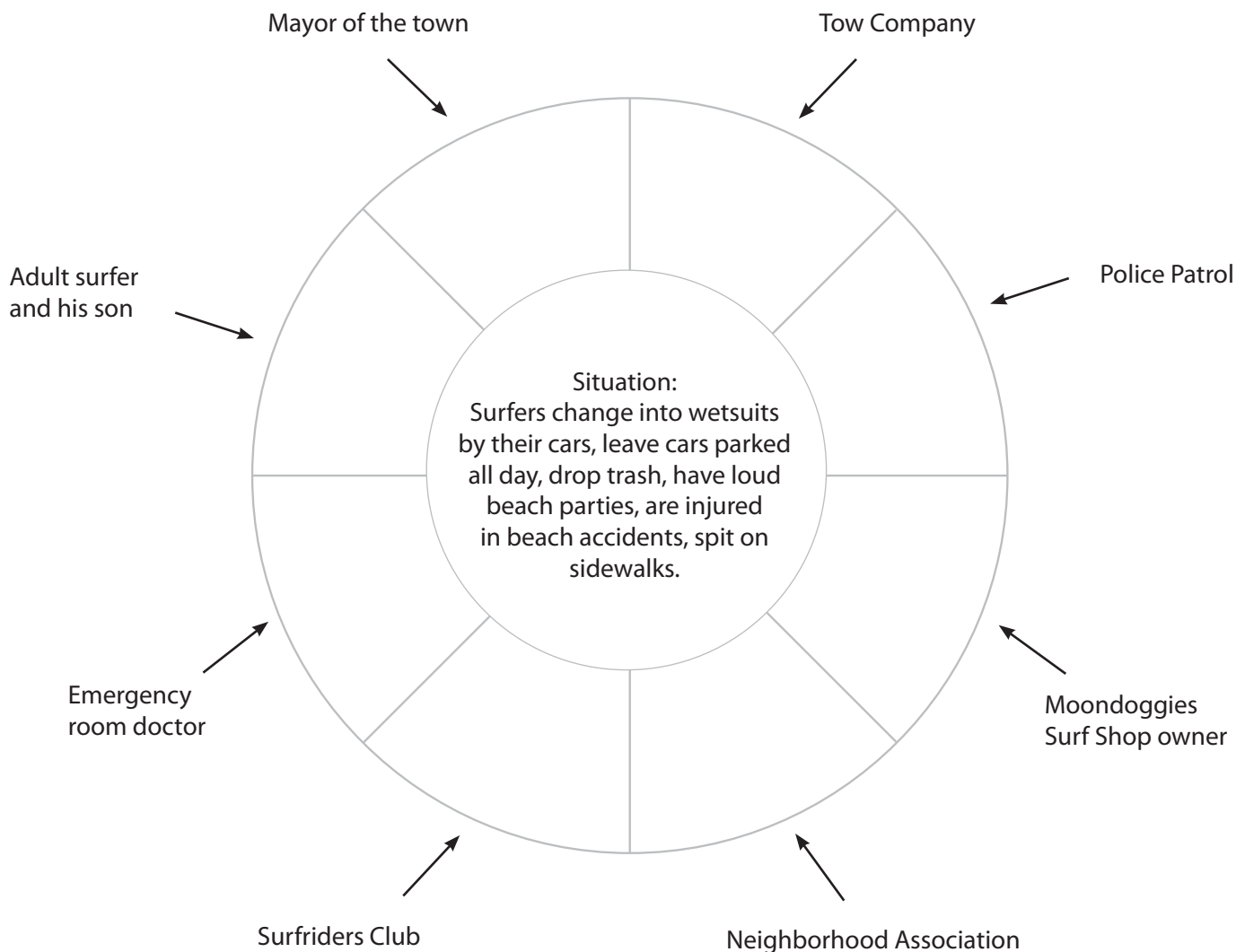
“If you’re trying to write, you have to let your attention drop. You can’t maintain an interest in anything else.”

– Barbara Tuchman

Example of Reframing Matrix

Student Directions: A citizen of a quiet beach town has complained about the surfers parking their cars along his beachfront street. At the town council meeting the next week, several people have sent letters to comment on the situation. Your job is to select one of the roles scattered around the matrix and to write a letter to the council from the viewpoint of the citizen you have chosen. This letter should try to persuade the council either to take some kind of action (you decide what that is) or to support a new view of the situation.

Citizens of the Town



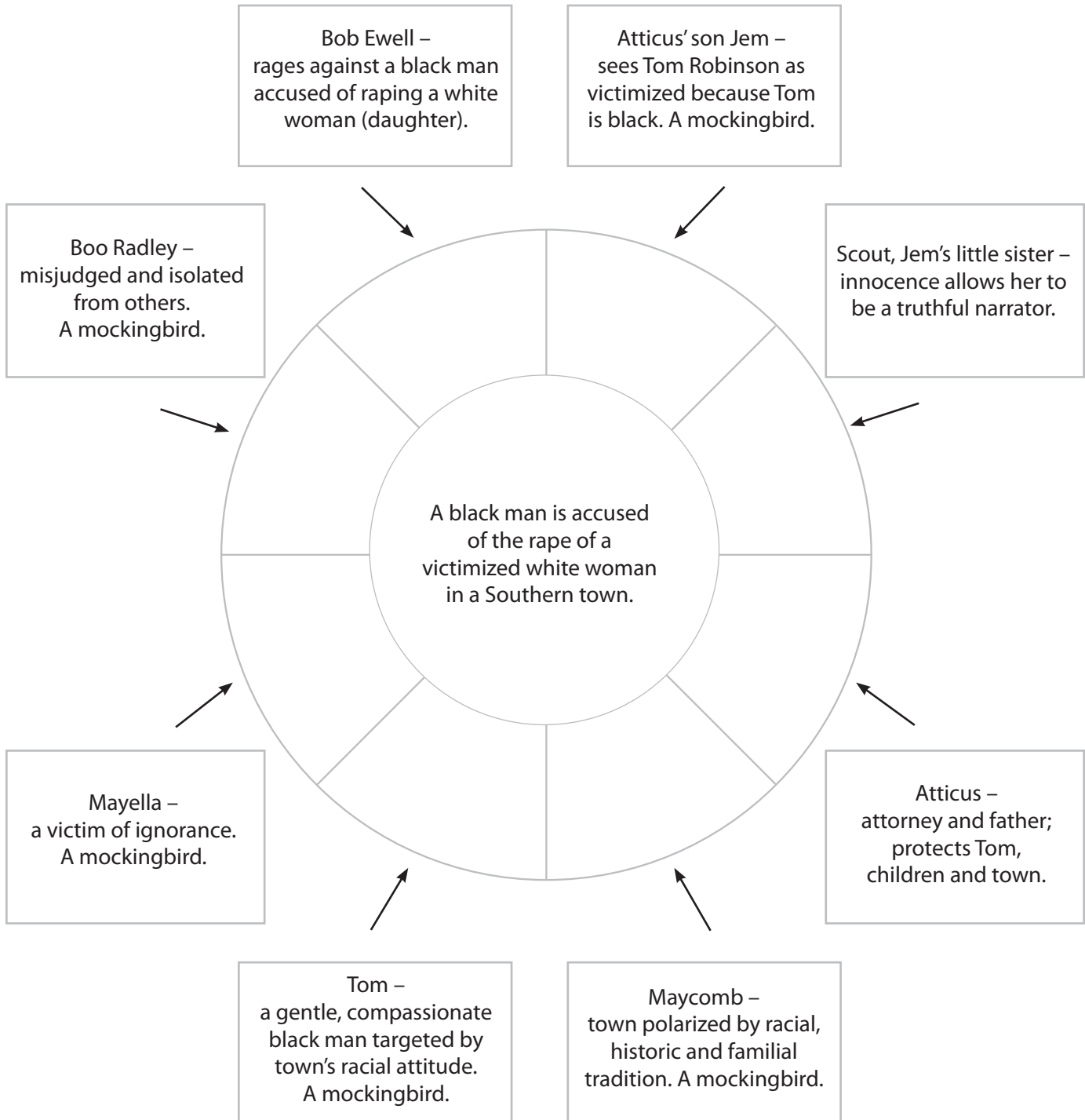
Reframing Matrix

Directions: Describe the situation which “frames” the focus of the reading. Write that situation in the center circle. In each small box surrounding the outside, place a person or role with a unique viewpoint of the situation. When you have finished, select one of the perspectives, and list the viewpoints of that person. In effect, you will be listing the points you wish to make in the essay that will be assigned. (Example: Mayor likes to see businesses prosper, wants to downplay controversy, tries to keep the townspeople happy, and wants to see surfers spending their money in the businesses.) When finished, use the information you created to work into an essay, a discussion, or other assignment.

The diagram is a circular structure with a central circle divided into eight equal segments by four radial lines. Surrounding this central circle are eight rectangular boxes, one for each segment. Each box is connected to its corresponding segment by a black arrow pointing inward towards the circle. The boxes are arranged as follows: two at the top, two on the sides, two at the bottom, and two at the bottom corners.

Reframing Matrix

(Based on *To Kill a Mockingbird*)



Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt

Goal

Students will analyze writing prompts in order to improve their ability to respond effectively in an essay.

Rationale

Understanding all aspects of writing prompts is an essential college readiness skill. Students need a process or system for deconstructing a writing prompt in order to accurately respond to the task. The strategy for RAMP should be used along with this strategy since RAMP will focus students on the outcome as stated in the prompt.

Student Handouts

- Organizational Words in Writing Prompts
- Guiding Questions for Deconstructing a Writing Prompt
- Sample Writing Prompt Deconstruction (2)

Instructional Steps

1. Display a sample writing prompt with a projector or document camera. Students should also have a copy of the prompt on paper.
2. Read the prompt aloud to students.
3. Ask students to identify the verbs in the prompt. Circle the verbs as students identify them.
4. Count and number the different tasks the prompt asks students to do.
5. Underline the details about each action, usually the phrases that follow the verbs.
6. List the verbs and underlined phrases beneath the prompt.
7. Refer them to the Student Handout: Organizational Words in Writing Prompts, and instruct students to find the verbs from the prompt on the list.
8. Tell students to record what they are to do according to the definition of the verbs.
9. Have students create an organizer outlining each task and showing how they are related.
10. Use the handout Guiding Questions for Deconstructing a Writing Prompt for more sophisticated and rigorous prompts.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students practice on additional prompts in small groups and then in pairs. Students should share their prompt deconstruction with the class to compare results.
- Use a gallery walk of different prompt deconstructions for students to view other groups' work.

Increased Rigor

- Provide longer and more sophisticated prompts for students to practice deconstructing.
- Have students paraphrase what they are expected to do after they have read the prompt.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*
- *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*
- *AVID College Readiness: Working with Sources*

*“The skill of writing is to create a context
in which other people can think.”*

– Edwin Schlossberg

Organizational Words in Writing Prompts

Following are organizational words in writing prompts for both in-class writing (“essay examinations”) and out-of-class assignments. This page will help you to interpret them.

Analyze	Examine carefully to determine why. Separate or distinguish the elements of anything complex. Break the idea into parts, and explain the various parts.
Assess	Examine critically, and estimate the merit, significance, or value.
Challenge	Ask for justification, question the statements provided.
Compare/ Contrast	Point out how things are similar and how they are different. (Sometimes, “compare” means both “compare and contrast.”)
Criticize/ Critique	Discuss the good and bad elements in a text, a film, or something else. Give evidence to justify your claims.
Defend	Maintain an argument with evidence; prove the validity of an argument with supporting evidence.
Define	Give the meaning of a term with enough detail to show that you really understand it.
Describe	Explain or write about; put into words a picture or an account. Tell how something looks, how something happened. Include how, where, who, and why.
Diagram	Make a drawing or outline of something and label its parts.
Discuss	Give reasons with details. Explore from different perspectives. Look at the pros and cons.
Effect	Whatever is produced by a cause; something made to happen by a person or thing; result.
Enumerate	Count off or list examples, reasons, causes, or effects—one by one.
Evaluate	Using evidence, discuss the strengths and weaknesses.
Explain	Make clear or interpret the reasons why something exists or is happening.
Identify	List and explain.
Illustrate	Make the point or idea clear by giving examples.
Interpret	Give the meaning of; use examples and personal comments to make clear.
Justify	Give reasons for your claim (in an academic argument).
List	List without details.
Outline	Make an organized listing of the important points of a subject. (This outline does not always have to look like the formal outline you may write for your English papers.)
Relate	Show the connections between things or how one thing causes another.
Respond	State your overall reaction (response) to the content, and then support your response with specific reasons and examples, often referring back to the reading.
Solve	Come up with a solution based on given information and your knowledge.
State	Give the main points in brief, clear form.
Summarize	Organize and bring together the main points, keeping out personal opinions.
Support	Back up the statements with evidence.
Synthesize	Pull together parts to make a whole—this requires looking for common attributes among the parts in order to link them together.

Source: Johns, A. (2007). *AVID College Readiness: Working With Sources*. San Diego, CA: Avid Press.

Guiding Questions for Deconstructing a Writing Prompt

As a writer, develop the habit of asking critical questions that will help you understand and prepare for formal writing assignments. The following questions will help you deconstruct and respond to complex writing prompts.

1. What are the verbs or action words stated in the prompt?
2. What are the details that follow the verb and clarify the task?
3. Are there clues in the prompt that will help me organize my paper?

Does the prompt use transition words such as “next, first, lastly, before”? Does it give directions such as “describe, compare, explain, and trace causes”? Is there a series of questions to consider? Does it make sense to discuss a specific portion of the prompt first, second, and third?
4. What content am I expected to cover in this paper?

What content should I include? Can or should I include information from my own experience?
5. Does the prompt tell me to focus on a specific text? What exactly does the prompt ask me to consider? How should I focus my analysis or discussion of the material? What is my goal in writing this response? How many elements and/or strategies am I being asked to analyze or discuss?
6. Does the prompt require me to use sources? If so, what kinds of sources should I use?

Does the prompt specify whether the sources should be primary (e.g., speeches, interviews, autobiographies, etc.) or secondary (e.g., biographies, analyses, or commentaries on events, articles, ideas, people, etc.)? If no direction is given regarding the type of sources, what would be most appropriate? May the sources be magazines or journal articles, films, or other source material? How many different types of sources should I use?
7. Does the prompt tell me to focus on specific literary elements?

What literary elements does the prompt ask me to analyze? How should I focus my analysis of the literary elements?

Use RAMP to further deconstruct the prompt.

8. **ROLE:** From which perspective am I being asked to write this paper?

Should I write this paper as a typical student or as someone else? Some prompts will ask writers to take on the persona of celebrities, leaders, government officials, and so on.
9. **AUDIENCE:** Who is my audience?

Who am I writing this paper for—an organization, the mayor, a family member, or some other individual or group? What kind of language (formal, conversational, etc.) is most appropriate for my audience? What does my audience know and/or believe?
10. **MODE:** What type of text am I being asked to write? What do I know about this type of writing?

Am I being asked to write a business letter? A personal statement? A book review? A literary analysis? You might want to ask your instructor about the kind of writing expected, and also ask specifically how to organize the content.
11. **PURPOSE:** According to the definitions on the handout, Organizational Words in Writing Prompts, what am I supposed to DO?

Does the prompt ask me to make an argument, inform my readers about a particular issue, or describe an event? Do I have to explain the significance of a particular topic? If you do not understand what you are being asked to do, seek clarification.

Adapted from LeMaster, J. (2011). Responding to a writing task. In *AVID critical reading: deep reading strategies for expository texts*. (pp. 115–126). San Diego, CA: AVID Press.

Sample Writing Prompt Deconstruction 1

Read through the example of a writing prompt deconstruction below. Then using the handout, Guiding Questions for Deconstructing a Writing Prompt, practice deconstructing the second writing prompt. NOTE: Do not use one-word answers.

PROMPT #1: Read the “Speech to the Troops at Tilbury.” Identify the speaker’s purpose and intended effect, and analyze the rhetorical strategies and techniques Queen Elizabeth employs to achieve this.

1. What are the verbs or action words stated in the prompt? Identify and analyze.
2. What are the details that follow the verb and clarify the task? Identify the speaker’s purpose and intended effect; analyze the rhetorical strategies and techniques.
3. Are there clues in the prompt that will help me organize my paper? In this order, name the purpose and effect, and analyze strategies.
4. What content am I expected to cover in this paper? First, I will need to know when the speech was delivered, who delivered it, and why. I also need to list the rhetorical strategies used.
5. Does the prompt tell me to focus on a specific text? The focus will be on the speech.
6. Does the prompt require me to use sources? If so, what kinds of sources should I use? The only source is the speech.
7. Does the prompt tell me to focus on specific literary elements? I am to focus on more than one rhetorical strategy.

Use RAMP to further deconstruct the prompt.

8. ROLE: From which perspective am I being asked to write this paper? This is an essay prompt so I will write from the perspective of a student.
9. AUDIENCE: Who is my audience? My teacher is my audience.
10. MODE: What type of text am I being asked to write? What do I know about this type of writing? I am writing a literary analysis essay.
11. PURPOSE: According to the definitions on the handout, Organizational Words in Writing Prompts, what am I supposed to DO? Identify: list and explain the speaker’s purpose. Analyze: Examine each rhetorical strategy or technique to determine if it is effective in achieving the purpose of the speech.

Sample Writing Prompt Deconstruction 2

PROMPT #2: Discuss how Harper Lee conveys the atmosphere of Maycomb in the first chapter of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and how she prepares the reader for the ending of the novel. Include at least three literary techniques she employs.

1. What are the verbs or action words stated in the prompt?
2. What are the details that follow the verb and clarify the task?
3. Are there clues in the prompt that will help me organize my paper?
4. What content am I expected to cover in this paper?
5. Does the prompt tell me to focus on a specific text?
6. Does the prompt require me to use sources? If so, what kinds of sources should I use?
7. Does the prompt tell me to focus on specific literary elements?

Use RAMP to further deconstruct the prompt.

8. **ROLE:** From which perspective am I being asked to write this paper?
9. **AUDIENCE:** Who is my audience?
10. **MODE:** What type of text am I being asked to write? What do I know about this type of writing?
11. **PURPOSE:** According to the definitions on the handout, Organizational Words in Writing Prompts, what am I supposed to DO?

Deconstructing Prompt

Esmeralda Pagan / 13th
11/06/12

Fall 2012

- Circle the academic verbs in the writing prompt
- Count and number the different tasks within the prompt
- Underline the details about each action (the phrases that follow the verbs) *what you will do*
- List the academic verbs and underlined phrases beneath the prompt
- Record what you need to do according to the definition of the academic verb
- Answer the "Guided Question for Deconstructing a Writing Prompt"

Prompt #1

"Life is a search for justice. ¹ Choose a character from the Lord of the Flies who responds in some significant way to justice or injustice. ² Analyze the character's understanding of justice, the degree to which the character's search for justice is successful, and the ³ significance of this search as a whole.

answer all questions } *intro - 1*
body - 2 & 3
conclusion - 4

Choose Character who responds to justice/injustice

Analyze Character's understanding of justice, degree of success, whole significance

Choose; To Select / Pick

Analyze; Examine carefully to determine why. Separate the elements of anything complex. Break the idea in to explain the various parts.

Fall 2012

Guided Questions for Deconstructing a Writing Prompt

1. What am I supposed to do as a writer to respond the prompt?
Analyze a character's search for justice
2. Are there clues in the prompt that will help me organize my paper?
Choose, Analyze Understanding the Search/Success, Significance.
3. What content am I expected to cover in this paper?
Characters Search for Justice
4. Does the prompt tell me to focus on a specific text?
Lord of The Flies
5. Does the prompt require me to use sources? If so, what kinds of sources should I use?
Novel/Direct quotes if possible.
6. From which perspective am I being asked to write this paper?
Third Person Perspective & Student Perspective.
7. Who is my audience?
Teacher
8. What type of text am I being asked to write? What do I know about this type of writing?
Literally, Analyzes - Examine & Determine why
** i am NOT Summarizing!*
9. Does the prompt tell me to focus on specific literary elements?
Characterization & Theme; Justice/injustice

Constructing a Rubric

Goal

Students will create a rubric to improve their understanding of how rubrics can guide and support writing.

Rationale

A rubric is a guide for students to create assigned essays and for teachers to score student-written essays according to the prompt requirements. One major advantage to using a rubric is that rubrics coach the students as they write. To help students understand what is expected of them, have them work backwards from analyzing an exemplary essay to collaboratively recreating a rubric reflecting an exemplary (or “high”) score.

Student Handout

- Argumentative Writing Rubric (to be completed)

Instructional Steps

1. Duplicate an “Advanced” category argumentative essay from a previous year’s class. Make sure the essay is from an argumentative essay or the genre of essay you are going to have them write themselves. Tell the students this essay has scored at an “Advanced” level.
2. Duplicate Student Handout: Argumentative Writing Rubric (to be completed) for each student.
3. Divide the students into groups of three or four.
4. Have them read the essay and annotate it individually first for the elements that make it at *least* a Proficient essay, and discuss their findings in the group. With that information, have the groups then share out their findings.
5. Ask the groups to focus only on the “Reading and Research” descriptor in the Trait column.
6. Pose the question: If this is *better* than a “proficient” essay for this trait, what could the descriptor for “Advanced” be? Have the groups discuss a possible descriptor, and have them devise a descriptor for that level to share out with the class.
7. Have all groups discuss and collaborate on a strong descriptor for “Advanced” for this trait, and write this on a document camera for everyone to copy in the appropriate place in their rubric.
8. Repeat the process for the rest of the rubric. If this process so far takes the remainder of the class time, plan on resuming the next class period with the rest of the activity.
9. Ask students to have the sample essay they used for construction of a rubric (from the previous steps).
10. Ask each group to refer to the rubric that has been constructed. Because this rubric will guide them in their own writing assignment, give students the prompt on which they will now be writing themselves.

“It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers.”

– James Thurber

“Say all you can say in the fewest possible words, or your reader will be sure to skip them; and in the plainest possible words, or he will certainly misunderstand them.”

– John Ruskin

11. Deconstruct the prompt for the essay they will be writing. (See Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt in this text.)
 - The prompt describes the topic and important facets that need to be in the essay they will write.
 - Then, using the prompt analysis in this text, guide students through the assigned topic.
 - Remind them the rubric is the guide or map they will use to write the assigned topic.
12. Ask them to consider the prompt and the rubric together. What should a finished/publishable essay have to be considered “Advanced”? Use a document camera to list their suggestions.
13. Finish by having students start the pre-writing on their essays.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students reread the essay.
- Ask them to highlight sections of the essay corresponding to the rubric’s “Advanced” designation. Discuss their essay highlights and ask them if there were any parts according to the rubric that were NOT in the “Advanced” category.
- If any sections do not fit the “Advanced” designation, ask students if *all* the sections of the essay must fit the category or if one or two areas could be at a lower level and still be an “Advanced” essay.

Increased Rigor

- Have the students rewrite any section of the essay that they would not find to fit the “Advanced” category so that it would reach “Advanced.”
- Have students discuss and collaborate on writing descriptors for the “Basic” and “Limited” columns. Have them share out their descriptors; after some class discussion write the agreed-upon descriptors on a document camera for everyone to copy in the appropriate place in their rubric.

Using Technology

- Use a document camera as embedded in the strategy.

Argumentative Writing Rubric

(to be completed)

Trait	4 – Advanced	3 – Proficient	2 – Basic	1 – Limited
Reading & Research		The essay uses relevant information from the resources to support most ideas.		
Focus/ Controlling Idea		The essay establishes a credible claim or proposal and develops counterclaim(s) fairly.		
Content Development		The essay focuses on most aspects of the writing task; development of ideas is skilled and for the most part, includes specific details and examples to develop the argument and clarify reasoning.		
Organization of Ideas		Organizational strategies are clear: a distinct introduction identifies the topic, ideas are generally related; transitions are logical and usually controlled to show connections; and the conclusion supports the information presented in the essay.		
Style & Conventions		The essay demonstrates a command of language conventions, uses an objective, formal tone, has sentences that are complete and varied but might have a few errors in conventions that create only minor disruptions in the fluency of the writing.		

Identifying RAMP

Goal

Students will learn to consider Role, Audience, Mode, and Purpose when planning their writing tasks.

Rationale

The RAMP strategy assists students in breaking down important considerations as they begin to plan their writing. RAMP stands for the **Role** of the writer, the **Audience** to whom the response is written, the rhetorical **Mode**, and the writer's **Purpose**.

Teacher Reference

- RAMP

Student Handout

- Practicing with RAMP

Instructional Steps

1. Explain and model the elements of RAMP for students using the teacher reference information. Project the example on the Teacher Reference page for students to see how the elements are evident in a writing task.
2. Conduct a think-aloud with students as you mine the task for RAMP elements. Ask students to complete the example on the RAMP student handout for reference as you progress so that students will have a model for future reference.
3. Provide another sample prompt for students to deconstruct independently or with a partner.
4. Have a class discussion to make sure all students understand RAMP. Be sure to identify times when elements are implied rather than stated in the task.
5. Demonstrate for students how altering the role, audience, mode, or purpose changes the planning required to successfully complete each task.
6. Encourage students to select the audience, role, mode, and purpose for their own writing once they are comfortable with these elements.
7. Challenge students to incorporate this strategy with the next writing task they are assigned to complete. Brainstorm various examples of each element as models for students.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Consider altering the audience, mode, or purpose to allow students increased access and more likelihood of success.
- Provide student handout copies for students to identify RAMP elements and plan their responses.
- Create a graph with a sample RAMP for a novel students read in the past.
- Create multiple prompts for use in a single class to differentiate for the needs of all students.

Increased Rigor

- Allow students to create and select their own RAMP elements for authentic writing tasks.

Using Technology

- Save paper: Consider using a generic RAMP graphic or a detailed RAMP sample for further reference on the class website.

Other AVID Resources

- *Middle Level Writing with Integrated Reading and Oral Language*

“However great a man’s natural talent may be, the art of writing cannot be learned all at once.”

– Jean Jacques Rousseau

RAMP

As part of the pre-writing process, it is important for students to analyze their writing task and consider several important aspects in order to contextualize their writing. The RAMP strategy affords students a way to break down several important considerations as they begin to plan their writing. RAMP stands for the **Role** of the writer, the **Audience**, the **Mode**, and the **Purpose**. As an acronym, RAMP helps establish the purpose of the writing and underscores that the writing is for authentic communication.

The **Role** of the writer refers to the role that the student assumes as the actual writer himself/herself. Who are you as the writer? Oftentimes students are writing as students, but at other times, they may be writing as a critic, member of a specific group, a reporter, group leader, another person, or even an inanimate object. By identifying their specific role as a writer, students are able to make personal connections with their subject matter. Creating plans based on the identified viewpoint will encourage more authentic voice and style in their writing.

Students should consider the **Audience** for whom the piece is being written. To whom is the student writing? To make writing more authentic, teachers are encouraged to create real-world audiences for students to address in their work. For example, Anne Marie Olson at LeTourneau University has students "... imagine themselves trapped in the classroom after some natural disaster and needing to get information out to a variety of people (Red Cross or other help agencies, news sources, campus organizations, moms and dads, etc.). Groups of students draft brief messages to be sent out, and they share them to demonstrate how different the information and the language and tone are depending on the audience" (Olson, 2012). Some examples might include

writing to a peer (letters, notes, text messages, your blog readers), a teacher (you, another teacher, an anonymous teacher), other adults (community members, parents, a rapper, newspaper audience), or groups (scientists, hunters, test scorers, environmentalists). In reality, the audience is an active participant in the rhetorical situation. After students identify their specific audience, they should consider this perspective as they plan their response.

The **Mode** of writing refers to the rhetorical modes students are expected to produce to enable them to be college- and career-ready. Within each mode (category) are a number of genres (formats or approaches to writing). If students identify the rhetorical mode, then they will more easily be able to incorporate writing elements generally associated with each mode in their planning. It is noted that characteristics of each mode can be found within other modes as well and are not found strictly in isolation. For example, a student may write a personal commentary in the argumentative mode but employ elements of narrative structure to relate an important event to the reader. The three rhetorical modes are:

- **Narrative:** short story, novel, memoir, personal narrative, biography, autobiography, narrative poetry
- **Expository:** informational, opinion/support, compare/contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution, research reports, explanations, technical writing
- **Argumentative:** ads, public service announcements, editorials, personal commentary, persuasive writing, speeches

The **Purpose** of the writing may be directly stated in the writing prompt to be addressed or it may be implied. Students should identify their purpose in order to more clearly define and plan their response. Students may be able to identify their purpose by answering the question, “Why am I writing this?” Examples of writing purposes include writing to entertain (short stories or personal narratives), to explain (cause-and-effect or process papers), to inform (reports or summaries), to describe (descriptive papers or poems), to argue (speeches, essays, debates, research), to persuade (editorials or personal commentaries), to evaluate (lab reports, literary analysis), or to solve a problem (problem/solution essays).

Once students identify the specific requirements of their writing using the RAMP strategy, students can more easily include this information in their planning and pre-writing. This lays the groundwork for the most difficult part of writing for many students, which is getting started.

Teachers should provide an example of a writing task and identify the elements of RAMP with the students to help model the expectation.

Sample Prompt with RAMP identification:

In stories and novels authors show us a character’s personality and attitudes by what the character says, what the character does, and what other people say about him/her. Choose one character from the novel and identify 1–2 traits that you believe to be true about this character and explain how you know that. Cite evidence that proves your thesis.

- Role–The student is writing as the student himself/herself.
- Audience–The implied audience is the teacher and classmates.
- Mode–The writer is writing in the expository mode.
- Purpose–The writer’s purpose for this literacy analysis is to inform and explain.



Practicing with RAMP

1. What is your **Role** as a writer?
2. What **Audience** are you writing to?
3. What is the **Mode** in which you are writing?
4. What is the **Purpose** for this writing?

Role: Audience: Mode: Purpose:	
Role: Audience: Mode: Purpose:	
Role: Audience: Mode: Purpose:	

Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing

Goal

Students will develop the habit of considering certain questions before and during writing tasks.

Rationale

Good writers employ active questioning throughout the writing process. Self-guiding questions can ensure that students consider important aspects as they plan their writing.

Teacher Reference

- Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing

Student Handout

- Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing

Instructional Steps

1. Present the idea of using guiding questions to students during the pre-writing stage. Remind them that there are no right/wrong answers at this point!
2. Assign a writing task for students to use as a model and allow them to work collaboratively to answer sample guiding questions about the topic.
3. Project the writing prompt or provide students with a copy of the prompt.
4. Use the student handout to model the importance of guiding questions during the planning stage of process writing.
5. Encourage students to add or create their own guiding questions that are appropriate for the task.
6. Remind students that not every sample guiding question is appropriate for every task and that new questions will emerge as writing continues.
7. Encourage students to refer to their guiding questions during later stages of process writing, such as drafting and revising.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model with the large group guiding questions in a think-aloud format.
- Provide only two or three sample guiding questions for students to use that are specific for the writing task.
- Encourage students to work collaboratively in small groups or pairs to identify and answer guiding questions if they are addressing the same writing task.

Increased Rigor

- Challenge students to create their own guiding questions that are appropriate for the writing task.
- Incorporate research opportunities and writing to answer research questions.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing

Good writers, as well as good readers, employ active questioning throughout the writing process. During the initial stage of the writing process, students make decisions about what to write, which aspects of the topic they will include, and how they will approach the subject. Students may use literature, reference materials, research findings or other information to assist them with their task. Guiding questions can ensure that students consider important aspects as they plan their writing. Teachers should encourage students to answer guiding questions as they approach a writing task and allow students to create their own questions as they progress in their writing. The initial questions can be referenced later as students draft and revise their work.

Sample guiding questions for writers:

- Why am I writing this?
- Who will read it?
- What organizational strategy works best for my writing?
- Which format/genre will I use?
- What ideas for an introduction do I have?
- What considerations for my audience and purpose must I address?
- What do I already know about my topic?
- What must I still find out about my topic?
- Which resources will assist me as I write?
- What aspects of the topic will I emphasize?
- How might I conclude my writing?

Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing

As you plan your writing, consider the following sample questions to assist you in clarifying the task and addressing important aspects in your work. Remember—not all questions are appropriate for all tasks and you can add your own questions as needed!

Guiding Questions	My Thoughts
Why am I writing this?	
Who will read it?	
What organizational strategy works best for my writing?	
Which format/genre will I use?	
What ideas for an introduction do I have?	
What considerations for my audience and purpose must I address?	
What do I already know about my topic?	

What must I still find out about my topic?	
Which resources will assist me as I write?	
What aspects of the topic will I emphasize?	
How might I conclude my writing?	
Additional question:	
Additional question:	

Magnet Words

(Buehl, 2001)

Goal

Students will know how to identify and use key words to help them develop ideas for writing.

Rationale

Creating and manipulating sentences becomes kinesthetic when the basic elements of reading and summarizing start with key or “magnet” words on 3 x 5 cards.

Student Handout

- Magnet Words

Instructional Steps

1. Pair students and have them read a short selection such as a paragraph which has been taken from a longer text. Using a document camera, display a key term or word from the short reading.
2. Give the pairs enough 3 x 5 cards for the entire assignment. This might be as many as five or six. With this first step, however, have the pairs start with one card. Ask students to write the key term in the middle of the card and highlight the key term in the text.
3. Solicit from the class important details about the term they found in their reading. Demonstrate writing those details around the key word on their cards. For example, for a text on selecting a snowboard, *snowboard* is the magnet word, *selecting*, *mountainous terrain*, *types*, and *All-mountain* are the detail words placed around the magnet word on the card.
4. Using the document camera, model combining the key word and details listed on the cards into a sentence summarizing the passage they read. For example, using the example in #3, the sentence might be *Selecting a snowboard depends upon the type of mountainous terrain in which you are using the board, but most boarders choose an All-mountain board.*
5. Refer to the Magnet Words Student Handout for more examples using a different subject.
6. Have students write the newly combined sentence on the back of their card.
7. Have the pairs read the next paragraph in the text. Give them a new key word from this new reading to write on the second card. Have them find and write the details on a second card.
8. Ask them to create a summary sentence on the back of the new 3 x 5 card just as you demonstrated in Step 5 above.

“Writing by hand, mouthing by mouth: in each case you get a very strong physical sense of the emergence of language... print obliterates it, type has no drawl!”

– William Gass

9. Ask for a volunteer to read his or her newly created summary sentence from the new reading. Scribe that sentence on the document camera.
10. Have the pairs repeat the process for a third paragraph and a third card.
11. Using a volunteered summary from the third reading, scribe that sentence so all can see the three summary sentences listed.
12. Model combining the three sentences into a summary of all three sections. Note: Demonstrate adjusting the combined summary so that it reads sensibly and smoothly. (See *High School Writing Teacher Guide* for a focus lesson in combining sentence kernels.)
13. Display the key words from the rest of the reading selection, and have student pairs finish reading and summarizing the remaining text sections on 3 x 5 cards, one section at a time.
14. Have the student pairs combine all the sentences into one summary for the entire reading selection. Using the cards, students can arrange the sentences in preferred order so that the resulting summary reads smoothly.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Guide students through two short reading selections in which you demonstrate how to find/select magnet words. Demonstrate how to select words or terms that add a detail from the reading.

Increased Rigor

Alter the process, the product, or the content:

- Have students individually generate the key word list.
- Select more rigorous text for the magnet summaries.
- Have students use another text to research, create, and cite a second summary which verifies or refutes the information they have found in the first textual summary.

Using Technology

- Encourage students to perform web searches to branch out from the initial textual elements as they search for related sources on the key term. This will necessitate lessons on how to verify, integrate, and credit the sources of the information they find. (See *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide* 7–12 for help in teaching how to make connections inside and outside the text. For lessons in citing sources see *AVID College Readiness: Working with Sources*.)

*Have students use the resources in the online Library of Congress to add additional information to the summaries they created from the original text.

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/main/research/>

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*
- *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*
- *AVID College Readiness: Working with Sources*

Magnet Words

Arizona and Sonora, Mexico

Father Kino

Spanish colonization

colonization 1687

In 1687, Father Kino began Spanish colonization of Arizona and Sonora, Mexico.

Native Americans

hot desert

Jesuit missionary

28 missions

Mission San Xavier del Bac (still active)

This Jesuit Missionary established 28 missions to serve Native Americans, and in this hot desert area, Mission San Xavier del Bac is still an active church.

Two different summary versions:

Process:

Place the magnet word in the center of the card. From your reading, look for details that add information or that relate to the magnet word. Place those related details on the card around the magnet word. When you are finished with selecting and writing the details, turn the card over. Construct a sentence using all the information from the other side of the card. Write that sentence on the back. After all cards are finished, arrange the cards in an order that makes sense as a summary of your reading. On paper, rewrite and put all the sentences together to make a summary.

In 1687, Father Kino, a Jesuit Missionary, began Spanish colonization of Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. He established 28 missions to serve Native Americans, and in this hot desert area, San Xavier del Bac is still an active church.

OR

Spanish colonization of the hot desert land in what is now Arizona and parts of Sonora, Mexico began in 1687. Father Kino, a Jesuit missionary, established 28 churches to introduce his religion to the Native Americans. San Xavier del Bac, one of those missions, is still in use today.

Organizing Text Structure with Graphic Organizers

Goal

Students will know how to use a graphic organizer to plan the text structure of a writing task.

Rationale

Text structure refers to the internal structure of a text. Students must develop their ability to consciously select a text structure to fit a writing task and explicitly organize their thoughts into a logical structure. Graphic organizers help to define and clarify the goal of an essay and support student thinking by visually representing how ideas are related and organized.

Student Handout

- Text Structure: Graphic Organizers, Signal Words, Guiding Questions

Instructional Steps

1. Explain to students how graphic organizers can help to organize information as they draft the essay. Tell students that when they understand the ways texts are organized, they will be able to clarify relationships between concepts, make abstract ideas more concrete, and draft text to meet the purpose established by the prompt.
2. Review the five common text structures with students:
 - elaboration/description,
 - cause and effect,
 - compare and contrast,
 - sequence (chronological or plot sequence),
 - claim and evidence (or proposition and support).
3. Deconstruct the writing prompt and ask students to determine which text structure would be most appropriate for the writing task.
4. Provide students with a copy of the guiding questions for the text structure they selected.
5. Model a teacher-directed think-aloud of questions and comments using the guiding questions so that students can see the process of gathering and recording ideas for a writing task.
6. Provide students with a graphic organizer appropriate for the text structure.
7. Ask students to complete the graphic organizer by capturing the ideas generated in the think-aloud.
8. Have students share with a partner and add further information.

NOTE: As students gain confidence identifying text structures aligned with the writing purpose and using graphic organizers to organize ideas, provide the signal words for students to use as they draft essays.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model completing the graphic organizer with the whole group.
- Give students graphic organizers that are partially completed.
- Have students work in pairs or small groups until they are proficient enough to work individually.

Increased Rigor

- While it is valuable to provide students with a ready-made graphic organizer for a pre-writing task, it helps students to think more critically when they have to develop their own. They have to determine what the relationships are among ideas they will use in their draft and develop their own pictorial/visual method for showing them. Be prepared to remove the ready-made graphic organizers over time and have students develop their own.

Using Technology

- Have students develop their graphic organizer with a web-based tool and share with the class.
- Use interactive tools to generate completed graphic organizers – available at www.readwritethink.org
- Use Mind Mapping software to create graphic organizers.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*
- *Middle Level Writing with Integrated Reading and Oral Language Teacher Guide*
- *The Write Path English Language Learners Teacher Guide*

“Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example.”

– Mark Twain, Pudd’nhead Wilson

Text Structures: Graphic Organizers, Signal Words, Guiding Questions

Three Types of Writing

Argumentative	Informative	Narrative
---------------	-------------	-----------

Five Common Text Structures

Elaboration/ Description	Claim & Evidence	Compare & Contrast	Cause & Effect	Sequence: Chronological, Process & Plot
<i>Elaboration involves using intricate detail to further develop a process or claim. Description is detail used to develop people, places, or things.</i>	<i>Claims are the opinions or assertions of the author. Evidence is what the author uses to prove his claim is correct.</i>	<i>Comparison shows how two or more things, points, or people are alike; contrast explains how they are different.</i>	<i>Cause explains WHY something happened. Effect describes WHAT happened as a consequence.</i>	<i>Sequence shows the order of things. Use a sequence structure to develop a process or plot of a story.</i>

Guiding Questions

Use to help comprehend, clarify, and analyze

Elaboration/ Description	Claim & Evidence	Compare & Contrast	Cause & Effect	Sequence: Chronological, Process & Plot
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being described? • What are its most important attributes? • What are the characters, places, and objects in the text passage? • Why is this description important? • What is the concept? • To what category does it belong? • How does it work? • What does it do? • How are the pieces related or connected? • What are the functions of its pieces? • What are examples of things that share some but not all of its characteristics or attributes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the claim/proposition? • Why is this important? • Who will this impact? • What evidence is given to support the claim/proposition (from experience, from facts and statistics or from texts)? • What reasoning is given using the evidence (commentary)? (How reliable is the evidence?) • What might an opponent say against this claim/proposition (rebuttals/counterclaim)? • What arguments can be made against the rebuttals (counterclaims)? • What are the consequences or benefits of this position? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being compared and contrasted? • What categories of characteristics or attributes are used to compare and contrast these things? • How are the things alike or similar? • How are the things not alike or different? • What are the most important qualities or attributes that make them different? • On what basis is the choice of qualities logical or reasonable? • What can we conclude about these things or items? • Why are these things being compared or contrasted? • When did the comparison/contrast structure emerge? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it that happens? • What causes it to happen? • What is the effect? • What are the important elements or factors that cause this effect? • How do these factors or elements interrelate? • Will this result always happen from these causes? Why or why not? • How would the result change if the elements or factors were different? • What is the cause/effect process the author is describing? • Why did a cause/effect structure emerge? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being described in sequence? • Why did a chronological order pattern emerge? • What are the major steps in this sequence? • What details should be included (people, places, etc.) with each step? • Is there a part in the sequence where the events are more important than the others? • Is the sequence of events or ideas presented or designed for the most effect? • Is there a conflict in this sequence? Where does it get resolved? • Why is the sequence important?

Graphic Organizers

Use critical thinking to create a graphic organizer appropriate for a writing task.

Elaboration/ Description	Claim & Evidence	Compare & Contrast	Cause & Effect	Sequence: Chronological, Process & Plot
				<p>Topic: _____</p>

Signal Words

Use to see relationships between a writer's words and the structure of a text

Elaboration/ Description	Claim & Evidence	Compare & Contrast	Cause & Effect	Sequence: Chronological, Process & Plot
<p>includes to begin with for instance also for example to illustrate another first in other words identified by between characterized by explains shows in fact in addition such as furthermore reflects second most important associated with near among</p>	<p>believe suggests reasons for example states position proposes evidence asserts claims defends the question is one answer is therefore nevertheless persuades opposes argues refutes against supports</p>	<p>however but same as -er, -est are similar as well as on the contrary as opposed to share common traits both unlike different from -er than just like have in common difference between whereas on the other hand not only...but also</p>	<p>because therefore as a result of so that accordingly thus because of may be due to for this reason due to since consequently this has led to nevertheless if... then subsequently in order to effects of the cause was this led to (caused)</p>	<p>first, second next, later, then before/after beginning, middle, end initially eventually during since concluding subsequently while now finally earlier previously following prior to preceding meanwhile for the past simultaneously</p>

Guiding Questions to Lead to a Claim for Argumentative Writing

Goal

Students will successfully use questions to plan an argumentative writing task.

Rationale

The unique requirements of writing in the argumentative mode necessitate a set of guiding questions to be considered as students plan, draft, and revise their responses.

Teacher Reference

- Questioning to Lead to a Claim for Argumentative Writing

Student Handout

- Pre-Writing Guiding Questions for an Argumentative Task

Instructional Steps

1. Provide students with relevant data to allow them the opportunity to base their argumentative responses on relevant, credible evidence. (Data to be considered might include literary or informational texts, pictures, charts, graphs, music, etc.)
2. Provide students a copy of the Guiding Questions handout to complete during the pre-writing stage of an argumentative task.
3. Encourage students to examine the data to identify the claim or message they want to convey to their audience.
4. Instruct students to use the data to craft their claim statement and to provide specific evidence and elaboration when writing.
5. Consider the counterclaim and how it will be addressed in the response.
6. Plan to tailor the response to fit the role of the writer, audience, mode of writing, and purpose for writing.
7. Refer to the guiding questions frequently when writing, especially during the drafting and revising stages.

Note: The questions posed in the pre-writing stage should be aligned with the necessary standards required for writing mastery. For example, younger students may not have to address counterclaim, while older students would need to not only consider counterclaim, but anticipate the reader's reactions and possible responses to the writing.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide the necessary relevant data for students to use to complete the argumentative task.
- Start with visual data such as graphs and pictures before progressing to shorter texts.
- Model each step using the Guiding Questions handout with a sample prompt/task.
- Have students work in small groups and pairs several times before attempting independently.

Increased Rigor

- Encourage students to create their own additional questions as they complete argumentative writing tasks.
- Require that students select the most convincing and strongest evidence to use in their writing. Also consider the order of their evidence within the response.
- Allow students to research their own data to be used in creating a claim and providing evidence.

Questioning to Lead to a Claim for Argumentative Writing

In an argumentative essay, the writer makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence that is logical, relevant, and convincing. The claim could be an opinion, a policy proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. The goal of the argumentative essay is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the evidence provided.

It is important to note some basic differences between argumentation and persuasion. Argumentation requires the writer to use logical argument to satisfy the audience that the claim and the supporting evidence are valid and have merit. It is the duty of the writer to select the most convincing evidence, explain the relevance of the evidence, and tactfully refute counterclaims. An example of an argumentative response would be writing to prove that removing sports drinks from school vending machines does not improve student health habits. The writer would reference informational articles and research findings to prove the claim. Persuasive writing actively attempts to change the mind of the reader or motivate the reader to take action. Writers must establish their credibility so the audience will accept their personal beliefs or opinions. The writer may appeal to the audience's self-interest and especially to their emotions. The writer generally does not spend time discussing or refuting an opposing point of view. An example of a persuasive response might be writing to persuade the school board to designate the first day of hunting season as a school holiday. The writer would try to motivate the board to take action and would appeal to the emotions of the board.

The first step in writing an argumentative claim is to use the inquiry process to examine the data. Data might include a synthesis of resources and texts, such as literary or informational texts, photographs, charts/tables, music, poetry, etc. This examination allows students to form their claim using specific data, which then becomes part of the evidence in the argument presented.

Teachers may assist students in the writing process by using guiding questions as tools for students to consider as they plan, write, and revise their responses. The guiding questions also remind students of the important parts of an effective argumentative response. Sample guiding questions include the following:

1. What sources of data will I use to craft my argumentative claim? (Consider literary references, photographs, charts, informational texts, research, surveys, and other data sources.)
2. What does the data tell me?
3. What message/claim do I want to convey to others based on the data?
4. How can I use the data to write my claim?
5. What evidence will I use to support my claim and make logical appeals?
6. How will I address counterargument?
7. What special considerations for my role as the writer, audience, mode, and purpose must I make?

Answering these questions may lead the student to additional questions as they complete the writing task. Students need to consider, for example, the order in which they present their evidence and what overall evidence will best support their claim.

To build a strong argument, it is essential to address the counterclaim(s). This allows the writer to demonstrate knowledge about the opposing argument and their ability to address the counterargument. From the perspective of the audience, the writer then appears more credible. Research and consideration of the counterclaim strengthen the writer's rebuttal.

Developing students' abilities to understand both written and spoken argument is the college and career-ready goal articulated in the Common Core State Standards. Using carefully selected guiding questions will afford students the opportunity to achieve mastery of this skill.

Pre-Writing Guiding Questions for an Argumentative Task

Consider the following questions as you begin your initial planning in response to an argumentative task. Be sure to reference these questions again as you draft and revise your writing.

1. What sources of data will I use to craft my argumentative claim? (Consider literary references, photographs, charts, informational texts, research, surveys, and other data sources.)
2. What does the data tell me?
3. What message/claim do I want to convey to others based on the data I have gathered?
4. How can I use the data to write my claim?
5. What evidence will I use to support my claim and make logical appeals?
6. How will I address the counterargument?
7. What special considerations for my role as the writer, audience, mode, and purpose must I make?

Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking

Goal

Students will improve their skills at taking and organizing notes from a single source.

Rationale

College level writing tasks often require that students respond to what others have said about their topic. By reading what others have said and considering those ideas, students formulate their own ideas in a new context. A strategy for students to use when asked to work with sources is Focused Note-Taking. This note-taking system helps students with researching and organizing source material, which they can then use to apply to their own ideas.

Student Handout

- Focused Note-Taking from a Single Source

Instructional Steps

1. Ask students to deconstruct the writing task. (Refer to the pre-writing strategy on deconstructing writing prompts.)
2. Instruct students to generate a list of questions related to the prompt; these questions will serve to guide their research.
3. Remind students that the questions should be Level 2 or Level 3. At this time, it might be necessary to review Costa's Levels of Thinking in Appendix B.
4. Review the difference between direct quotes, paraphrases, and summaries. For additional information, see *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*.
5. Check students' questions to monitor quality of research. Be sure that students are looking for accurate information.
6. Ask students to research and find a source that could be used for a task related to a prompt they have deconstructed—either paper or digital.
7. Inform students that as they read the source material, they should focus on answers to the questions generated in Step 2.
8. Have students write one question in each section in the first column.
9. Instruct students to record their notes and analysis in the next two columns as they find appropriate/relevant information.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model the entire process as a large group.
- Model the question-generating step of the process.
- Present a detailed review of the distinguishing differences between direct quote, paraphrase, and summary.
- Use a simple writing prompt the first time through the process.
- Assign students to work through the process in small groups or pairs.

Increased Rigor

- Use a more complex prompt.
- Require independent practice in generating questions
- Require both primary and secondary documents.

Using Technology

- Use digital resources only.
- Have students work in pairs and share their notes through NoteMesh, a collaborative note-taking web program. (www.notemesh.com)

Other AVID Resources

- *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*
- *AVID College Readiness: Working with Sources*

“Research to me is as important or more important than the writing. It is the foundation upon which the book is built.”

– Leon Uris

Focused Note-Taking from a Single Source

Citation Information: Use the following table to record the correct citation information about your source. Answer all of the questions in the table before taking notes on your source.

What is the title of my source?	
What is the author's name?	
Who is the publisher and what is the publication date?	
What pages are referenced? Or is this an electronic source?	

Note-Taking Guide: As you read your sources, focus on the questions you generated. The questions are written in the first column. This process will ensure that you are noting information relevant to the writing prompt.

What is the question or topic?	Direct quote, paraphrase, or summary of source material.	Analysis that relates the information to the prompt or question.
One question related to the prompt is...		

What is the question or topic?	Direct quote, paraphrase, or summary of source material.	Analysis that relates the information to the prompt or question.
One question related to the prompt is...		
One question related to the prompt is...		

Adapted from *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*

Structured Talk as a Pre-Writing Strategy

Goal

Students will use academic conversation to help them plan a writing task.

Rationale

The purpose of structured talk as a pre-writing strategy is to provide a format and forum to help students participate in academic conversations. Discussions during the writing process will assist students in clarifying, explaining and expanding their thinking and writing.

Teacher Reference

- Structured Talk

Instructional Steps

1. Review the Collaborative Structures included in this book. Determine the best structure to suit the needs of the writing task and your students. Review the teacher reference sheet.
2. If you are using a paired or small group structure, carefully consider the placement of students for pairs or groups.
3. Review any necessary ground rules before the discussion begins. Set appropriate time limits.
4. Consider distributing guiding questions for students before the day of the discussion.
5. Conduct a quickwrite just before the discussion to capture initial ideas and get thoughts flowing.
6. Have students use the predetermined collaborative structure or meet in small groups to complete their discussion.
7. Use the structured talk time for students to determine their role as a writer, audience, mode of writing, and purpose.
8. Encourage students to reference texts or research findings as appropriate.
9. Encourage students to take notes during the discussion and to add to their quickwrites after the discussion has ended.
10. Provide feedback to students based on your observations as a teacher during the discussion. Include comments about the discussion process and behaviors that lead to successful discussions as well as content-related comments.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Use this strategy along with the Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing strategy as a basis for discussion among students.
- Provide specific topics/issues for students to discuss.
- Begin with smaller chunks of time for collaboration until students acclimate to the strategy.
- Assign specific roles to students in small groups so that all have to participate. One student could be the discussion leader, another the summarizer, another the questioner, etc. This provides more structure for students who need more guidance in acclimating to this strategy.

Increased Rigor

- Include structured talk opportunities throughout the writing process so that academic conversations begin to occur more naturally for students.
- Require more Socratic questioning during the structured talk.

Using Technology

- Create a class forum for a structured and monitored discussion using an electronic format such as a blog, Wiki, or discussion board.

“Everything in writing begins with language.

Language begins with listening.”

– Jeanette Winterson

Structured Talk

Students who have frequent opportunities to talk about their thinking are more likely to generate richer, more creatively written work. Discussion at any point in the writing process will assist students in clarifying, explaining, and expanding their thinking and writing. The goal of structured talk as a pre-writing strategy is to provide a format and forum to help students participate in academic conversations. This enables students to explore topics/issues of concern, share background information, and make informed choices or statements. The “give and take” of the conversation stimulates thought and can help focus and sharpen students’ thinking. The discussion becomes a way of verbalizing ideas that students may not have known they had.

Since many students do not naturally have academic vocabulary or resources on which to base their discussions, they will need more guidance from the teacher to initiate the discussion. Elements students need to get the discussion started could include reference to a specific text, notes on the topic, or notes taken from a speaker, presentation, or shared experience. Teachers may wish to provide several guiding questions for student use, such as, “What is a ‘truth’ that the author shows you in this text?” Or “Considering the ideas presented in this reading, is there a parallel with real life?”

Teachers may wish to establish or review several ground rules with students prior to participating in a structured talk experience. While some formal structures provide ground rules for participation,

other less formal types of structured talk, such as paired or small group discussions, do not. Several rules to consider include:

- Each member should accept responsibility for the success of the conversation.
- Divide the allotted time between all members of the group so that one person doesn’t dominate the discussion.
- Be specific about the kind of help that you need by stating goals at the beginning of the session.
- Encourage your partners to elaborate and explain their thinking. Remember that there is no right or wrong during brainstorming sessions.
- Thank your partners for their help at the end of the session.

Examples of structured talk opportunities include Socratic Seminars, literature circles, World Café, philosophical chairs, paired and small group discussions. Please refer to Appendix A of this book for a specific collection of collaborative structures appropriate for classroom use. A class website can also provide the forum for a structured and monitored discussion using an electronic format such as a blog, Wiki, or discussion board.

College and career readiness requires students to have the ability to take a stance and support that stance in speaking and writing, which is another goal for structured discussions. Additionally, most workplace compositions also involve collaboration among professionals. By providing students the time and opportunity to participate in structured talk in the classroom, teachers are preparing students for this valuable skill that can be directly transferred to college and/or the workplace.

Drafting

The **drafting** stage of the writing process has its start in pre-writing when writers begin to crystallize what they are experiencing, discussing, finding, researching, and thinking about with a more defined perspective on their subject. The pre-writing stage provides the background and information for the draft. The writer knows what to say, especially since pre-writing has provided think-time, but emphasis on correctness at this stage can inhibit the actual composing process. Refinement comes later. So first drafts are messy, often look disorganized, occasionally have invented spelling, might have awkward wording, and are sometimes legible only to their creators, even if the draft is word-processed. Subsequent drafts might be neater or more organized or involve greater clarity of description, detail, or support, but drafts are only drafts, not finished pieces. During drafting the focus is on developing the ideas and moving them onto paper, getting as much detail as possible into stating and supporting main points, selecting precise wording, moving sentences and paragraphs into some kind of progression, and then reading/re-reading and staging for effect.

Since drafting is the time for actual composition without having to consider neatness, the luxury of focusing on getting it all down without regard to what it looks like can be satisfying and even cathartic. The information and ideas are there and ready at hand. Writers can return to the drafting stage at any time during the writing process, and they often do when more ideas have surfaced or if the writer or a reader has determined more development is necessary. Drafting should free the writer to create and design without regard for the refining required of a published essay.

Even with that freedom, there are those who might be overwhelmed in thinking of the whole. The Drafting in Chunks strategy in this section breaks down the composing process so that creating the essay in smaller pieces seems less intimidating to writers. As drafting progresses, the Mentor Texts and Round Robin Drafting Discussion strategies give neophyte writers models and provides inspiration for how essays should look and sound to the readers. Oral Rehearsal and Collaborative Drafting add more tools to help both reader and writer envision the final message the essay is created to deliver. Reading aloud a draft in progress helps the writers and listeners hear a writer's thinking and connect all the parts into a smooth-sounding whole. Strategies to design sentences for a variety of writing modes help students scrutinize the building blocks for different types of essay responses. Students can also use the provided templates for a kick-start in Analyzing and Summarizing Evidence, Creating Expository Summaries, and Character Analyses. Faulkner could have been talking about drafting when he urged writers to "Get it down. Take chances. It may be bad, but it's the only way you can do anything really good." He knew drafting is not a one-stage finality—there will be more to come.

Collaborative Drafting

Goal

Students will work collaboratively in small groups to complete a writing task.

Rationale

Collaborative drafting is a powerful strategy that encourages cooperation, critical thinking, peer learning, and active participation to create a written product.

Teacher Reference

- Collaborative Drafting

Instructional Steps

1. Create writing tasks that would best be completed collaboratively. Considerations include tasks with multiple research opportunities and writing to respond to real-world problems, issues, or topics.
2. Decide if students should work in pairs, self-selected groups, or random/teacher selected groups.
3. Determine whether your class needs practice/review in active listening (see the Active Listening strategy in the Oral Language section of this book.)
4. Determine which collaborative structure best fits the writing task: group investigation, cooperative drafting, or jigsaw. (See Appendix A in this volume). Provide specific directions according to the structure selected.
5. Provide a written set of guidelines, expectations, and a timeline for research, planning, drafting, editing, and publication of the writing.
6. Discuss/review options for handling conflict and creative differences when working collaboratively.
7. Explain how the project will be graded, both for content of the final product and the process for working together with peers.
8. Afford students the opportunity to reflect on the collaborative process and the steps they took to complete the project.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide mini-lessons on tone, style, voice, and effective transitions.
- Model effective methods of problem-solving and collaboration.
- Provide checklists with required components and established deadlines.
- Provide frequent teacher-directed checks in the process.
- The jigsaw strategy using expert groups is a good starting point for collaborative writing.

Increased Rigor

- Group investigation and cooperative drafting are more rigorous for students.
- Allow choices in selecting topics and formats for responses.
- Ask students to assign roles and tasks for completing the writing project.

Using Technology

- This strategy is best implemented through the use of word processing and electronic editing programs.

Collaborative Drafting

Rationale

Collaborative drafting is a powerful strategy that encourages cooperation, critical thinking, peer learning, and active participation to create a written product. In the workplace and in the classroom, people are being asked to engage in collaborative writing as parts of projects in courses and in the business world. For the purposes of this strategy, collaborative writing is defined as the opportunity for students to complete a full-length writing assignment in pairs or small groups. The rationale for using this strategy includes many benefits:

- Students learn from each other by working as a team and building interpersonal relations.
- Students are exposed to multiple perspectives in addition to their own.
- The structure encourages discussion and shared decision making.
- Strengths and weaknesses as writers and thinkers are highlighted.
- Consideration of the audience, tone, and style in writing and editing is required.
- Negotiation of concerns and effective communication are taught using the collaborative structure.

Guidelines

In planning tasks for students to complete in a collaborative setting, it is best to consider tasks that would be difficult for students to accomplish alone. The goal is to create a response to a real-world task/prompt.

- Decide if students should work in pairs, self-selected groups, or random/teacher selected groups.
- Make sure the specific requirements for the assignment are discussed and established in written format for future reference.
- Create a timeline and set deadlines for researching, drafting, editing, and publishing the final product.
- Create a process for handling possible clashes of opinion and creative differences. Encourage non-threatening ways to deal with problems and foster active listening.

- Explain how the assignment will be graded for each group/pair. Collaborative assignments should be evaluated both for the written product and the collaborative structure used to complete the task.
- Identify technology resources, such as online discussions, communication via e-mail, helpful electronic websites, Wikis, etc. that would support the collaborative writing process.

Formats

Several options exist for completion of a collaborative writing task.

- Using **group investigation**, students are organized into groups according to their interests or identified topics. Students then determine sub-topics that each member will research. Each member carries out his or her part of the investigation and then the group creates a final product with consideration for the audience, purpose, and task.
- In **cooperative drafting**, students create a co-authored response. Students draft, edit, and revise their work to produce the final product. It is important for students to each have the most current version of the response, thus, an electronic format is best. Students may insert comments in the original document or use the annotation feature when editing and revising.
- Still another option is to use the **Jigsaw strategy**. After researching and planning the response, the class is divided into smaller groups to author parts of the written response collaboratively. One group may write the introduction and thesis statement, while other groups write support and elaboration parts or a conclusion for the essay. Groups then come together to weave the parts into one cohesive whole, providing effective transitions for the final product. This strategy may also be used during the revision stage of the process. Students could be divided into specialty area groups to examine the organization, content, support/elaboration, etc. for the response.

“We owe almost all our knowledge not to those who have agreed, but to those who have differed.”

– Charles Colton

Drafting in Chunks

Goal

Students will be guided to draft the body of an essay by focusing on “chunks” of the essay.

Rationale

Students are daunted by a prompt requiring a multi-task response. By viewing and performing the drafting task in chunks, the process of composing becomes manageable for the writers.

Teacher Reference

- Drafting in Chunks:
Creating a Planning Graphic

Student Handout

- Drafting in Chunks Planning Graphic

Instructional Steps

1. After students have deconstructed the prompt and decided the audience, purpose, and mode of their writing, ask students to decide the order in which they will address the prompt’s requirements. (See “Deconstruction and Interpretation of the Prompt” in this book.)
2. Tell students to temporarily ignore the entire introduction to their composition *except* for the thesis statement.
3. Ask students to “answer” their thesis statement by brainstorming points they need or wish to write to show or prove their thesis/claim.
4. Have students create and use a planning graphic like that described on the Teacher Reference page. They are to brainstorm and list the points they plan to include in each body paragraph.
5. Have them begin their actual draft writing with *one* of their body paragraphs. They do not have to write the paragraphs in order of placement.
6. Have students put the paragraphs together in a unified body. This is where the numbered columns will help students arrange the entire essay body.
7. Have them read their newly constructed essay body for coherence and supportive details.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- To help students put together their expository paragraphs, give them a line diagram. (See sample line graphic for scaffolding.)
- They will first need to construct a thesis statement that "... is a clearly worded declaration of the view(s)/ideas" the writer will "... substantiate, assert, or prove in a paper" (Mullen & Boldway, 2005, p. 83). This is a necessary step before drafting.

Increased Rigor

- Have students use this process to draft the body of a longer essay, one requiring 4–9 body paragraphs.
- Have students do a quickwrite on what they like or do not like about drafting in chunks.

Using Technology

- For an interactive drafting graphic that helps students look at the entire essay (rather than in chunks), try the ReadWriteThink site: <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/essaymap>

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

"Writing the last page of the first draft is the most enjoyable moment in writing. It's one of the most enjoyable moments in life, period."

– Nicholas Sparks

Drafting in Chunks: Creating a Planning Graphic

Students can create a Planning Graphic or use the template on the Student Handout:

1. To make a Planning Graphic, have students turn plain copy paper sideways, landscape style. Instruct them to write the thesis across the top.
2. Divide the rest of the copy paper into 3–4 columns. If more than four body paragraphs are needed to answer the response, they will need more than one planning graphic paper.
3. Have students label each column with a brief statement of what that planned body paragraph is going to substantiate, assert, or prove.
4. In the columns, have them brainstorm in list format the points they plan to include in that body paragraph.
5. When they have finished their planning graphic, students will number the columns in the order in which they will place the paragraph in the essay.

Embedding Research in Drafts

Goal

Students will use a 3-step process to draft statements they can use to integrate source information into an essay.

Rationale

When students use other sources to support their ideas, they need to understand that research needs to be embedded effectively into the draft. Students must include the correct citation information and develop elaboration about the research evidence to explain how the research supports the main points.

Student Handout

- 3-Part Source Integration

Instructional Steps

1. Have students use the focused note-taking process as they do preparatory research. (See Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking strategy in the Pre-Writing section of this book.)
2. Instruct students to develop a thesis for their essay. This is an important first step and will be necessary for students to be able to elaborate on the importance of their evidence.
3. Ask students to determine which research evidence will be used in their essay.
4. Share first page of the 3-Part Source Integration handout.
Explain to students that this 3-step process will support their use of research evidence in their drafts.
5. Instruct students to reference their focused note-taking pages from pre-writing.
6. Instruct students to follow the 3-part source integration format for each piece of research evidence they plan to use in their essay.
7. Have students share their source integration statements with a partner for feedback.
8. Explain to students that they will embed these statements where appropriate as they draft their essay

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model the process with students using examples from student research.
- Ask students to work with a partner to compose the 3-part source information required to integrate supporting research into the draft.
- Model the process of embedding the 3-part source integration statements into the essay draft.

Increased Rigor

- Have a read-around of draft pages to analyze embedded statements. Students can discuss the effectiveness of the evidence as well as the craftsmanship of the embedded information.

Using Technology

- Project 3-part source integrations using a document camera so that the class can offer suggestions.

Other AVID Resources

- *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*

“The true writer has nothing to say. What counts is the way he says it.”

– Alain Robbe-Grillet, For a New Novel

3-Part Source Integration

In order to make an in-text citation complete, it needs to be “packaged.” That is, it should be both introduced and discussed. Although there are a variety of ways to package citations, begin by using the templates below. Then, look at research papers or other texts with citations to see how a source is brought into the text and discussed.

Here is how one common type of citation package is organized into three parts:

Part 1: Introduce the source, the author, and provide comments about the author or source.

Part 2: Provide a paraphrase or direct quotation. (Begin with a verb and end with a parenthetical citation.)

Part 3: Comment on why this part of the text is important, relevant to the prompt, or significant in some other way. Consider the following questions: how does the research support your point; how do you elaborate; how do you explain the “so what” of your evidence?

	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3
Part 1: Introduce the source, the author’s name, and comments about the author.	The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), in their article “Immigrants Are a Vital Component of American Society,”...	In the article “The Threat of Terrorism Is Being Reduced,” John Ashcroft, the U.S. attorney general...	In his article, “Global Warming Is a Serious Threat to Humanity’s Future,” Mark Lynas, the author of <i>High Tide: News from a Warming World</i> ,...
Part 2: Provide a paraphrase or direct quotation. (Begin with a verb and end with a parenthetical citation.)	maintains that immigrants in America make every effort to assimilate (64).	claims that “terrorism is relatively inexpensive to conduct, and devilishly difficult to counter” (<i>Viewpoint</i> 27).	argues that in other parts of the world, flooding, drought, and sea-level rise are forcing people to leave their homes, creating environmental refugees (123).
Part 3: Comment on why this part of the text is important, relevant to the prompt, or significant in some other way.	This position refutes a common belief held by critics of immigration—that foreign-born Americans refuse to learn English and do not embrace “the American way of life.”	This point is troublesome. America is spending billions of dollars on the “War on Terror” and using its military might to fight an elusive enemy.	It is important for us to consider this point because mass displacement of human life could have severe consequences for communities all around the globe.

3-Part Source Integration: Chart

Develop two citations for each part of the chart, using the samples provided by your teacher as models.

Title and author of source: _____

	Citation 1	Citation 2
Part 1: Introduce the source, the author's name, and comments about the author.		
Part 2: Provide a paraphrase or direct quotation. (Begin with a verb and end with a parenthetical citation.)		
Part 3: Comment on why this part of the text is important, relevant to the prompt, or significant in some other way.		

Using the chart above, transfer one of your 3-part in-text citations onto the lines below.

Embed this sentence in the appropriate place in your essay. Highlight the sentence in your first draft for the reader response.

Using Mentor Texts

Goal

Students will recognize and imitate elements of effective writing techniques of established or experienced writers.

Rationale

A mentor text is a well-written sentence or short excerpt from fiction, poetry, or informational text. Students can improve their own writing by creating new sentences or excerpts based on the style and structure of a mentor text.

Teacher References

- Using Mentor Texts
- Mentor Text Example Assignments 1 and 2

Student Handouts

- Mentor Text Sentences
- Mentor Text: Student Handout for Example Assignment 2

Instructional Steps

1. Determine which element of the writer's craft students need to see modeled and incorporated into their own writing.
2. Select a mentor text that incorporates the element(s) of focus for the lesson.
3. Allow students to experience the mentor text first as a reader and then through the lens of a writer.
4. Model the use of the selected mentor text by providing the sample excerpt from the original author and writing a new version along with students during the lesson.
5. Explain the process using a think-aloud strategy as the new text sample is created. Use the same basic form and structure of the original writing.
6. Reflect verbally on the process by clarifying for students how this skill could be used in future writing tasks.
7. Distribute the Student Handout: Mentor Text Sentences for guided practice.
8. Use one of the mentor text assignments in the Teacher References that follow, or create one of your own based on what literature your class is studying.
9. Challenge students to identify their own mentor texts and bring them to class. Be sure students can identify why the text they selected is reflective of the label of "mentor text."
10. Reinforce the use of mentor texts periodically throughout the year by providing examples of good writing for students to experience and identify mentor sentences.



Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide samples of mentor texts and new writing based on these samples.
- Write and think-aloud with students in class to model the process.
- Conduct mini-lessons for the elements of writer’s craft that students need help with.
- Have students work in pairs and small groups before attempting the task individually.

Increased Rigor

- Encourage students to select their own mentor texts and explain why they selected those texts and which specific writing elements they want to model in their own writing.
- Instruct students to self-identify areas of writer’s craft that they would like to improve in their own writing and identify mentor texts to match areas for improvement.

Using Technology

- Create a two-column text document with the original mentor text on the left and space for students to type their version of the new text on the right side.

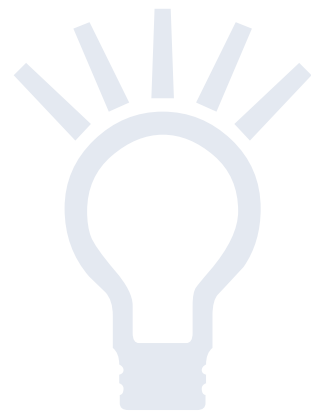
Using Mentor Texts

We all need mentors in our lives—other people who are willing to share their craft, skills, and experiences to help us learn to do something new and experience success. Artists, athletes, parents, teachers, leaders, and even writers frequently attribute their success to time spent learning from others. Using the same idea about important mentors in our lives, we can also show students how to become better writers by studying quality writing samples produced by the best writers in the field. Originally the National Writing Project encouraged young writers to use “copy change” as a method to model well-written poems, paragraphs, and other literature. In a version of the original copy change, Jeff Anderson, a Texas writer and teacher, uses “sentences that take you there” as models or “mentors” for students, and he has students collect such mentor sentences to share with each other. A mentor text is a well-written sentence or short excerpt from fiction, poetry, or informational text. Mentor text excerpts are selected because they contain powerful elements of a writer’s craft, such as vivid verbs, concrete imagery, tone, mood, sentence structure, figurative language, use of patterns, or other identified elements. It is important to note that mentor text selections are usually short excerpts that best exemplify a specific writer’s skill and they are not necessarily the entire text selection.

When using mentor texts, it is critically important that students first experience the text as a reader. Students can then appreciate the experience of reading the text and examining its effects on the reader before they view the text again through the

lens of a writer. Teachers should model the use of mentor texts in the classroom, carefully discussing the practice of mimicking other authors for the purpose of improving our own set of writer’s craft skills. Just as we learn to walk, talk, draw, or perform by imitating others, so too can we learn to write in this way. By improving specific writing composition skills through practice, we will be able to incorporate these skills into our own work more effectively in the future.

To model the use of mentor texts, select several excerpts from texts students may have already read. After reading the excerpt again in the context of the writing, use a think-aloud to assist students in seeing why the excerpt was selected as a mentor text. Highlight specific skills of the writer as you model for students. Using a two-column chart, place the original excerpt on the left side and credit it. Create a new version with students on the right side of the page. Write several responses to emphasize that there are many ways to be “right” with mentor texts!



Mentor Text Sentences

Using a well-written sentence from literature or an informational text, challenge yourself to rewrite the sentence, changing words to fit another topic or concept while maintaining the general structure of the sentence.

Example:

“Then we dashed about, waving our hands in the air like nets, catching two, ten—hundreds of fireflies, thrusting them into jars, waving our hands for more.”—Fireflies!

Then we drove about, swerving our carts in the halls like bowling balls, missing one, two—fifty students, shooshing them back into classrooms, swerving our carts on again.

Possible topics: seasons of the year, stress, too much work, friends, life

Now you try it!

**“She was a large woman with a large purse that had everything in it but hammer and nails.”—
“Thank You, Ma’am”**

“Disregarding the song of the birds, the waving green trees, and the smell of the flowers, Jimmy headed straight for a restaurant.”—“A Retrieved Reformation”

**“Jiro bolted like a rabbit from the mouth of a wolf that races to its hole without once looking back.”
—*The Master Puppeteer***

Select your own mentor text sentence(s) to complete!

Mentor Text: Example Assignment 1

Characteristics of Holden's Style

1. use of slang ("lousy," "crumby," "moron")
2. curse words (esp. "goddam" and "_____ as hell")
3. repetition of certain phrases ("kills me," "I really mean it")
4. vagueness ("and stuff")
5. exaggeration ("in about a thousand magazines")
6. contradiction ("I'm quite illiterate, but I read a lot.")
7. avoidance ("My hand hurts me...I don't care much.")
8. digression (everywhere apparently)

Warnings

- Remember that Holden does not say everything that he thinks. Neither should you. Look back at how he talks to teachers and other adults. Hint, hint.
- Stay true to Holden's era. Do not modernize the curses or update the slang. If Holden didn't use the word, you can't use it.
- Talk the talk . . . but dig deeper than just the words. Create a piece of writing that moves as Holden's language moves—avoiding, contradicting, and digressing—you know.

Your Turn

Write approximately a page on any subject in Holden Caulfield's style. Pick a subject that Holden would find thought-provoking. Yeah, like Holden ever really thinks! For a smart guy, he sure is a moron. Did you ever wonder who made toothpicks and what if they didn't wash their hands and stuff? I mean it, they could put their crumby hands on the toothpicks and then your grandmother could come in and pick one up, like at a cafeteria somewhere and put it in her mouth, all filthy with a million germs, for chrissakes. I don't even want to think about it. It kills me.

Mentor Text: Example Assignment 2

Theme for English B

By Langston Hughes

The instructor said,

Go home and write
a page tonight.
And let that page come out of you—
Then, it will be true.

I wonder if it's that simple.
I am twenty-two, colored, born in Winston-Salem.
I went to school there, then Durham, then here
to this college on the hill above Harlem.
I am the only colored student in my class.

The steps from the hill lead down into Harlem
through a park, then I cross St. Nicholas,
Eighth Avenue, Seventh, and I come to the Y,
the Harlem Branch Y, where I take the elevator
up to my room, sit down, and write this page:

It's not easy to know what is true for you or me
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what
I feel and see and hear, Harlem, I hear you:
hear you, hear me—we two—you, me, talk on this page.
(I hear New York too.) Me—who?
Well, I like to eat, sleep, drink, and be in love.
I like to work, read, learn, and understand life.
I like a pipe for a Christmas present, or records—
Bessie, bop, or Bach.
I guess being colored doesn't make me NOT like
the same things other folks like who are other races.
So will my page be colored that I write?
Being me, it will not be white.
But it will be
a part of you, instructor. You are white—
yet a part of me, as I am a part of you.
That's American.
Sometimes perhaps you don't want to be a part of me.
Nor do I often want to be a part of you.
But we are, that's true!
As I learn from you, I guess you learn from me—
although you're older—
and white—
and somewhat more free.
This is my page for English B.
1951

Personal Background on the poet.

What makes the poet unique in the class?

Specific detail about where poet lives now

Setting details

Things the poet likes

Details concerning the differences
between the instructor and the speaker

Addresses the instructor about
how the two will work together

Mentor Text: Student Handout for Example Assignment 2

“Theme for English B” Model Poem Assignment

This assignment will consist of two parts.

FIRST: You will write a poem about yourself, modeling the poem by Langston Hughes.

- Title your poem—Theme for ELA
- Begin your poem with the following words:
“The instructor said,
Go home and write a page tonight.
And let that page come out of you
Then it will be true.”
- Follow the pattern of ideas that was discussed in class. You can vary some in the body of the poem if you choose, but be sure to include information about your background, your unique qualities and preferences, and finish with a message to your ELA teacher.
- Type the final draft of your poem. It should be single-spaced in 12-point font.

SECOND: You will create a visual for your poem. You can use magazine pictures or clip art. Or you can draw your own images and designs. Arrange your poem and images on the paper provided to you in class.

Drafting Mentor Text

Jesus Espino
12/13/12
5th hour
CPE4

In case you didn't know I had a friend name Marco. He was the kind of kid that would get on your nervous pretty quickly. He would always talk about pointless things. Like this one time we were watching a football game and we were talking about how close was the game and Marco was not really in the conversation so he started a conversation about horses...I mean nobody really cares about horses. That kills me. I felt sorry for him I really did. But he was annoying, he could become annoying if he really wanted to. He sure was a moron. Plus he would always sit there and watch every move of yours. He would know every personal thing about you. Like he knows everything about me and my ex-girl. I'm not kidding. I stop talking to him for a while, because he was really annoying. But anyways I started talking to him again, I felt depress for him he was a loner. But anyways he told me about a problem he had with his parents and how they gave him curfew. What's curfew...? What kind of moron would give their kids curfew, that's stupid as hell. It kills me. For god sakes. I didn't even want to think what I would do if my parent would give me curfew. I didn't really pay attention to the problems he was telling me about so I left.

Theme for English 3

Go home and write a page tonight
And let that page come out of you
Then it will be true."
I wonder if it's that simple.
I'm am sixteen, black, and born in Alabama
Moved to Kansas leaving my grandpa and grandma
I went to school at Rsw Institute
And there is where I learned a thing or two
Upon leaving the school one thing was clear to me
Heights was the last place that I wanted to be

I hate large crowds and talking to strangers
But when I heard that I was going to heights
I thought to myself "I'm in danger,"
Many came excited for me
Saying how much fun it would be
But I told many of them sports don't interest me
Football, basketball no, no thank you
Those would cause big problems for me
Drawing is the only hobby I want
No body trained me I'm just self-taught
I have drawn many things that many call demonic
But I noticed I do so I won't be dishonest
Still a virgin, staying a virgin until I find the right one
While some people would just probably just give it to anyone
I'm not criticizing not despising
I'm just feeling what I'm writing;
Even though nobody's perfect
Doesn't mean they have to be worthless
Drugs, alcohol, sex I stay away from
And strive to keep God as my number one
I realize that this poem is made up of run-ons
So I'm going to have to get this work done
So Mr. Valdez I have finally finished this page
That I believe you had written when I was only 11 years of age
So I believe you have heard enough of me
So this is my page for English 3.

Kalonji Beacham

Oral “Rehearsal”

Goal

Students will get ideas and suggestions for a writing task by discussing ideas with a partner before drafting.

Rationale

The process of drafting an essay is made easier when student writers can orally think through, rehearse, and receive feedback on their planned essays. Validation or constructive advice is immediate, and the writer and the listener both benefit from the clarity of hearing others’ ideas.

Teacher Reference

- Oral Rehearsal Scaffolding Options

Instructional Steps

1. Have the partners pre-plan and list the points they wish to include in their oral rehearsal. Have them use a graphic organizer. (See the Writing to Learn section of this book for templates.)
2. Provide students with guidelines for the partnership process. Guidelines might include:
 - Have a copy of the oral notes or talking points for partner #2 (listener) as the piece is being shared by partner #1 (author).
 - Ask questions of partner #1 (author) in two categories:
 - Why have you written this?
 - Why does the subject matter?
 - Be prepared to make, share, and explain comments or notes with partner #1 (author) after the reading.
 - Phrase comments positively.
3. Begin and progress through the sharing process by having partner #1 (author)
 - explain the purpose and importance of the potential essay to partner #2, and
 - orally construct the essay, following the notes (talking points).
4. Continue the process as partner #2 (listener) marks the provided oral notes as partner #1 talks out the planned essay.
5. Partner #2 then reads his or her comments to the author who explains or clarifies and takes notes as needed.

6. Repeat the process so both partners can share and benefit from the oral rehearsal on their planned essays.
7. Have students immediately draft and flesh out the essays as discussed with their partners.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Create and display the guidelines providing structure for the oral rehearsal.
- Pre-planning by partners should include making a list of talking points that will be used as notes for the oral rehearsal.

Increased Rigor

- Once the first partnership is completed, students can then find an additional partner with whom to review the process, thus increasing the amount of feedback each student receives.

Using Technology

- Consider creating a forum in which you help students work through online conversations and peer feedback about their writing. *Educational Leadership* magazine recommends Voicethread at <http://voicethread.com>. Pending approval by your school or district, you also might try using the free version of Skype for the same purpose, though currently the free version only allows two speakers to converse on Skype. Check with your technology administrators for help in this endeavor.

“Be obscure clearly.”

– E.B. White

Oral Rehearsal Scaffolding Options

Need to scaffold? Try this:

Students can find it difficult to create an oral essay rehearsal if they have little experience drafting academic essays. They have no visual reference as to how such essays might appear on a page, even if they have seen examples.

- Place a list of essay components on the white board or on a document camera so that the rehearsing partner will have a visual reference of an essay. (Components include such items as an introduction, a “pro” argument, an opposing argument, and so on.)

Or try this:

- Have partner #1 focus on only ONE paragraph at a time in oral rehearsal, and have partner #2 (listener) take notes on teacher-specified items within the paragraph as it is orally delivered.

Another method to scaffold the process is to cue students orally as they are drafting their essays to partner #2. (See below)

- Familiarize students with the elements that comprise the text structure being used. (For example, if the essay-to-be is argumentative, and partners are focusing on pro/con within a paragraph, they must also know transitions that will assist them to indicate stance in their argument.)
- Before student pairs begin with the oral rehearsals, let them know you will be giving them oral signals to help them organize their “readings.” When you say, “START INTRO,” partner #1 will start with the oral introduction. When you call out, THESIS, partner #1 is to finish the sentence he or she is on and state the thesis. When you call out, TRANSITION INTO PARAGRAPH 1, the speaking partner begins the next paragraph, smoothly moving into the first paragraph with a transition. When you call out, ON THE OTHER HAND, the speaker begins the next sentence with that transition phrase and fits the rest of the sentence into that frame. Calling out HOWEVER gives partner #1 the transition into a supporting argument favoring the thesis. NOTE: These are examples and certainly do not represent the only transitions you might use.
- Continuing through the rest of the essay with similar oral cues gives students the structure they need to stay on the topic without wandering and to make the formation of their oral rehearsals easier.
- Consider having a trio as a team, with partner #2 being the listener and partner #3 giving the cues. This might help with noise control.

Pass the Draft

*“No one should be judge
in his own case.”*

– Maxim 545

Goal

Every student will successfully add information to a draft in the process of creating a group essay.

Rationale

This strategy provides differentiation in the drafting process. Students collaborate to develop a draft of an essay, allowing students at various skill levels to model the drafting process with each other.

Instructional Steps

1. Focus on one topic and organizational plan as a class.
2. Arrange students in groups of 4–6 and provide each group with a blank sheet of paper.
3. Have one student in each group generate a sentence or two of the introduction paragraph and write it on the paper.
4. Instruct students to pass the paper to the student on the left, who adds one or two more sentences. This process continues until the introduction is complete.
5. Have one student read the introduction aloud; group members can then discuss what to change, add, or delete.
6. Ask the group to develop a transition sentence once they have finished the introduction.
7. Follow the same process above by passing the paper to a student on the left who adds the next sentence or two.
8. Continue this process until a body paragraph is completed, and, once again, this is shared and reviewed by the group.
9. Continue this process for as many paragraphs as necessary.
10. Collect the group drafts, and copy or project to share with the whole class. Students will have an opportunity to discuss similarities and differences and look at how different groups approached the drafting process.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Use starter sentences or sentence templates to provide structure for the draft.
- Compose the introduction as a whole class, and then have small groups work on the body paragraphs.

Increased Rigor

- Have students analyze differences in writing styles and voices.
- Have each member of the group rewrite the group essay in their own voice; then share and compare.

Using Technology

- Use a laptop or tablet/notebook to compose the draft

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

RAMP Shifting

(Note RAMP strategy in the Pre-Writing section)

Goal

Students will learn to manipulate text for purpose and audience.

Rationale

This strategy encourages creative thinking and careful attention to the details of the writing task. Students are asked to consider a topic from several perspectives, for multiple purposes, and for multiple audiences.

Teacher Reference

- RAMP Shifting Example

Student Handout

- RAMP

Instructional Steps

1. Use course content to identify a writing topic based on standards and objectives for the course.
2. Brainstorm numerous roles students could assume in their writing based on the topic.
3. Decide possible audiences for writing and consider formats that would be appropriate.
4. Identify rhetorical modes and purposes for writing on the topic.
5. Explain RAMP to students (see RAMP pre-writing strategy in this book). Provide a list of specific writing tasks with RAMP elements identified with all relating to the same general topic of study OR complete Steps 1–4 with students in class. See the Teacher Reference page for a sample.
6. Encourage students to complete their assigned task individually, in pairs, or in groups. Students need to plan and write the first draft for this activity. A published draft might later be produced.
7. Examine the written responses as a class and identify how specific elements in each response relate to the RAMP elements required from the writing task.
8. Determine areas of weakness or improvement if there are responses that do not match RAMP requirements. Provide feedback for the author(s) to consider OR work as a class to improve the response.
9. Encourage students to carefully plan and consider RAMP elements before drafting, during drafting, and when revising their own writing in future assignments.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide copies of the student RAMP handout for note-taking so the RAMP elements are clearly identified.
- Have students work in small groups or pairs to determine the RAMP elements before beginning a writing assignment.
- Model the process of determining the RAMP elements as a large group.

Increased Rigor

- Provide several draft responses on the same topic for students to evaluate for effectiveness with consideration of identified RAMP elements. Students should explain why one draft is more effective than others based on the writing assignment and objectives.
- Consider a range of difficulty in the roles, audiences, and purposes students are asked to write about.
- Ask students to work in small groups. Each student completes an individual essay on the same writing topic. However, the RAMP elements will vary for each student. Then students can compare the variety in their essays.
- Ask students to consider the Rhetorical Triangle as an extension of RAMP. Examine how the use of language choices develops the three basic components: ethos, pathos, and logos.

RAMP Shifting Example

This strategy encourages creative thinking and careful attention to the details of the writing task. Students are asked to consider a topic from several perspectives, for multiple purposes, and for multiple audiences.

Here is an example of how writing would change based on the student's **role** as the writer, the intended **audience**, the **mode** of writing, and the **purpose** for writing. Consider a topic, such as the beach/ocean. Many purposes, audiences, and roles might be identified for writing based on this one topic. The following list presents a few of the possibilities:

As a dolphin, write an editorial to an industry demanding clean ocean water.

As a seagull, write a diary entry to report about your day on shore.

As a nature lover, write a poem to fellow environmentalists professing your inspired feelings at the sight of the ocean.

As a travel agent, create a brochure highlighting all the positive aspects of a beach vacation.

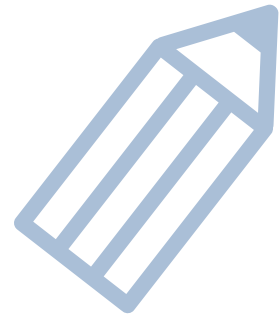
As a lifeguard, write an advice column for the newspaper advocating for general safety when visiting the beach.

As a scientist, write an essay to compare and contrast dolphins and porpoises.

As a member of the Coast Guard, create a public service announcement about the importance of boating safety.

One way to use this list is to assign a different task to students (individually, in pairs, or groups) for drafting. Then have the class compare responses to determine how specific elements in the response match the RAMP requirements of the original task. This emphasizes the importance of remaining focused on important elements in the writing prompt in order to write an effective response.

For more proficient students, the teacher could provide multiple draft responses on the same writing topic for students to evaluate. Students are asked to evaluate the drafts with regards to specific RAMP elements identified in the writing task. Students then justify reasons to support why certain responses are more appropriate than others. This affords students the opportunity to move into metacognition and think about their choices and justifications. Students should be prompted to consider this learning when crafting their own responses in the future.



RAMP

Topic: _____

Role	Audience	Mode	Purpose

Round Robin Draft Discussion

Goal

Students will provide useful feedback to their peers during drafting and response stages.

Rationale

Having students review and respond to peer drafts is a learning task itself. The Round Robin Draft Discussion is one way to encourage students to provide helpful guidance to each other within the classroom. While this strategy is located in the drafting section of the book, it is also good for teaching and reinforcing reader response and editing skills.

Student Handout

- What Can I Say?

Instructional Steps

1. Move students into groups of four, and have them bring their drafts-in-progress.
2. Give the each participant a handout which describes the specialized tasks from which they will select one to do. (See Student Handout: What Can I Say?)
3. Have them proceed in round robin fashion for each draft following these steps:
 - Read the draft and complete the task selected silently.
 - Take notes on separate paper, and use the notes as “scripts” when the group discussion of the draft begins.
 - Pass the draft to the next reader. When everyone has his/her essay back, begin the discussion draft by draft with everyone reading and discussing the essay from their notes.
 - Instruct the author to take notes on his/her draft, even though the notes by other students will be given to the author later.
 - Repeat the process for each draft.
4. Have all groups write a reflection on their participation in the activity and on what they plan to revise as a result of the discussions.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students use shorter selections for Round Robin Draft Discussion.
- Model a Round Robin first for the entire class before expecting students to participate in the activity.
- Monitor the discussions to watch for opportunities for assistance.
- Enlist the assistance of upper classmen or parent volunteers for the first sessions.

Increased Rigor

- Have students try a different task for each essay.

Using Technology

- Set up Meeting Words sessions and have small groups of students participate in separate groups to focus on one draft at a time: (<http://www.meetingwords.com>)

What Can I Say?

(Round Robin Draft Discussion Guide)

The major goal in this group discussion is to have other eyes besides the teacher's reading the draft and making suggestions based upon what is written. To help guide the discussion, there are three different ways your draft is going to be discussed.

Procedure

1. Read the descriptions of the discussion tasks below. Select one to use on everyone else's draft but your own.
2. No matter which task you choose, always FIRST find what the writer does well.
3. In your group, read the drafts and take notes on a new sheet of Cornell notepaper for each draft as you read. For example, if you are doing Task 1: Voice, you will need to read the draft, focus on the task "voice" is going to do, and take notes on the aspect of voice.
4. When you are finished taking notes on one draft, pass the draft to the next person who will read that essay and perform his or her selected task while you read the next draft that was passed to you. **(If the draft is passed to the person who wrote it, that person will not read it over.** She or he will wait for someone else's draft.)
5. Continue reading and commenting in round robin fashion until all drafts have been read and notes have been taken.
6. Before each person's notes are discussed, make sure all members of your group have their own drafts again.
7. One person at a time reads or discusses his/her notes to the author, explains any confusing parts, and answers any questions. After all have shared their notes, they give the author the notes taken.
8. Continue this until all authors in the group have their own drafts and the notes on those drafts.

Task 1

Voice

In an essay, "voice" is evident in the words chosen by the author and the manner in which the sentences are composed to show the author's personal style, and it will show the author's ability to create the idea/emotion/excitement/disappointment/hurt/betrayal... all those things that make the author's style uniquely his (or her) own.

- Look for the author's choice of words, and decide if they are exact and concrete and carefully chosen to give the impression of opinion or attitude. Definitely look for strong words that stand out and make the draft look like the writer/author considered how to support the claim.
- Good writing shows up when the audience, the people the writer hopes to affect, are convinced the author's argument is right or have changed their opinion. Check for sections or sentences that are descriptive enough to make you *feel* the way the author feels. Or, maybe you might see the overall word choice makes the reader a bit confused about the purpose of the draft essay because the writing style does not fit the purpose stated in the claim.
- Is it supposed to present an argument, explain, describe, or tell a story? Friendly, informal chattiness does not fit there. Perhaps the draft is not as interesting as it should be because the author does not use words that make us think, or perhaps the words leave the reader slightly bored.
- Variety of wording helps us to understand, to develop mental pictures, and to focus on importance of the details. Are the words arranged in the sentences carefully to give a certain effect?
- Does the draft show a variety of sentence lengths so the reader doesn't feel like the draft drones on and on?
- Can you tell what the writer *feels* about the subject? Does the author seem angry or bored?

Task 2

Audience

An audience is just what it seems: the part of the population the writer hopes to influence with this text. It's "someone" who watches the scene or tries to understand or who needs to be convinced. An "audience" is the target for the essay, the reader or readers who will read the essay. It could be your teacher, your boss, the newspaper readers, the judges in a contest, a voter, or a variety of others.

- Pay attention to the way you feel when you read the essay. Are there sections where you have the sense the writer wants someone to understand and appreciate a certain viewpoint?
- Are the author's examples appropriate for the audience of the essay?
- Perhaps the author's attitude is showing. Check out the tone of the writing. Is the tone right for the audience? In other words, if it is a serious topic, does the tone fit the topic?
- If the draft is a description, check out how the writer *shows* you the scene or how the writer "takes you there." For example, "Jaws burst out of the frothy sea, his razor teeth ominously gaping so closely I could see a strand of my ankle tether lodged between rows of teeth." The underlined words convey the feeling of the strength and power of a berserk animal, a surfer's nightmare.
- If the draft is supposed to be giving the reader information (directions on a process? an explanation?), see if the information makes sense and is in a reasonable order.
- Read the draft all the way through to see if the writer tries to make it flow smoothly. One way to interrupt "smooth flow" is to write short, choppy sentences, seeming like an uninteresting list.
- Do you see any words that are used incorrectly or misspelled?
- Are there any other jarring grammatical errors, such as incomplete sentences?
- Look for sentences that are not written well, or that have so many errors that they need to be corrected before the final draft. Maybe the punctuation interrupts the sentence so it's hard to understand what the author is trying to say.
- Some writers use exclamation marks to emphasize minor ideas. Some writers use a circle instead of a dot over every "I" as if the reader is a teen or a child. This is the kind of writing that shows the writer is not using a mature style.

Task 3

Quality Control

Quality Control has the job of making sure all the words are carefully checked for, say, spelling, and the sentences and errors do not block understanding of the writer's intent. For example, if there are mechanical errors getting in the way of the author's meaning, quality control will mark that for discussion with the writer.

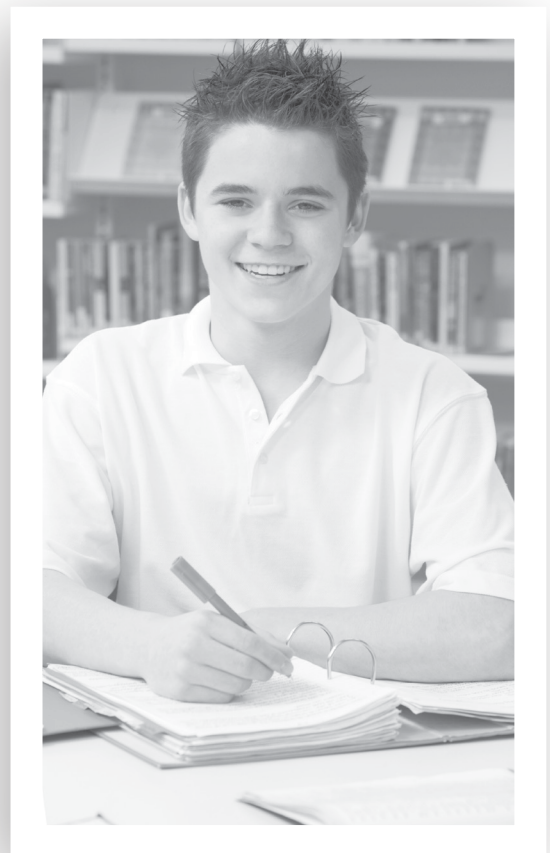
- First, look for sections or sentences that are well-written. These are the kinds of sections where the writer has explained clearly or written an interesting example. Maybe the writer has been careful to write enough detail to convince the audience the argument is the right way to think.

Task 4

Quality Control

If the writer has done a great job on developing his/her claim and then supporting it with carefully selected details, explanations, or examples, development is said to be well-done. If the essay is in the argumentative mode, good development shows up in the arrangement of the support so that maximum effect on the audience makes the reader think and acknowledge the writer's issue. Good development in an argumentative essay also states a counterclaim and rebuttal so the writer not only acknowledges that there is another side to the issue, but the writer also refutes that counterclaim. The conclusion does not bring in new arguments or information. Rather, the essay comes to a natural close.

- Variety of wording helps us understand developmental pictures and focus on importance of the details. Are the words arranged in the sentences carefully to give a certain effect?
- Does the draft seem almost like a report with just a listing of facts?
- Read the draft for details like facts and incidents that give us the exact reason *why* we should believe his/her argument and that show us, as readers, strong arguments for or against an issue.
- Find sections where the author has written an excellent example or an action-filled description. Your task as "development" is to help the author know he (or she) has a strongly convincing argument, description, story, or process.
- Check out the length of the draft. Is there enough evidence or support to explain a process or to make the reader see the scene?
- Are the examples and explanations sensible or are they weak or out of order?
- Do the facts in the draft hold up or are they just facts that do not help the reader to understand, believe, or agree with the ideas in the draft paper?
- Does the draft wander around with words but fail to actually say anything that makes the reader see the scene or that convinces the reader to take action? Does the draft indicate that the writer has followed the directions as they are written on a process?



Using Templates and Sentence Frames

Goal

Students will use templates to improve their ability to write effectively in different modes, using academic language.

Rationale

The use of templates and sentence frames provide support for students in structuring their thinking and writing. Struggling writers face two challenges: what to say and how to say it. By providing templates and frames, students can wrestle with what to say and then use the template to help provide structure and academic language that they may not have. A properly designed template is not a “fill in the blank” format. Rather, the template will help build student coherence and organization in writing and promote thoughtful, insightful writing. Templates cannot take the place of the actual messy thinking that has to go into composing. Rather, templates enhance student autonomy in composing while using models to increase sentence facility.

Teacher References

- Sample Expository Summary Template
- Sample Analyzing and Summarizing Evidence Template
- Sample Character Analysis Template

Student Handout

- Sentence Frames for (5) Different Modes of Writing Development

Instructional Steps

1. Determine the level of scaffolding necessary for students. The teacher should decide if students should begin with sentence frames and then work to using the templates as they become more proficient in writing.
2. Select a text and set a purpose for the template. Are students going to summarize the text? Will they be asked to analyze the theme of the poem?
3. Create the template and provide enough space for students to write their ideas.
4. Provide starter language to guide students in what to think and how to express those thoughts.
5. Begin the template with spaces to introduce the text, author, and genre. Many students need guidance in documenting this information.
6. Explain to students how templates are designed to support and guide their writing of academic texts.
7. Model for students the process of completing an essay using a template. Talk them through the process as you compose the essay.
8. Provide another template for students to complete in pairs or small groups. Students can work with others as they practice the rhetorical moves common in academic writing.
9. Continue providing templates, gradually removing more of the support each time. This strategic approach helps students progress in their writing so they become proficient in structuring their essays and using academic language.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Introduce sentence frames first so that students can practice with shorter segments of writing. Sentence frames are used initially as a template where the teacher selects the frames and students use them, and later students have a menu of sample sentence frames to choose from; the ultimate goal is to take away sentence frames altogether.
- Use paragraph frames with signal words to help guide the student in drafting multi-sentence paragraphs.
- Provide templates that are full of guiding language, academic vocabulary, and sentence starters.
- Create daily opportunities throughout the year for students to practice using sentence frames and templates.
- Assign templates that vary in length, sophistication, and purpose.

Increased Rigor

- Use templates with supporting prompts.
- Ask students to create their own templates for a particular writing prompt and exchange with other students to complete the essay.
- Move away from templates and use directives. For example, ask advanced students to: (1) introduce the source material; (2) account for the central claim that the author is making; and (3) summarize his or her key evidence—without the help of a template.

Using Technology

- Create templates using Microsoft Word that allow students to record their thoughts directly on the computer.

Other AVID Resources

- *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*
- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*
- *The Write Path English Language Learners Teacher Guide*

Additional Resources

- Graff, G., Birkenstein C., & Durst, R. (2011). *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* (2nd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Sentence Frames for Different Modes of Writing Development

Elaboration/Description

Signal Words	Guiding Questions
<i>includes</i> <i>to begin with</i> <i>for instance</i> <i>also</i> <i>for example</i> <i>to illustrate</i> <i>another</i> <i>first</i> <i>in other words</i> <i>identified by</i> <i>between</i> <i>characterized by</i>	<i>explains</i> <i>shows</i> <i>in fact</i> <i>in addition</i> <i>such as</i> <i>furthermore</i> <i>reflects</i> <i>second</i> <i>most important</i> <i>associated with</i> <i>near</i> <i>among</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being described? • What are its most important attributes? • What are the characters, places, and objects in the text passage? • Why is this description important? • What is the concept? • To what category does it belong? • How does it work? • What does it do? • How are the pieces related or connected? • What are the functions of its pieces? • What are examples of it? • What are examples of things that share some but not all of its characteristics/attributes?

Sample Sentence Frames

- _____ shows _____.
- _____ can be described as _____.
- Usually, _____.
- _____ is called _____ and is related to _____.
- _____ is used to illustrate _____.
- Characteristics of _____ include _____ and _____.
- _____ can be characterized by _____.
- _____; in other words _____.
- _____ can be defined first as _____ and second as _____.
- _____ is _____; for instance, _____.
- _____ happens _____.
- An example of _____ is _____.
- _____ rests among _____ and near _____.

Sentence Frames for Different Modes of Writing Development

Cause and Effect

Signal Words	Guiding Questions
<i>because</i> <i>since</i> <i>therefore</i> <i>consequently</i> <i>as a result of</i> <i>this has led to</i> <i>so that</i> <i>nevertheless</i> <i>accordingly</i> <i>if... then</i> <i>thus</i> <i>subsequently</i> <i>because of</i> <i>in order to</i> <i>may be due to</i> <i>effects of</i> <i>for this reason</i> <i>the cause was</i> <i>due to</i> <i>this led to (caused)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it that happens? • What causes it to happen? • What is the effect? • What are the important elements or factors that cause this effect? • How do these factors or elements interrelate? • Will this result always happen from these causes? Why or why not? • How would the result change if the elements or factors were different? • What is the cause/effect process the author is describing? • Why did a cause/effect structure emerge?

Sample Sentence Frames

- _____ was caused by _____.
- The _____ because _____.
- Because of _____, the _____ is _____.
- _____; therefore, _____.
- As a result of _____, _____.
- If _____, then _____.
- In order to _____, _____.
- For this reason, _____.
- _____ has been caused by _____, thus _____.
- Due to the fact that _____, it seems evident that _____.
- _____ has led to _____. For this reason I believe that _____.
- If _____ is _____, then I predict that _____.

Sentence Frames for Different Modes of Writing Development

Compare and Contrast

Signal Words	Guiding Questions
<i>however</i> <i>both</i> <i>but</i> <i>unlike</i> <i>same as</i> <i>different from</i> <i>-er, -est</i> <i>-er than</i> <i>are similar</i> <i>just like</i> <i>as well as</i> <i>have in common</i> <i>on the contrary</i> <i>difference between</i> <i>as opposed to</i> <i>whereas</i> <i>share common</i> <i>on the other hand</i> <i>traits</i> <i>not only...but also</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being compared and contrasted? • What categories of characteristics or attributes are used to compare and contrast these things? • How are the things alike or similar? • How are the things not alike or different? • What are the most important qualities or attributes that make them different? • What can we conclude about these things or items? • Why are these things being compared/contrasted? • When did the comparison/contrast structure emerge?

Sample Sentence Frames

- ____ is ____ -er than ____.
- ____ is the ____ -est when compared to ____.
- ____ and ____ are similar because they are both ____.
- ____ and ____ are different because ____ is ____ and ____ is ____.
- ____ is ____; however, ____ is ____.
- Unlike ____, ____.
- While ____ is different from ____, ____.
- ____ is ____, as opposed to ____, which is ____.
- Not only is ____, but ____.
- Although ____ and ____ have some similar characteristics, they are very different ____.
- While ____ is able to ____, ____ does not have that capability/feature ____.
- The most important difference is that ____ has ____, while ____ has ____.
- Just as ____, so too ____.
- By comparing ____ and ____, it is clear that/I realized that/I learned that ____.
- While ____ and ____ are both ____, there are several major differences between them.

Sentence Frames for Different Modes of Writing Development

Sequence

Signal Words	Guiding Questions
<i>first, second</i> <i>next, later,</i> <i>then,</i> <i>before/after</i> <i>beginning,</i> <i>middle, end</i> <i>initially</i> <i>eventually</i> <i>during</i> <i>since</i> <i>concluding</i> <i>subsequently</i>	<i>while</i> <i>now</i> <i>finally</i> <i>earlier</i> <i>previously</i> <i>following</i> <i>prior to</i> <i>preceding</i> <i>meanwhile</i> <i>for the past</i> <i>simultaneously</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being described in sequence? • Why did a chronological order pattern emerge? • What are the major steps in this sequence? • What details should be included (people, places, etc.) with each step? • Is there a part in the sequence where the events are more important than the others? • Is there a conflict in this sequence? Where does it get resolved? • Why is the sequence important?

Sample Sentence Frames

- First, _____. Then, _____. Next, there was _____ and _____.
- In the beginning/middle/end (*you choose*), _____.
- After (*insert action*), _____.
- Before _____, _____.
- Initially _____, then _____.
- Immediately after _____, _____.
- Meanwhile _____ was taking place.
- Once _____ happened, then _____.
- As a result of _____, _____ happened.
- Following _____, _____.
- Previously, _____.
- Initially _____, then _____.
- Preceding the events of _____, _____.
- Meanwhile _____ was taking place/occurring/happening.
- First, _____ happened. Then, _____ occurred and _____. Eventually, _____.
- For the past _____ (*set time frame*), _____.
- Immediately following the _____, the _____ took place/occurred.

Sentence Frames for Different Modes of Writing Development

Claim and Evidence

Signal Words	Guiding Questions
<i>believe</i> <i>suggests</i> <i>reasons</i> <i>for example</i> <i>states</i> <i>position</i> <i>proposes</i> <i>evidence</i> <i>asserts</i> <i>claims</i> <i>defends</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the claim/proposition? • Why is this important? • Who will this impact? • What evidence is given to support the claim/proposition? • What reasoning is given using the evidence (commentary)? • What might an opponent say against this claim/proposition (rebuttals)? • What arguments can be made against the rebuttals (counterarguments)? • What are the consequences or benefits of this position?

Sample Sentence Frames

- I disagree with ____ because ____.
- The evidence suggests that ____.
- ____ proposes that _____. She/he supports her/his position by _____.
- The author's claim is that _____ and s/he supports this claim by _____.
- It is clear that ____; therefore, _____.
- According to____, ____is an important issue/serious problem.
- ____ justifies this position by _____.
- While she/he tries to persuade us that _____, the evidence suggests _____.
- Nevertheless, the evidence strongly points to _____.
- ____ argues that _____; however, opponents suggest _____.

Sample Expository Summary Template

The following pages provide sample templates that teachers have created for their students who were reading non-fiction and fiction texts. Refer to these templates as you build your own. Note: This template was developed to support sophomore students as they learned how to summarize the main points in an expository text. This work was part of a controversial issues unit. Students read "Immigrants Are a Vital Component of American Society" and used this template to frame their academic summaries.

In the article, _____,

the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) _____ (s) that _____
(verb)

_____ .
(main claim)

According to AILA, anti-immigration groups generate myths about immigrants in order to _____

_____ .
(Use this space to explain AILA's position)

In their article, AILA works to dispel three myths: the first, _____

_____ ;
the second, _____

_____ ;
and the third, _____

In response to the first myth, AILA reports that _____

_____ .
The second myth is challenged by the fact that _____

_____ .
AILA disputes the third and final myth by _____

_____ .
The article concludes by _____

Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide, 178.

Sample Analyzing and Summarizing Evidence Template

The following template is a summary exercise designed to help writers practice analyzing an author's use of evidence.

_____, in the article, _____
 (author's full name) (article title)

_____ (s) that _____
 (verb) (What is the author's claim?)

In his/her article, _____
 (author's last name) (verb that describes how the author collects the evidence)

 (Discuss the type of evidence the author uses)

in order to _____
 (explain why the author uses this evidence)

For example, _____
 (author's last name) (verb)

 (list or describe the evidence)

 (Use this space to describe specific evidentiary details)

This evidence suggests that _____

 (Analyze the evidence and discuss its significance to the author's claim.)

Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide, 140.

Sample Character Analysis Paragraph Template

Note: This template was created to support sophomore students as they learned how to analyze characters in fiction. Students read a short story, "And of Clay We Are Created" by Isabel Allende, and used this template to practice analyzing character traits.

In the short story _____, Azucena _____s
(title of work) (verb)

_____ as she _____
(main trait) (explain her situation: what does she do?)

While waiting to be rescued, she _____.

This behavior is unexpected because _____.

Even though characters in the story do not directly describe Azucena, readers can infer that she is

_____ from her _____
(trait)

Azucena's ability to _____ illustrates
(restate the action or situation)

(explain how the character's actions illustrates the trait)

Because of her _____, Azucena _____
(trait) (verb)

(provide insightful commentary that creates a feeling of closure)

Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide, 177.

Template

Lord of the Flies: Character Analysis Template

In the novel _____, written by _____.

_____ can be described as _____.

(Character's name)

(Main personality trait of this character)

An example from the novel that shows this characteristic is _____

(Describe a scene or event in which the character shows this trait)

This is a good example because _____

(Explain how this exemplifies the character trait)

Another example where the trait is shown is _____

(Describe a scene or event in which the character shows this trait)

This shows the trait by _____

(Explain how this exemplifies the character trait)

The character development of _____ is/is not essential to the plot of the novel

(Character's name)

because _____

Lauren Sanchez
Lang Arts 1st
12-12-12 D:

In the novel Lord of the Flies written by William Golding, Piggy can be described as intelligent. An example from the novel that shows this characteristic is whenever the boys needed to find a way to light a fire, and Piggy pulled the glasses off of his face and used them to start the fire, giving them hope of survival. This is a good example because without Piggy's wits, the boys never would've had hope to get rescued.

Another example where the trait is shown is when Piggy actually tried convincing the boys to make a sundial, to tell the time using a stick. This shows the trait by showing that Piggy had the prior knowledge to even know how a sundial works, let alone to know what it actually is.

The character development of Piggy is essential to the plot of the novel because while all the other boys were turning into savages, Piggy still held onto hope & never gave up on trying to get home.

In the _____, _____ uses _____ in
(type of text) (title) (author) (symbol/motif)

order to _____.
(signify/represent/allude to – description of the symbol/motif)

This symbol/motif directly relates to _____
(Coming of Age characteristic)

because _____.
(student rationale/explanation)

An example from the text would be _____.
(direct quote or paraphrase the situation)

This is essential to the development of Holden's character
 because _____.
(state connection between symbol/motif – explain significance)

The use of _____ is/is not effective.
(name symbol/motif)

(student rationale/explanation)

Class Term 11
12/13/12

Symbol Paragraph Catcher in the Rye
 In the book Catcher in the Rye,
 J.D. Salinger uses the thought of
 a catcher in a rye field in order to
 represent the main character Holden
 Caulfield trying to save and protect
 children from the astonishing horrid
 things that are in the world. The symbol
 relates to Holden's awareness that he
 is becoming an adult, because in the
 book Holden puts out this childish front
 although he's extremely immature but
 as the story develops Holden starts to realize
 what's more important in the world.
 An example from the text would be "you
 know that song, if a body catches a body
 coming through the rye." on 22 when Holden
 says this in the book he's referring to a song
 because he's explaining that it symbolizes
 him wanting to decide children in a
 good way. The use of the symbol catcher
 in the rye is effective because it connects
 Holden's thoughts of wanting to be
 protective to his actions throughout the book.

Reader Response

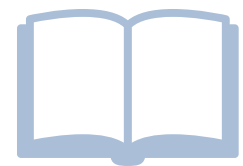
It is nearly impossible to create complete interesting texts without having someone listen to or see the unfinished draft to provide input on clarity, detail, voice, tone, or purpose. Writers know what they intend to say, but they do not always have a clear picture of what is actually stated or how it is interpreted. It takes an “other” audience—either a teacher, an individual, or a group—to hear or see where to alter or add ideas. In fact, professionals usually have several people providing input to their work before it is published. This input is called **“reader response”** and is a vital part of the writing process as much for students as it is for professionals.

In her recent book, *Write Beside Them*, author/teacher Penny Kittle details the work she does with students as they alternately struggle and succeed in the entire writing process, but she notes “Writers grow with regular response to their work and to the work of other writers” (Kittle, 2008). When we teach our students how to provide effective feedback strategically, we teach both the writer and the responder to remember the prompt, the rubric and the guidelines for effective communication. In the course of delivering feedback, both the writer and the responder benefit. Both learn strategically. As one educator observed, “When we teach students how to provide effective peer response and teachers to provide effective teacher response, we set them up for vertical alignment and maintaining rigorous expectations for writing outcomes.” Teaching students to respond appropriately and constructively to their own or another student’s writing is often a challenge. Students are seldom taught strategically and explicitly how to do this. At the end of this introduction is a reference tool for teachers to use when obstacles interfere with the productivity of the reader responses. The “If/Then” chart identifies some of the most common problems that can occur as students navigate the practice of becoming a critical responder to writing. The “Then” column lists

strategies in the *Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* book that would be beneficial to use with students to guide and support them in overcoming the problems.

It is important to note reader response is not the same as editing. Editing for correctness involves checking for adherence to mechanical standards. The purpose of reader response is to provide an audience with whom the writer can share his or her writing and elicit responses that focus on the quality of the content and flow of the written communication. Equally important, the implementation of peer, self, and teacher responses will not necessarily add to the content of the writing, though it could. Rather, it will afford both peer and student writer further instruction on the craft of written communication. The teacher will feel less like an editor. Student writers will be more likely to “get” any disconnect between their intentions and their actual impact before proceeding to the editing stage. The teacher responder can more ably instruct all in the continuing process of writing and the academic skills of dialogue. In fact, by working in the capacity of responders, teachers learn more about how to teach writing.

Their content may vary considerably, but whether they are performed by the teacher or by classmates, whether they are turned in to the teacher or handed directly to the student scribe, reader responses are a valuable part of the writing process that will result in more effective student writing that meets high academic standards.



If/Then Chart

IF...	THEN...check out this strategy
students only know how to give global feedback—don't look at paper details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-creation Reader Response • Guided Response
students say "this is good," "I like it" or "fine" or similar unhelpful feedback because they do not know how to give feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language of Authentic Feedback • Authentic Questioning • Revisit the Prompt • Re-creation Reader Response
students don't know how to ask authentic questions of the writer (intention, word choice, etc.); avoid yes/no questions or questions for which the person asking already knows the answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic Questioning • Language of Authentic Feedback
students cannot determine appropriate response to the prompt; students give feedback that is not aligned with the writing prompt and its expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit the Prompt • Re-creation Reader Response • What it is/is not • Rubric Analysis • Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing
students rewrite the paper for the writer; think the response job is about editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic Questioning • Guided Response • Language of Authentic Feedback • Checklist Tracking

Teacher Response

Teacher responses to student writing serve two purposes: to offer feedback and to guide learning. Most students are wary of (and perhaps weary of) the dreaded red ink that is the common form of teacher response. Typically, a student will skim through the comments and then put the essay aside with minimal retention of the notes a teacher has labored to compose. The challenge then is to motivate students to move from skimming teacher responses to studying and utilizing them to improve their writing. Teachers must be very strategic about the form and type of response they provide on student essays, though the same type of response does not need to be used each time. If both teachers and students use the same guidelines for responding to writing, a common set of expectations will be reinforced. This will make it easier for students to interpret feedback and to do something constructive with it.

In addition to responding to students' final writing (the "product"), teachers must also be willing to assess and comment on students' processes for developing a piece of writing. When students turn in an essay, it is helpful to have them turn in all the work leading up to the final product. This includes pre-writing work, reader-response comments, all rough drafts, editing, etc. This "package" can then be reviewed by the teacher. Assessing the writing process also validates the evolutionary nature of writing and provides the teacher with information on areas where the student might have some misconceptions or weaknesses in the process. Effective writing is seldom written in one sitting; it develops over time with feedback and reflection guiding revision. Below are some suggested methods for teacher responses.

Diagnostic Responses

Unlike other responses, these are not shared with the student. Students are given the task to write a short essay some time during the first or second week of class. The teacher reads the diagnostic essay with a focus on the student's strengths and weaknesses. Responses and notes are not for grading purposes, but rather for determining what students do well and what they are struggling with in their own writing. The purpose for these types of responses is solely for the teacher to use when designing learning practices to foster writing improvement.

Rubric Responses

It is often useful to have students use the rubric to assess their own process first, so the teacher has an idea of how students view their work. Having students do a self-assessment also serves an instructional purpose: it helps them recognize and internalize the expectations teachers hold for the development of a piece of writing. Using a rubric provides a way to efficiently assess the quality of students' writing against specific criteria. As teachers read an essay, they simply check off the criteria on the rubric as evidence is found in the writing.

This rubric rating should be augmented with notes and commentary on specifics of the paper. It is helpful to use pencil when writing comments directly on a paper so as not to overpower the student's writing.

Responses as a Reader Instead of Evaluator

Students benefit from feedback (from both peers and teachers) that is specific and honest and that respects the goal of writing—communication. Therefore, it is important for the reader to communicate as clearly as possible the **experience** he/she is having with the paper (where he/she is confused, engaged, bored, etc.). The reader should also record questions that surface as they read, and these should be noted on the essay so the student knows what was triggered by his/her writing. The key is to pose questions that arise from the student's writing but that are not answered within the draft. Prompt the writer to consider ideas and think about how to address them. Asking a question such as "Why did you choose to put this example here?" is much more thought-provoking and genuine than "Do you need a thesis statement?" (to which we already know the answer—yes!). If a paper is hard reading for lack of a thesis statement, say so: "I'm feeling lost without a clear thesis statement."

In this Section

Additional tools for teacher responses follow: Guidelines for Commenting on Student Writing; Responding to Student Writing as a Reader, Not a Critic; and Strategic Teacher Response to Students' Writing, as well as a strategy on Conferencing. Afterward, there are strategies and information that address peer and student response.

Guidelines for Commenting on Student Writing

1. Skim the entire paper before writing anything.
2. Personalize the final comments—address the student by name and sign your name as in a letter.
3. Be supportive in tone—focus on instruction not evaluation.
4. Begin by specifically stating the strength(s) of the paper and pinpointing the nature of the major weakness(es).
5. Don't overwhelm the student; focus on the most vital elements and ignore (for now) less important problems.
6. Acknowledge effort as well as achievement.
7. Respond to the ideas; use content-specific responses.
8. Use "I" statements—give reader's response, not judge's evaluation. Focus on ways students can solve their own problems.
9. Start and end with encouraging remarks based on specific strengths.
10. Be honest.
11. Rather than mark all the mechanical errors in the paper, focus on just a few of the major, recurring problems—look for patterns. Model the correct usage in your comments, and make notes on common problems that need to be addressed in small groups or with the whole class.
12. Treat suspected plagiarism sensitively; it might be evidence of lack of confidence and/or the student's idea of how to use scholarly works.

Responding to Student Writing

As a Reader, Not a Critic

Read through the piece, paying careful attention to how you are responding as you read. Mark the paper in three clearly defined ways to identify positives, confusions, and errors. For example: (1) draw a wiggly line under words, phrases, or sentences you especially like or to which you have a strong positive response; (2) draw a straight line under parts that are confusing or cause you to have a negative response because of wording, organization, etc.; (3) put a **X** at the end of any line that contains a mechanical error (or errors).

Using “I” statements or open-ended questions in the margins, make comments about your responses to specific sections. Your comments should communicate how you felt as you started to read (intrigued, confused, enlightened, skeptical, frustrated, engaged, curious, etc.), how you felt at various points during your reading experience, and how you felt when you finished reading. Be sure to explain why you felt each emotion. *Remember that you are not just talking about the writing; you are reporting on your experience of it.* It is the writer’s responsibility to make revision decisions based on your responses.

Use “I” Statements (Let the writer know how you responded.)

Helpful Things to Say	Things Not to Say
“I wanted to hear more about...”	“I think you should change...” (taking ownership of the writing)
“I wasn’t interested until the part when...”	“I felt you did a good job with...” (judging the writing instead of responding)
“I didn’t understand why... happened.”	“I believe that you should...” (taking ownership of the writing)
“I was excited, scared, confused, engaged, etc. when...”	“I think your paper is perfect...” (judging and not specific about elements of the writing)

Ask Honest Questions (Ones that you actually want answered and to which you do not know the answers.)

Helpful Things to Say	Things Not to Say
“What made you think that the narrator is a little boy?”	“Don’t you think it would be good to...?” (taking ownership of the writing)
“How does this example relate to your main point?”	“Wouldn’t it be better if you had a thesis statement?” (rhetorical question; obviously need a thesis statement)
“When did the car break down? I missed that part.”	“Why not cut the part about...?”

*“Cut out all those exclamation marks.
An exclamation mark is like laughing at
your own joke.”*

– F. Scott Fitzgerald

Strategic Teacher Response to Students’ Writing

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate a variety of strategies to monitor and assess the learning products of students. Many of these strategies are written and include opportunities for writing to learn, process writing, on-demand writing, and choice writing. English language arts teachers frequently ponder issues concerning their responses to the written products of students. Teachers who include many opportunities for written responses in their classes often struggle with the paper load and managing feedback.

Teachers should make strategic decisions about how and what they will assess in student writing. Some examples to consider are listed below. Teachers should:

- Ask carefully constructed questions. Preface them with why, how, or what.
- Offer comments about what students did well in the overall comments.
- Prioritize the top three areas/concerns about the writing and address only those. Let students know which areas are selected for responding. Select these areas strategically based on the requirements of the writing prompt. Students can be overwhelmed by too many comments, and teachers will become “editors” rather than “teachers.”
- Develop an appropriate level of response for commenting on a first draft and differentiate that from an appropriate response to a second or final draft. Comments should lead to a focused plan for revision.
- Comments should provide another opportunity for teaching writing. **Writer’s craft comments should be offered twice as often as editing comments.**
- Avoid doing the students’ work for them. For example, if marking errors in grammar and usage, circle the mistake to call attention to the error and let the student determine what is wrong and how to fix the mistake.
- Create performance rubrics or scoring tools specifying the performance expectations for a piece of work. Communicate with students using the rubric or tools.
- Offer the most detailed comments on drafts rather than on published copies. Mid-process feedback affords students the opportunity to implement suggestions before final publication.
- Skim a set of essays to identify common problems to address with the whole class.
- Read writing as a *reader* first and as a *grader* on a second reading.
- Conference face-to-face when possible. A 2-minute discussion with a student can cover more feedback than taking 5 minutes to write comments on paper.

Provide numerous opportunities for students to practice and create multiple drafts of their work before publishing a final copy. Teachers must strategically determine when feedback is needed, what form it may take, and how to best deliver the information. When written comments are appropriate, consideration of the above suggestions will help manage this teaching requirement. Remember, providing feedback is a skill that improves with practice.

Conferencing

Goal

Teacher will have an effective one-to-one writing conference with students to support writing improvement.

Rationale

Since good writing is collaboration between writer and reader, short, focused conferences can be held at any point in the drafting process with a paragraph or an entire essay. Conferences offer comments on positive aspects and student writers' concerns, as well as adjustments toward making the essay "publishable." Students learn essays have an audience, first drafts are not final drafts, and good writing results from reexamination.

Teacher Reference

- Student Independent Work During Conferencing

Student Handout

- Pre-Conference Questionnaire

Instructional Steps

1. Engage students in a quiet activity such as finishing their drafts during the conferences or have them work on a webquest (see *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts for Strategic Reading* for explanation and resources to create a webquest).
2. Have students complete the Pre-Conference Questionnaire and bring it to the conference.
3. Place a list of the conferees on the white board so there will be no interruptions. Students will be ready for conferencing. Have students erase their names at the conclusion of their conference.
4. Begin each conference with the teacher silently reading the in-progress draft the student brings to the conference. Remember to read the essay as a *reader* first and as a grader on a later draft.
5. Make only marginal marks (if necessary) as reminders of the top three areas needing clarification or praise. Too many areas in need of correcting tend to overwhelm students.
6. Do not make any corrective marks on the draft. Rather, avoid acting as an editor. Circle the error and call attention to it so the student can determine the nature of the error and how to fix it.
7. Begin with praising the successful or admirable efforts on the draft essay in the beginning as this will help to put the student at ease. Ask questions about the content, and preface them with *why, how, or what*. These questions might be for clarification or a request for further information on the topic. Refer to the marginal marks. Some teachers ask questions to elicit more development in the essay.
8. Encourage conferencing students to ask clarifying questions since they often do not understand what makes the draft publishable. (A list of question stems could be given to students to guide them initially during the questioning process.)
9. Expect the student to answer the questions he or she is asked, though some thought or investigation may be needed. If this is the case, students should write the questions in the margins of the draft and plan to answer later.

10. State next steps. Have the students write a reflection on the conference to cognitively process what has been discussed. This might also include such things as a request for clarifying a confusing aspect of the draft, or it might be a reminder of the need for more support. As a guide to revision, students will need to take notes on the draft.
11. Continue the conferencing throughout the class.
12. Make sure students submit all drafts along with the final essay.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide students with productive seatwork to use while conferencing is ongoing. Seatwork should be oriented toward sharpening their writing efforts, and it could be digital research to inform their drafts.
- Arrange for a paraprofessional or a colleague to supervise students while conferencing is ongoing. Plan to use their talents to provide a resource for students as they are writing.

Increased Rigor

- Use the Round Robin Draft Discussion Guide in this text, and explain how to use the student handout “What Can I Say?”

Using Technology

- Hold conferences through use of Blackboard or other such closed discussion utility. Remote conferences can be held at any time of the class day through special arrangement.
- Have students draft in class in computer lab so that at a certain point in the process, they see the teacher for conferencing.
- Use Google Docs or other such sites for students to post their drafts for conferencing.

Student Independent Work During Conferencing

Rationale: Students not conferencing need an independent goal-directed activity or activities to ensure there is no wasted class time. The following suggestions provide ideas from which teachers can create their own classroom-adjusted work to cover conferencing times.

Have a paraprofessional, parent volunteer, an upperclassman or a fellow teacher attend class and assist the rest of the class on conference days. During the time conferencing is being held, ask the guest teacher to monitor and assist students. Prepare the guest teacher ahead of time with information to help them provide assistance for the current assignment. This is likely to include the assignment parameters as well as the prompt, the rubric, and any other information necessary. The following activities are those the paraprofessional, aide, or fellow teacher might have students do:

If drafts are almost finished or finished and awaiting conferencing, have students:

- a. Finish drafting the essay.
- b. Respond to the questions on the Pre-Conference Student Handout, and be ready to bring it to the conference.
- c. Add a quote to the essay. (See *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading* for suggestions on where to find quotes.)
- d. Exchange only the introductory paragraphs with an elbow partner, and have the elbow partner create three or four content questions that will be answered in the draft essay. Then have the partners read the drafts to see if the questions are answered. If the questions are not answered, have them discuss with each other what is missing in either the claim or the contents.
- e. Have each student write a four sentence précis of his/her essay. Use the "Four Sentence Rhetorical Précis" in Section 1.5 in the *High School Writing Teacher Guide*.
- f. Have students participate in a Round Robin Draft Discussion (See Round Robin Draft Discussion in this text.)

Pre-Conference Questionnaire

Directions: Respond to the following questions, and bring this entire handout to the conference.

What do you feel you did well on this essay?

What do you like most about the essay?

What aspect caused you the most trouble during the drafting stage?

As you were writing the first draft, what kinds of things did you do to help you create and organize the essay?
(Read it to yourself? Ask yourself questions? Use your notes? Explain.)

What aspect do you feel you need help in revising?

What questions do you have about your essay?

Peer and Self-Response

Peer and self-response strategies capitalize on the learners themselves as sources of information for each other in commenting on and critiquing their writing. This involves the acts of reading, writing, speaking, and listening and is much more than an accountability sheet of questions to answer and hand back to the writer or teacher. Successful peer and self-response is contingent upon the teacher's ability to plan and teach students how to complete these acts.

In planning strategically for an environment that is conducive to collaborative responses, the teacher starts the year with high-comfort/low-risk peer contributions. Perhaps students sit in groups of four. Each student reads a paragraph length essay to the group. The peers respond with one person providing a detail he or she liked, another providing one suggestion that could improve the paragraph and the third person asking a question about the essay. This helps to establish parameters and begins to develop an environment for constructive peer response. The second exposure to peer responding would be something a little more risky for feedback, moving students a little further out of their comfort zone. Eventually, students work in collaborative conversations about their writing and provide appropriate, detailed, text-based responses and suggestions for improvement.

Students' ability to respond to their own writing using analysis and evaluation skills is also important. Students will increase their ability to respond to their own writing through continual use of peer revision strategies, many of which may also be used individually, such as Rubric Analysis. Additional strategies, such as highlighting elements of an author's craft and conducting a 3-Column Analysis, encourage self-responding to strengthen writing.

The best teachers equip their students with the necessary skills, including instruction in the Language of Authentic Feedback, Authentic Questioning that fits the genre, inquiry strategies, framing statements, and academic dialogue. Teacher modeling is critical to help students acquire the skills and understand the process. Students are taught how to provide specific, honest feedback using evidence from the writer's text to support their thinking. If revision suggestions are supplied in the peer response, they are accompanied by reasons to support them. The goal is to keep the ownership of the essay with the writer. For example, if a revision suggestion is made that there is not enough support and elaboration presented in a specific paragraph, the student may further suggest the use of an elaboration strategy appropriate for the content, such as cause/effect or problem/solution, for the writer to consider when revising. Ultimately, of course, it should be the author of the essay deciding which suggestions to employ. The peer will provide solid revision recommendations based on stated criteria for the writer to consider.

In the larger educational context, peer response skills afford students the opportunity to give authentic and meaningful feedback in any setting they encounter. Students should be encouraged to analyze their own writing as well as seek and provide feedback numerous times throughout the writing process as they complete their work. Teachers may also discover through teaching their students these feedback and revisions skills that the teacher's response and assessment tasks will be less frustrating and less time consuming.

Authentic Questioning

Goal

Students will generate questions to stimulate valuable feedback on a partner's draft.

Rationale

The power of authentic questions for reader response is that they are student-generated based on the writing assignment. Authentic questions don't necessarily have a right or wrong answer but rather multiple answers or perhaps no clear answer at all. Authentic questions ignite a conversation about the writing and strategically focus students on the essential elements of the writing task.

Instructional Steps

1. Have students bring their first drafts to class.
2. Ask the whole class to review the writing prompt.
3. Generate a series of questions that will help to guide feedback based on the writing prompt. These questions should not be ones that could be answered with one word. Examples: "Why did you choose this topic for the essay?" "How does the writer use research evidence to support his/her claim?" "What makes this essay compelling?" It is important to stress to students that the questions they create should be thoughtful questions to guide the writers into deeper thought and revision of their essays. (Note: See the Teacher Reference: Strategic Teacher Response to Students' Writing for ideas of authentic questions to guide students in their responses.)
4. Project the questions so that students can copy them in their notes.
5. Put students in pairs and have students exchange their first drafts.
6. Provide enough time for students to carefully read their partner's draft.
7. Instruct students that they are to write a response to their partner's essay using the authentic questions the class created based on the prompt. The responses should be detailed and written in paragraph form.
8. Instruct the students that at this point, they are not to correct or comment on grammar and spelling.
9. Explain that the goal is to offer two or three suggestions for improving the draft as well as providing overall feedback on the essay.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model this activity with an exemplar of the essay. Students generate questions based on the prompt. Then as a large group, students and teacher read the exemplar and write a peer response over the essay.
- Ask students to offer only one suggestion for revision.
- Have students work in triads and read their essays orally. Students discuss the previously class-created authentic questions as a group and the writer takes notes on the comments.

Increased Rigor

- Have students develop one or two authentic questions over the prompt as homework. Then during the next class period, students can work collaboratively to refine the questions to use for peer responses.
- Use released Advanced Placement exams that provide a prompt and several exemplars. Students work collaboratively to create authentic questions and then complete a peer response activity using an exemplar essay. Responses can be examined as a whole class to determine the effectiveness of the comments.

Using Technology

- Use the computer lab to type responses and email to the partner and the teacher.
- Use a document camera to share questions and model large group responses.

Other AVID Resources

- See also Academic Language Frames in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Guided Response

Goal

Students will improve the quality of the comments they write about their peers' essays.

Rationale

Students often provide general or vague comments during the peer response process. Most of the time this is due to a lack of understanding how to provide specific details to guide revision. These general comments are of little help to the writer for revision.

Teacher Reference

- Suggested Topics for Guided Responses

Instructional Steps

1. Gather 5–10 vague comments from previous peer response activities. For example, “this needs more detail.”
2. Display the comments using a projector or white board.
3. Conduct a large group discussion with the class about the usefulness of each response. How helpful would this response be to guide revision? What would make this comment more helpful? Write revised comments on the board for students to compare.
4. Ask students to brainstorm a list of general comments they have seen on their essays before.
5. Place students in small groups and have them rewrite each of the comments so that it is more helpful for revision and praise. For example, instead of “good description,” the comment might say, “I like the detail you use when you describe the food fight in the cafeteria. I especially like the details on the sounds like the tomatoes squishing against the tables and the splat of the Jell-O® against the wall.”
6. Share responses with the large group.
7. Provide prompts to guide their responses and explain the need to offer specific comments for the writer.
8. Select response prompts strategically aligned with the writing prompt. Avoid prompts only requiring one word responses. Rather, use prompts that will promote deep thinking about the writing. See samples on the teacher reference page for general suggestions.
9. Remind students they are not being asked to evaluate the paper; they are being asked to respond to it with an eye toward helping the writer improve.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Practice writing specific responses several times before applying the process in a peer response activity.
- Review the process after each essay, using general comments made by students on the previous essay and peer response session.
- Have students rate the usefulness of each peer response on their essay and explain how that response guided their revision.

Increased Rigor

- Put students in triads. Have them share drafts: one person responds to a paper, the next student responds to the comments, pointing out if they are effective or not and suggesting revised comments as needed. Rotate until each has played the role of writer, responder, and response critic.

Using Technology

- If the class is using a Microsoft Word® to submit essays, use the Review tab at the top of the Windows Microsoft Word program. Move the cursor onto or near the place where you wish to provide a comment. Then go to the “Review” tab at the top of the page and find “New Comment.” Click on that and type in the comment you wish to make.

*“I never considered a difference of opinion
in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as
cause for withdrawing from a friend.”*

– Thomas Jefferson

Suggested Topics for Guided Responses

- Discuss the relevance of the supporting details and evidence as they relate to the central claim.
- Discuss the voice in the essay: what makes it unique and distinct from other essays on the same topic? What revisions would make the voice stronger?
- Explain the success of the essay in responding to the prompt.
- Focus on the effectiveness and clarity of the thesis. How does the writer consistently adhere to the thesis throughout the entire draft?
- Discuss the organizational structure of the draft.
- Talk about what you like best about this draft.
- Discuss areas for improving the essay. Which ideas, impressions, and discussions do you think the writer should work on? Is there any part of this draft you had difficulty following?
- Explain your understanding of the points the writer is trying to make. Are the ideas well-connected?
- Ask of the essay “so what?” after you finish reading. Write a sentence or two paraphrasing the point of the paper, answering the question, “in what way(s) is this interesting, surprising, intriguing, etc.?” If the paper lacks a “so what,” make a note on the draft and discuss the possibilities.
- Share two questions you have about the writer’s argument. Explain how answering these questions would improve the essay.
- Discuss the patterns that are established but could use additional development. How do patterns of characterization, say, relate to patterns of imagery, plot, or diction?
- Describe the focus of the paper. How well does the writer stay on track? Discuss sections of the essay where the writer strays off task. Point out information the writer has included that is unnecessary for moving the essay forward.
- Discuss the writer’s connection of analysis to the thesis. Point out all the places where the writer has failed to make these connections.



Language of Authentic Feedback

Goal

Students will use appropriate language to provide helpful and supportive feedback to their peers.

Rationale

Teaching skills for the language of authentic feedback helps students to avoid the trap of useless comments during reader response for the writer. With practice, these skills transfer to other occasions when feedback and collaboration are needed.

Teacher Reference

- Language of Authentic Feedback

Instructional Steps

1. Have students complete a quickwrite on the following topic: "At this point in your writing process, what feedback would you most like to receive about your writing so far?"
2. Develop a list of helpful information to know about writing using information from the quickwrite. The class may even develop a list of do's and don'ts. Be sure to include plenty of examples of what students *should say* during peer response.
3. Model an appropriate peer response session for the class. Using a sample essay, the class may create examples of feedback for the writer. The teacher should reinforce the use of "soft" language, "I" statements, and inclusive language (refer to Teacher Reference page).
4. Pair students for peer responding. Students should swap drafts and complete a first reading, marking the text as they read. Instruct students to read the paper a second time, and mark the text by making notes about positive features and questions or areas of uncertainty. Encourage students to refer to the class-created list of helpful feedback while working.
5. Instruct students to begin with positive feedback first before providing constructive criticism during the conversation. Teachers may want to create specific examples of academic language scripts for use during peer response (refer to Teacher Reference page).
6. Require all comments to be based on evidence from the writing. Specific revision suggestions should be accompanied by reasons to support them.
7. For the first round of peer responses, limit feedback to elements of writer's craft. Editing and proofreading collaboration will occur later in the writing process.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Consider using groups of three students at first. If one peer responder doesn't offer any advice, the other responder may do so.
- Have students write an area of focus at the top of their paper before peer responding to help focus the responses. Students could also write questions at the top of their paper to help focus the responder.
- Show samples of weak peer responses and strong peer responses and have students practice the peer response process.
- Suggest options for reader response focus, such as thesis/claim, sequence of ideas, audience awareness, tone, supporting evidence, etc.

Increased Rigor

- Have students answer the question "What three pieces of advice will most improve this writing?"

Using Technology

- Students may create electronic responses or use the "track changes" or "add comments" features in Microsoft Word.

Other AVID Resources

- Academic Language Scripts for Discussion (*The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*, pages 218–219)

“What we’ve got here is a failure to communicate.”

– *Donn Pearce, Cool Hand Luke*

Language of Authentic Feedback

Do your students often say, “This is good” or “It was fine” when asked to provide peer responses to writing? Do they try to rewrite the author’s paper or provide editing comments only? This may be in part because students have not been taught the language of authentic feedback. Authentic feedback should indicate that the reader cares about the writer, the writer is capable of success, and the reader will help the writer create a path to success. Responses are directed at *writing* rather than at *writers*! If students are taught to respond to writing first as a reader, they can provide helpful information for the writer to know. Students are encouraged to adopt the role of coach, rather than editor or judge.

The dialogue during peer response should promote critical thinking and an open discussion between students. During this time, students should ask questions, make observations, pose possibilities and options, seek clarification, and summarize their findings. Questions such as, “What would happen if this paragraph is removed?” encourage careful analysis and deep thinking. Peer response questions should be created by the writer or the class to solicit specific responses from the reader. Questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no” generally do not produce helpful, specific feedback. For example, if a student asks, “Does the paper need more support?” the writer still does not know in which specific paragraph support is needed or what type of support would best be included. Framing statements targeted to solicit specific responses also help focus the reader’s work. Examples include the following: “Two aspects I liked...” “Parts that confused me...” “I would not change...”

The tone of the peer response should also be taken into consideration. Readers should not be so overly positive that the writer has no sense of what to revise; conversely, the reader should not offend the writer with overly harsh criticism. Using “soft” language and capitalizing on the use of “I” statements can help create a positive tone. Examples include words such as “might” and “maybe.” “You might want to consider adding an example here.” “Maybe deleting this sentence would help.” “As a reader, I was confused by...” Helpful phrases such as “Have you considered...?” or “What if you...” also produce a positive tone.

Do students confuse editing and proofreading at the sentence level with revising content and employing elements of author’s craft at a more global level? If so, teach students the difference between proofreading and editing for grammar, usage, and mechanics versus reading for content and craft elements. Clearly separate expectations for these two tasks in the classroom. Correcting errors early in the writing process does not have anything to do with improving the substance of the writing. In fact, pointing out too many errors may discourage the writer or send the message that correcting errors is all that matters in writing.

Lastly, remember that learning to provide effective feedback and use appropriate language strategies for discourse takes time and practice. Through multiple, repeated exposure, modeling, and teacher coaching, students will begin to integrate and employ these skills naturally.

Whip Activity

Goal

Each student will contribute to a discussion on a specific writing issue.

Rationale

A whip, sometimes called a “round robin,” is a type of controlled discussion that is often used to check for understanding or to serve as a closure activity at the end of the class day. The versatility of the strategy allows for a variety of adjustments which could make the whip serve as a peer response activity as well.

Teacher Reference

- Using a Whip Activity with Reader Response

Instructional Steps

Students often only know how to give global feedback and do not look at essay details. To use the activity as feedback for student writing, select one common writing issue for each round of the whip activity. (See Teacher Reference.)

1. Pose an issue/situation based on a common writing problem, and this problem could be derived from past or present essays.
2. Have students respond in a quickwrite before the whip activity begins.
3. Seat students in a circle.
4. Select a scribe to take notes on the responses.
5. Explain the parameters of the whip:
 - State an appropriate thought or reasoned statement, something that adds to the topic or that presents a solution to the issue.
 - Add something new to the suggestions already given or build upon someone else’s answer but do not repeat an answer already given.
 - Advise students to listen carefully before their turn since the goal is twofold: To check for understanding and to make sure all students have enough details to revise their essays.
 - Calling a “pass” is not allowed.
 - Have the scribe give the teacher the notes which are then used as a basis for discussion after the whip activity is finished.
6. Have a discussion using the notes while at the same time checking to see if re-teaching is necessary on the topic or the problem discussed. (See #7 and #8 below.)
7. Collect the quickwrites as exit tickets at the end of the class period.
8. Use the exit tickets as well as the responses in the whip to review possible re-teaching needs.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Arrange all students after the quickwrite in groups of three in a speaker-and-two-wingmen configuration, also known as a triad seminar.
- Seat the speakers with the wingmen behind them.
- Conduct the whip as described in the instructional steps but at the end of one round, have the speakers turn to the wingmen for further contributions.
- Conduct one more whip with the new information.

Increased Rigor

- Have a student select the issue for the whip.
- Encourage students to request the strategy when appropriate.

Using Technology

- Conduct the whip in a Wiki or closed chat room, and post the results to give all participants information for further discussion or writing.

Using a Whip Activity with Reader Response

For purposes of the whip activity, it is best to use essays or portions of essays from another class or from a previous school year's essays with student names removed. Before beginning any reader response activity, consider first reviewing the prompts for the essay or essays with the students. After the whip activity, add responses to the reader response "word" wall.

Below are possible issues that may be found in student writing. The following suggestions will help ensure the focus issue is addressed in the whip:

- Issue/Situation:** Not enough support in an analytical essay.

Whip suggestion: Using an essay from a different class, have students quickwrite suggestions to the author. Note: Because students will universally suggest "add more support," the teacher will need to specify student quickwrites should have at least two specific suggestions to put forth in the whip. This will increase the likelihood there will be a variety of responses.
- Issue/Situation:** Support in the essay is not logical or is in error.

Whip suggestion: This situation requires prior knowledge of the issues involved in the essay assignment. Prior to the whip, students might need to go back over the prompt so parameters for the assignment are fresh in their minds.
- Issue/Situation:** The introduction is too lengthy.

Whip suggestion: Preview the rubric or the prompt with students prior to the whip. Note: It is possible students in the whip might not be able to pinpoint the problem unless they have two introductions to compare...one in response to the prompt and one with the issue to be resolved.
- Issue/Situation:** The entire essay is skimpy and lacking detail.

Whip suggestion: This common problem occurs partly because the writers have not done enough research or marked their resources (texts) as they gathered information to use in the essay. In a whip activity, listen for the need to reinforce the necessity for careful reading and marking the texts used.
- Issue/Situation:** The essay is based entirely upon personal beliefs rather than thoughtful, researched reasoning and without considering the nature of the prompt.

Whip suggestion: Forewarned is forearmed: This is an issue that could give rise to debate within the whip (depending upon the type of personal beliefs stated in the essay). Review the rubric with students prior to the whip. It is probably better to deal with this from the standpoint of needing more evidence. Even if the reader disagrees with the personal beliefs, he or she can look for and evaluate the evidence to support. It is also possible that types of support need to be retaught or that the prompt needs to be revised before assigning the topic again.
- Issue/Situation:** The writer's paper is dull or has a lack of voice.

Whip suggestion: Consider using two essays on the same topic but with one essay showing vitality and the second acting as a "problem" essay or paragraph showing lack of voice. This is an issue that more experienced writers would be more equipped to handle. Be aware that emerging writers will not necessarily be able to comment upon the issue beyond saying that it is boring.

Other issues that might arise for whip responses: Paragraphing is odd or lacking; structural components are misarranged lessening the desired effect; thesis is poorly composed; essay is mostly introduction or is missing a conclusion; essay is wordy; essay lacks transitions.

Re-creation Reader Response

Goal

Students will be able to complete a graphic organizer based on information in a text in order to evaluate and improve the draft.

Rationale

The re-creation strategy is used to “reverse map” the graphic organizer of the writer’s essay. Re-creating the planning helps determine if the response has the required elements and sufficient elaboration to meet the writing task. It then becomes the basis for a focused discussion about writing between the author and the reviewer.

Instructional Steps

1. Have students work in pairs and exchange draft copies of their written responses. A copy of the specific writing prompt should be provided for each partner’s draft.
2. Provide copies of the graphic organizer that best fits the thinking strategies required in the writing assignment. (Note: If a graphic organizer was introduced when the writing assignment was given, it should be the same graphic organizer used here.) (See Writing to Learn strategy on using graphic organizers.) In a problem/solution writing task, for example, the writer must identify and explain the problem, suggest a possible solution(s), provide sufficient support and elaboration, address counterargument(s), and identify effects of the solution on the problem. A graphic organizer containing these elements might be taught prior to assigning a task for students to complete independently.
3. The peer reviewer should read the writer’s essay and transfer the information from the draft onto a copy of the graphic organizer, thus “re-creating” the planning used to write the response. Use the back of the graphic organizer to note any information in the essay NOT related to the task.
4. Examine the newly created organizer. Are there holes where information should be, but isn’t? Is the support and elaboration sufficient to cover the topic or idea? Are all parts of the prompt addressed?
5. Use the organizer as a starting point for a focused discussion about the writer’s work. The peer reviewer should talk through the re-creation event, pointing out observations along the way. Comments and questions posed during the discussion should be noted by the author of the writing for future consideration.
6. Allow time for both partners to discuss the writing they reviewed.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide copies of the appropriate graphic organizer for use during the re-creation exercise.
- Practice the re-creation together as a class using an exemplar writing sample and a sample that does not meet the standard. Ask students to re-create the graphic organizer for each essay. Compare the two. Talk through appropriate comments that students would offer each author, modeling aloud, and reinforcing targeted and appropriate student comments.

Increased Rigor

- Encourage students to create their own appropriate graphic organizers to match the thinking skills and components required in the writing task.

Revisit the Prompt

Goal

Students will use the prompt to evaluate an essay draft and guide revision.

Rationale

Often, students view the prompt as merely the basis on which their writing is to begin. They may not realize that the prompt, coupled with their draft, provides the writer with a roadmap to the expected *contents* of the essay. Revisiting the prompt and pairing it with their draft enables students to self-evaluate their progress towards the inclusion of necessary components of the writing assignment.

Teacher Reference

- Sample Revisiting the Prompt Graphic Organizer

Student Handout

- Revisiting the Prompt Graphic Organizer

Instructional Steps

1. Review the process of how to dissect a prompt if necessary. (See Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt in this text.)
2. Use the Teacher Reference: Sample Revisiting the Prompt Graphic Organizer to show students how to extract elements and expectations directly stated and inferred from a sample prompt and add them to the required writing contents section of the graphic organizer.
3. Discuss what is meant by “focus,” or central issue, as it applies to the prompt.
4. Define “topic” for students: Topic is the subject from the prompt on which you are writing.
5. Define “task” for the students: Task is revealed in the prompt and is the action that has to be taken.
6. Give students copies of the Student Handout: Revisiting the Prompt Graphic Organizer.
7. Distribute or display the prompt students are currently addressing. Students should have copies of their drafts also.
8. Direct the students to highlight the focus, topic, and task from the prompt and add to their graphic organizers. They should copy direct quotes from the prompt and identify requirements in the appropriate columns.
9. Instruct students to then identify specific evidence from their drafts in which they specifically address all aspects of the required writing contents. If they find “holes” where more information is needed, this indicates a need for targeted revision as a next step in the writing process.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students practice with 2- or 3-year-old course, state, or Advanced Placement prompts from previous years.

Increased Rigor

- Give students a previous year’s exemplary essay and have them construct the prompt that was given for the assignment. This “backwards mapping” will assist students in carefully reconstructing important elements of the writing task.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*
- *Middle Level Writing with Integrated Reading and Oral Language Teacher Guide*

Sample Revisiting the Prompt Graphic Organizer

PROMPT

Recent news reported revised laws against using animals for medical research, yet it is due to research on swine that researchers and physicians found heart valve transplants from pigs were the best anatomical and biological fit for humans. Think about the issue of using animals for medical research. Write an essay in which you argue for or against the use of animals in medical research. Use evidence to develop and support your claim. Address possible counterclaims in your response.

TYPE OF WRITING REQUIRED: Argumentative

	Prompt	Writing: The Requirements
Focus	“Write an essay in which you argue for or against the use of animals in medical research”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the importance of the issue • Write a claim • Address counterclaims
Topic	“Evidence for or against medical research on animals”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide a position: for or against
Task	Argue for or against in an essay Use evidence to support/refute medical research on animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence and Support (examples, anecdotes, stats, facts, quotes, references) • Consider counterclaims • Establish authority/credibility of writer • Diplomatic tone • Logical organization • Varied vocabulary • Varied sentence structure

Sample Revisiting the Prompt Graphic Organizer

1. Recopy the prompt here: _____

2. Type of Writing: (Is the prompt asking for an Argumentative, Informative/Expository, or Narrative essay?)

	Prompt	Writing: The Requirements	Specific Evidence from My Essay
	What does the prompt say? Place quotes from the prompt in this column.	Identify and write the required components here.	How did I specifically address each one?
Focus			
Topic			
Task			

3-Column Analysis

Goal

Students will analyze a partner's writing, by focusing on three specific areas.

Rationale

The 3-Column Analysis is an inquiry-based method that asks students to observe their writing, to look for patterns, and to consider the implications of those patterns. This helps students arrive at valuable conclusions, which allows them to identify areas for focused revision.

Teacher Reference

- Sample: 3-Column Analysis

Instructional Steps

1. Have students draw three columns on a blank sheet of paper, one for each targeted area of focus. Example: first word of each sentence; verb in each sentence; number of words in each sentence. (This is a perfect time to conduct a focus lesson on any of the conventions you want students to consider.)
2. Ask students to exchange their essay draft and the 3-Column Analysis paper with a partner.
3. Have students read through their partner's essay and identify and record the appropriate information in each column.
4. Have students compare notes with their partner when finished and discuss the patterns discovered in one another's papers.
5. Instruct each student to complete a quickwrite on a sheet of paper, summarizing the patterns discovered and contemplating the implications of these patterns in relation to the overall piece of writing. (Examples: What does it mean if almost every sentence starts with "I"? What does it mean if almost every sentence has eleven words?)
6. Discuss how to edit/revise, to create more sentence variety, to use more active verbs, etc. after several students have shared their quickwrites with the class.
7. Allow students to collaborate on revisions at this point. They will have built some momentum through the discussion and will have a lot of ideas for productive revision.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Use a short piece of writing and stop to process thinking after each column.
- Select focus areas that students can readily identify.

Increased Rigor

- Ask students to determine the focus areas of each column based on writing problems they have had in their own essays. For example, students might analyze the different sentence structures in an essay: simple, compound, complex, periodic, etc. Or students can explore the use of passive and active voice as one aspect of the 3-Column analysis.

Sample: 3-Column Analysis

First word of each sentence	Verb in each sentence	Number of words in each sentence

Highlighting for Self-Response

Goal

Students will learn how to use highlighting to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own writing.

Rationale

If students need help analyzing their own writing, teaching them to highlight targeted content and elements of author's craft can help them identify patterns, omissions, and areas for strengthening their work.

Instructional Steps

1. Provide multiple colors of highlighters or colored pencils for students to use.
2. Use a sample paragraph or essay and project the writing for students to see. Provide copies for students to use as they follow along.
3. Identify specific elements of writing to highlight in the sample text. Consider highlighting elements of writing with which students have difficulty or skills currently under development. Be strategic in deciding which elements to highlight. Examples include:
 - Topic sentences and support
 - Descriptive details
 - Elaboration strategies
 - Transition sentences
 - Action verbs
 - Claim(s) and evidence
 - Textual references
 - Counterclaim(s) and support
 - Concluding sentences or paragraphs
4. Highlight elements that are used effectively in the writing and those that are not when modeling for students. It is helpful to use a different color to distinguish between effective and non-effective. This provides students the ability to learn to analyze the writing and identify elements used proficiently and those needing revision.
5. Model for students how to revise the writing based on identified and highlighted elements not used proficiently in the writing.
6. Encourage students to refer to the writing task to identify elements for highlighting when they are working independently with their own writing.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide students with identified elements to be highlighted and revised in their writing.

Increased Rigor

- Teach students to identify elements to be highlighted based on their analysis of the writing task and knowledge of writer's craft elements.

Using Technology

- Use the highlighting feature in word processing programs to highlight text electronically. Multiple colors can be used to depict information according to identified areas of need.

*“You don’t write
because you want to
say something; you
write because you have
something to say.”*

– F. Scott Fitzgerald

Rubric Analysis

Goal

Students will be analyzing a rubric to guide rewriting their drafts.

Rationale

A rubric helps the writer determine the type and quality of written response required, but it also provides a systematic guide to scoring the final written “product.” When students use a rubric as a standard against which they evaluate their own in-process drafts, they will also find it a helpful tool to use for self-analysis of their writing.

Teacher References

- Rigorous Scoring Rubric
- Example: Partial Deconstruction of Level 9 Scoring Chart

Instructional Steps

1. Provide students the rubric on which their essay or other written response is to be judged.
2. Have students focus on the descriptors that are listed for “most effective” or “excellent.”
3. Project the rubric and start with the first descriptor to demonstrate turning the descriptor into at least one question. For example, “has a thought-provoking thesis statement that establishes a clear position and preview or anticipates the coming analysis for the reader” (*High School Writing Teacher Guide*, p. 359). results in questions:
 - Does the paper have a thought-provoking thesis statement?
 - Does the thesis statement establish a clear position and preview?
 - Does the paper anticipate the coming analysis for the reader?
4. Instruct students to write the questions on Cornell notepaper, and instruct them to continue creating questions from the “excellent” column and writing the questions on their notepaper.
5. Tell students the questions they created are the self-check questions they need to use on their own writing assignment.
6. Instruct them to highlight any questions they cannot answer affirmatively for their draft paper. The students will use the highlighted questions as the focus on their draft rewriting.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- After modeling the process of creating questions based on the rubric, continue as a class to create questions and share aloud until all rubric points are addressed. This will enable the teacher to be sure all important points are addressed by all students.

Increased Rigor

- Have students recheck their rewritten drafts: Give the newly analyzed draft to a peer and have them use the questions to check for alignment with the rubric.
- Use the 9 point rubric for AP Essay as an example of how to analyze rubrics for more rigorous writing.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Rigorous Scoring Rubric (Level 9 only)

High-Scoring Essays

These well-focused and persuasive essays address the prompt directly and in a convincing manner. An essay scored a 9 demonstrates exceptional insight and language facility. An essay scored an 8 or a 9 combines adherence to the topic with excellent organization, content, insight, facile use of language, mastery of mechanics, and an understanding of the essential components of an effective essay. Literary devices and/or techniques are not merely listed, but the effect of those devices and/or techniques is addressed in context of the passage, poem, or novel as a whole. Although not without flaws, these essays are richly detailed and stylistically resourceful, and they connect the observations to the passage, poem, or novel as a whole. Descriptors that come to mind while reading this essay include: mastery, sophisticated, complex, specific, consistent, and well-supported.

Rubric Listed Sentence-By-Sentence

These well-focused and persuasive essays address the prompt directly and in a convincing manner.

An essay scored a 9 demonstrates exceptional insight and language facility.

An essay scored an 8 or a 9 combines adherence to the topic with excellent organization, content, insight, facile use of language, mastery of mechanics, and an understanding of the essential components of an effective essay.

Literary devices and/or techniques are not merely listed, but the effect of those devices and/or techniques is addressed in context of the passage, poem, or novel as a whole.

Although not without flaws, these essays are richly detailed and stylistically resourceful, and they connect the observations to the passage, poem, or novel as a whole.

Descriptors that come to mind while reading this essay include: mastery, sophisticated, complex, specific, consistent, and well-supported.

*Retrieved from <http://slhs.pasco.k12.fl.us/AP/APLitsummernew2011-1.pdf>, accessed 9-27-2012.

Example: Partial Deconstruction of Level 9 Scoring Chart

What?	How?
Well-focused/addresses prompt	No extraneous topics or details, support, or information written. Essay is on topic.
Convincing manner	Essay does not fall into silly or unreasonable discussion.
What?	How?
Exceptional insight	Essay discusses unusual and accurate idea(s) <i>supported with examples from text</i> .
Language facility	Diction selected carry accurate meaning/apply smoothly to insights.
What?	How?
Adherence to topic	No other subject or topic is added.
Excellent organization	Topic and support are organized for strong effect on reader.
Excellent content	Essay shows ideal development of ideas and support.
Excellent insight	Unique ideas are well-supported.
Facile use of language	Diction shows strong use of words for effect.
Mastery of mechanics	Correct punctuation/capitalization and effectively presented quotations.
Components of effective essay	Correct paragraphing, controlling ideas well-placed, enough detailed support, effective conclusion.

What It Is/Is Not

Goal

Students will do an initial revision on their draft by reviewing the required elements of the task based on the prompt and rubric.

Rationale

Students often need an interim stage before the draft is ready for collaborative work and peer response. The “What It Is/Is Not” activity helps the writers decide if they have the appropriate and required elements according to the limits the prompt specifies.

Teacher Reference

- “What It Is/Is Not” Sample Chart

Student Handout

- Blank “What It Is/Is Not” chart

Instructional Steps

1. Instruct students to have the rubric and the previously deconstructed prompt along with their drafts ready to use with this activity.
2. Display and explain how the sample “What It Is/Is Not” chart shows a few characteristics of deconstructed prompts and rubrics for three different academic essays.
3. Be certain to explain that this chart is incomplete and is only a sample.
4. Explain that their own deconstructed prompt helped them to create their drafts. Now the “What It Is/Is Not” handout is for them to fill in their own chart based on the deconstructed prompt and the rubric.
5. Have them use their prompt and the rubric to create the chart on the blank and then use it to compare with their drafts.
6. Ask them to verify that important characteristics of the writing type selected (see #2 above) *are* included in their drafts.
7. Tell them to take out from the draft anything that is in the “Is Not” column.
8. Have them include the chart and all drafts when they turn in their final essay.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Arrange students in groups of three to create the chart.

Increased Rigor

- Have students use an exemplar to construct a class or group “What It Is/Is Not” chart for the particular type of writing they are expected to compose. Use the handout “What It Is/Is Not” chart for this created chart.

What It Is/Is Not

Sample Chart

Each left column lists the type of academic writing required in most academic classes. The middle column lists the characteristics required of such writing, and the column on the right lists some characteristics students often display in drafts of that essay type. NOTE: Not all “What It Is/Is Not” characteristics are displayed here; this is only a sample of the types of comments that might be included in this column.

Type of Academic Writing	What It Is	What It Is Not
Narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of central idea • Coherent • Structured, salient details • Sequentially organized • Relevant dialogue, pacing, and description • Usage of academic language • A conclusion following narrative events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disorganized or incoherent • Composed with informal language • Composed of a list of peripheral details or events • Inaccurately related • Concluding with an unreflective conclusion
Argumentative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a claim • Coherent • Analysis of relevant implicit/explicit details • Acknowledgment of counterclaims • Citation of evidence • Inferentially derived • Usage of logical, relevant examples • Usage of academic language • Planned for persuasive effect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A retelling of text/plot • Insignificant issue for argument • Composed with informal language • Addressed to an undefined audience • Disorganized • Details that are irrelevant or invalid • A list of peripheral structure • Inaccurately interpreted • Concluded by introducing new topic
Informational or Explanatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of central idea • Factually correct • Coherent • Usage of academic language • Research from a variety of sources • Planned and organized through selection of relevant research • Relation of information and ideas is logical and evident • Specific diction with sensory detail • Styled to elicit interest • Formally styled (through definition, classification, comparison/contrast or cause/effect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing with an undefined purpose • Dull and repetitive with no effort to evoke audience interest • Composed of informal language • Concluded with information that does not support the stated details • Undefined informational sources • Reliance on single resource • Incoherent

What It Is/Is Not

Type of Academic Writing	What It Is	What It Is Not



Revising

From writers who write with pencil to writers who use word processors, revision has always been part of the process of looking again at the written work. Revision, or “re-seeing” as Donald Murray calls it, involves checking for quality and clarity of content and ideas, and it occurs throughout the drafting stage. What writer does not revise as he or she drafts? We reread and revise as we add more content or catch and cross out an error in our in-progress material. However, “re-seeing” is not based on error correction or proofreading, though that can happen during revision. Checking for mechanical correctness is called editing, and it is important that students understand the difference so they will be open to making substantive changes. Revision is looking at content and organization; manipulating words, sentences, and exact phrasing for meaning; and moving or cutting sentences or sections for clarity and maximum effect on the reader.

As was discussed in the preceding section on Reader Response, multiple opportunities for students to give and receive feedback should be part of the guidance teachers provide for their student writers, whether it is in discussion with an adult, spoken or written questions and comments from peers, or self-feedback that takes place within the writer. We must teach our students that, just as a musician might listen for harmony; the writer in us listens for cadence and

meaning. So we may read our drafts aloud, asking others to listen and to serve as the sounding board for our work or as an opportunity for self-reflection. From there, we, the writers, use the feedback to create a plan for revision.

Strategies such as these are helpful, but it is not enough direction for student writers to be simply told to use the feedback and start revising. We have to help students learn to interpret the input they receive so they can plan for revision. This involves coaching young writers to analyze the feedback they’ve received and then determine what actions are required of them. For example, if a peer has written on the paper, “I am confused here. I don’t understand the reference to the tree,” the student writer has to determine what that means and how to resolve it—and whether or not they want to resolve it. See the Teacher Reference: Guide for Interpreting Input for some examples.

Once writers have analyzed and interpreted the feedback, they must plan their revision steps. Having a plan helps students to strategically and conscientiously change their writing rather than arbitrarily take out words, insert new ideas, or rephrase a sentence. How to move through this revision process successfully is the focus of this section.

Teacher

Conferencing

Peer

Authentic Questioning

Guided Response

Whip

Self

Highlighting

Revisiting the Prompt

Interpreting Input

Goal

Students will isolate reader response comments and revise based on careful analysis of feedback.

Rationale

After students have read the feedback from peers or teachers, they must plan their revision steps. The plan helps students to strategically and conscientiously change the writing rather than arbitrarily take out words, insert new ideas, or rephrase a sentence. A basic plan for this step consists of interpreting the feedback, analyzing the comments, and determining the best method for revising based on the feedback.

Teacher Reference

- Guide for Interpreting Input

Student Handout

- Guide for Interpreting Input

Instructional Steps

1. Share a sample paragraph with students either by providing a copy for each student or by projecting the paragraph using the document camera. The sample paragraph can be one from an earlier assignment or the teacher can ask for a volunteer to share his/her draft. The sample paragraph should contain written peer responses.
2. Have students read the responses on the draft.
3. Explain that the class is going to develop a specific revision plan based on the responses.
4. Share the Student Handout: Guide for Interpreting Input.
5. Explain that “input” consists of comments on the content of the essay. These comments can be made by the writer, a peer, or the teacher.
6. Ask students to focus on two specific “input” responses that will be a focus for revision. Have students write the first response in the blank column labeled “Input.”
7. Explain that for each “input” comment, students will analyze the intent of the comment. The final column “output” will consist of one possible way to revise based on the input and analysis. Students need to be concise in their “output” responses.
8. Model this step as a large group first so students understand the process.
9. Have students work with a partner on the second example. Once pairs have finished, asked for several volunteers to share with the large group. Have students explain “why” each change is being made. How does this change make the writing stronger?

10. Model writing the revised paragraph using a document camera.
11. Inform students that the Interpreting Input plan should be included in the process steps of the essay. This documents the writing process and can be submitted to the teacher or kept in their interactive notebooks or writing folders for future reference.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model as a large group and then with students in small groups.
- Instruct students to focus on one priority for revision and then conference with a partner on the Interpretation and Output categories.

Increased Rigor

- Give students a paragraph or an essay with specific content issues relevant to the class.
- Have students brainstorm as many methods as they can to solve each issue.
- Ask them to preserve the results in their interactive or writer's notebooks or writing folders.

Using Technology

- If students are composing on a word processor, they can create an online interactive notebook where the Interpreting Input revision plans are stored.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Guide for Interpreting Input

INPUT (self, peer, teacher feedback)	INTERPRETATION	OUTPUT
Input (feedback)	Analysis and Interpretation	Output (action during revision)
I am drawn into the field scene because of the specific details about the colors.	The field scene is interesting and keeps my reader engaged. Are there other places in my writing where I could add more specific details like this?	Re-read the draft and circle the places where I can add more specific detail.
Why did you include information about the National Weather Service? I was confused about it.	I thought the weather service info would show an expert opinion, but I haven't made it clear how it fits with my point.	Add a sentence before the weather service quote that introduces the quote.
I am unclear what you are arguing. I need a clear statement that establishes your claim.	My introduction has too much general information, and I need to make a clear claim.	My claim is... Eliminate the 2nd sentence in the intro and insert this claim sentence instead.
I wasn't totally convinced. Can you add another example?	My argument isn't strong enough to convince my reader.	I need to revisit my research and find another example to include. Decide if it will come before or after the example I have in the paper now.
I like the flowers. Can you add more description of them?	My reader was drawn into the writing by the flowers, but the flowers aren't really that important. If I add more description, I think my reader could be led off topic.	I'm not going to do anything about this feedback.

Guide for Interpreting Input

INPUT (self, peer, teacher feedback)	INTERPRETATION	OUTPUT
Input (feedback)	Analysis and Interpretation	Output (action during revision)
Why did you include information about the National Weather Service? I was confused about it.	I thought the weather service info would show an expert opinion, but I haven't made it clear how it fits with my point.	Add a sentence before the weather service quote that introduces the quote.

Acronyms for Revision

Goal

Students will remember the steps in the revision process by using acronyms.

Rationale

The use of acronyms will help students to remember specific actions and steps for revision. Increasing the levels of sophistication of the acronym to match task-specific actions increases the rigor in revision.

Teacher Reference

- Using Acronyms for Revision

Instructional Steps

1. Discuss with students the need for revision and relate a personal example of a time when you, as the teacher, used revision.
2. Provide examples of revision acronyms which can be used with any writing task. (See Teacher Reference page for examples.) Using a sample text, model how the specific actions in the acronym can be employed in revising the text.
3. Provide acronyms with increasing sophistication as students' levels of proficiency increase for revision. Match the actions in the acronym to the writing task requirements.
4. Consider creating a revision acronym as a class (see Teacher Reference page). Adjust the actions to match specific revision considerations of the writing task.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide generic acronyms for revision to be used with any writing task.
- Ask students to create posters of the revision acronyms for display in the classroom.

Increased Rigor

- Create a specific revision acronym collaboratively as a class. Words such as "FOCUS" or "EDIT" could be used. Modify the revision actions to match the specific writing task requirements.

Using Acronyms for Revision

Students often do not see the need for revising their written work or they do not possess the skills to do so effectively. In teaching students to revise their writing, it may be helpful for the teacher to identify and explain a time when he/she wrote something initially and later revised it with success. This may include an example of professional rejection and later acceptance. Examples may include college entrance essays, professional articles or other publications, a letter to the principal, school board, or newspaper, etc. Another option is to provide biographical information about a published author and examples of how the person revised their writing numerous times before publication. Students must understand the writing process is iterative, with many opportunities to draft, seek input and advice, and revise.

For some students, the use of acronyms will help them to remember specific tasks needed during the revision stage of process writing. There are many examples of acronyms for teachers to use. Several popular ones from various sources are included for reference:

- **STAR** – Substitute, Take things out, Add, and Rearrange (Kelly Gallagher)
- **ARMS** – Add, Remove, Move, and Substitute (Charles A. MacArthur)
- **SCAN** – Does it make Sense? Is it Connected to my belief? Can you Add more? Note errors? (Self-Regulated Strategy Development, SRSD)

The important elements of the acronym remind students of specific actions that must be incorporated during the revision stage. Providing numerous examples of these actions for students as often as possible in the classroom reinforces the need for revision. Specific acronyms may also fit more rigorous writing tasks as well. Revision checklists could even be created using task-specific acronyms to add another layer of revision support.

Another option is to collaborate as a class to create a revision acronym of your own. Select a word, such as “FOCUS” or “EDIT,” and create your own actions for revising. It is possible to match the necessary actions with specific requirements of the prompt/task. This collaboration allows direct input from students and makes the act of revising more personal. The class-created acronyms can be shared with other classes as well.

“Good writing takes more than just time; it wants your best moments and the best of you.”

– *Real Live Preacher*

Interpreting Input: Developing a Revision Plan (TEASE)

Goal

Students will craft a plan to guide the revision process of a text.

Rationale

Students receive responses on their drafts and then are expected to make revisions based on those comments. However, a critical step between the response and revision is often missed—teaching students how to use the responses to guide their revision. Students need a plan that will “tease” out specific revisions so they aren’t seen as something “accidental” that happens in the writing process.

Student Handout

- TEASE: A Plan for Revision

Instructional Steps

1. Share a sample paragraph with students either by providing a copy for each student or by projecting the paragraph using the document camera. The sample paragraph can be one from an earlier assignment or the teacher can ask for a volunteer to share his/her draft. The sample paragraph should contain written peer responses.
2. Have students read the responses on the draft.
3. Explain that the class is going to develop a specific revision action plan based on the responses.
4. Share the Student Handout: TEASE.
5. Ask students to focus on two specific responses that will be addressed and to copy them on the graphic organizer. Establish these areas as targeted priorities for revision, and record on the graphic organizer.
6. Explain for each targeted priority, students will need to create a list of specific steps they will take to make revisions. These should not be general steps like “fix topic sentence.” Rather they need to list specific steps. (First, narrow the topic from the general “dogs” to “German Shepherds.” Second, change the opinion statement from “are favorite dogs” to “are good guard dogs because of their protective tendencies and their loud bark.”)
7. Model this step in the revision plan based on the sample paragraph.
8. Ask students to explain “why” each change is being made. How does this change make the writing stronger?

9. Model writing the revised paragraph using a document camera.
10. Inform students that the TEASE revision plan should be included in the process steps of the essay. This documents the writing process and can be submitted to the teacher or kept in their interactive notebooks or writing folders for future reference.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model as a large group (using a representative sample paragraph) and then with students in small groups.
- Instruct students to focus on one priority for revision or instruct students on a narrow list of priorities for revision, and base this list on the most often demonstrated issues seen in that particular group of students.

Increased Rigor

- Modify the TEASE plan so students are addressing complex issues for revision.

Using Technology

- If students are composing on a word processor, they can create an online interactive notebook where the TEASE revision plans are stored.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

TEASE: A Plan for Revision

Target two areas for revision based on the reader responses:

1.

2.

Establish two revision priorities for the essay:

1.

2.

Revision Priority 1

Action – specific steps to revise:

Revision Priority 2

Action – specific steps to revise:

Seek support or clarity on the proposed changes:

Seek support or clarity on the proposed changes:

Explain why this revision will make the writing stronger:

Explain why this revision will make the writing stronger:

TEASE Revision

Kosa Fajardo

Student Handout

TEASE: A Plan for Revision

<p>Target two areas for revision based on the reader responses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diction - Harold's other vocabulary. 2. incorporating more of the Harold's perspective perspective 	<p>Establish two revision priorities for the essay</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be Be more organized with the order of things 2. Make it Make it more fluent.
---	---

Revision Priority 1	Revision Priority 2
<p>Action - specific steps to revise</p> <p>Remove the middle of the paper add substance Add more the sentences towards the middle of the paper.</p>	<p>Action - specific steps to revise</p> <p>Using better diction.</p>
<p>Seek support or clarity on the proposed changes</p> <p>What What would sound good to put in there?</p>	<p>Seek support or clarity on the proposed changes</p> <p>What other words should I change to make the essay sound more like Harold?</p>
<p>Explain why this revision will make the writing stronger</p> <p>This will make my paper sound more fluent.</p>	<p>Explain why this revision will make the writing stronger</p> <p>This will make my paper sound more like Holden Caulfield.</p>

Student Handout

TEASE: A Plan for Revision

Danica Leal
12/12/12
CPE 4; 3rd hr

<p>Target two areas for revision based on the reader responses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put it together to flow 2. Don't use too many topics. 	<p>Establish two revision priorities for the essay</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. include how holden talks, 2. how Holden would feel towards things.
---	--

Revision Priority 1	Revision Priority 2
<p>Action - specific steps to revise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flow everything together, make it sound like Holden, and talk about a couple things only. 	<p>Action - specific steps to revise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use words like "Chrissake", "damn". • talk about what we would think, if it's "phony".
<p>Seek support or clarity on the proposed changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we just make it like a conversation? 	<p>Seek support or clarity on the proposed changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we make it sound like we're Holden? or just what we think we would say
<p>Explain why this revision will make the writing stronger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will help the story make more sense, instead of having a lot of topics and confusing the reader 	<p>Explain why this revision will make the writing stronger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it will make it sound as if you're Holden, in his shoes.

Editing



Introduction

Young people starting college in 2002 were the first students who could have access to a personal computer with a spell and grammar checker. Since then, the spell and grammar checkers have figured heavily as the go-to editing tool for everyone from student writers to professional wordsmiths. With this accessible tool, why, then, do students still manage to confuse “past” and “passed?” Or “cite,” “sight,” and “site” (among others)? Rhetorical questions have no answer, just as this text has no answer to the spell-checker quandary. Perhaps education critics cite the advent of the personal computer for any number of editing omissions that show up in students’ drafts; however, those errors present editing-stage teachable moments that will pay off in students’ future draft efforts. Teaching neophyte writers how to edit within the context of the writing rather than in isolation entails focusing on grammar, usage, mechanics, punctuation, spelling, style, and organization, all aspects of refining a written masterpiece. However, editing is not likely to make for rapt student attention unless they view the process as helpful to clear communication. Students accustomed to having the word processor catch a variety of errors are not always attuned enough to editing to recognize, say, the necessity for clear communication in an academic assignment versus a Twitter posting, LOL. As today’s teachers of language arts recognize, BTDT. (Been there, done that.) The material in this section can help with creating and conducting a positive editing plan, one that reinforces the value to students of knowing how to edit their work so they write exactly what they intend to say.

Managing the Editing Process

Some teachers guide their students with a page or two of common errors and corrections. For an example of such a guide, see “Editing Marks” in AVID’s *English Language Learners Teacher Guide* and the section “Common Editing Marks” in *High School Writing Teacher Guide*. These are helpful and instructive, and since inexperienced writers often make sentence level errors, training students to understand editing marks makes writing expectations clearer. Another useful tool to help with editing is the website for the “Writer’s Diet” (<http://www.writersdiet.com/WT.php>) featured in the strategies section below. Students copy and paste a segment of their writing into the site and are able to see where to tailor their paragraphs for clarity or, as the site indicates, to perform “editorial liposuction.”

Editing for organization includes looking for logical transitions, unified paragraph structure and placement, titles, and the “flow” of the sentences for effect. Sometimes showing and discussing examples of effective and ineffective organization clarifies the importance of editing. Editing for style involves proofreading for rhetorical choices, and this includes making nouns into verbs, using passive/active voice, writing short, choppy sentences, or the opposite, writing sentences that would make Faulkner proud. In fact, having students compete to write the longest meaningful and grammatically correct sentence is an enjoyable way to introduce students to the importance of reading their essays aloud to themselves and others during the drafting and editing stages.

“We know what a person thinks not when he tells us what he thinks, but by his actions.”

– Isaac Bashevis Singer

Checklist Tracking

Goal

Students will track their errors over the course of several essays in order to focus on areas for improvement.

Rationale

When students track the errors they consistently make in their writing, they are able to target areas for correction in the editing stage of the process. The tracking sheets also aid both the student and the teacher in identifying the focus lessons students should complete in order to continually improve in the areas of grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.

Student Handouts

- A Guide for Editing Another Student’s Paper
- Checklist Tracking Sheet

Instructional Steps

1. Instruct students to exchange essays with a partner.
2. Ask the partner to read the essay and note errors in the essay but do not correct.
3. Have students use the handout, A Guide for Editing Another Student’s Paper, to guide the marking process on the essay.
4. Have students return essays to the author.
5. Ask the author to check the errors, determine how to correct the error, and make the correction on the essay draft.
6. Provide students with a copy of the Checklist Tracking handout.
7. Ask students to write the title of the essay in the top row.
8. Have students place checkmarks in the boxes that identify the errors in the first essay.
9. Use this list to identify individual or group focus lessons to support students in improving grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. within the context of their writing.
10. Continue this process until three essays have been recorded and then ask students to reflect on their writing as it relates to the checklist. The reflection could be written in the interactive notebook or writing folders and kept throughout the semester.

Note: The checklist can also be done after the teacher edits students’ essays.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Identify 3–5 areas to track initially so students are not overwhelmed. Gradually increase the different errors to track in essays.

Increased Rigor

- Identify more complex and sophisticated editing errors, such as sentence variety (loose, periodic, episodic, etc.).
- Identify errors by simply placing a star or asterisk in the margin of the essay where the error occurs. Authors must determine where and what the error is and then correct. Errors should still be tracked on the checklist.

A Guide for Editing Another Student's Paper

Circle errors in **GRAMMAR** if:

- You see subjects and verbs that do not agree.
- You see verbs that are the wrong tense.

Place parentheses around errors in **PUNCTUATION** if:

- You see apostrophes are used incorrectly.
 - You see where commas are needed after items in a series (except for the comma before using **AND** or **OR** to connect the last item in the series).
 - You see quotation marks are needed around statements someone has made (quotes), titles of songs, short stories, plays, chapters of books, electronic files and articles in periodicals.
 - You see periods and commas are needed inside quotation marks in a sentence.
 - You see question marks are needed at the end of a question and **INSIDE** quotation marks of a quotation.
-

Place checkmarks over errors in **SPELLING** if:

- You see the spell-check has not caught all the spelling errors. (If in doubt, use a book dictionary.)

Underline errors in **CAPITALIZATION** if:

- You see words and items in need of capitalization. These include holidays, eras in history, official names of special events, documents, trade names, official titles, and geographical places.

Use brackets around confusing or difficult-to-understand phrases and sentences.

Write **RO** in the margin to indicate a sentence is a run-on.

Write **FRAG** in the margin to indicate a sentence fragment.

Write **TRANS** in the margin if a transition is needed.

Checklist Tracking Sheet

	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title
ERRORS										
Commas										
Semicolons										
Colons										
Periods										
Quotation Marks										
Apostrophe										
Capital Letters										
Subject-Verb Agreement										
Pronoun Agreement										
Homonym Words										
Capital Letters										
Spelling										
Sentence Fragment										
Sentence Run-On										
Passive/Active Voice										
Voice										
Correct Word Choice										
Sentence Variety										
Other:										
Other:										
Other:										
Other:										
Other:										

Editing Journals

Goal

Students will create and maintain an editing journal to monitor editing errors.

Rationale

Students who struggle with writing conventions need an explicit strategy to monitor their mistakes and to provide consistent practice in correcting these errors. The journal provides a place for students to set goals and monitor their improvement in the editing process.

Instructional Steps

1. Have each student start an editing journal to keep track of the common mistakes made by the class as well as those made by the individual. The journal can either be a separate notebook or could be included in their ELA interactive notebook.
2. Record how to correct each mistake listed.
3. Have students gather information for this journal from teacher or peer feedback, focus lessons, and printed or online resources.
4. Instruct students to review their journal when it is time for editing every formal essay. Students first review the common errors listed in the journal and then review their essay to correct those specific mistakes.
5. Encourage students to use this journal as a place to set specific goals for editing and to note their progress on every essay.
6. Monitor students' journals during writing conferences or other designated one-on-one time with individual students, and use this recorded information to help inform the conversation during these conferences.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model the journal process by recording entries based on targeted focus lessons.
- Limit the number of errors in the journal for focus. In other words, ask students to identify and correct 4–5 different types of errors in the essay. This way, students will not be overwhelmed.

Increased Rigor

- Have students quantify their errors and make a graph of their progress.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Expert Editing Groups

Goal

Students will receive feedback on multiple editing areas.

Rationale

Collaborative groups are ideal for editing for such things as grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure. This strategy is also successful because the number of errors to work with is limited. This allows for a concentrated focus on specific errors until students are proficient at identifying and correcting these errors.

Instructional Steps

1. Create several “expert” groups of 3–4 students. Each group will be responsible for checking one type of error (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, verb tense/agreement, etc.)
2. Provide specific instruction on the “expert” area to students in each group.
3. Have students give their essays to an expert group to be checked only for one specific error.
4. Ask students to pass essays as needed to other “expert” groups.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Work with students to identify which “expert” groups will need to read their essays. For example, if a student usually does well on spelling, then there is no need for his essay to go to the spelling expert group.
- Build confidence in students by reviewing and practicing the skills identified by the “expert” groups.

Increased Rigor

- Identify more complex and sophisticated editing errors such as sentence structure or word selection for effect.
- Ask students to determine which “expert” groups are needed based on the errors identified during the peer-response revision activities.

Using Technology

- Use the free website <http://meetingwords.com/> to collaboratively edit sentences or sections for review or essays in-progress. This site is best for whole class editing or review and does not have the limiting factors other free sites seem to have.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Sentence by Sentence Correction

Goal

Students will be able to identify and correct common sentence level errors in a paragraph.

Rationale

Sometimes it is difficult to see where revision has to be made in a longer piece of writing. Writers might gloss over obvious errors because they do not “see” them or perhaps they do not know that the error (or omission!) is indeed an error. Sentence by Sentence is one way to focus the writer’s attention on shorter constructions in order to avoid being sidelined by his or her own writing assumptions.

Instructional Steps

1. List types of sentence level errors on a display surface (poster, whiteboard or document camera). In this activity, target the ten most common errors students exhibit in their writing. For lists of some common sentence level mistakes, see “Common Editing Marks,” or “A Quick Guide to Sentence Structure” in *High School Writing Teacher Guide*, (Sections 2 and 4, respectively).
2. Call students’ attention to the error list, and by discussing the errors first, ensure that students understand what those errors might look like in a sentence.
3. Ask students to select a specific paragraph or other written piece with limited numbers of sentences.
4. Have the students rewrite their selected paragraph one sentence at a time, skipping lines between sentences and numbering the sentences in order.
5. Seat the students in pairs, and have each one read his/her own “deconstructed” paragraph to the other, marking any mistakes they catch as they read their own work.
6. Instruct the partners to then read the deconstructed paragraph, and mark any of the ten target errors.
7. Have them discuss the errors marked and return the papers to the partner.
8. Ask the students to correct their mistakes and after checking the rest of their own writing for similar errors, rewrite the entire essay.

9. Remind students to log their errors in their learning logs or interactive notebooks.
10. Post the error list prominently for students to use for future writing assignments.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Pair students carefully. Consider pairing stronger writers with less experienced ones.
- Have students focus on only one or two errors at a time.
- Have them use a word processor for writing and rewriting together. This tends to help mollify students who are reluctant to expend effort on writing yet again.

Increased Rigor

- Have students compose a paragraph incorporating as many common errors as possible, then exchange with a partner and see if they can rewrite each other's paragraphs error-free in a specified amount of time.

Using Technology

- Provide computer/word processing access for the task.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

“Technology...the knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it.”

– Max Frisch

Target Areas – Small Groups

Goal

Students will improve targeted editing skills by focusing on one area.

Rationale

This strategy requires an intentional focus on targeted skills and combines with a collaborative approach to increase understanding and retention.

Instructional Steps

1. Conduct a whole class focus lesson on a target skill relevant to an essay—for example, using quotation marks in narrative essays.
2. Collect student papers that are at the editing stage and redistribute them randomly.
3. Arrange students into small groups of 3 or 4.
4. Instruct students to work collaboratively to edit each essay they have brought to the group.
5. Stress to students they are only editing for the correct use of the target skill in the focus lesson—in this case, quotation marks.
6. Return essays to authors to correct.
7. Use this strategy when focusing on errors that have frequently appeared in students' essays.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Base the target skill on a teacher assessment from a diagnostic essay.
- Start with basic proofreading and editing skills.
- Place students in pairs the first time and then move to triads before groups of 4.

Increased Rigor

- Identify more complex target skills, such as passive and active voice.
- Ask students to identify the target skills they want to focus on in the small group.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Publication of Student Writing

Introduction

The opportunity for students to publish their work for an authentic audience motivates students to produce revised and edited drafts as close to error-free as possible. Publishing student writing is an integral part of the writing process. When students write for real audiences, they are motivated to write genuinely and pay closer attention to the purpose, audience, and context of their writing. Without a real audience, writing sometimes becomes merely a task to complete for a grade rather than the opportunity to practice the art of writing. Without publication, the student writer writes for one critical reader only—the teacher. To enable students to be college- and career-ready, students must write to a variety of authentic audiences and to have their writing reach those audiences as published work.

There are many ways to publish the work of students for others to experience. Here you will find suggestions to assist teachers in going public with students' writing. As with all student work samples, teachers are reminded of the need to **obtain parent and student permission** before writing samples are published in any format. This will protect teachers from issues surrounding privacy of students' work and personal information. Some districts have approved, standardized permission slips for using student work. When in doubt, always discuss your plans and intended use of student work with a school administrator before proceeding.

Classroom Community Publications

- Wall of fame or memorable lines bulletin boards
- Reading aloud to the class from the writer's chair
- Class created magazines, newsletters, newspapers, books, or websites

School Community Publications

- School published newsletters, newspapers, or brochures
- School academic displays, media center and office displays of work
- Reading at student assemblies or parent meetings
- School news show
- Sharing writing with younger students
- Family writing nights, PTA meetings, special ceremonies

Local Community Publications

- Local newspapers (articles, letters to the editor, movie or restaurant reviews)
- News shows
- Local businesses
- Community organizations—civic groups, churches, service organizations, doctor's offices/ hospitals, retirement facilities

Global Community Publications

- Writing contest submissions for essays, short stories, poetry (Scholastic Art and Writing Contest, History Day)
- Scholarship submissions
- National and international publications
- Online publishers, blogs, Wikis, websites (see Appendix E: Technology Resources for specific examples)

Write and Release*

Goal

Students will release essays to the public and receive authentic feedback on their published work.

Rationale

Students seldom have a variety of audiences for their writing since it's mostly created for a grade or in response to some situation. The activity "Write and Release" has aspects of social networking, blogging, and old-style letter writing combined with journaling. This up-to-date communication provides an audience that is public, yet secure; sophisticated, yet experimental. With all these angles, students know someone other than a teacher or a parent is going to be reading their creations and commenting on the content.*

*Modeled after *Bookcrossing.com*, accessed 8/5/2012

Teacher Reference

- Write and Release Procedures

Instructional Steps

1. Seek permission from the school administration and (if so instructed) from the school board to participate in the "write and release" activity described here.
2. Find district-generated parent permission notes for students to have parents sign and return for releasing student work.
3. Create a link on the district website OR set up a link on the teacher website for "write and release" journal entries. See teacher handout: "Write and Release Procedures."
4. Create a list of numbers to assign students for use on their writing to be "released."
5. Share with students the member-supported Book Crossing website (www.bookcrossing.com). The members read a book, sign up on the website to share the book, receive a registration number, and have access to a book plate template. The idea is to label the book with the book plate and leave the book somewhere public where someone else finds the book and later accesses the website to report where/when it was found.
6. Discuss and compare the Book Crossing "read and release" procedure with the classroom "write and release" program their writing assignment will enter.
7. Explain the rules and procedures for releasing the student work.
8. Select essays and give students a cover sheet for their "to-be-released essays."
9. Deliver the released student writing to the sponsoring businesses.
10. Monitor the "write and release" link daily for responses to share with students.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Meet one-on-one to help some students select their most promising essays and discuss what further revisions they may want to make before releasing them.

Increased Rigor

- Have students work in pairs to help each other select which of their essays would be best for write and release. Ask them to submit their preference to you with a persuasive paragraph explaining why they made that choice.

Write and Release Procedures

Seek permission first!

1. From school administration or school board for student participation: Review district and school policies for contact by outside individuals. Share your objectives and the procedures.
2. From parents: Use district permission forms and have parents sign them. Include a description of the activity, sites where you will release the student writing, and where the journal will be posted for anyone to view.
3. From businesses: Ask if you can release student writing in appropriate folders at the business, and leave a written plan on what to do with the writing after a 3-week period at their sites.
4. From students: After all others listed above have granted permission, use either district- or teacher-created forms with district approval. Have students sign and return the forms with their signed parent permissions.

Describe the type of student writing that will be released:

Expository essays are good candidates. All writers are identified by number only (or by pseudonym). Since a release is public, all material must be carefully edited and cleanly presented.

Reveal potential “release” hosts, such as:

Waiting rooms for dentists, physicians, hospitals
 Auto repair shop lobbies
 Lobbies of motels that serve breakfast
 Beauty shops
 Motor vehicle departments
 Popular restaurants and drug stores with courtesy waiting chairs and benches

Create a number list for student entries

Assign a code or number to each student. The students place this number or code on their releases.

Create a cover sheet explaining the release. On the cover sheet, explain the goals of the activity and the process of the journal. Secure the essay inside a sturdy folder with brads.

Create Security and set up link on a website

Because the districts serve a youthful and vulnerable population, any district with capability to support web services will also have security systems with firewalls to keep harmful outside entities from accessing students and student information. It is wise to use district-supported websites because of security issues and cost containment. Few commercial services can offer both security and free or low-cost supported web sites.

Set up the journal entry format:

On the website where the public will respond:

“Our essays do not want to sit in our folders gathering dust, so we thought this might be a way for others to enjoy them too. Please leave a comment on what you read; and, if you have another place where this essay might be read and enjoyed, please take it with you and let us know here where you “released” the essay.

Where did you release it?
 (It can also stay right where it is!)

If you enjoyed reading it, please tell us what you liked about it.

If you felt you needed more information to be added to it, what would you add?

Explain to parents the “write and release” activity:

Students seldom have a variety of audiences for their writing since it’s mostly created for a grade or in response to some situation. The activity “Write and Release” has aspects of social networking, blogging, and old-style letter writing combined with journaling. This up-to-date communication provides an audience that is public, yet secure; sophisticated, yet experimental. With all these angles, students know someone other than a teacher or a parent is going to be reading their creations and commenting on the content.

Set up rules and include others specific to your district/site:

Explain to students the teacher will release a *copy* of their essay since the essays will likely not return in good condition if they return at all.

All essays must be the final ready-to-publish copies with no uncredited copyrighted material in the essay. There will be no scoring marks on the releases, and the releases will be identified only by a teacher-assigned number.

Students can access the journal site after the teacher has had a chance to preview the site contents each day.

The journal site is only for journaling. Students may not contact the journalists in any form.



“Achilles exists only through Homer. Take away the art of writing from this world, and you will probably take away its glory.”

– François-René de Chateaubriand

“I try to leave out parts that people skip.”

– Elmore Leonard

Evaluation and Reflection

Evaluation

Evaluating and providing feedback on student writing is always a complex and time-consuming process. Students write to demonstrate knowledge and analytical skills as well as to develop communications skills. Thus, teacher responses and evaluations are meant to not only guide students to become better writers and better thinkers, but also to encourage overall improvement and explain the grade assigned. Strategic and intentional approaches to evaluating student writing help students develop into stronger writers. Certain strategies will improve consistency of evaluation.

- Provide students with clear and concise assignments along with clear rubrics for evaluation. Students will know what is expected of them and will understand the various levels or weights for evaluation. This knowledge will support students' focus as they write.
- Read through all essays quickly to get a general idea of student performance on the task. Even though this might seem like time wasted, one of the advantages is that teachers can determine if the assignment was misunderstood before spending a great deal of time commenting and marking student papers.
- Focus on the content that is most important for the particular writing task. For example, if the objective for an essay is identifying and embedding evidence for support, then comments can be made on that aspect only. Students are often overwhelmed by the numerous comments appearing on their essays when they are returned. As a result, they tend to pay little attention to the detailed notes the teacher has made, which defeats the goal of bettering student writing. If the comments are focused on one aspect that has been emphasized through all stages of the writing process and on the evaluation tool, then student performance is more likely to improve.
- Resist the urge to correct all grammar errors. First, it is the students' responsibility to create an error-free draft. Little is learned if the teacher has spent time marking all errors; the student skims through the marks and then files the essay in his or her notebook. A good approach is to mark one paragraph so that the student can identify the patterns of the mistakes. Other techniques for beneficial ways to guide students in editing grammar and conventions are specifically outlined in several strategies in this section.
- Provide comments on strengths. Praise will encourage students and have a greater impact on writing improvement than criticism alone.
- Write an encouraging note at the end of the essay. Comment specifically on the strengths of the essay, identify a major area on which to focus for improvement, and provide specific recommendations for revision.
- Provide specific criteria for assessment on the rubric or evaluation tool. A detailed rubric will clarify criteria for the teacher as well as students. A rubric can also help keep the teacher focused during the grading process.

“Writers are always selling somebody out.”

– Joan Didion

Specific strategies for responding to student writing are included in this section. Responses are designed to improve student performance. A few general tips to remember are listed here but explored in more detail in the various strategies.

- Be specific in comments. If the comment states, “This paragraph is unclear,” students have little direction for revision. However, by suggesting a topic sentence for the paragraph, students would have a better idea of what is needed to improve the essay.
- Guide analytical thinking. Comments should not be limited to surface level corrections. Ask students higher level questions that will promote deeper thinking about a topic. For example, “Why is the need for conservation important?” “How is the issue significant?” When students revise, these comments will lead to essays that demonstrate students’ critical thinking skills.
- Provide choices. Instead of listing one way to revise the essay, give students a list of several choices. Then students can decide which of the options to develop in the revision. This allows students more ownership in the revision process.

Reflection

In order for students to gain a cognitive understanding of the strategies they use in writing, they must examine and reflect on their learning process. When students use new strategies, they need to consider the impact these strategies make on their writing. Students should reflect on their writing process and understand what works for them. For example, in pre-writing when students brainstorm

ideas, some prefer to create a web or cluster of all ideas, others prefer to outline, and still others prefer to talk through their ideas before capturing them in writing. Students will improve as writers when they understand the best strategies for their particular learning style.

Student reflection is important if they are to gain insight into how they accomplished the final essay so they can be more likely to replicate the process on the next essay. Before they begin their first draft, ask students to reflect on where they are as writers and identify the specific areas for focus in order to improve on this essay. During the writing process, have students reflect on what is working in the process and what is not working. Students could conference with the teacher or with peers to brainstorm strategies to guide them in improvement. When an essay is completed, students should be required to think about the final product, their process in writing the essays, and their performance. They can also consider their own needs as writers and set goals for future assignments.

The strategies in this section are focused on helping students to write more reflectively. Using Analogous Reflection, Graphic Organizers, or Tracking will activate the student’s imagination and intellect by immersing him or her in the experience with sensory details and vivid language. Reflection Questions and Rubrics: Evaluating and Reflecting on the Process or the Product help students probe more deeply and extend their thinking. *Myself as a Writer*, Peer Evaluation Teams, and Portfolios help students communicate the significance of the writer’s experience(s) to an audience. Reflection, then, serves as perhaps the most significant means to connect student writers to their own best learning.

Writing Portfolios

The importance and use of portfolios for students' writing cannot be stressed enough. As a basic repository for work samples selected specifically to showcase students' efforts in writing, the portfolio is a place where examples of writing, including works in progress, finished pieces, and informal writings are housed for each student. Students are encouraged to collect self-created samples of writing to learn, process writing, and on-demand writing in their portfolios on a regular basis throughout the course. Teachers should encourage students to file all components of process writing, including brainstorming or pre-writing and all draft copies with evidence of revision, editing work, and published copies. Additional artifacts may also include journal entries, projects, and any other writing students believe showcases their efforts as writers.

There are many uses for the information stored in the students' portfolios. Some ideas include:

- Assisting teachers and students in documenting the mastery of standards by providing specific artifacts as evidence of mastery.
- Showcasing a variety of written products created for various purposes, audiences, and in various formats to highlight the student's range of written abilities.
- Giving teachers and students a quick reference to skills previously taught or addressed in earlier writing samples.
- Providing choice writing opportunities for students. Teachers instruct students to complete the thinking and planning for several possible written responses during instruction, storing this pre-writing in the student's portfolio. At designated times during the course, students then select which topic they would like to use as the basis for a process writing assignment, taking the piece through all the steps in the writing process.

- Creating a reference point during parent conferences as evidence of a student's current progress as well as possible areas of future instruction for improvement.
- Facilitating portfolios which follow students from year to year as they progress through their educational career. This provides current teachers the opportunity to examine the previous work of their students and collect data about future writing needs.
- Supporting students in their reflection and analysis of their growth as writers over time (see *Myself as a Writer* strategy in this publication). Students become the evaluators and assign value to their own work.

When used appropriately, portfolios become much more than a repository for work. They are instructional tools enabling both teachers and students access to critical writing instruction.

Portfolios in the Electronic Age

Some teachers have access to electronic means for capturing and tracking the writing of their students. Many textbook companies also provide online resources for creating electronic portfolios for students, such as Write Source, an e-portfolio that follows students from grade to grade. Edmodo is another electronic resource that enables teachers to respond, track, and store student writing. While some electronic resources require fees to access, others are free to use. Regardless of whether portfolios are kept in an electronic format or in folders maintained in the classroom, they are an important instructional tool to support the improvement of student writing.



Analogous Reflection

Goal

Students will use analogy to compose meaningful reflections on their own writing.

Rationale

Reflection is a key strategy for teachers and students to understand how students think about writing and learning, and how they see themselves as participants in the writing process. However, there is a tendency for students to write reflections as a diary, in which they just describe rather than analyze or synthesize. When students use an analogy, they analyze their writing with a new vision and engage metacognition.

Instructional Steps

1. Have students divide a sheet of paper into four boxes.
2. Label each box with a word or term from a category unrelated to writing. This could be types of cars, food, clothing, music, countries, cities, careers, etc.
3. Place students in groups of 3–4 and have them brainstorm 1–2 specific words per box. For example, in clothing, they might list jeans and high-heeled shoes.
4. Share as a large group and ask students to add words to their boxes.
5. Move students so that they are working in pairs.
6. Ask pairs to select one item from their brainstorm list in the boxes.
7. Give students the frame sentence: My writing is like a(n) _____ (word) because . . .
8. Brainstorm with their partner a list of characteristics that the item shares with their writing.
9. Explain the task to students: they are to write an essay in which they compare their writing and writing process to the item. Select 2–3 characteristics for the comparison. Use specific examples of the item and specific examples from their writing process and essays, to develop the comparison.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Complete a Venn diagram or 3-Column chart that compares the item to the writing instead of writing the essay.
- Model the process with a sample essay.

Increased Rigor

- Instead of having the students brainstorm the specific words for each labeled box, give the students the specific words. Then, have students write the analogy that “shows” the relationship. (See *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*, “Synectic Analogous Thinking”)

Using Technology:

- Use a PowerPoint with visuals and text to develop the analogous comparison.

Graphic Organizers as Reflective Tools

Goal

Students will use a graphic organizer to help them reflect on their writing.

Rationale

We know that the brain works by making visual patterns, and while imagination and visualization of patterns are components for enhancing memory, they are also contributors to graphic reflection. Students using graphics as reflective tools see how information fits together to show where change can be made and where more information is needed.

Student Handouts

- Box Reflection
- 3-Column Log
- Steps Reflection

Instructional Steps

1. Point out to students that they use graphic organizers for brainstorming and for framing their responses to a prompt, but they can also use organizers for reflection on a topic or process.
2. Select the graphic organizer that is most appropriate for the writing assignment or student needs. Other examples are the Four-Box Reflection and the Steps Reflection. (See examples in this section.)
3. Model for students the simple 3-Column Log for reflecting (Student Handout: 3-Column Log).
4. Ask students to suggest other questions/prompts for the first column. Write comments (or other questions based on the needs of the students) and display using a document camera for students to see.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide students copies of reflection graphic organizers. Have students select one of their own pieces of writing and use the graphic organizer to guide their reflection.

Increased Rigor

- Provide students with a choppy paragraph (with short sentencings) and have students reflect on how to recreate the paragraph using a variety of sentence options, such as episodic, periodic, or loose sentences.
- Have students use a sample essay provided by the teacher, perhaps written by a former student, to reflect on the tone of the essay.

Box Reflection

The *Box Reflection* features four areas for reflection. The following “prompts” are suggestions, though these will vary with each writer.

What mechanical issues should I address for next time?

How should I solve support/detail problems next time?

Four Strategies To Use Next Time

I had trouble with _____. What can I do next time to avoid this problem?

What sentence level problems should I plan to check on next time?

3-Column Log

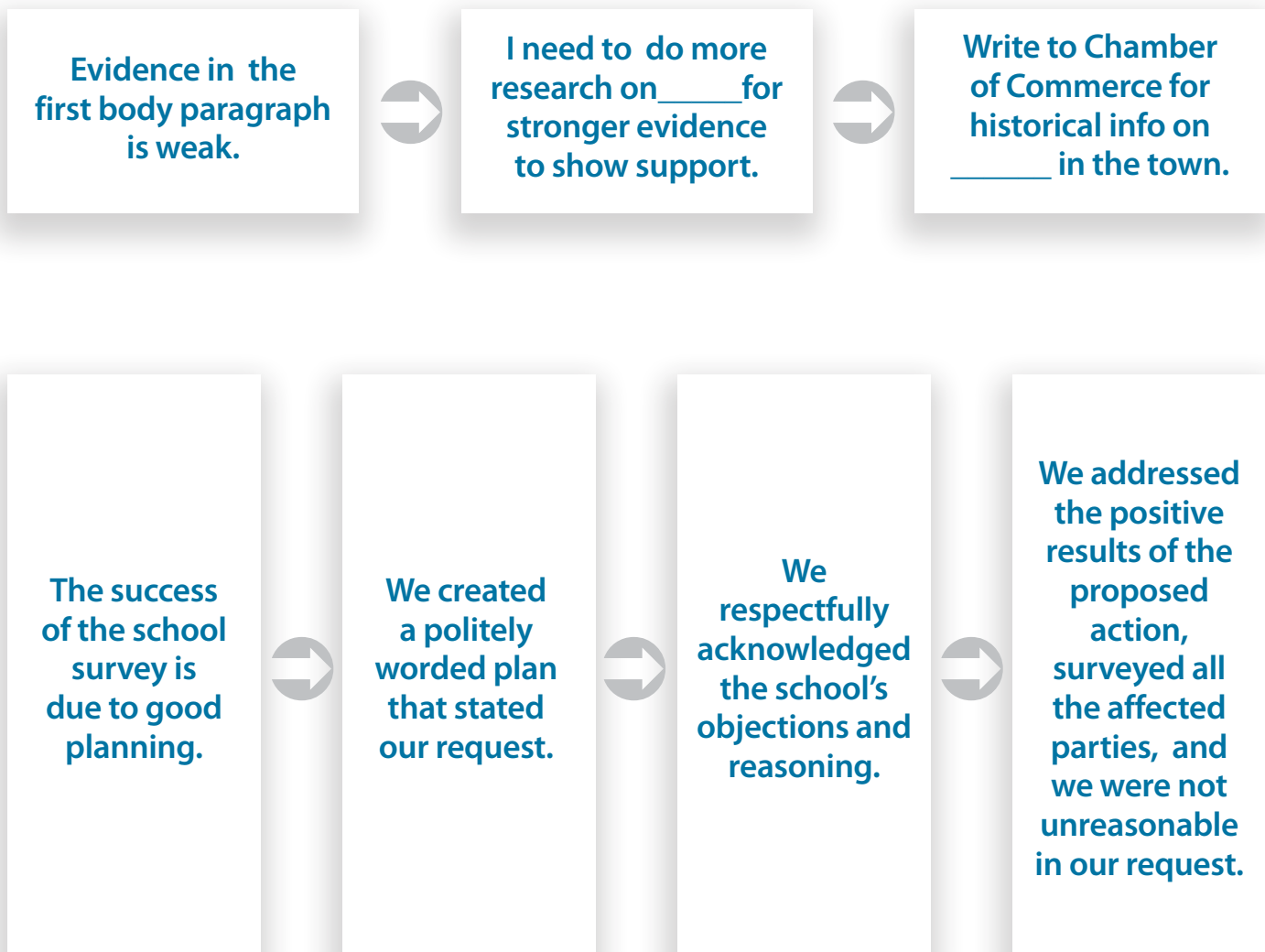
A simple **3-Column Log** can be an effective tool for writers to use in reflecting on their own writing.

Prompt	Response	Did I get help? What did I do after getting help?
According to the prompt, what are the specific items I should have addressed?	(Write the list of items)	
If I did not write about all of them, why not?	(Explain)	
Why did I arrange the support for my claim the way I did?	(Explain)	
What did I do that turned out perfectly on this essay?	(Explain)	
What did I have trouble trying to do on this essay?	(Explain)	
How did I solve this problem?	(Explain)	
Next time, I will...	(Finish the sentence)	

Steps Reflection

Steps Reflection is used to show a progression of steps to take after reflecting on a topic.

NOTE: In the sample below, students have used a persuasive writing technique to create a positive change.



Myself as a Writer

Goal

Students will write an essay reflecting on their growth as a writer over a specified period of time.

Rationale

To encourage self-reflection, students construct a reflective essay using their writing portfolios. Referencing specific examples, students provide analysis of their growth as a writer during the course.

Student Handout

- Myself as a Writer

Instructional Steps

1. Provide access to students' writing portfolios containing samples collected all through the course for this culminating assignment.
2. Use the Student Handout: Myself as a Writer to explain the essay assignment and assist with the analysis of student writing.
3. Provide the question stems for students to use in their analysis. Encourage students to create a few of their own questions related to their writing.
4. Assist students as they complete the essay and take their work through the stages of the writing process.
5. Provide an opportunity for students to publish and showcase their reflective, analytical writing.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Select the guiding questions students must use for the body of their essays.

Increased Rigor

- Assign students to work collaboratively to develop questions in groups or individually before they write their essays.

Using Technology

- Portfolios may have been kept electronically. If so, students will need access to their work for this assignment.

Myself as a Writer

You have written many examples of on-demand writing, process writing, writing to learn, and choice assignments in this course. Using your portfolio of writing, review your work over the course of this year and evaluate what you have learned. Determine how you view yourself as a writer. Identify areas of your growth during the year by referencing specific examples in your work. Use the question stems provided to assist in the analysis of your portfolio.

Once you evaluate your work and locate examples, write an essay in which you explain your analysis and provide specific examples of how you have grown as a writer this year. You may use the basic structure identified here or create an organizational pattern that works best for your writing.

Opening: Provide an introduction about yourself, focusing on a brief history of your writing experiences. What have you learned or discovered about yourself as a writer this year? What new skills do you possess? What was your best work, and what made it the best?

Body: Select several of the analysis questions to use as the topics of the paragraphs in the body of the essay. Provide specific support and elaboration as part of your analysis and evidence for each paragraph. Identify your strengths and areas for future learning. Consider creating a few of your own analysis questions as well.

Conclusion: Summarize your learning. Define yourself as a writer. What areas of interest exist for you in the future? What goals have you set for yourself?

Question Stems to Analyze Student Growth as a Writer:

1. I have worked the hardest on _____. This was a challenge for me because _____.
2. The piece of writing that surprised me most is _____ because _____.
3. When I am asked to write something, I _____.
4. I like to write about _____.
5. I can't write when _____.
6. One of my goals this year was _____.
7. Some important things I learned about writing this year were _____.
8. One of the connections my writing has helped me make is _____.
9. I made progress in _____. I still need help with _____.
10. In the future, I would like to write _____.
11. I discovered _____ about myself as a writer this year.
12. A goal I have for the future is _____.
13. I usually rewrite/revise by _____.
14. A person I have grown to respect as a writer is _____ because _____.
15. (Write your own analysis question)

_____.

Peer Evaluation Teams

Goal

Students will work in collaborative groups to assess other students' essays.

Rationale

Students often skim through a writing rubric without fully comprehending the criteria. This process focuses students on the rubric and requires application to a student essay. The defense portion of the process supports higher-level thinking.

Student Handouts

- (Rubric of teacher's choosing for assessing essays)
- PET Procedures
- Rubric for PET Collaborative Group Work

Instructional Steps

1. Assign students a random number to be used in place of their name so all essays are anonymous. Keep a list of names and numbers so students are not assessing their own paper in their groups.
2. Place students in triads.
3. Explain that they will work collaboratively to evaluate other students' essays.
4. Review the roles for each person in the group—these are listed on the Student Handout: PET Procedures. Each student will be the recorder for the student essay they receive.
5. Have students select their roles.
6. Review the procedures for this process before essays are given to students. Check that all students understand the process. Distribute a copy of the rubric that will be used to assess this essay. This might be a teacher-generated rubric or a standardized district/state rubric.
7. Set a time limit for the group discussion.
8. Monitor the groups as students work on the evaluation process.
9. Instruct students to review the rubric on the student handout and write a reflection for their group works using the language of the rubric.
10. Provide time for students to write the score defense and reflection.
11. Collect all papers from students.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model the process with the whole class using a sample paper from the previous year or another class.
- Have students work in pairs.
- Use a holistic rubric first before using one with multiple criteria.

Increased Rigor

- Ask student authors to respond to the score given by the group. Do they agree? Disagree? Explain their viewpoint using specific examples from their essay.
- Use the AP or IB rubrics consistently during the process so that students develop a proficient understanding of the rubric for the tests.

PET (Peer Evaluation Team) Procedures

Facilitator

This is the person who will be responsible for collecting all scored essays to return to the teacher.

Task Master

This person must keep the group on task. Groups lose points when conversations stray from the essay being discussed.

Time Keeper

This person first decides how much time can be reasonably spent on each essay and then directs the group to adhere to the time allotted.

Recorder

Everyone will take a turn writing the notes that will form the 250-word defense of the score given. Each person will be given an essay to read aloud to the group and take notes on during discussion. Then students will write the 250-word defense to be turned in to the teacher.

During Group Work Procedure

1. One person reads the essay to the group. Others listen and take notes on strong and weak points. A "T-Chart" graphic organizer works well for this step.
2. Group decides if essay is upper half or lower half score on the rubric.
3. Group then discusses the specific score(s) on the rubric. During the discussion, group members should use the language of the rubric and refer to specific sections of the essay. Use quotes and specific examples from the essay.
4. The recorder writes the notes of the discussion.
5. Group arrives at a consensus for a score.
6. Group discusses the specific reasons for the score so that the recorder can outline the defense.
7. The second essay is read and the process is repeated until all three essays are completed.

After Group Work

8. Recorder writes a formal defense of the score that will be given to the student author. Defense should be about 250 words or approximately one page.
9. Students write an individual reflection of their collaborative work using the rubric on the next page. The reflection should focus on their productivity and professionalism.
10. Return the student essay, the defense, and the reflection to the teacher.

Rubric for PET

Collaborative Group Work

Criteria	Poor – 3	Fair – 6	Good – 9	Excellent – 12
Productive	Group is consistently off task; many reminders are needed to focus on the task; task is not completed on time.	Group is on task some of the time; several reminders are needed to focus on the task; a little extra time is needed to finish.	Group is mostly on task; reminders are needed one or two times to focus; work is completed on time.	Group is always on task; no side conversations or distractions; work is completed in a timely manner.
Professional	Discussion of essay is seldom constructive and tends to resort to negative and belittling comments about the writing.	Discussion of essays is sometimes constructive and beneficial to the writer; several comments are negative, inappropriate, and unnecessary.	Discussion of essays is usually constructive and beneficial to the writer; one or two comments are negative or inappropriate.	Discussion of essays is always constructive and beneficial to the writer; negative comments are avoided.
Defense	Written defense is general and vague with little to no specific detail in terms of examples or quotes; writer has little idea why the score was given.	Written defense is detailed in places and general and vague in others; more examples and quotes are needed to give the writer justification for the score.	Written defense is somewhat detailed, needs a few more examples or quotes from essay, and gives clear reasons for the score.	Written defense is detailed, uses quotes and examples from the essay, and gives the writer specific reasons for the score.

Total Score Possible for PET: 36 points

Reflection Questions

Goal

Students will answer specific questions to guide their reflections on one of their essays.

Rationale

Reflection on their writing is a challenging task for students because they are required to create an explicit writing about a process that is more invisible. Through the use of question prompts, students receive guidance in exploring how they see themselves as participants in the writing process.

Student Handout

- Reflection and Self-Evaluation Questions

Instructional Steps

1. Designate certain times for reflection. A student might reflect during the first draft or after the first and final drafts are completed.
2. Provide students with a copy of the Student Handout: Reflection and Self-Evaluation Questions.
3. Ask students to select a certain number of questions to answer in their reflection. It might be more helpful initially to assign specific questions for students to answer. As students become more proficient, allow them to self-select questions or write new ones to address the writing assignment.
4. Have students write their reflection on a separate sheet of paper. The reflection can be turned in with the final draft of the essay along with all other papers developed in the process.
5. Instruct students to keep all the reflections on essays to be referenced and used when writing a reflection on his/her growth as a writer. One possible idea for this type of essay is the “Myself as a Writer” strategy.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Select only one or two questions to begin. The entire page might be overwhelming for some students.
- Have students write their reflection on a 3 x 5 notecard to begin and then gradually increase the size of paper and length of the reflection.

Increased Rigor

- Assign 4 or more questions to be answered in a multi-paragraph reflective essay. This essay can be a stand-alone essay that reviews all writing done in a designated time period.

Using Technology

- Have students create a reflective blog. Each entry in the blog will be a response to one of the questions. The blog should be continuous throughout the semester and focus on all writing process assignments.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Reflection and Self-Evaluation Questions

Choose 4–5 of the most appropriate questions below to answer about your paper (or answer the specific questions assigned to you by your teacher). Write your responses on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What is the writing prompt you responded to? If you chose the prompt, explain why.
2. Who is your audience? What is the message you are trying to communicate to your audience? How effectively do you think you conveyed this message? Why?
3. What are you most proud of in this paper? How were you able to accomplish this?
4. What problems do you see in your piece? What are you least happy with? Why?
5. What did you learn about writing from completing this paper that you can apply to future assignments?

Discuss the specific things you want to work on in your next paper.
6. What reader response feedback did you not take? Why?
7. Describe the specific changes you made from your first draft to your final draft and how these changes improved your paper. Be as detailed and specific as possible. Refer to specific pages, paragraphs, and passages so your teacher can easily find the parts you're describing.
8. Describe what you like about your revision. Brag a little. Be specific in referring to pages, paragraphs, passages—even words or phrases—that you particularly like. Explain why you are pleased with these changes.
9. What was helpful to you as you wrote this piece? What contributed to your success?
10. What part of the writing process was most difficult for you? Why? What questions do you have?
11. Describe and discuss the problems you were unable to solve in your final draft (what you still don't like about it or what you are still uncertain about). Be specific, telling where, what, and why you feel as you do.
12. Finish the following statement and then explain it: "As a writer, this paper shows that I..."
13. What goals do you have that this piece of writing works toward meeting? How?
14. What other question(s) would you like to answer?
15. Compare your final draft with the rubric and rate your paper. Explain your rating.

High School Writing Teacher Guide

Reflection Stems: Products and Process

Goal

Students will use sentence stems to support reflection on their writing.

Rationale

Reflection stems are useful tools to help students initiate a considered response for their own or for a partner's writing. Stems can be used as a path into self-evaluation and to articulate careful editing input on peer writing.

Student Handout

- Reflection Stems for Evaluation

Instructional Steps

1. Have students use their published essay for this reflective work.
2. Remind students that reflecting on what they have written means looking back on the process and discussing or writing about that process.
3. Use the Student Handout: Reflection Stems for Evaluation, and select one for this activity. Display that stem on the whiteboard or document camera.
4. Encourage students to study the reflection stem and to deconstruct what *it tells them*. For example, the stem **“One of the most interesting parts was...”** suggests three things:
 - There is more than one part.
 - More than one part was interesting.
 - At least one part was the most interesting.

Point out that the things they know about the stem so far are, in this case, the three things they must *write* about.

5. State that the reflection stems are the *beginning* of the “script” for what they must write in the reflection. For example, the stem above (**“One of the most interesting parts was...”**) gives them only part of the script. Have them review their essays and consider what they would write to finish the stem.
6. Ask for two volunteers to share their now completed reflection statements and write those on the whiteboard.
7. Using one of the students’ finished stems as an example, have the class add to the list of what the stem (from #3 above) now indicates they must discuss in their reflection. For example: **One of the most interesting parts was *a discussion of how sharks’ denticles inspired the design of Speedo™ swimsuits.*** The addition of the italicized words just listed has lengthened the list of facts that must appear in the reflection statement.
8. Have students use the stems on the student handout to reflect on part of a larger writing assignment or on the whole essay.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Pair students during the practice using reflection stems and during the actual peer review of written paragraphs or essays.

Increased Rigor

- Encourage students to add to the reflection stems list and to share with the class when they complete their evaluative reflections.

Reflection Stems for Evaluating and Reflecting on the Process

One of the most interesting parts was...

The questions or thoughts I have are...

The difficult part to understand was...

How does your writing connect to ...

Something that did not fit in with _____ is _____

Your argument was not clear when...

You nailed it when you wrote ...

Your argument is most persuasive when...

The supporting details you use are...

How does the opener...

Your examples are...

In comparing only the opening paragraph and the conclusion, I see...

What other details need to be...

The point I want to make is...

The strongest detail is...

The parts that are confusing ...

One surprise was...

The most significant...

To what extent did this essay...

The prompt says to _____ but _____

Which sources were...

How does the conclusion...

I do not understand the part where...

You need to...

Stems for Self-Reflection

I chose these details because...

I really like what I...

The strongest section in my essay is...

I wish I could have found/changed...

This writing would be stronger if...

A new strategy I tried is...

One surprise was...

I am not satisfied with _____ because _____

Something I couldn't figure out was...

Next time, I will...

The best part of this is _____ because _____

I learned that my writing...

Rubrics: Evaluating and Reflecting on the Product

Goal

Students will focus on the content of their writing rather than the score of a rubric.

Rationale

It is frustrating to return essays to student writers and see them ignore the individual comments on their papers to focus solely upon the evaluative score. Delivering a lesson that will center student attention on specifics of the product rather than an overall score will help students understand how to refine their writing skills by design rather than by chance.

Student Handout

- Evaluating and Reflecting on the Product

Instructional Steps

1. Reproduce the rubric so that each student has copies if they do not still have the one they used for planning their response.
2. Instruct students to create a T-chart to use for the process they will be using in class. Using their previously evaluated essays, have them look at any comments on their papers along with their score and then at the rubric used to evaluate their essays.
3. Tell them to use the left side of the T-chart to write and number the issues/errors they find on their papers. If they have any repeated errors, they will only need to note the error once.
4. On the right, facing each error, have them write the descriptors from the category that best fits the errors they have incurred. If they cannot determine any descriptor that seems to apply to the error, tell them to place a check mark on the right side facing the error.
5. Group students into teams of 3 or 4, and have them share their T-charts, focusing particularly on the checks.
6. Instruct them to discuss the error and collaborate on selecting the sections of the rubric that seem to apply to the errors. If they cannot discern the appropriate descriptor for any check mark, have them leave the check mark as is.
7. Reseat students at their desks, and have them complete the Student Handout: Evaluating and Reflecting on the Product. When they complete the handout, have them staple the T-charts to the back and turn in both sheets.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Smaller discussion groups provide a perception of safety for group discussion. Reticent students are more willing to collaborate and talk to others if the size of the group is limited.
- Posting the steps in the exercise helps to provide continuity in the activity. Students are more likely to stay on topic, as well.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Evaluating and Reflecting on the Product

1. Since you used the rubric to plan the essay response to the prompt, how could you have avoided the types of errors you saw on your returned essay?
2. If the achievement level or levels you selected were not the ones you used as your guides, what caused the difference between what you *planned* and what you actually think you achieved?
3. Was that choice a successful use of the rubric? Why or why not?
4. As you were using the T-chart and marking the check marks, what did you find or what will you change that will help you the next time you write an essay?
5. For your next essay, which level descriptor will you use to guide you? Why?
6. Since you have completed your essay, do you feel the rubric helped you plan? How?

Rubrics: Evaluating and Reflecting on the Process

Goal

Students will improve their understanding of how effectively they use the writing process.

Rationale

The writing process in all its stages is seldom used in a step-by-step fashion. Students move back and forth within the process, mirroring how human brains develop ideas and create the path to get to the final product (or idea). When students reflect on *how* they used the process to create their essays, they perform a type of metacognition, examining what works for them and how they can streamline their use of the process to improve their writing.

Student Handouts

- Writing Process Rubric
- Reflecting on the Process

Instructional Steps

1. Have students look at the Student Handout: Writing Process Rubric, which evaluates the process of writing. Students should be familiar with the descriptors and the high to low levels that indicate achievement. Now, they are going to be looking at a rubric as a way to examine their own writing process.
2. Have the stages of the writing process in a visually accessible place such as in a wall display or on a very large poster or posters.
3. Define the first stage, pre-writing, for all students, and have them make a list on Cornell notepaper as the stages are discussed.
4. Ask students to list the kinds of tasks they performed as pre-writing.
5. Call on class members to define what they think the drafting stage is and what kinds of tasks might be included in this stage.
6. Repeat this same pattern until all stages of the writing process have been discussed. Provide some guidance as definitions are shared, making sure all students are clear on the stages of the process.
7. Pass a large sheet of unlined paper to each student and ask each student to draw a circle on half the paper to use as a pie chart. They will be using the other half of the paper for the narrative explanation they will write.
8. Explain that they are to divide the pie chart (the circle) into the stages of the writing process and name each “wedge,” but they are to adjust each wedge to reflect how much time they spent working in each. For example, if they thought they spent a longer time on pre-writing than on drafting, have them make the wedge larger to reflect this time.

“There are thirty-two ways to write a story, and I’ve used every one, but there is only one plot—things are not as they seem.”

– Jim Thompson

9. Have students use Teacher Resource: Writing Process Rubric to determine how they might place a value on their use of the process itself. If they felt their involvement in a particular stage or stages reflects a specific level (advanced, proficient, basic, or limited), have them place a check mark on the rubric where their involvement merits it.
10. Ask them to tally each column and place the total under the column. When they finish, explain that the column tally represents their overall advanced, proficient, basic, and limited stance.
11. Have them next look at each tally and decide which column has the highest or lowest score. This will tell them in which category they need to improve, and by also looking at the left side titles; they will be able to see precisely where they can spend the most effort to be certain their use of the process can benefit them the most.
12. Give students the Student Handout: Reflecting on the Process. Explain they are to use the right side of the pie chart page they created to write the responses to the questions.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Use a document camera to display the example segments of the Writing Process Rubric.
- As the writing process segments are displayed, use a highlighter to mark the exact points emphasized in an explanation of rubric discussion.

Increased Rigor

- Have students help revise a segment of the rubric. Display the specific descriptor, and ask students to work in pairs discussing the revisions. Then have the pairs share their ideas in a whole class discussion of the revision.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Writing Process Rubric

The following rubric can be used by the students to evaluate the writing process in which they engaged as they developed their paper.

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Limited
Pre-Writing	Evidence of significant pre-writing; it is clear I used the pre-writing process to formulate ideas and a plan for writing	Evidence of pre-writing; it is clear I used pre-writing to generate ideas	Some evidence of pre-writing, but I am not certain how much I used the pre-writing process to prepare for drafting	No evidence of pre-writing
Drafting and Revising	I generated multiple drafts, using reader responses to guide the revision process; it is clear I am taking charge of the drafting and revising processes	I generated at least two drafts using reader responses to guide revision	I generated one or more drafts, but I am not certain reader responses were helpful in their present form to develop the draft(s)	I generated one draft with little or no meaningful revision
Use of Feedback	I received very productive reader response—quality and quantity are high; the feedback was very useful for revision	I received adequate reader response; the feedback was useful for revision	I received some reader response, but the feedback was too general, or not substantive enough, to be useful for significant revision	No evidence of reader response
Use of Editing Feedback	I received productive editing feedback; feedback was used to make corrections in the paper; it is clear that I sought out multiple opportunities to develop an error-free paper	I received adequate editing feedback; feedback was used to make significant corrections in the paper; it is clear that errors were minimized	I received some editing feedback, but not enough for significant corrections	No evidence of editing
Consideration of Audience	I published the final draft to meet all the specific demands of the chosen audience	I published the final draft to meet most of the specific demands of the chosen audience	I published a final draft, but it did not adequately meet the demands of the chosen audience	I didn't publish a final draft or the final draft does not address the chosen audience
Evaluating and Reflecting	I thoughtfully self-evaluated/reflected upon my process and/or learning, and established specific goals, steps, and/or needs for future writing	I self-evaluated/reflected upon my process and/or learning, and established some goals, steps, and/or needs for future writing	I attempted self-evaluation/reflection, but did not adequately focus upon my process or learning; goals, steps, and/or needs for future writing are too general or vague to be useful	No evidence of self-evaluation/reflection; no evidence of goals, steps, and/or needs for future writing
Tally Scores:				

Reflecting on the Process

Consider each question on the list below. Write a narrative to reflect your responses to the questions, and place the narrative on the other half of your pie chart sheet. If you are using an interactive notebook, separate the chart from the narrative. Place your pie chart on one side of your notebook and your narrative on the facing side.

1. Look at your pie chart. On which stage did you spend the least amount of time? Why? When you looked at your path in using the process, did your lowest column tally reflect this lack of time spent in particular stages?
2. What do you think you can do to increase your ability to use any stage of the writing process?
3. What were the most helpful strategies and activities in each stage?
4. What writing process stage did you feel was not helpful? Why do you feel that way?
5. If you were going to edit the entire rubric to better fit your use of the writing process, what would need to be changed? Why?
6. In your next writing assignment, list the action plan you will take to write your essay. In other words, in what order do you think you will use the stages of the writing process? (It is okay to use a stage more than once.)

Tracking Infographic Reflection

Goal

Students will create a visual/graphic to reflect on the quality of their writing over time.

Rationale

This strategy requires students to use a combination of images and text to display their understanding of particular patterns in their own writing. The Tracking Infographic could include quotations, which reinforces the idea that students always need to have textual evidence to support their interpretations and conclusions.

Teacher References

- Tracking Infographic Reflection
- Sample Infographic

Instructional Steps

1. Ask students to review the various essays they have written over the course of a semester or other designated time period.
2. Have them look for patterns in their strengths and record those on notebook paper, such as a clear thesis, smooth transitions, specific word choice, etc.
3. Have them next look for patterns in areas where they can improve and strengthen their writing. For example, use of supporting evidence, increased sentence variety, etc. Again, students should record their patterns and examples on notebook paper.
4. Explain to students they will use these notes to create a Tracking Infographic that reflects their progress in writing. A Tracking Infographic is a visual that will help explain how their writing has changed and improved over the designated period of time.
5. Tell students they will create a visual that traces their writing during this period. They are to use a combination of visuals (literal or interpretive), text, and direct quotations from their essays. The infographic should capture the evolution of their writing to this point in the school year.
6. Have students write a 3–5 sentence reflective summary of the visual. The summary should concisely describe students' progress in writing and should be written on the tracking infographic.
7. Instruct students to write 1–2 goals they will focus on to continually improve their writing. These goals should be included on the Tracking Infographic so that students can reference as they work on future essays.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students finish each step completely before explaining the next step.
- Share examples of Tracking Infographics or create one of your own to share with students.
- Have students work with a partner throughout the process. They can combine their writing and identify common patterns. Or they could focus on individual writing but work with a partner to discuss the process of creating the tracking poster.

Increased Rigor

- Have students share their infographic with a partner. Instruct the students to each write a paragraph summarizing their partner's reflections based on what they glean from their partner's infographic.

Using Technology

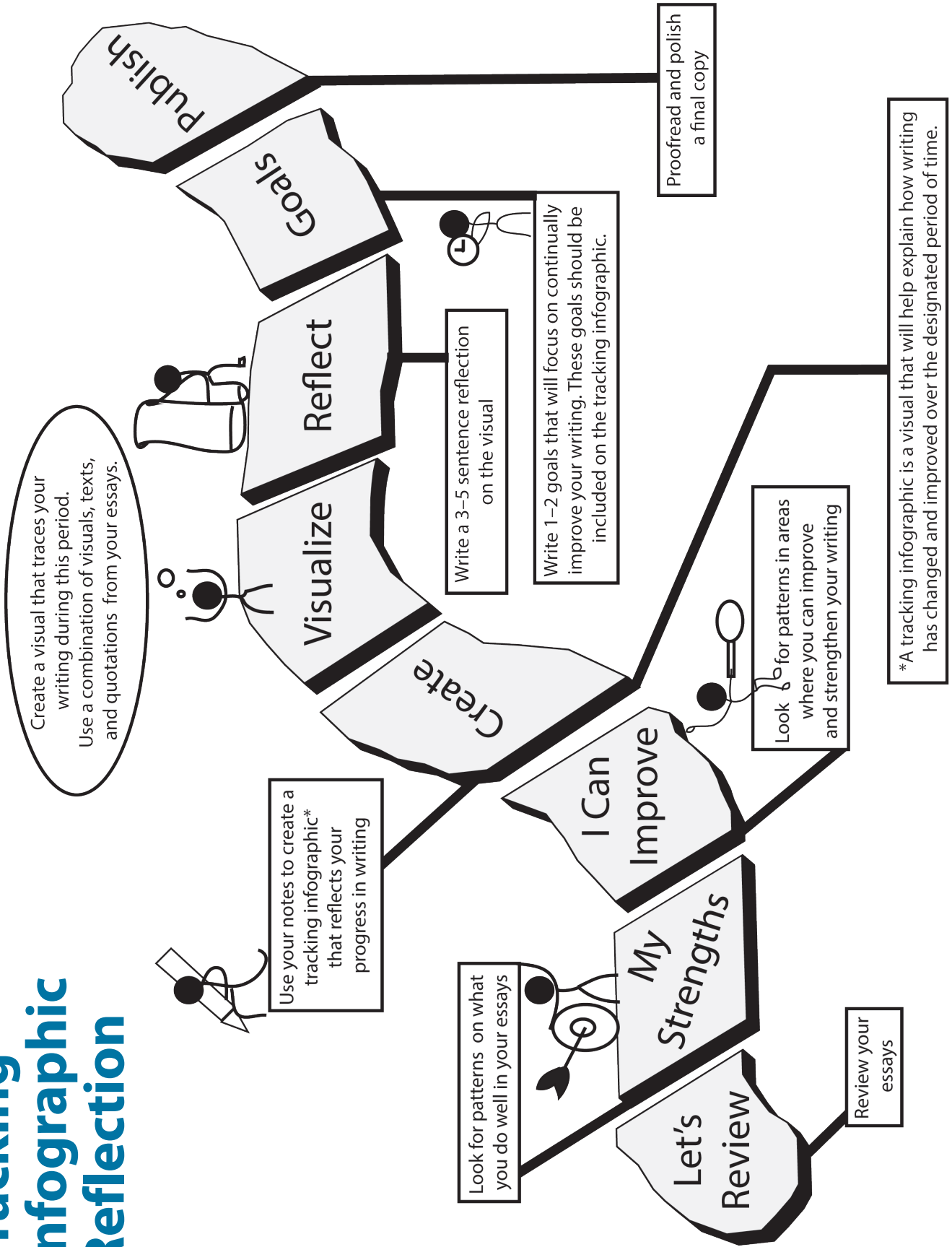
- Sites that will be helpful for students to use when developing their infographics include:

<http://piktochart.com/>

<http://create.visual.ly/>

<http://infogr.am/>

Tracking Infographic Reflection



Sample Infographic

Papers

climate change
Essay 1

Rose For Emily
Essay 2

WWII
Essay 3

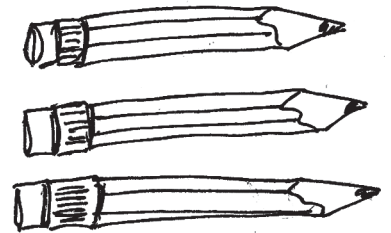
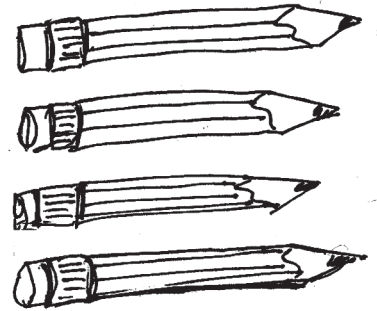
Errors

run on
S-V Agreement
Comma Splice
Fragment

run on
S-V Agreement
Comma Splice

S-V Agreement

Visual



Integrating WICOR: Sample Writing Units

Introduction

The following sample writing units are designed to show how the writing strategies presented in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* can be integrated into a unit supporting a specific genre, standards, and objectives. Even though the best ELA units will emphasize the connection between reading, writing, and oral language, the focus in these sample units is on the implementation of the writing process. Each plan begins with a list of core texts to be read and studied prior to the writing using the AVID Critical Reading Process as developed in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*. These selected texts serve as the research for students to apply during the writing process. This is followed by a sample list of the Common Core State Standards addressed and the content/learning and language objectives. Next are the stages of the writing process for the development of the essay. Finally, each unit concludes with a suggested rubric for evaluating student writing.

These writing lessons are meant to be examples of how writing lessons around core texts might be organized and how the writing strategies in this book can be used to support and guide students through the writing process; they are not meant to be definitive examples of how to teach the identified texts or the particular genre of writing. Included in this section is a template for your own planning, following a backwards design model to implement the writing process. Consider these steps to engage in planning.

1. Determine the theme, texts, genre of writing, standards, and objectives.
2. Determine the outcomes expected from students as they demonstrate their learning and mastery of the standards and objectives.
3. Based on these outcomes, determine the skills students need to successfully accomplish the outcomes. Identify the reading, writing, oral language, and thinking skills students must develop in order to meet the expectations of the culminating writing assignment.
4. Identify the appropriate teaching strategies and learning activities to be used to help students develop and practice the needed skills as they work toward the larger objectives and standards. Also consider what specific scaffolding will be required to meet the range of student needs—this is the place to plan for differentiation.
5. Identify a diagnostic method for determining what students already know and can do as they begin the writing unit.
6. Determine what formative assessments will be developed to assess student understanding as they move through the writing process.
7. Finally, using all of the information above, articulate the plan for writing and develop the writing prompt to use with students.

These steps establish a roadmap for developing individual lessons within the writing unit; each individual lesson should always work to move students along toward the larger objectives, standards, and outcomes of the unit.

Writing Unit: _____

Works to be read prior to the writing lesson:

Common Core or State Standards Addressed by the Unit:

Content/Learning Objectives:

Language Objectives:

Diagnostic Assessments:

Formative Assessments:

Summative Assessments:

Plan and Strategies

Rationale/Explanation

Planning for Writing

(TEACHER: establish purpose/outcome; set writing task)

Writing Prompt: (Consider RAMP): Sample prompt	Rationale for this prompt/writing task
---	--

Pre-Writing

(build background knowledge; generate ideas; motivate toward writing)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RAMP• Deconstructing the prompt	
--	--

Drafting

(move from pre-writing to a draft; shape a direction for the writing)

Reader Response

(provide "input" about the writing; peer, self, teacher feedback)

Revising

(interpret and use the "input" about the writing; re-see, re-think, and rewrite; apply focus lessons)

Editing

(proofread; identify and correct errors; apply focus lessons)

Publishing

(take the writing "public"; share the writing)

Self-Evaluation/Reflection

(identify learning; plan for future application of the learning)

Sample Writing Unit: Argumentative Writing

Works to be read or viewed (print, non-print, digital):

- “Two-Thousand-Yard Stare” by Thomas Lea (painting)
- “The Death of Captain Waskow” by Ernie Pyle (informational text)
- “Statistics of World War II—The History Place”
www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/statistics.htm (data chart)
- “The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner” by Randall Jarrell (poem)
- “Sentimental Journey” by Morley Music Co., Inc. (song lyrics)

Common Core or State Standards Addressed by the Unit:

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Content/Learning Objectives:

- Students will create a claim based on multiple texts and research information.
- Students will provide sufficient and substantial support for their claim.
- Students will analyze multiple texts about a common theme.
- Students will produce an argumentative essay incorporating all components of process writing.
- Students will participate in collaborative work to refine their own writing and the writing of others.
- Students will analyze a writing prompt, identifying and incorporating RAMP elements.
- Students will use graphic organizers to plan and revise their writing.

Language Objectives:

- Students will use formal English to produce a published copy of an argumentative essay.
- Students will select appropriate vocabulary and diction to match the writing task.
- Students will use textual evidence to provide support in their essays.
- Students will use language frames to provide authentic feedback.

Diagnostic Assessments: Select an argumentative mentor text in which the author effectively provides a claim with support and elaboration. Ask students to use the Teacher Reference: Questions Leading to a Claim for Argumentative Writing with the mentor text to see if they can identify the author’s claim and supporting evidence in the text.

Formative Assessments: RAMP, Pre-Writing, Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing, Checklist Tracking

Summative Assessments: Reflection Questions, Graphic Organizers as Reflective Tools

Plan and Strategies

Rationale/Explanation

Planning for Writing

(TEACHER: establish purpose/outcome; set writing task)

Writing Prompt:

After reading assigned World War II texts, write an editorial discussing the cost of war and evaluate its impact on people involved and their relationships. Be sure to support your position with evidence from the texts.

Students should use information from the assigned texts and their own research to support a claim about the cost of war. Students may create claims, such as “War leads to freedom” or “The USA has paid a high price for war.” The texts, while not argumentative in nature, assist students in creating their own argumentative claims based on the topic and in providing support and evidence for their claims and counterclaims.

Pre-Writing

(build background knowledge; generate ideas; motivate toward writing)

Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt

Use the **Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt** strategy to identify key words and associated tasks in the prompt. Point out the importance of the words “evaluate,” “support,” “evidence,” and “editorial.” Reference the handout and questions provided to teach students how to extract key words and phrases.

Identify the elements of the prompt using the RAMP strategy.

Use the **RAMP strategy** to assist students with identifying important elements of the prompt. Here, students are asked to write an editorial, possibly for a newspaper audience. They are to write in the argumentative mode by stating a claim and supporting their position based on the texts read and other research.

Quickwrite

Display the painting “Two-Thousand-Yard Stare” by Thomas Lea as the focus for a class discussion. Use the painting to have students generate a **Quickwrite** capturing initial thoughts, observations, and details about the painting. After sharing initial observations, engage students in a closer analysis of the details and then a discussion about the possible context of the picture. Students may wish to include some of the thoughts captured in their quickwrites later in their drafts.

Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing

Use the **Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing** for students to consider as they plan their responses. Good writers use questioning throughout the writing process. Guiding questions ensure students consider important aspects as they plan their writing. Remind students to reference these questions multiple times during the completion of the writing task. Teachers may want to assist students in identifying appropriate questions specific to the task.

Drafting

(move from pre-writing to a draft; shape a direction for the writing)

Structured Talk	Once students have analyzed the prompt and completed their guiding questions for pre-writing, students will benefit from the opportunity to collaborate with classmates to discuss their drafts using Structured Talk . This strategy can be included as a bridge between pre-writing and drafting, as students may talk through ideas for claims, evidence, support, and structure of their writing. This strategy could also lead to Collaborative Drafting if the teacher opts to let students work in pairs or small groups to complete the writing task.
Guiding Questions to Lead to a Claim for Argumentative Writing	Because this task is argumentative, special consideration must be given to the inclusion of a claim, evidence, support, and counterclaim during drafting. The Guiding Questions to Lead to a Claim for Argumentative Writing strategy and resources will assist students in planning and including these necessary components into their responses. Make sure all aspects have been considered and addressed by all students before they proceed with the writing process.
Sentence Frames: Claim and Evidence	Reference Sentence Frames: Claim and Evidence to provide students access to a possible structure for their responses.

Reader Response

(provide "input" about the writing; peer, self, teacher feedback)

Student Response: Language of Authentic Feedback	For facilitating and encouraging specific, helpful input from students regarding the writing of their classmates, instruction using the Language of Authentic Feedback is good training for students. Using effective language frames, students learn to respond to writing to target specific correction areas. This provides more effective options for the writer to consider.
Self-Response: Highlighting	Encourage students to self-respond to their own writing using Highlighting for Self-Response . Teachers may want to identify areas of focus for this task, including claim statements, textual support examples, evidence and elaboration, transitions, or counterclaims. After highlighting necessary elements in their own writing, students will be able to visually see areas of weakness in their writing to target for correction or improvement.
Teacher Response: Conferencing	Use Conferencing to provide specific feedback to students. In only a few minutes, teachers can assist students in improving their writing by providing several writer's craft suggestions for consideration. Resist the initial urge to provide feedback concerning editing at this time. Discuss ideas for focus, elaboration, structure, etc. Ask questions and pose options for students to consider. Prioritize your comments and areas of feedback. Remember to tell students what they did well!

Revising

(interpret and use the “input” about the writing; re-see, re-think, and rewrite; apply focus lessons)

Use Acronyms for Revision

Teach students to use an appropriate **Acronym for Revision**. This mnemonic device will remind students about the important tasks and actions associated with revising their writing. Showing students how to Replace, Add, Delete, and Reorder (RADaR) parts of their work leads to an improved final product.

Interpreting Input:
Developing a Revision Plan

Instruct students to create a plan for revising their draft based on the feedback they received from reader response activities. The strategy, **Interpreting Input: Developing a Revision Plan**, will guide students as they focus on *what* they need to change and *how* they will make the changes.

Editing

(proofread; identify and correct errors; apply focus lessons)

Checklist Tracking

To assist students in targeting errors consistently made in their writing, the **Checklist Tracking** sheet enables students to identify and correct errors. This ongoing list also provides teachers an option to track and discuss progress with students. Teachers may create and conduct focus lessons based on the frequency of errors noted on the sheets. Students should reflect on their learning through the use of the tracking sheets after they have been marked for several writing assignments.

Publishing

(take the writing “public”; share the writing)

Publishing Options

Reference the **Publication of Student Writing** suggestions to provide options for students to publish and showcase their work. Options exist for classroom, school, local, and global publication. Publication encourages students to produce their best, error-free work. For this writing task, students may wish to have their writing published in the school or local newspaper. Remember to obtain parent and student permission before submitting or posting students’ work for contests or on public websites. Follow the guidelines of your school or district to protect students’ privacy at all times.

Self-Evaluation/Reflection

(identify learning; plan for future application of the learning)

Portfolios	Encourage students to collect the pre-writing, drafts, revisions, edits, and published copies for inclusion in their Portfolios . As a means of tracking students' writing progress, the portfolio should contain evidence of all stages in process writing. Students may select their best work to highlight writing for multiple purposes, audiences, and formats.
Graphic Organizers as Reflective Tools and Reflection Questions	Use the Graphic Organizers as Reflective Tools for students to complete metacognitive work about their writing process. The 3-Column Log prompts students to consider the process they used to complete the task, what problems they encountered, and how they worked through the process of solving those problems. This organizer might be used in combination with Reflection Questions that target specific parts of process writing or elements of the task that the teacher would like students to analyze. The teacher may select specific questions to be answered or opt to let students self-select the most appropriate questions based on their experiences.

“What is called eloquence in the forum is commonly found to be rhetoric in the study.”

– Henry David Thoreau, Walden

Argumentative Writing Rubric

Trait	4 – Advanced	3 – Proficient	2 – Basic	1 – Limited
Reading & Research	The essay effectively uses relevant information with accuracy from the resources to support all ideas.	The essay uses relevant information from the resources to support most ideas.	The essay inconsistently uses relevant information from the resources to support some ideas.	The essay does not use relevant information from the resources to support ideas.
Focus/ Controlling Idea	The essay establishes and maintains a substantive and credible claim or proposal and uses counterclaim(s) appropriately, fairly, and thoroughly.	The essay establishes a credible claim or proposal and develops counterclaim(s) fairly.	The essay establishes a claim or proposal and makes note of counterclaim(s).	The essay attempts to establish a claim or proposal, but lacks clear purpose and makes no note of counterclaim(s).
Content Development	The essay focuses on all aspects of the writing task; development of ideas is thorough and includes specific details and examples to develop the argument and add depth to reasoning.	The essay focuses on most aspects of the writing task; development of ideas is skilled and, for the most part, includes specific details and examples to develop the argument and clarify reasoning.	The essay inconsistently focuses on the writing task; development of ideas is superficial and includes details and examples that are not always appropriate or too brief. There may be lapses in reasoning or unclear relationships to the argument or claim.	The essay attempts to address the writing task but lacks focus; development of ideas is weak due to inappropriate or vague details and examples. Connections to the argument or claim are irrelevant.

Argumentative Writing Rubric (continued)

Organization of Ideas	Organizational strategies are effective: a well-defined introduction presents the topic; ideas are developed so that each builds on the preceding idea, strategic transitions are used, and the conclusion articulates the significance of the information presented in the essay.	Organizational strategies are clear: a distinct introduction identifies the topic, ideas are generally related, transitions are logical and usually controlled to show connections, and the conclusion supports the information presented in the essay.	Organizational strategies are inconsistent: introduction states the topic, ideas are not always controlled to show relationship, transitions are limited, and the conclusion re-states information presented in the essay.	Organizational strategies lack purpose, are weak or not evident at all: introduction identifies the topic in an unclear, vague manner; ideas may include extra information or may shift abruptly from idea to idea, weakening the coherence of the essay; transitions are inadequate and ideas have no connections; and the conclusion is either missing or vague.
Style & Conventions	The essay demonstrates an exemplary command of language conventions, uses an engaging tone, shows varied and controlled sentence fluency, and has minimal errors in standard conventions that do not distract from the fluency of the writing.	The essay demonstrates a command of language conventions, uses an objective, formal tone, has sentences that are complete and varied but might have a few errors in conventions that create only minor disruptions in the fluency of the writing.	The essay demonstrates a limited command of language conventions, uses a tone that is appropriate but inconsistent, has sentences that are simplistic and might have little variety, and has errors in conventions that create some disruptions in the understanding and fluency of the writing.	The essay demonstrates a weak command of language conventions, uses a tone that is vague or inappropriate, has frequent sentence errors and/or lack variety, and has serious and persistent errors in conventions that disrupt the understanding and fluency of the essay.

Sample Writing Unit:

Informative/Expository Writing

Works to be read prior to the writing lesson:

- “The Blood of Freedom” by Albert Camus (essay)
- “Ragged Old Flag” by Johnny Cash (song lyrics/poem)
- “Patriotism” by Yukio Mishima (short story)

Common Core or State Standards Addressed by the Unit:

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Content/Learning Objectives:

- Students will deconstruct a complex writing prompt to determine all tasks that need to be completed.
- Students will use a text structure graphic organizer to plan their essay.
- Students will read texts of different genres and identify main ideas on the topic of patriotism.
- Students will take focused notes to use as evidence/support in their essay.
- Students will produce an informative essay incorporating all components of process writing.
- Students will read and respond to another student’s essay with a focus on details and evidence for support.
- Students will create a plan for revision based on reader response comments.
- Students will accurately embed direct quotations and/or paraphrases from others in their essay.

Language Objectives:

- Students will use academic language to write an informative essay.
- Students will integrate a research source as evidence in their essay.
- Students will use quotation marks correctly in documenting another author’s words.

Diagnostic Assessments: Frayer Model on patriotism

Formative Assessments: Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt, Organizing Text Structure with Graphic Organizers, Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking, Drafting in Chunks, Highlighting for Self-Response, TEASE revision plan

Summative Assessments: Final Essay for portfolio, Reflection Questions

Plan and Strategies

Rationale/Explanation

Planning for Writing

(TEACHER: establish purpose/outcome; set writing task)

Writing Prompt:

Patriotism. Many writers put forth thoughts of patriotism and how the ideal manifests in society. In a well-developed, multi-paragraph essay, examine the three authors' views of patriotism. How do they define or develop the ideal? Find examples in the texts that demonstrate the importance and value of patriotism. Is patriotism presented as a negative or positive attribute? How does patriotism influence our decisions? Finally, based on the various viewpoints presented, how would you define patriotism?

This task will require students to read several texts of different genres, then write an essay that informs the reader of the key points in each text and conclude with a synthesis of the information by formulating their own definition of "patriotism."

Pre-Writing

(build background knowledge; generate ideas; motivate toward writing)

Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt

Use **Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt** when students are given a multi-faceted prompt. Students need a system of isolating segments of the prompt and understanding what is required in each segment in order to accurately respond to all aspects of the prompt. The first seven questions ask students to consider the process for answering the prompt. The RAMP strategy is also used since RAMP (Role, Audience, Mode, Purpose) will focus students on the outcome as stated in the prompt.

Frayer Model

Ask students to complete the **Frayer Model** on the word, "patriotism." This will activate prior knowledge of the key vocabulary word in the prompt and guide students' thinking on the concept of patriotism. Refer to the Academic Vocabulary strategy in this book. The strategy uses the Frayer Model and can be replicated in this activity on the word "patriotism."

Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking	Have students use the Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking strategy to capture ideas that the authors have written about “patriotism.” Since the prompt asks for the writer to first inform the reader about “patriotism,” students will need a system to organize and record the ideas of the authors.
Organizing Text Structure with Graphic Organizers	Use the Organizing Text Structure with Graphic Organizers strategy to support students as they clarify the goal of the informative essay. The graphic organizer will create a visual representation of the writer’s thinking and help them develop the relationship between ideas.

Drafting

(move from pre-writing to a draft; shape a direction for the writing)

Drafting in Chunks	Have students write this complex essay using the Drafting in Chunks strategy in order to help them build confidence for completing this task. By drafting the essay in paragraphs, perhaps over a period of days, students might not be as overwhelmed. They can focus their attention on each topic/paragraph in isolation before moving to the next one.
--------------------	---

Reader Response

(provide “input” about the writing; peer, self, teacher feedback)

Read-Around for Details	Focus students on the use of details and evidence in the essays they will be responding to in groups. In this essay, they are required to discuss another writer’s ideas before formulating their own. Evidence and detail are critical for a well-developed essay. By participating in a Read-Around for Details, students work collaboratively with a sharp focus on details and evidence.
-------------------------	--

Revising

(interpret and use the “input” about the writing; re-see, re-think, and rewrite; apply focus lessons)

Interpreting Input: Developing a Revision Plan (TEASE)	Instruct students to create a plan for revising their draft based on the feedback they received from the reader response activity. The strategy, Interpreting Input: Developing a Revision Plan (TEASE) , will guide students as they focus on what they need to change and how they will make the changes.
--	--

Editing

(proofread; identify and correct errors; apply focus lessons)

Focus Lesson – 3-Part Source Integration	Review the technique of embedding quotations by using the focus lesson on 3-Part Source Integration . Ask students to apply this technique in their drafts for every quote or paraphrase that they have used.
Target Areas – Small Groups	Place students in small groups of 3–4. Approaching this task collaboratively will scaffold students’ ability to proofread for different errors. Stress to students they are only editing for the correct use of the target skill in the focus lesson—in this case, embedded quotations and quotation marks.

Publishing

(take the writing “public”; share the writing)

Final Draft for Portfolios	Spend class time with students as they polish their draft to create a finalized version of the academic essay to be evaluated by the teacher and then placed in student portfolios. Students might work in a computer lab to create a clean, typed version or write a neat copy in ink. A possible rubric for evaluation is below.
----------------------------	--

Self-Evaluation/Reflection

(identify learning; plan for future application of the learning)

Reflection Questions	Use question prompts to guide students in thinking of their writing and learning on this essay. The prompts provide students a “road map” for exploring their participation in the writing process. Focus on the questions that are most relevant to the writing task involving inquiry and synthesis.
----------------------	--

“By reading a lot of novels in a variety of genres, and asking questions, it’s possible to learn how things are done—the mechanics of writing, so to speak—and which genres and authors excel in various areas.”

– Nicholas Sparks

Informative Writing Rubric

Trait	4 – Advanced	3 – Proficient	2 – Basic	1 – Limited
Reading & Research	The essay effectively uses relevant information with accuracy from the resources to support all ideas.	The essay uses relevant information from the resources to support most ideas.	The essay inconsistently uses relevant information from the resources to support some ideas.	The essay does not use relevant information from the resources to support ideas.
Focus/ Controlling Idea	The essay clearly focuses on a captivating topic that informs the reader with ideas and information and establishes a unified purpose throughout.	The essay focuses on an interesting topic that informs the reader with ideas and information and establishes a purpose that is mostly consistent throughout.	The essay has a topic that informs the reader with some ideas and information and has a general purpose established.	The essay has an unclear topic with few ideas and little information, and it lacks a clear sense of purpose.
Content Development	The essay focuses on all aspects of the writing task; development of ideas is thorough and includes specific details and examples.	The essay focuses on most aspects of the writing task; development of ideas is skilled and, for the most part, includes specific details and examples.	The essay inconsistently focuses on the writing task; development of ideas is superficial and includes details and examples that are brief and not always appropriate.	The essay attempts to address the writing task but lacks focus; development of ideas is weak due to inappropriate or vague details and examples.

Informative Writing Rubric (continued)

Organization of Ideas	Organizational strategies are effective: a well-defined introduction presents the topic, ideas are developed so that each builds on the preceding idea, strategic transitions are used, and the conclusion articulates the significance of the information presented in the essay.	Organizational strategies are clear: a distinct introduction identifies the topic, ideas are generally related; transitions are logical and usually controlled to show connections, and the conclusion supports the information presented in the essay.	Organizational strategies are inconsistent: introduction states the topic, ideas are not always controlled to show relationship, transitions are limited, and the conclusion re-states information presented in the essay.	Organizational strategies lack purpose, are weak or not evident at all: introduction identifies the topic in an unclear, vague manner; ideas may include extra information or may shift abruptly from idea to idea, weakening the coherence of the essay; transitions are inadequate and ideas have no connections; and the conclusion is either missing or vague.
Style & Conventions	The essay demonstrates an exemplary command of language conventions, uses an engaging tone, shows varied and controlled sentence fluency, and has minimal errors in standard conventions that do not distract from the fluency of the writing.	The essay demonstrates a command of language conventions, uses an objective, formal tone, has sentences that are complete and varied but might have a few errors in conventions that create only minor disruptions in the fluency of the writing.	The essay demonstrates a limited command of language conventions, uses a tone that is appropriate but inconsistent, has sentences that are simplistic and might have little variety, and has errors in conventions that create some disruptions in the understanding and fluency of the writing.	The essay demonstrates a weak command of language conventions, uses a tone that is vague or inappropriate, has frequent sentence errors and/or lack variety, and has serious and persistent errors in conventions that disrupt the understanding and fluency of the essay.

Sample Writing Unit:

Literary Analysis

Works to be read prior to the writing lesson:

- Descriptive Passage from “The Deluxe Café in Darlington,” excerpted from *Blue Highways* by William Least-Heat Moon
- “The Reluctant Grown-up” by Fred Amram from *Hippocampus Magazine*, January 2012
<http://www.hippocampusmagazine.com/2012/01/the-reluctant-grown-up-by-fred-amram/>
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/753/1/>: Creative non-fiction information for teachers and students

Other sources to use for non-fiction literary analysis:

- “The Wonder of Geese” essay by Bryan Furuness in *Essays on the Art and Craft of Creative Nonfiction*. Accessed within <https://www.creativenonfiction.org/brevity/craft.htm>
- “anyone lived in a pretty how town” a poem by e. e. cummings
- 2002 AP® English Language and Composition Free Response Question (Form B)

Common Core Addressed by the Unit:

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning, and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claims and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claims and counterclaims.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Content/Learning Objectives:

- Use a higher-level style and literary analysis in deconstructing a literary essay.
- Identify a series of details, images, or facts to support a sense of place and character.
- Write to distinguish the different purposes of the personal essay, the memoir essay, and the literary journalism essay.

Language Objectives:

- Write introductions and conclusions designed for reader impact.
- Consider purpose and audience in constructing a literary essay.
- Select appropriate details, imagery, and word choice to determine appropriate voice.

Diagnostic Assessments: Writing in the Margins, comparisons with previous knowledge, (background information)

Formative Assessments: Quickwrite, Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing, Structured Talk, Writing Body Paragraphs, Draft Read-Around, 3-Column Analysis, Acronyms for Revision

Summative Assessments: Checklist Tracking, Common Editing Marks, Analogous Reflection

Plan and Strategies

Rationale/Explanation

Planning for Writing

(TEACHER: establish purpose/outcome; set writing task)

Writing Prompt:

Consider the essays you have read and discussed, and write an essay in which you analyze how the language used in the literary sources reflects the intensity of the author's observations and how effectively the author conveys these views.

For this writing task, students will be required to read literary sources from a variety of genres: fiction, poetry, and non-fiction. Students will then analyze the role language plays in the development of the author's view, using evidence of language from the sources as evidence of their interpretation.

Pre-Writing

(build background knowledge; generate ideas; motivate toward writing)

Writing in the Margins

Call on students to *define* the term "small hometown." After hearing their definitions, have them describe the *characteristics* of a traditional small hometown, including anything they hear, see, smell, taste. Scribe their descriptions on a white board in list format.

Have students read the essay entirely without stopping first. Then, have the students apply the **Writing in the Margins** strategy from *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading* to capture the main ideas of the writing and to identify literary elements and figurative language in the way the author crafts this text.

Ask students to sit with a partner to discuss their findings and afterward, have them share out elements and language they have identified. In discussion, ask them what image the author created in this essay? What are the words the author used to create that image?

In discussion, ask them to compare the details, images, and facts in the essay with the list on the whiteboard. How is the list similar to the same type of elements in the essay? How are they dissimilar? In dissecting the prompt (see below) students will need to analyze the reading assignments for such elements. Making comparisons at this time will aid them in the tasks that follow.

Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt	<p>Have students use Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt and accompanying RAMP strategies to determine the parameters of the assigned essay. In deconstructing the prompt, students are isolating the required information they are to write in the essay. When they also add the individual elements of RAMP (Role, Audience, Mode, Purpose), they have a clear picture of how to proceed in constructing their essay response.</p> <p>Have them read and annotate “The Reluctant Grown-Up.”</p>
Quickwrite	<p>Ask students to complete a Quickwrite using the following question for response: What do we know and how do we know the unwritten rest of the story in this memoir?</p>
Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing	<p>Ask students to gather in groups of four to share their quickwrites and continue the discussion using Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing to prepare them for the writing task. The Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing strategy completes the informal “outline” of requirements on which they will base their essay response.</p>

Drafting

(move from pre-writing to a draft; shape a direction for the writing)

Structured Talk	<p>Have them use the same groups for Structured Talk to help them identify and set-up their responses to the prompt. Though the students now have an understanding of <i>how</i> they will format their writing, they also need to have an understanding of <i>what</i> they are going to say within their format.</p>
Writing Body Paragraphs	<p>Have students use the strategy for Writing Body Paragraphs as a guide when they begin to compose on paper. This will help them consider strategies for effectively developing a cohesive idea in each paragraph of their essays.</p>
Composing the Draft	<p>Follow this activity with some time for students to write their first draft. They need to keep in mind and use the discussion in structured talk as a guideline, especially now that they are committing words to the paper.</p>

“A scrupulous writer, in every sentence that he writes, will ask himself at least four questions, thus: 1. What am I trying to say? 2. What words will express it? 3. What image or idiom will make it clearer? 4. Is this image fresh enough to have an effect?”

– George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language,” 1946

Reader Response

(provide “input” about the writing; peer, self, teacher feedback)

Draft Read-Around	<p>Form new groups of up to four students to participate in a Draft Read-Around. Students bring their drafts to use during the group discussion. In this activity, students are each assigned a role in the group. The teacher decides ahead of time what aspects of the essay need to be checked for all groups, and based on that decision; the teacher assigns roles for group members to assume. For example, one person might read for transitions and another for paragraphing. Another might read for embedding quotations. Still another would read for another purpose.</p> <p>Have students read a draft, take notes on the aspects that they are assigned. This process is repeated for each essay in the group being certain not to read their own essay in the process. After all essays have been read and checked, the student authors within the group receive all the essay comments made in the Read-Around along with their essay.</p> <p>Have students revise their essays according to the notes they received in the Read-Around.</p>
3-Column Analysis	Have students complete a 3-Column Analysis for mechanical correctness and revise according to the results of the analysis to complete the Reader Response strategies.

Revising

(interpret and use the “input” about the writing; re-see, re-think, and rewrite; apply focus lessons)

Acronyms for Revision	Ask students to use the input from reader responses and revise their essay using the strategy Acronyms for Revision to focus on specific revision changes they need to make. For example, if student writing shows difficulty with claims, transitions, and acknowledgment of counterclaims, the acronym CAT might serve as a revision help.
-----------------------	---

Editing

(proofread; identify and correct errors; apply focus lessons)

Checklist Tracking Common Editing Marks	Have students complete the Checklist Tracking strategy to have a final tour through the almost-publishable essay. In this strategy, students use a Common Editing Marks sheet to edit the paper from errors or omissions that would affect meaning and reader understanding. This is the final opportunity for revision before the publishing phase of the writing process. Have them create a clean copy for publication.
--	--

Publishing

(take the writing “public”; share the writing)

Writer’s Chair

Post the Published Piece

After the teacher has read all the submitted final papers, he/she selects a series of papers to spotlight for one or two specific strengths or for exceptional performance on specific tasks. Have each author sit in a Writer’s Chair to read their selection, and ask the class to listen for the specific strength or outstanding characteristic. Afterward, post the essays on a special display wall, perhaps called “Wall of Fame,” with the specific strength highlighted.

Self-Evaluation/Reflection

(identify learning; plan for future application of the learning)

Analogous Reflection

Reflection is a vital part of the learning process. All writers must perform this task because it fixes the writer’s mind on what works (and what does not!) during the writer’s own composing phases. Thus, students retain helpful strategies and avoid those that do nothing to increase their skills as they compose an **Analogous Reflection** with a reflection partner. Usually, these kinds of reflections are done individually. However, when performed with a partner, analyzing and then synthesizing becomes a shared learning strategy. Both benefit from the discussion on the analogies used.

Literary Analysis Writing Rubric

Trait	4 – Advanced	3 – Proficient	2 – Basic	1 – Limited
Reading & Research	The essay demonstrates an insightful interpretation of text revealed in depth of understanding of literary elements.	The essay demonstrates a general interpretation of text and literary elements.	The essay inconsistently demonstrates awareness of meaning of the text, but some attempt to discuss literary elements is evident.	The essay makes no attempt to interpret the text. Literary elements are not included.
Focus/ Controlling Idea	The essay has an exemplary focus on a captivating topic that analyzes all aspects of the of the author’s intent.	The essay maintains a steady focus supported with analysis that shows a clear idea of author’s intent.	The essay shows an attempt at establishing a focus but it is not clearly stated. Writer expresses an opinion but does not consider all aspects of author’s intent.	The essay is confusing and/or has an inaccurate focus. No attempt is made to analyze the text.
Content Development	The essay demonstrates an insightful analysis with clear understanding of the author’s use of literary techniques. Rich and varied details are supported with reference to text.	The essay is a generally accurate analysis with some insight into use of author’s literary techniques. Details are sequenced and stated clearly, but may not be fully developed.	The essay makes vague reference to details derived from text, but there is an unclear or inaccurate analysis of literary techniques and devices within the text. Content is somewhat uneven but exhibits some attempt to adhere to prompt.	The essay attempts to analyze the text but has poor or weak content development with no support from the text. Writer shows no understanding of how to form an analytical response.

Literary Analysis Writing Rubric (continued)

<p>Organization of Ideas</p>	<p>Essay demonstrates evidence of careful planning with commendable organization, including smooth use of transitions enhancing the flow between ideas and paragraphs. Convincing and rich details support the thesis.</p>	<p>Essay has a logical statement of ideas with references to supporting textual material but may not maintain consistent organization between paragraphs. Transitions evident throughout.</p>	<p>Essay has minimal organizational strategies or use of strategies is inconsistent: introduction states the topic, ideas are not always controlled to show relationship, transitions are limited, and the conclusion re-states information presented in the essay.</p>	<p>Organizational strategies lack purpose, are weak or not evident at all: introduction identifies the topic in an unclear, vague manner; ideas have no supporting connection to the text, weakening the coherence of the essay; transitions are inadequate and ideas have no connections; and the conclusion is either missing or vague.</p>
<p>Style & Conventions</p>	<p>The essay demonstrates an accurate and commendable control of language conventions with few or no errors to interrupt the communication of the thesis. Stylistically sophisticated with precise language demonstrating exceptional understanding of the topic.</p>	<p>The essay demonstrates appropriate use of language conventions and intentional stylistic manipulation, though with less sophistication than advanced status. May have some errors but is generally edited accurately.</p>	<p>The essay may use basic vocabulary or unsophisticated sentence structure, but some attempt to control sentence patterns is evident. Contains errors but not so numerous as to obscure meaning.</p>	<p>The essay has no evidence of editing or stylistic control. Serious errors in grammar and usage.</p>

Sample Writing Unit:

Biography

Works to be read prior to the writing lesson:

Biographical texts:

- *Keepin' It Together* (Virginia Frantz)
- *John Steinbeck* (Catherine Reef)
- *Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President* (John Devaney)
- *Up Close: John Steinbeck* (Milton Meltzer)

Supporting biographical information from local historical societies or museums:

- "Interactive Dust Bowl" based upon the PBS documentary *The Dust Bowl* (Ken Burns) <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/dustbowl/interactive/>
- Interview with relatives of survivors of The Depression and/or the Dust Bowl
- "Voices from the Dust Bowl" (An archive of the Library of Congress) <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/afctshhtml/tshome.html>
- Website for the National Heritage Museum: <http://www.nationalheritagemuseum.org/Exhibitions/CurrentExhibitions/TeenageHoboesintheGreatDepression.aspx>. A voluminous site rich with stories and recordings of teenage hoboes in the Great Depression.
- Commercial sites with valuable background information: <http://www.erroluys.com/HowAmericansHelpedEachOtherDuringtheGreatDepression.htm> and <http://www.erroluys.com/HoboLettersfromRidingtheRails.htm>. A sampling of letters from boxcar children during the Great Depression.

Background Non-Fiction:

- *Children of the Dust Bowl: The True Story of the School at Weedpatch Camp* (Jerry Stanley)
- *Dust to Eat: Drought and Depression in the 1930s* (Michael Cooper)
- *American Experience: Surviving the Dust Bowl* (DVD)
- *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl* (Timothy Egan)

Fiction for Student Background Information:

- *Out of the Dust* (Karen Hesse)

Non-fiction for Teacher Background Information:

- *A Nickel's Worth of Skim Milk* (Robert J. Hastings)

Common Core or State Standards Addressed by the Unit:

- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Content/Learning Objectives:

- Students will analyze multiple texts to determine biographical and historical authenticity.
- Students will use local and national resources to establish a biographic sequence of events.
- Students will write a coherent narrative/biography of a local or national personality.
- Students will collaborate with a triad of reflective peers to refine each person's writing.
- Students will publish their biographical narratives for an audience beyond school.

Language Objectives:

- Students will vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.
- Students will choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.
- Students will use textual evidence and speaker's specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Diagnostic Assessments: Visual Brainstorming and Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt, including RAMP

Formative Assessments: Quick List, Structured Talk, Focused Note-Taking, Visual Dramatic Bodystorming, Research, Drafting by Oral Rehearsal, Drafting in Chunks, Embedding Research in Drafts, 3-Column Analysis, Read-Around for Details, Strategic Response

Summative Assessments: Published Essay, Reflection and Self-Evaluation Questions.

Plan and Strategies

Rationale/Explanation

Planning for Writing

(TEACHER: establish purpose/outcome; set writing task)

Writing Prompt:

People from our past influence the way we live today. From your reading and research, think of someone from another era or from the present time who has had an influence on you or on society, and write the story of how this unique person's life and accomplishments reveal his/her deeper character.

The focus of this writing task is to recognize the commonality of human experience. Though the suggested resources listed for this sample unit are those that feature life and living in the 1930s and 1940s eras, they are listed as examples of the kinds of materials that could be used for whatever biographical subject is chosen. Students could opt for a contemporary person or they could range farther in the past.

Pre-Writing

(build background knowledge; generate ideas; motivate toward writing)

Focused Note-Taking

1. Have students use **Focused Note-Taking** as they read one of two biographical sources: *Keepin' It Together* and *John Steinbeck*. (An alternate book, *Children of the Dust Bowl*, contains anecdotes of children living in Weedpatch camp during the Depression.) They will need to select a person for the focus of their biographies. They may select any individual they have read about, or they may select any person from their family/friend interviews (See #9). (Some suggestions include Mary McLeod Bethune, Richard E. Byrd, Father Charles E. Coughlin, Jesse Owens, Mildred Babe Didrikson.) In their focused note-taking, they will need to know specific information for their eventual biography:
 - a. What makes this person unique?
 - b. Has this person impressed or influenced you or others?
 - c. Has this person taught a valuable life lesson or made a difference for others?
 - d. Are you (or other people) a different person because of your interaction with this person?
 - e. What specific behaviors impress you about the person?
 - f. How has the person specifically influenced your attitudes or thinking or that of other people?

(Adapted from *High School Writing Teacher Guide*)

Visual Brainstorming	2. On one large expanse of poster paper, display/post a photo of an actual person from local history. Next to the photo, write the prompt and invite students to respond on the poster paper surrounding the prompt: What do you know about <name the person>? This can be done with the teacher moderating the comments or it can be posted for comment over the course of 2–3 days. These characteristics might later be included in the student essays.
Deconstruct and Interpret the Prompt	3. Using a document camera, help students Deconstruct and Interpret the Prompt as described in this strategy. If further scaffolding is needed, help students to paraphrase the prompt so that all understand the tasks required in their written essays.
RAMP	4. Following the analysis of the prompt, have students identify the Role (the writer who has been influenced by the biographical subject), the Audience (interested readers or the teacher), the Mode (biographical story) and the Purpose (to reveal admirable character traits).
Brainstorm	5. Divide students into triads and give each group an envelope with a list or pictures of the contents of a “bundle” made from an old piece of canvas. List or show pictures of items such as a pocket knife, a book of matches, a razor, a bar of soap, a tin cup, tin can of coffee, dried beans, needle and thread, or a bit of string or wire. Based upon the contents of the bundle, have the triad Brainstorm/Visualize and create the short biography of the person who owns the bundle. Ask each triad to report out to the larger group the story and the proof of the story using the contents of the bundle. Have the class make a conjecture of the probable time period of the bundle based upon the contents.
Quick List	6. Preview the biographical stories they will be reading by having them participate in “The Interactive Dust Bowl” on the website: http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/dustbowl/interactive/ and afterward read and take notes on the National Heritage Museum site and the commercial sites. Have students Quick List the big ideas they saw in the websites. (These “big ideas” will likely include causes of the dust condition, family reactions to the problem, the impact on people and, in particular, on families and teens.)

<p>Structured Talk</p>	<p>7. In a discussion afterward, have the students use Structured Talk to discuss the “big ideas” and questions they have regarding the Dust Bowl years. Remind them of the signs hoboes used to place on the fences of sidewalks of those who helped them. (See http://www.erroluys.com/HowAmericansHelpedEachOtherDuringtheGreatDepression.htm for a picture of the signs.) Ask what these signs indicated about the citizens and hoboes during this time in our history.</p> <p>8. Remind them of the prompt, and ask what other information they need to create an essay response to the prompt.</p>
<p>Focused Note-Taking</p>	<p>9. To tie the material to the goal, have them again use Focused Note-Taking to interview family and friends regarding their knowledge of or family stories from the years of the Great Depression and the migration of the family from the ravages of the Dust Bowl.</p> <p>10. During the interviews, have students ask about any family migrant experience of travel, techniques for coping with the hardships of weather, family life, uncertain income, and the habits family members (or friends) adopted to conserve resources.</p>
<p>Visual Dramatic Bodystorming</p>	<p>11. Then divide the class into groups of three or four, depending upon the number of people in the scenes they create. Have groups complete the Visual Dramatic Bodystorming activity, and use ideas from their reading to create the scenes. Or, they may choose the sample activity as listed in the strategy. To debrief after the Visual Dramatic Bodystorming, ask students to name as many <u>truths</u> about the Dust Bowl era as they can.</p>
<p>Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking</p>	<p>12. To further inform their biographies, have them research background information from the '30s to '40s eras at the Library of Congress website: http://www.loc.gov/rr/main/research/. Use the strategy, Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking, to gather information and make research an organized and useful task.</p> <p>13. Have students create a list of biographical details about the person on whom they are focusing their writing.</p>

Clustering

14. Guide students into clustering all their big ideas from research, note-taking, and other pre-writing strategies used so that they can see how they will organize all the information they have gathered on the person they selected during Step 1.
15. Have them plan and list on paper the order in which they will be writing the details in the body of the essay.

Drafting

(move from pre-writing to a draft; shape a direction for the writing)

Drafting by Oral Rehearsal

To get started, have students pair with another person to participate in **Drafting by Oral Rehearsal** for the first body paragraph. Have the pairs work together to make sure all aspects of the paragraph work together.

Drafting in Chunks

Then, using their notes on their reading and the background DVD as well as interviews (if they conducted the interviews), have students begin drafting their biographical essays by **Drafting in Chunks**.

Embedding Research in Drafts

Help students work through **Embedding Research in Drafts** so that they can support their biographies with details from their notes.

Reader Response

(provide “input” about the writing; peer, self, teacher feedback)

3-Column Analysis

First, have students complete a **3-Column Analysis** on their own papers before they have their peers help them with a Read-Around. From the results of their own self-check, have them make whatever draft corrections their paper needs.

Read-Around for Details

Then, have students bring their completed, refined drafts to a group of three or four others. Have them participate in a Read-Around for Details. To prepare them for the Read-Around, assign each student a “lens” they will look through as they read a peer’s paper. These “lenses” will vary according to the parameters of the paper and the number of students in each group. Some suggested “lenses”: Detail Checker (reading for supporting details); Thesis Checker (reading for adherence to and development of the thesis); Conventions Detailer (similar to detailing a car except checking for violations of correct conventions); Argument and Opposition (checking for argumentative form); or Informative Detector (reading for informative structure).

Strategic Response	As a spot-check on the efficiency of the Read-Around, perform a Strategic Response on two or three aspects of the biographies. This will serve as an interim check on the progress of the essay response, and it will help teachers manage the paper load.
Revising (interpret and use the “input” about the writing; re-see, re-think, and rewrite; apply focus lessons)	
Focus Lessons	Based upon the Strategic Response just performed, use Focus Lessons to guide students in crafting a more effective response to the prompt. (Specifically select and design those focus lessons based on the needs of the students’ strategic responses.)
Editing (proofread; identify and correct errors; apply focus lessons)	
Common Editing Marks	Once students have revised their drafts and have been provided input with useful focus lessons, distribute the Student Handout: Common Editing Marks . Review this helpful guide sheet with students so they will be familiar with marks that may appear on their papers from the editing process.
Target Areas – Small Groups	Then use the strategy Target Areas – Small Groups to help students collaboratively find and revise targeted areas where errors are commonly found on student writing.
Publishing (take the writing “public”; share the writing)	
Write and Release	Because this biographical essay involves a shared human experience (that of the Depression and the Dust Bowl), the student biographies can be printed or written in their final form and posted on the class wall for back-to-school night or in a student exhibition organized for this purpose. Similarly, regional offices of education often feature displays of student-created writing and art. During the months of January and February, such displays are most requested to use for the public areas of the buildings. Contact the department in charge of student displays for permission to post student work. Be sure to request permission from school district officials first for such a display and, following that, provide information and permission slips to parents and students to allow student work to be publicly viewed.

Self-Evaluation/Reflection

(identify learning; plan for future application of the learning)

Reflection and Self-Evaluation Questions

As the biographical essay is in the reflection stage, have the students finalize the process and the experience by adding a reflection page as a last page of their essay. Use the Student Handout: **Reflection and Self-Evaluation Questions** that focuses on what they are proud of in the paper, what they learned about the biographical subject, and what other aspects they would have liked to have addressed in their essays. Then have them select two other reflection questions focusing on their next essay and what they plan to do differently.

Note to the teacher: The Biography sample writing unit is a model using a specific time period. Of course, since it is only one model, considering other plans and other time periods is a choice each teacher must decide for him or herself. Even in this plan, students can select any person on whom they wish to focus. The option should be available no matter which era or country or person they select as their starting point in an informational writing topic.

*“The sole substitute for an experience
which we have not ourselves lived
through is art and literature.”*

– Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Biographical Essay Rubric

Trait	4 – Advanced	3 – Proficient	2 – Basic	1 – Limited
Reading & Research	Shows results of effective research and relevant information to develop a complete understanding of the biographical subject's character and effect on society and/or individual.	Uses relevant information from research and shows some insight into biographical subject's character and his/her effect on society.	Lacks effective research and shows biographical subject is not adequately explained or represented. His/her effect on society is understated.	Lacks emphasis on the biographical subject and contributions or is off-task.
Focus/ Controlling Idea	Maintains a commendable focus on topic/subject and uses logical reasoning. Presents a compelling thesis.	Maintains clear focus on topic/subject with reasonable skill. Presents a thesis with some emphasis on the subject's appeal to the reader.	Suitable focus but attempts to address prompt are out of sync with the focus. Presents a thesis but is inconsistently supported.	Has limited focus and demonstrates lack of understanding of the task. Attempts to present a thesis.
Content Development	Presents engaging details of subject's life and contributions to society. Details emphasize connection between character and impact on society.	Develops relevant biographical details that show connection between accomplishments and character. Competently explains impact on society.	Lists sparse biographical details and does not fully explain connection between subject's character and impact of achievements on society.	Does not develop relevance of achievements to subject's deeper character. Impact on society is missing or weakly portrayed. Details may be skimpy.

Biographical Essay Rubric (continued)

<p>Organization of Ideas</p>	<p>Strong introduction and conclusion plus orderly progression of details bolster claim and show crafted acknowledgement of subject's contributions and effect on society and individual.</p>	<p>Introduction presents claim and leads into progression of body details. Conclusion draws naturally to a close. Presentation style is appropriate but not outstanding. Exposition presents organization relevant to the genre.</p>	<p>Progression of details may be presented out of order, yet some attempt to organize is evident. Needs revision to provide smooth connection between details or paragraphs.</p>	<p>Details within the essay show little or no discernible order. There is little or no attempt to design organization for support to claim.</p>
<p>Style & Conventions</p>	<p>Skillful use of sentence fluency shows obvious proofreading. Contains few or no mechanical errors. Diction is precise and purposeful.</p>	<p>Demonstrates reasonable use of sentence variety and word choice. Few outstanding mechanical errors.</p>	<p>Word choice is imprecise or shows minimal use of precision. Some unremarkable sentence variety is evident. Mechanics and usage show several errors, but some attempt to proofread is evident.</p>	<p>Proofreading and sentence variety are lacking. Sentence level errors obscure meaning, and word choice is immature.</p>

Writing Lessons from Other AVID Resources

Source	AVID Resources	Section or Unit
<i>The Write Path English Language Learners Teacher Guide</i>	Self-Character Analysis	5.1.1
	Autobiographical Sketch	5.1.2
	A Life Map	5.1.3
	A Special Person in My Life	5.1.4
	People I Admire Essay	5.1.5
	Persuasive Writing	5.1.6
	Writing Formal Letters	5.1.7
	My Heritage: Compare and Contrast Essay	5.1.8
	Folktales Essay	5.2.1
	Character Analysis Essay	5.2.2
	Description of a Place	5.3.1
	Autobiographical Incident	5.3.2
	Mandala	5.3.3
	Poetry	5.3.4
Research Process	6	
<i>High School Writing Teacher Guide Grades 9–12</i>	Mandala Writing	5.1
	Autobiographical Incident Essay	5.2
	Biography	5.3
	College Admission Essay	5.4
	Explanation of Life Goals	6.1
	Career Research	6.2
	Description of a Place	6.3
	Explanation of a Process	6.4
	Character Analysis	7.1
	Problem-Solution Analysis	7.2
	Argument	7.3
	Timed Writing	8
	SAT: Timed Writing Section	8.2
	ACT: Writing Section	8.3
	AP Writing Exams: Writing Tasks	8.4
Analytical Writing Placement Examination (CA)	8.5	
English Placement Test (EPT) Writing Section	8.6	
<i>Middle Level Writing with Integrated Reading and Oral Language Teacher Guide 6–8</i>	Narrative Mode: Memoir	6.1
	Writing to Inform	6.2
	Persuasive Mode: Editorial/Personal Commentary	6.3

“Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word tell.”

– William Strunk, Jr., *The Elements of Style*

On-Demand Writing

Introduction

The act of composing requires habits of mind that develop students’ “rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, writing processes, knowledge of conventions, and ability to compose in multiple environments” (NCTE, 2011). The pressure of a non-negotiable time element merely sharpens the need for practiced and skillful demonstration of critical thinking, precise diction, clean usage, and identifiable voice.

A time may come when on-demand writing is composed almost instantly online using such tools as Nota (a Web tool allowing multiple people to “create, share, and collaborate” on presentations) or even Google’s 10x10 tool that creates “100 words and pictures that define the time.” All the new web tools in development at this moment are as unimaginable now as the ballpoint pen was in October, 1945, when it was invented. We continually redefine our futures by the tools we create and use, modify and reinvent. Yet on-demand writing, in whatever future form it takes, will still require human minds that are able to think abstractly and inferentially. As Gere, Christenbury, and Sassi (2005) explain, “Good writing and writing on demand are not contradictory.” The core skills

that serve students in timed writing tasks are still those that assist in dissecting a prompt, choosing a topic, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

We teachers have a text-ready classroom from the first day the students enter, but skills required of good on-demand writing go beyond those needed for longer term assignments. That is why in this section we include strategies on Time Management, Deconstructing On-Demand Prompts, and addressing Fluency and Speed. Our students actually need those core skills daily in their personal lives for texting, writing blogs, creating YouTube videos, Twittering and other electronic postings. Writers-in-training today face a constant call for on-demand writing proficiency, whether it’s in a high stakes test or part of their continual social interaction. As teachers, we can direct our students in this skill development even as they live the practice.



Academic Vocabulary in Writing Prompts

Goal

Students will understand academic verbs commonly used in on-demand writing prompts.

Rationale

Good writers employ skills in deconstructing writing prompts when they analyze the use of specific vocabulary words commonly found in on-demand writing prompts. The writer associates the required skills and actions needed to produce the essay as a result of analyzing the tasks required by specific words in the prompt.

Student Handouts

- Organizational Words in Writing Prompts
- Frayer Model Student Example
- Frayer Model Template

Instructional Steps

1. Use the Prompt Deconstruction strategy for on-demand writing explained in this resource to teach students how to analyze the components and requirements in a writing prompt. This strategy focuses on the key verbs and asks students to underline or circle key action words in the prompt, such as *discuss, evaluate, explain, justify, or summarize*.
2. Use the Student Handout: Organizational Words in Writing Prompts as a reference to teach students to identify the key words found in writing prompts. Point out how these key words are often used as verbs in prompts and they require specific skills and actions to correctly respond to the writing task.
3. Provide several examples by conducting a think-aloud with students. Use the Frayer Model Student Example handout for the word “**solve**” to help students define the words and identify critical characteristics:
4. The word “**solve**” indicates there is a problem for which a solution is needed. To do this effectively, writers must state the identified problem, propose a solution that directly solves the identified problem, and provide clear elaboration using specific facts and background knowledge as to why and how the proposed solution will solve the problem. The writer may also consider addressing any possible counterclaims in the essay.
5. Conduct another teacher-led example with the class. Use the word “**justify**” to prove by giving reasons. (If a writer does this effectively, this means creating a claim or thesis, providing reasons to support the claim/thesis, and using sufficient elaboration to explain each reason). Complete a Frayer Model with students in class.
6. Divide students into triads and assign the remaining words from the list among each of the groups until all words have been distributed. Challenge students to define each word assigned to their group and to make a list of the required skills and actions associated with each of their words.

7. Use the Frayer Model to assist in this task. Students may create posters, PowerPoint presentations, or other visual cues.
8. Present assigned words to the whole class.
9. Check to be sure each group accurately identifies all the necessary skills associated with each word. Challenge students to be sure their classmates have considered all possibilities during the presentations. Provide assistance as needed.
10. Post the chart of organizational words in the classroom and any visual aids, including the Frayer Models, created by the students for this assignment for reference during future in-class assignments.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Select targeted words from previous writing tasks assigned to students or key words matching tasks from previous released state or national writing tasks.
- Have students include key words in their interactive notebook or writer's notebook for future reference.

Increased Rigor

- Ask students to identify other words they encounter in writing tasks and add to the list throughout the school year.

Using Technology

- Students may wish to use PowerPoint or other presentation programs in creating their group presentations.

Organizational Words in Writing Prompts

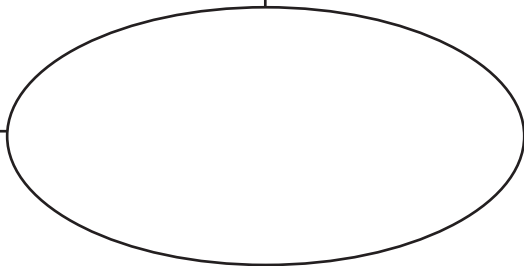
The following are organizational words in writing prompts for both in-class writing (“essay examinations”) and out-of-class assignments. This page will help you to interpret them.

Analyze	Examine carefully to determine why. Separate or distinguish the elements of anything complex. Break the idea into parts, and explain the various parts.
Assess	Examine critically, and estimate the merit, significance, or value.
Challenge	Ask for justification, question the statements provided.
Compare/ Contrast	Point out how things are similar and how they are different. (Sometimes, “compare” means both “compare and contrast.”)
Criticize/ Critique	Discuss the good and bad elements in a text, a film, or something else. Give evidence to justify your claims.
Defend	Maintain an argument with evidence; prove the validity of an argument with supporting evidence.
Define	Give the meaning of a term with enough detail to show that you really understand it.
Describe	Explain or write about; put into words a picture or an account. Tell how something looks, how something happened. Include how, where, who, and why.
Diagram	Make a drawing or outline of something and label its parts.
Discuss	Give reasons with details. Explore from different perspectives. Look at the pros and cons.
Effect	Whatever is produced by a cause; something made to happen by a person or thing; result.
Enumerate	Count off or list examples, reasons, causes, or effects—one by one.
Evaluate	Using evidence, discuss the strengths and weaknesses.
Explain	Make clear or interpret the reasons why something exists or is happening.
Identify	List and explain.
Illustrate	Make the point or idea clear by giving examples.
Interpret	Give the meaning of; use examples and personal comments to make clear.
Justify	Give reasons for your claim (in an academic argument).
List	List without details.
Outline	Make an organized listing of the important points of a subject. (This outline does not always have to look like the formal outline you may write for your English papers.)
Relate	Show the connections between things or how one thing causes another.
Respond	State your overall reaction (response) to the content, and then support your response with specific reasons and examples, often referring back to the reading.
Solve	Come up with a solution based on given information and your knowledge.
State	Give the main points in brief, clear form.
Summarize	Organize and bring together the main points, keeping out personal opinions.
Support	Back up the statements with evidence.
Synthesize	Pull together parts to make a whole—this requires looking for common attributes among the parts in order to link them together.


Source: Johns, A. (2007). *AVID College Readiness: Working With Sources*. San Diego, CA: Avid Press.

Frayer Model

Definition	Characteristics
Examples/Models	Non-Examples



Frayer Model

Definition	Characteristics
<p>Solve means to provide a solution, explanation, or an answer to a question or problem. I base the answer on the relevant information given, my own background knowledge, experiences, and problem-solving strategies.</p>	<p>There must be a problem for which a solution is needed. I must define the problem, create a solution, explain how and why I chose that particular solution, and consider the effects of the solution on solving the problem.</p>
	
Examples/Models	Non-Examples
<p>I solve problems in Math class, such as equations.</p> <p>Detectives solve mysteries on TV and in books.</p> <p>The police solve criminal cases.</p> <p>I solve puzzles.</p>	<p>Creating more problems</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Searching</p> <p>Wondering</p>

Deconstructing On-Demand Prompts

Goal

Students will be able to deconstruct writing prompts quickly for timed writing situations.

Rationale

Students will encounter a variety of timed writing tasks ranging from in-class essay exams to college admission and placement exams. For most students, these situations create anxiety and a lack of confidence. Many students feel that an on-demand writing task is accomplished by rapidly writing one draft, ignoring the writing process. However, by spending a few minutes of the time deconstructing the prompt and creating a brief outline, students will be more prepared to write a cohesive essay.

Instructional Steps

1. Collect sample writing prompts appropriate for students: state assessments, ACT, SAT, Advanced Placement, IB, academic classes, etc.
2. Explain that many students struggle with on-demand writing tasks because they misunderstand or misread the writing prompt.
3. Write or project the following task list for students: 1) read the prompt once with no markings; 2) circle action words/verbs; 3) number the tasks; and 4) create a cluster, a jot-list outline, or notes of key points and evidence to include in the essay.
4. Explain that, much like speed dating, they will have a limited amount of time to “get to know” the writing prompts by completing the tasks listed on the board. A good place to start is to allow 5 minutes for each prompt, though some classes might need more time for the first attempt at this activity.
5. Give each student a packet of two prompts.
6. Tell students to begin with their first prompt. Start a timer for the 5 minutes.
7. Call time and have students move to the second prompt.
8. Place students in pairs. Have students compare their deconstructions for each prompt.

9. Ask students to complete a quickwrite reflection once they have finished comparing. The quickwrite should address the following questions: Which step was most difficult for you in this process? How did your deconstructions compare to your partner's? What is one goal that you will work on the next time we practice deconstructing prompts?

NOTE: This is a process that students will need to practice many times over the course of the school year. More prompts can be added so that students are rapidly deconstructing four prompts during an activity.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model the entire process with the class.
- Have students work in pairs with no time limit for the first several writing prompts.
- Provide more time initially to deconstruct the prompts and then gradually decrease the time as students become more proficient.

Increased Rigor

- Have students write a thesis statement as part of their task list.
- Ask students to collect prompts they find challenging and use these prompts for the activity.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Fluency and Speed – 10-Minute Writing

Goal

Students will practice 10-minute writing tasks on a weekly basis.

Rationale

As students move from grade level to grade level, the need for fluency in their writing becomes increasingly more urgent. They are given more on-demand writing tasks where they must learn to evaluate the nature of the response required and the time they are allotted to complete the response. Strategies that help writers learn to adjust their writing to fit the demand and the time will be useful tools for students to incorporate into their process. Similarly, having students memorize a small store of quotes to use in writing can also help increase fluency as well as have their writing appear more polished and planned.

Teacher Reference

- Fluency and Speed – 10-Minute Writing

Instructional Steps

1. Assign weekly writing tasks that must be completed from pre-write to publication within 10 minutes (Gere et al., 140). Remind students that they must write without stopping!
2. Do not post the elapsed time as they write. Since this is a practice, such visual time-tracking is a distraction at this point. When they go into a formal on-demand writing session, they will have a better sense of 10-minute intervals even though they will have the visual reminders in a formal writing situation such as for an AP test.
3. Include 10-minute writing topics. (See Teacher Resource.)
4. Help students develop fluency with form and content. (See Teacher Resource.)
5. Post “Best of Ten” fluency writing pieces weekly.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Timed writing tasks are often completed without electronic devices. The more practice all students have in writing by hand, the better practice is for writing on-demand.

Increased Rigor

- Encourage students to count their words and keep track of the numbers. Raising the total number written weekly and tracking progress are incentives for improvement.
- Have students memorize short quotes to suit instances when they need to bolster support or provide polish in an argumentative, a persuasive, or a descriptive essay. Such quotes are likely to be found categorized in the old-style Roget’s Thesaurus or a book such as Charlton’s *The Writer’s Quotation Book: A Literary Companion*. However, electronic sources are more immediate. (See Teacher Resource for a list of electronic sources.)

Using Technology

- Occasionally, allow students to bring their own devices on which to write for 10 minutes with the provision that they are capable of printing out their writing if asked to do so.

“My method is to take the utmost trouble to find the right thing to say, and then to say it with the utmost levity.”

– George Bernard Shaw

Fluency and Speed – 10-Minute Writing

Topics for increasing student fluency and speed when responding to writing tasks

- Speculate what would happen if our noses were upside-down instead of the standard design we all have.
- Explain a how-to process, such as how to drive a stick-shift or how to swim with sharks.
- Write the dialogue you would have with your parent if he or she did not know how to use a Smart Phone.
- Write an explanation of how to avoid being injured by a tornado (or tsunami or flood) if you are away from home.
- Write a letter to persuade a stranger to donate to a worthy cause (or a nonsensical one).
- Describe your ideal candidate for national office.
- Write your biography from age 5 to your current age.
- Describe what you would do if you found a foreign object in the food you purchased while you were just about to eat it in a fast-food business.
- Write an alternative ending, not the one published, for a famous novel or movie.
- Use careful detail to describe what you would do if you met a carnivorous animal on a hike. (NOTE: You have to survive!)

Fluency includes the ability to generate and develop ideas (form and content) within on-demand writing (Gere et al., 140).

- Give students a one-word topic on which they must write within the 10-minute time limit. (For example, “best.” Of course, they will ask “Best what?” They have to decide.)
- Have them write to an open-ended or framed prompt: “Suppose...” or “Most kids my age...”
- Ask them to write the action assignment: “Your mission, should you accept it, is...”
- Describe your version of a recipe for disaster.
- Write the story: “Yippee! I...”
- Write *The Famous Decision*.
- What about *people in the news*?

Electronic Sources for Quotes

- Brainy quotes:
<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/best.html>
- Goodreads:
<http://www.goodreads.com/quotes>
- *Writer’s Digest* site:
<http://www.writersdigest.com/editor-blogs/there-are-no-rules/72-of-the-best-quotes-about-writing>
- Quotations by Author:
<http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/>

Prompt Writing

Goal

Students will create writing prompts in order to develop proficiency in understanding prompts.

Rationale

Students who learn to create new writing prompts will be more proficient in deconstructing the prompts they encounter in on-demand writing tasks. Students will also be able to identify and use elements of RAMP and academic vocabulary words commonly found in writing prompts.

Student Handout

- Prompt Writing

Instructional Steps

1. Provide students with the handouts for RAMP and Organizational Words in Writing Prompts from this publication. Review the use of RAMP elements in writing prompts and academic vocabulary commonly found in prompts.
2. Provide the Student Handout: Prompt Writing with sample prompts for students to deconstruct as a class.
3. Review the elements of well-written prompts using the handout. Instruct students to identify elements of RAMP and key vocabulary terms used in each prompt.
4. Ask students to create their own prompts incorporating the necessary elements, RAMP considerations, and key vocabulary.
5. Have students share the prompts they created with each other. They can trade written prompts and have their partner identify the necessary elements in writing.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Write sample prompts together as a class using the required elements and identifying key vocabulary.
- Have students work in small groups or pairs creating prompts to share with the class.

Increased Rigor

- Challenge students to locate and bring to class writing prompt examples from other content areas for analysis.
- Give students some previous years' AP prompts and have them identify the elements. (See Using Technology below for sources.)

Using Technology

- Prompt Sources: <http://www.msclark.net/Classes/APamerlit/APEssayTopics1980-2008.pdf> OR
- http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/english_lang/samp.html?englang

Prompt Writing

Prompts may be created using the following guidelines. After reading the guidelines, practice creating several of your own prompts.

Elements of a Well-Written Prompt

Sentence 1: A **declarative** sentence (a simple sentence where possible) that makes a generalization about a particular topic or subject matter.

Sentence 2: An **imperative** sentence (also a simple sentence) that asks students to make a personal response to the subject matter defined. Or an **interrogative** sentence that gives students a question to answer.

Sentence 3: Any specific directions about the mode of writing expected, the length, or any qualifiers (for example, "Be sure to use two supporting ideas.>").

Examples

Many schools in America are struggling with the question of whether students should wear uniforms or not. Do you think students should wear uniforms? Write an editorial supporting your view for the local newspaper.

Leaders are necessary to any group, such as families, clubs, teams, or countries. Explain what it takes to be an effective leader. Be sure to support your opinion with specific qualities, examples, or personal experiences.

Reality television has become a popular pastime in American culture. Write a proposal for a new idea for a reality television show that you would send to a particular network. Remember you must account for the safety of participants, and they must not be humiliated on television.

Setting is often an important element in the development and theme of novels and stories. Think of a literary text you have read in which the setting played a major role and explain your analysis. Be sure to name the text and author, and explain how the setting was used effectively as an element of the author's craft.

Now try to create a prompt of your own:

Time Management

Goal

Students will acquire a strategy for planning tasks in timed writing situations.

Rationale

Students are often stressed because of the time constraints. Much of this stress can be alleviated when students follow a plan for writing the essay.

Student Handout

- Student Plan for On-Demand Writing

Instructional Steps

1. Assign students to small groups and ask them to brainstorm a list of challenges or obstacles they face in on-demand writing situations.
2. Record their ideas on chart paper.
3. Distribute the Student Handout: Student Plan for On-Demand Writing.
4. Review the steps listed on the handout.
5. Provide a prompt appropriate for student performance level.
6. Explain that students will work through the plan for this essay as a group.
7. Guide students through the steps of planning, pre-writing, writing, and revising/editing.
8. Stop after each step and review with students: what was most challenging during this step?
9. Review the brainstorm list created in Step 1 once all steps have been completed. Ask students to identify the challenges/obstacles that will be addressed by following the on-demand writing plan.
10. Have students practice the plan at various intervals throughout the school year.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Allow for more time initially so that students can build confidence when completing on-demand writing tasks.
- Model the process as a large group.
- Share student samples from other classes to model the revising/editing process.
- Have students work in small groups or pairs before completing the process individually.

Increased Rigor

- Provide challenging prompts from released AP or IB exams.
- Ask for sample prompts from a nearby college or university to use for practice.

Student Plan for On-Demand Writing

Adapted from *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Plan

- Write down the amount of time you have to complete the essay.
- Look at the clock and determine the time for each of the steps. Note specifically when you should move on to the next step. Write this somewhere where you can see it as you create your essay.
 - Pre-writing: 1/6 of allotted time
 - Writing: 4/6 (2/3) of allotted time
 - Revising/Editing: 1/6 of allotted time
- Glance at the clock periodically and when time has elapsed, move to the next step in the process.
- Explain each point completely before going on to the next one. If you skip around, your answer will seem confusing and incomplete. Make sure each topic sentence relates to your thesis.
- Support your general statements with details, examples, and facts. Use specific people and events to show that you know your subject and to help your audience follow your line of thinking/reasoning. You must use examples, even with a short essay. If your answer is two sentences long, make the first sentence a thesis and the second an example.
- Do not be afraid to “think on paper.” Some of your best ideas may develop as you write.
- Make it clear that you are moving on to another point by using transition words. These may include: *such as, besides, in addition, next, however, and although*.
- Conclude in a sentence or two when you feel you’ve covered everything. Don’t simply repeat your opening sentence. Use some of the main ideas you brought up in your essay.
- Stay aware of the time.

Pre-Writing

Use approximately 1/6 of the allotted time (10 minutes for a 60-minute essay; 5 minutes for a 30-minute essay) to complete the following tasks.

- Deconstruct the prompt.
 - Read the prompt and circle action words and verbs.
 - Number the tasks listed in the prompt.
- Create a plan.
 - Choose a topic
 - Create a visual, cluster, jot-list outline, or notes detailing key points and evidence that will be included in the essay.
 - Review prompt and check that outline addresses all tasks listed.

Writing the Essay

Use approximately 4/6 of the allotted time (40 minutes for a 60-minute essay; 20 minutes for a 30-minute essay) to complete the following tasks.

- Introduce your topic by rephrasing the question/prompt or repeating key words from the prompt in your first sentence. Get right to the heart of your essay with a clear thesis; do NOT write a lengthy introduction and do NOT repeat yourself.
- Look for mistakes you might have made on the facts (dates, names, etc.). If you need to make a correction, draw a single line through the old information and write the new information just above it. Don’t waste time scribbling out old information.
- Check for complete ideas, clear thoughts, and details/explanations.
- Proofread for spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors.
- Make any needed corrections neatly and legibly.

Writing Introductions and Conclusions

Goal

Students will learn techniques for writing introductions and conclusions in timed writing situations.

Rationale

On-demand writing carries the urgency of speed and precise wording into this rigorous task. After being taught to craft interesting and informative introductions and conclusions during the luxury of planning time, students might feel it is an abrupt reversal of routine. With some practice, however, students can find this streamlined change facilitates the heart of their message as expeditiously as an electronic posting.

Instructional Steps

1. Select three or four exceptional essays from previous classes, and use a document camera to project only the prompt and the essay introduction and conclusion for each of the first three essays, discussing one set at a time.
2. Have students identify the **subject**, **author**, and **source** in the introductory paragraph. Highlight the subject, author, and source.
3. Have them next find the **answer** to the question which the prompt requires. This question shows up in the prompt in verb form using words like *prove*, *qualify*, *evaluate*, *identify*, *interpret*, and *solve*, and so the **answer** will perform the action of the verb. (See Deconstruction and Interpretation of a Prompt strategy in this text.) Highlight the answer.
4. Ask them to find the **claim** (or thesis) the essay writer states. In on-demand writing, this is almost always in the introductory paragraph. Highlight the claim.
5. Explain to students that these three basic elements make up three sentences in the on-demand introduction. This is all they will be writing in the time allotted for introducing the body of their essay.
6. Have them read the conclusion paragraph for each introduction shown on the document camera.
7. Project the introduction and *conclusion* from one essay again, and explain that in on-demand writing, the conclusion only needs 2–3 sentences to bring the writing to a close.
8. Ask students to select **one sentence in the conclusion that addresses the prompt**.

“Omit needless words.”

– William Strunk, Jr.

9. Have two students share their selected sentences with the class.
10. Project the last sentence in each conclusion. Point out **how the last** sentence (or perhaps the last two sentences) in each conclusion leaves the reader with a satisfying sense of closure, just as it does in any other essay. (See *High School Writing Teacher Guide* for more information.)
11. Emphasize that in on-demand writing, merely repeating the thesis in the conclusion is not a strong finish.
12. Have the students use one of their finished essays to craft a streamlined, on-demand style introduction and conclusion using the information they already have in their essay introductions and conclusions.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Pair students when they are working on the practice essay introductions and conclusions.
- Give all students a hard copy of the demonstration introductions and conclusions while displaying the projected introductions and conclusions on the document camera.

Increased Rigor

- Give students the body of a successful timed essay and then allow them 10 minutes to write an introduction and a conclusion for that essay. Let them compare their versions with the original.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

“Devise, wit; write, pen; for I am for whole volumes in folio.”

– Shakespeare, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*

Focus Lessons

Introduction

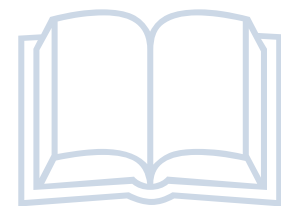
For decades, there has been a debate on the best way to teach grammar. On one side of the debate are those who believe grammar should be taught in isolation, usually in the form of worksheet drills that have no direct connection to the students’ writing. Even though evidence from years of research does not support this approach as a means to improving student writing, many persist in using the isolated approach to teaching grammar. On the other side are those who teach grammar in the context of student writing. Teaching students to focus on the practical application of grammar within their writing has a positive impact on improving the quality of student writing. This is not always an easy task and requires a commitment to conferencing with students and differentiating contextual grammar lessons. With the direction of their teachers, students can also identify the grammatical issues in their writing that need improvement.

The focus lessons provided in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* book are not designed to be taught from start to finish as a series of mini-lessons. Rather, the teacher should make an intentional and selective decision based on the needs of students. These decisions can be determined in a number of ways. For instance, a focus lesson might be selected based on a diagnosis of some facet of student writing. There are times when focus lessons are targeted based on the writing assignment. For example, if the writing task is research-based, the focus lessons might address embedding quotations and the proper forms of punctuation. Another

method of determining focus lessons can be basing them on trends a teacher notices in the writing of the class as a whole. If a teacher notices the majority of students are using an overabundance of simple sentences, then the focus lessons might address various sentence-combining activities. Many of the strategies presented in this book for editing tie directly to the use of focus lessons to support improving writing quality, because, as Rousseau knows, “However great a man’s natural talent may be, the art of writing cannot be learned all at once.”

The first strategy in this section, A Contextual Approach to Conventions, outlines the manner in which teachers can organize the focus lesson presentations to students. This strategy is more general in nature because it outlines the steps of a contextual lesson but does not include specific content. The specific content for focus lessons is included in the strategies that follow.

Much focus lesson content exists in other AVID resources. A table is provided on the following page for teachers to reference additional information. There are many resources for the content of the focus lessons; many districts have purchased writing handbooks for students to use. No matter the source of content information, the approach should always be based on the writing needs of students.



Focus Lessons from other AVID Resources

Essay Organization

Introductions	HSW 4.11; ELL 3.4b
Conclusions	HSW 4.14; ELL 3.4d
Elaboration and Support	MLW 5.1; ELL 3.4c
Three-Point Paragraph Lesson	ELL 3
Overview of Three-Part Essay	HSW 3.1

Claim/Thesis Statement

Develop	HSW 4.10; MLW 4.1
---------	-------------------

Quotations

Integration	CR 11.3; CR 11.5
Use of	HSW 4.13

Voice

Word Choice: Connotation/Denotation	MLW 5.2
Detail	MLW 5.1; HSW 4.6

Sentences

Sentence Combining	HSW 4.17; MLW 5.3; ELL 4.1 & 4.2
--------------------	----------------------------------

Usage

Active/Passive Voice	HSW 4.16; MLW 5.3
Transitions	HSW 4.12; MLW 5.4; ELL 3.2 & 3.4
Comma Usage	ELL 3.3b
Editing for Usage and Mechanics	HSW 4.9; ELL 4.3
Conventions English Grammar & Punctuation	HSW 4.7

Other

Diagnostic Essay	HSW 4.1
------------------	---------

HSW: *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

MLW: *Middle Level Writing with Integrated Reading and Oral Language Learners Teacher Guide*

ELL: *The Write Path English Language Learners Teacher Guide*

CR: *Critical Reading: Deep Reading Strategies for Expository Texts Teacher Guide*

A Contextual Approach to Conventions

Goal

Students will improve a targeted writing convention during the editing phase of an assignment.

Rationale

It is important to teach our students how to use the conventions of standard written English; however, teaching these skills in isolation has proven to have little transference to students' writing. Teaching conventions in the context of students' writing while engaged in the editing process has proven more effective.

Instructional Steps

1. Identify a particular area of need (based on assessing students' previous writing) such as semicolons, commas, verb/noun agreement, etc.
2. Start class with a "mini-lesson" on this identified area of need as students reach the editing phase of a writing project (after having drafted, received feedback, and revised).
3. Show students examples of correct and incorrect usage (authentic student work is valuable for this) and explain how the particular punctuation, or other convention area, works in a sentence, how it clarifies the writer's ideas, and so on. It is useful for students to take notes here. Keeping a conventions journal in their interactive notebook (see Writing to Learn section) works well for chronicling a variety of mini-lessons over time.
4. Model the appropriate way to offer feedback to the writer about the convention(s) just taught.
5. Ask students to exchange their own drafts with a partner. Each partner reads the other's paper, looking specifically for uses of the convention(s) just taught. The partner marks any areas of concern and offers suggestions for where punctuation, etc. might be added or corrected.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Follow this process several times, focusing on a different convention each time; however, it is probably more useful to highlight the particular areas where students are making frequent errors, rather than moving down a whole "laundry list" of conventions.

Increased Rigor

- If several mini-lessons have been covered prior to an assignment, have partners look for appropriate use of both the new and previous conventions that have been presented.
- Engage the class in a discussion about what they found, what questions they have and what other usage issues have surfaced after they've edited one another's essays.

Active/Passive Voice

Goal

Students will know how to effectively use active voice.

Rationale

One of the surest ways to increase clarity is to pay attention to the grammatical voice. This is not the same as the tone, a term that sometimes employs the word “voice” in a different sense. All English sentences employ either the active voice or the passive voice. The passive voice is not wrong, but good, clear, direct writing prefers the active voice whenever possible and uses the passive only when there is a good reason.

Student Handout

- Active/Passive Voice Exercise

Instructional Steps

1. Explain to students the difference between active and passive voice. All English sentences employ either the active voice or the passive voice. That is, in all cases the subject is either doing the action of the sentence or is not. If the subject of the sentences is performing the action of the verb, you have an *active* sentence. If the subject is not doing the action of the verb, you have a *passive* sentence. In a passive sentence the agent of the action may or may not be named in the sentence (as in this sentence); this is one of the reasons why the passive voice can be less clear.
2. Display the following sentences either on the board or projected: a) The workers *cleared* the field so the team *could play* their game. b) The field *was cleared* so the game *could be played*.
3. Discuss the difference between the two. In the first sentence the first action is in the verb “cleared,” and the agent of that action, “the workers,” is the subject of the sentence. The second action “could play,” appears later, after its agent, “the team.” The sentence is active. In the second sentence, the first action, “cleared,” has no agent at all. We don’t know who did the clearing. The second action, “could be played,” likewise has no agent. Who is going to be playing the game? The sentence is passive.
4. Give students copies of the handout, Active/Passive Voice Exercise. Ask them to work with a partner and rewrite the sentences.
5. Discuss the rewritten sentences as a large group.
6. Have students review their most recent draft and look for instances of passive voice. Ask them to either highlight or underline sentences with a colored pencil so these sentences can be rewritten as part of the editing process.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students give examples of what they are doing when they are “active” and when they are “passive.” Discuss the difference before transitioning to the concept in writing.
- Model the process of changing from passive to active voice on several examples.

Increased Rigor

- Explain that passive voice is not always wrong. It is used by writers to achieve sentence variety or to emphasize something other than the subject. It can also be used to help with transitions of ideas or in technical writing. Have students work in pairs and read through published essays or stories. Ask them to identify use of passive voice in the reading. Identify the purpose for using passive voice in that context. Is it effective? Would the sentence have been better in active voice? Discuss examples with the class.

Active/Passive Voice Exercise

Exercise: Rewrite the following sentences to create sentences in the active voice.

1. The traffic sign was suddenly blown over by the strong wind.
2. Three trays of fresh bread were dropped by the baker's assistant.
3. All of the gas stations in town were held up by the same gang of aging criminals.
4. That song was written by my friend in the army.
5. Costumes for the play were purchased by the drama teacher with her own money.
6. The lawn furniture was broken by irresponsible party guests.
7. The dives were accomplished with great precision by the team, and the gold medal was won by them.
8. Five pounds of chocolate candy were eaten by the unfortunate German shepherd.
9. All the candles on the birthday cake had been blown out by the birthday girl.
10. The award for the best picture of the year is presented each spring by the Motion Picture Academy.

“Detail makes the difference between boring and terrific writing. It’s the difference between a pencil sketch and a lush oil painting. As a writer, words are your paint. Use all the colors.”

– Rhys Alexander

Writing Body Paragraphs

Goal

Students will understand how mode and purpose determine their approach to writing body paragraphs.

Rationale

Body paragraphs support the thesis or claim of an essay and must include relevant and significant details, evidence, or elaboration. Students must consider the rhetorical mode and purpose of the essay when planning the construction of paragraphs for support in their essays.

Student Handout

- Writing Body Paragraphs

Instructional Steps

1. Explain the purpose of writing body paragraphs and use the Student Handout: Writing Body Paragraphs to remind students about general writing tips and guidelines. Provide additional focus lessons as needed for necessary elements, such as parallel structure, imagery, or use of transition words.
2. Encourage students to consider the rhetorical mode and purpose of their writing and refer them to the specific information pertaining to the appropriate mode as they are constructing their essays.
3. Have students use a current writing assignment or prompt to create and share paragraphs appropriate to the mode and purpose. Students may work in pairs or collaborative groups to do this.
4. Share paragraphs as a class and ask students to evaluate the paragraphs produced and shared to determine if they are appropriate to the mode and purpose and identify why or why not.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide sample pre-written paragraphs and rhetorical modes for students to evaluate and use as models.

Increased Rigor

- Examine 4–5 body paragraphs from rigorous essays. Have students develop a checklist to track the methods these authors have used to develop the body paragraphs in their essays.

Writing Body Paragraphs

General Purpose and Guidelines

Body paragraphs support your thesis statement or claim and should contain one idea or aspect in each paragraph along with supporting details, evidence, or elaboration. Consider the following when you are composing these paragraphs:

- A clear topic sentence is needed to tell the reader what the paragraph is about. A topic sentence is different than the thesis statement because it introduces a supporting idea related to the overall thesis or claim.
- Body paragraphs should contain strong supporting details, examples, reasons, evidence, or facts to support the topic sentence.
- Paragraphs should follow the order described in the topic sentence and be developed with the support and elaboration based on that order.
- Paragraphs should be unified and coherent. Unity means all sentences explain or prove the main idea, and cohesion means the ideas flow smoothly and relate to one another.
- Use transitional words or phrases between paragraphs and within paragraphs to move from one idea to another.
- Maintain a consistent point of view and avoid unnecessary, sudden, or illogical shifts in point of view.
- Use parallel structure to link together similar ideas otherwise placed in separate statements.
- Consider the rhetorical mode and purpose of the essay when constructing paragraphs and include relevant information to suit the mode and purpose (see below).
- Remember to consider your audience when selecting appropriate words and vocabulary for your writing.

When writing in the **argumentative mode**, consider the following

- Argumentation means giving reasons to support a claim. Writers must start with a written claim to prove in their essays.
- Adequate research and data analysis must precede argumentative writing. Use this information to provide factual, logical, statistical, anecdotal, or textual evidence.
- Supporting sentences should contain relevant evidence and logical reasoning with justification and commentary for the reader to consider.
- Consider and address possible counterclaims or rebuttals. To do this, summarize the opposition's viewpoint, refute their claim, and summarize why the claim is not sufficient from your perspective.
- Remember the purpose of argumentative writing is to provide a claim and support it from your perspective. Persuasive writing, which is a type of argumentation, seeks to convince the reader to believe a certain view or opinion and then take action. Be sure to clarify your purpose for writing before adding persuasive elements.

When writing in the **expository or informational mode**, consider the following

- Use precise nouns, verbs, and adjectives to provide explanations and details in your writing.
- Consider the structure of your essay to best achieve your purpose. Determine which structure best fits and use it when writing the body of your essay. Possible structures include cause/effect, problem/solution, compare/contrast, chronological/sequential, order of importance, or spatial.
- Provide necessary analysis and connect ideas for unity.
- Show readers through clear examples with sufficient elaboration. A possible way to construct an expository paragraph is to start with a topic sentence, provide supporting evidence and analysis, and then create a transition to the next idea in the conclusion of the paragraph.

Connotation and Denotation

Goal

Students will improve word choice based on connotation.

Rationale

Words are not limited to one single meaning. Most words have multiple meanings, which are categorized as denotation and connotation. Denotation is the literal, dictionary definition of the word. Language expression comes from connotation and determines word use in writing.

Instructional Steps

1. Explain that denotation is the dictionary definition of a word and connotation is the associations connected to certain words or the emotional suggestions related to the word.
2. Provide the following examples for analysis: cabin/shack; aroma/stench; chef/cook; thrifty/cheap. While the definition of each pair is the same, the first word in each pair is generally more positive and the second word is more negative in connotation.
3. Give students the following words: dog, hound, puppy, mutt, canine, flea-bag, companion, seeing-eye dog, and man's best friend. Discuss whether the words have positive or negative feelings associated with each of them.
4. Provide students with a copy of a short story or article and create two lists on the board: Positive Connotation and Negative Connotation.
5. Divide the class in half to rewrite the story or article, with half the class using words with positive connotations and the other half using words with negative connotations.
6. Have students list the words they used in the appropriate column and then read their rewritten story or article aloud. Analyze the words chosen and highlight the importance of this word choice. Stress the importance of the power of words on the reader!
7. Ask students to use their current writing drafts to apply these concepts to their own individual work.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Create a "Word Wall" with lists of words that mean the same thing but have different connotations.

Increased Rigor

- Have students examine editorials or persuasive speeches to determine how the writer or speaker uses specific words (connotation) to convey their points.

Using Technology

- Use online thesauruses and dictionaries when writing to more accurately select words to express meaning.
- Compare synonym choices offered by word processing programs when writing.

Formal vs. Informal Language

Goal

Students will improve word choice based on appropriate level of formality.

Rationale

The one feature of language most responsible for establishing tone in writing is diction, or the writer's choice of words. Diction is actually a matter of appropriateness. In one situation a certain word would be appropriate while in another that word would seem out of place and a different word would fit better. Determining the appropriate word is a valuable skill for a writer.

Student Handout

- Determining Language Level

Instructional Steps

1. Explain to students the importance of choosing the appropriate diction for a piece. It might help to clarify to students that "word choice" is much like clothing choice. A swimsuit would be inappropriate at a funeral in the same way a tuxedo would be out of place at a picnic.
2. Project the following paragraphs on the board:

FORMAL: The domicile which we determined would be our primary residence during our anticipated sojourn in that region of the country exuded an aura of colonial charm not without a certain rustic exuberance, all of which we considered to be essential for our assimilation into our new environment.

MIDDLE: The house we chose while we lived temporarily in that part of the country was both picturesque and simple. We decided that we needed such a house if we were going to feel like we belonged there.

COLLOQUIAL: The place we stayed in when we spent a few years there looked like it was right out of the history books and none too fancy neither. But we figured if we were ever gonna feel like it was home, that was the way it had to be.
3. Have students identify the specific words in each paragraph that give it the characteristic quality.
4. Provide students with a copy of the handout, Determining Language Level.
5. Have them work with a partner to complete the table and the continuums.

“The greatest part of a writer’s time is spent reading, in order to write; a man will turn over half a library to make one book.”

– Samuel Johnson

6. Ask students to share their continuum either by copying on the board or by drawing it on unlined paper and posting on the designated section of the room.
7. Debrief by asking students what determines the appropriate level of language for an essay. The focus of this discussion should be on audience and purpose.
8. Have students review their most recent essay and look for places where they can replace words to be more appropriate for the audience and purpose.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Project or write a variety of sentences on the board. Ask students to identify the level of language in each.
- Rewrite the sentences with the class changing from the current type of language to the opposite. For example, project a text message. Have students rewrite the sentence in formal language.

Increased Rigor

- Review novels that contain levels of informal language. (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *Catcher in the Rye*, etc.) Have students examine the impact the use of informal language has on the overall meaning of the novel. For additional practice, ask students to rewrite several passages using formal language. How does the change impact the overall meaning?

Determining Language Level

For each of the words provided below, determine if you think the word is more formal or more informal. For each that you call formal, provide a less formal word that means close to the same thing. And for each that you call informal, provide another more formal word that is closely synonymous.

Word	Formal	Informal
dinner	supper	grub
automobile		
hassle		
expertise		
sanitation		
inquiry		
habitation		
gabby		
critter		

Next, select one of the words above and create a continuum like the one below. Be sure the continuum has five levels of formality.



Imagery

Goal

Students will create strong sensory images.

Rationale

A common weakness in student writing is general word choice that creates a boring and bland essay. Students can improve their word choice by focusing on a couple of techniques; one of the most common is the use of imagery in writing.

Instructional Steps

1. Define imagery for students: an image is composed of concrete words that create a picture in the reader's mind by appealing to any of the five senses—sight, sound, touch, taste, smell.
2. Create a 5-column chart on the board or document camera.
3. Brainstorm phrases with the class that would describe “a summer night.” First ask for students to offer phrases that would describe the “sights” of a summer night. Record their comments. Then ask for “sounds” of a summer night and record. Repeat this process for the three remaining senses: touch, taste, smell.
4. Inform students they will work collaboratively to create word lists focusing on imagery.
5. Post 5 sheets of chart paper around the classroom. Each sheet should be labeled with one of the five senses.
6. Divide students into 5 groups and send each group to a different poster.
7. Tell students they will have 3 minutes to brainstorm and record as many words they can think of to describe the particular sense. For example, the sense of sight might list words like “dusky,” “bright,” or “drab.”
8. Ask students to record the words neatly and clearly on the poster.
9. Signal students to rotate to the next poster after the time limit expires.

“I have never thought of writing as hard work, but I have worked hard to find a voice.”

– Randy Pausch, Carnegie Mellon Commencement Speech, 2008

10. Tell students to read the words already recorded on the poster and add more to the list.
11. Repeat this process until all groups have recorded on all posters.
12. Consider options for making permanent copies of the word lists. Students might add these to their writer’s notebooks or interactive notebooks for reference.
13. Pair students and ask them to focus on their current essay. Instruct them to exchange essays with their partner.
14. Have them read their partner’s essay and underline (with colored pencils) any words or phrases that could be replaced with specific words/phrases from the posters in the room.
15. Instruct the student writers to make the suggested revisions before publishing a final draft.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Include a specific phrase on each poster to narrow down the type of words for students to generate. For example, “a hot pizza,” “mowing the lawn,” etc.

Increased Rigor

- Provide sample paragraphs from mentor texts containing good use of imagery. Have students analyze the author’s use of this technique.

Interpretation and Insight

Goal

Students will use evidence, relevance, and verdict to develop more thoughtful paragraphs.

Rationale

Students often struggle with developing the reasoning for their thoughts in essays. By focusing on the aspects of evidence, relevance, and verdict, students will extend their commentary in essays beyond one sentence. Students will develop their interpretation and go beyond simply “reporting” the facts or events to interpreting the significance of the evidence.

Instructional Steps

1. Consider writing the essay as analogous to operating as a lawyer who must argue his or her case effectively.
2. Focus first on **evidence** or support. When forming a body paragraph, a writer is required to give evidence for his/her case. This evidence might be in the form of a quote from the text, facts, or details.
3. Explain the meaning or importance of the quote, fact, detail. This explains the **relevance** of the evidence. (What does this evidence have to do with the thesis? The topic sentence?)
4. Develop and present the **verdict**. (What does this evidence/relevance finally prove? Or, how does this relate to the thesis, a universal truth, or the contemporary world?)
5. Continue this pattern for every supporting detail in the body paragraphs: **E, R, and V** format. A typical outline might look as follows:
 - Topic sentence
 - Major point 1
 - Explanation
 - Evidence
 - Relevance
 - Verdict (clincher sentence)

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Ask students to examine sample paragraphs and mark the paragraphs, identifying the elements of the paragraph: topic sentence, major point, evidence, relevance, and verdict in each.

Increased Rigor

- Read mentor texts of multiple genres and examine the methods that these authors use to blend the incorporation of evidence, relevance, and verdict techniques.

Maxims and Inductive Writing

Goal

Students will be able to write an inductive paragraph.

Rationale

Most of the time, we write our paragraphs **deductively**; that is, we begin with a topic sentence that states a generality, and then we go on to demonstrate that statement's validity. Occasionally, we want to use the opposite method in which we present our details or examples first and end with a statement of the generality that we have been illustrating. This kind of writing is called **inductive** writing, and it works especially well when the development takes the form of a narrative or anecdote. In this strategy, students can employ the use of **maxims** to write inductively.

Student Handouts

- Maxims and Inductive Writing
- Maxims and Inductive Writing Practice

Instructional Steps

1. Show students the deductively written sample paragraph in their Student Handout. Then have them compare it with the inductive sample. Ask where the topic sentence is in each sample. They should be able to find the topic sentence in both.
2. Explain that writers occasionally like to vary their writing styles by writing inductively; that is, by writing the details first and the generality last.
3. Point out that in both paragraphs, the writer has told a little narrative, an anecdote. (An anecdote is a short tale about a person or about something that happened to the person.)
4. Refer students to the **maxims** that are listed in the handout. The listed maxims, (short remarks, usually no longer than a single sentence and that offer a bit of advice) were written by seventeenth-century French writer Duke François de la Rochefoucauld. The second list is comprised of remarks from nineteenth-century author Mark Twain.
5. Tell students that maxims are an excellent way to write the topic sentence in an inductively written paragraph or in a longer piece.
6. Have students write a paragraph in which the anecdote comes first and then the paragraph ends with a quotation from the list of maxims. To get them started, have them quickwrite a list of memories they might have that would fit one of the maxims in the student handout. The idea is that they will be sharing their maxims.
7. Tell students they will have about a half-hour to do the writing. It does not have to be a finished piece, but they do have to be able to read it.
8. Divide the class into small groups and have students share their maxims. The group is then to select the representative sample paragraph to share with the entire class.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Allow more time to write if it seems more time is needed. However, if there is not enough time afterward to read the maxims in reflective groups, decide if it is best to collect the papers and redistribute the next day or to have students take them home to rewrite.

Increased Rigor

- Have students apply inductive writing to a paragraph about a character taken from literature. Instead of a maxim, the final line would be a thesis statement regarding a significant character trait.

"I have often regretted my speech, never my silence."

– Maxim 1070

Maxims and Inductive Writing

Writing **deductively** is the type of composing that starts with a topic sentence stating a generality followed by the details that support the topic sentence. The below paragraph is a deductive paragraph sample:

Fishing is not my favorite summertime activity. Actually, it is not an activity I enjoy at any time, and I think I may have been cured of ever trying it again when I also cured my brother from trying to teach me how. When I was about ten, my older brother thought he'd teach me how to enjoy fishing. Besides, he said he'd take me to the Dairy Queen afterward. Since I adored my older brother and with my thoughts on the ice cream to come, I went with him to the lagoon. Upon arrival, the ducks in the lagoon paddled over to waddle out of the water and beg. He said we had to ignore them, so he set up our chairs and pulled out the fishing rods. Shooing the ducks away from the bait bucket, he said, a person has to first bait the hook, and here, he brought out a gooshy-looking potato bug. Now, a potato bug is harmless but looks like a giant oversized ant with pincers and a soft striped belly topped by a head bigger than the body. Did he want me to...to TOUCH it?? Yes, he did. The memory of once accidentally stepping on one with my bare feet still lingered, and it was all I could do to keep from shrieking. So when he tried to hand it to me while his other hand held the hook between his thumb and pointer finger, I reached for it, but the thought of touching that ugly bug made me jump just enough to cause his thumb to be impaled on the hook. He made some hugely strangled-sounding noise and dropped the potato bug which landed on my summertime-bare knee. I jerked sideways, bumping into him where he was perched on a rock beside the lagoon. He slipped off the rock and landed in duck goo. The ducks took this opportunity to knock over the bait bucket and started chowing down on whatever other bugs were in there. My brother roared at the ducks to get away, and there he was, gloriously covered in muddy duck goo, holding his thumb, still firmly hooked to the line which was attached to the pole, which slid off the bank, jerking the hook deeper into his thumb all while blood ran down his hand. Sad as that was, it was even sadder for me that I never got my Dairy Queen ice cream afterward. My brother said it was pure justice.

A paragraph is **inductive** when the details or examples are written first and the paragraph is ended with the generality (the topic sentence). The paragraph below is an inductive paragraph, ending with a maxim adopted from Duke François de la Rochefoucauld.

I was working as a lifeguard at the pool one summer when I saw Ellie the Perfect come in. Ellie is the kind of girl who seems to be Ms. Perfect in every way. She gets great grades, is the president of just about every club on campus, and drives to her perfect home every day in her perfect car. To top all that off, she doesn't have to work summers because her parents are rich. In short, she is living the perfect life. So when she came in, surrounded by her perfect friends, I was surprised that she was at a public pool. I knew she had her own pool at home. Then I spied Erik the Great, the swim team star. He was over on the side, sitting next to his best bud, Max. Ms. Perfect saw him too and went into action. Pretending to wave to someone on the other side, she started walking over when some little kid did a fast dash out of the pool, leaving a huge puddle of water on the deck. Ms. Perfect hit that puddle of water and did a half-gainer into the deep end of the pool. She gargled once and started going under. I didn't wait for her to surface, but started whistling all the kids out of the way as I jumped down and into the water to pull her out. She was coming up for air, flailing her arms windmill fashion when I reached her, pulled her around, and hooked my arm around her neck. By now, Erik the Great was on the side reaching down to help me take her out of the pool while she was gaking and coughing. Once on the deck, she pushed me away, all the while casting thunderous looks in my direction. A big crowd had gathered around us. She must have suddenly realized she was missing a unique opportunity because she looked up at Erik hovering over her and cooed how perfectly wonderful he was to rescue her like he did and how she almost drowned and wasn't he just great. As I stood there with pool water sluicing off my body, I suddenly realized how true it is that for most of mankind, gratitude is no more than a secret wish to receive even greater benefit.

Maxims and Inductive Writing Practice

Writing Directions: Select one of the maxims from Rochefoucauld in the list below and write an anecdote that ends with that quoted maxim. You may also choose to select from the second list of maxims by Mark Twain. Be ready to share your writing in class.

1. With true loves as with ghosts: everyone speaks of them, but few have seen them.
2. For most of mankind, love of justice is nothing more than the fear of suffering injustice.
3. We are so accustomed to disguising ourselves from others that we end by disguising ourselves from ourselves.
4. There are those who would never have been in love, had they never heard about love.
5. To refuse praise means that you want to be praised twice.
6. Some disgusting persons possess virtue, and others also exist who are pleasing with all their blemishes.
7. Although sloth and timidity impel us toward our duty, often our virtue gets all the credit. What often prohibits us from abandonment to a single vice is that we own many more.
8. For most of mankind, gratitude is no more than a secret wish to receive even greater benefit.
9. No matter how many nice things they say about us, we never learn anything new.
10. We admit our small failings only in order to persuade others that we have no greater ones.
11. We would often be ashamed of our finest acts if the world were aware of the motives behind them.
12. We easily forgive our friends those faults that personally do not touch us.
13. All the passions cause us to make mistakes, but love causes us to make the most ridiculous ones.

1. The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.
2. Classic: A book which people praise and don't read.
3. A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.
4. Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to.
5. It is better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid than to open it and remove all doubt.
6. The principal difference between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives.
7. Let us be thankful for the fools. But for them the rest of us could not succeed.
8. If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man.

Parallelism

Goal

Students will know how to check for and use parallel structure.

Rationale

Parallelism refers to maintaining a consistent pattern of words in a sentence or series to show that all elements have the same importance.

Instructional Steps

1. Define parallelism to students. Ask them to record the information in their interactive or their writer's notebook.
2. Write or project the following sentence: When Shelly has some free time, she likes to spend time shopping, read books, and to get manicures.
3. Explain that this sentence is not parallel because the three verbs in the series are all in different forms.
4. Ask for volunteers to correct the sentence. Note: The sentence can be revised correctly in three different ways as long as all verbs are in the same form.
5. Tell students that errors in parallel structure are most likely found with the following writing structures: phrases—especially those beginning with verbs, clauses, words in a series.
6. Have students skim their most recent essays to look for errors in parallelism. Suggest they pause when they see the words “and” and “or.” Take a moment to double-check for parallel structure. Also have students read their essays aloud; sometimes an error in parallel structure can be heard by the change in rhythm or sound of the words.
7. Ask them to underline any sentence with parallel structure using a colored pencil.
8. Check with a partner to determine if editing changes are needed and then make the appropriate corrections.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model revising sentences from students' essays in their original and corrected formats for the class using parallel structure.
- Use highlighters to visually emphasize instances where parallel structure is needed.

Increased Rigor

- Ask students to discuss in a small group why they think parallel structure is or is not important. Have them share their opinions with the whole class or in a quickwrite.

Semicolons Lesson

Goal

Students will use semicolons correctly.

Rationale

Using a semicolon to join two compound sentences allows students to increase the variety of sentence structures used in an essay. This is often an easy way to help students combine multiple simple sentences.

Instructional Steps

1. Explain to students that there are only a few rules regarding the use of semicolons.
2. Point out to them that the first rule is the use of a semicolon in place of a period or a comma followed by the word “and.” Example: My legs gave out from under me; I was obviously more tired than I realized.
3. Emphasize to students that the most common mistake people make involving semicolons is to use a comma instead of a semicolon. This results in a run-on sentence or a comma splice where what appears as one sentence should really be more than one.
4. Tell them the second rule for semicolons is to use the punctuation mark to separate two clauses separated by words we call conjunctive adverbs: *however, therefore, nevertheless, in fact, consequently, that is* to name a few. In this construction, the semicolon comes before the conjunctive adverb and a comma follows it. Example: You didn’t make a reservation for dinner; nevertheless, we can find you a table.
5. Have students practice by rewriting/revising the following sets of sentences using semicolons.
 - You gave me the wrong plane ticket in fact you called me by the wrong name and charged me the wrong amount.
 - Marigolds blossom best in full sunlight, and they hardly grow at all in the shade.
 - I waited for 3 hours in the doctor’s office and in the meantime, I studied for my upcoming calculus test.
 - Tornadoes are common in the Midwest. Hurricanes are a threat to the Gulf Coast.
 - Some people are upset when they are splashed with mud however, you seem to have taken the accident in stride.
6. Have students review their current essay and find pairs of sentences that could be combined with a semicolon. Ask them to revise these sentences for the final draft.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Ask students to work in pairs and review magazine articles looking for examples of the use of semicolons. Have students cut out the examples and glue them to construction paper. Post examples in the classroom for students to read.

Increased Rigor

- Provide students with paragraph excerpts from rigorous text with compound-complex sentences. (The opening paragraph of Charles Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities* is a good example.) Have students work in pairs and rewrite the sentences in the paragraph using semicolons as much as possible. Compare the rewritten paragraphs with another set of pairs.

Loose and Periodic Sentences

Goal

Students will learn when it is more effective to put the important information in a sentence at the beginning and when it works better placed at the end.

Rationale

The key to sentence fluency and variety in writing is distinguishing between different types of sentences and using them effectively. For the purpose of analyzing sentence structure, we categorize English sentences in several ways. One of the most basic but still useful is the distinction between loose and periodic sentences.

Student Handout

- Loose and Periodic Sentence Exercise

Instructional Steps

NOTE: Before beginning this focus lesson, students might find it more beneficial to have completed lessons in sentence combining.

1. Project or write the following two sentences on the board: a) We wondered how we would ever pay our bills with the costs of food, gasoline, and clothing rising every week. b) With the costs of food, gasoline, and clothing rising every week, we wondered how we would ever pay our bills.
2. Explain that the first sentence is an example of a loose sentence. Loose sentences are those in which the important information appears early and additional details follow. The key information of this sentence, *we wondered how we would ever pay our bills*, comes first. The additional information, *with the costs of food, gasoline, and clothing rising every week*, follows. The sentence could have ended both grammatically and logically after “bills.” While the additional information is explanatory and helpful, it is not necessary.
3. The second sentence, the periodic sentence, is the opposite structure with the important information at or almost at the end. The sentence does not end, either logically or grammatically, until the reader gets to the period. Since the important information is at the end, the information is presented in a more emphatic manner.
4. Read the first sentence on the Student Handout: Loose and Periodic Sentence Exercise. Ask students to identify the type of sentence first. Then, as a large group, rewrite the sentence so it is the opposite type.
5. Have students work with a partner to identify and rewrite the other five sentences.
6. Share and discuss the students’ sentences.
7. Have students review their current essay and look for examples of loose and periodic sentences. Do they need to be rewritten for emphasis? If so, note this as part of the editing process.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Display a few more examples for students before asking them to work on the exercise.

Increased Rigor

- Instruct students to review their current novel or text (or most recently completed). Have them think of five examples of each type of sentence and record these examples on notebook paper.

Loose and Periodic Sentence Exercise

Exercise: Some of the following sentences are loose; some are periodic. Rewrite the loose sentences to make them periodic, and the periodic sentences to make them loose. Decide whether the rewritten sentences are as effective as the originals. (The easiest way to do this is to begin by locating the subject and predicate, and then rearrange the rest of the sentence as necessary.)

1. Only if we are vigilant, only if we are alert, only if we require the most excellent performance in our professionals, will we receive the kind of medical care we as an aging population so desperately need.
2. With the cymbals crashing, the glockenspiels gleaming in the sun, and the drum major high-stepping with style and flair, the marching band impressed the holiday crowd.
3. We tried so hard to find the missing suitcase, looking in all the closets of the house, asking the guests to search the trunks of their cars, and even crawling under the porch in case a mischievous child had put it there as a prank.
4. Even though the sky was bright and there was no threat of rain, the atmosphere of the abandoned mine camp was eerily threatening.
5. The guests were laughing gently because the host was quite embarrassed to acknowledge that the small children, whom he had assumed were asleep upstairs, had been munching on the hors d'oeuvres for about an hour and a half.
6. Strumming his guitar, singing the words he could remember, and inserting nonsense syllables when he couldn't, the folk singer reminded us of the coffee-house nights of our college years.

“With sixty staring me in the face, I have developed inflammation of the sentence structure and a definite hardening of the paragraphs.”

– James Thurber

Sentence Variety

Goal

Students will learn ten ways to vary their sentence structure.

Rationale

Sentence variety adds to the interest and style of a piece of writing. Too many of the same type of sentence creates a text that is repetitious and tedious. These general methods of varying sentences will help to “spice” up an essay, analysis, or narrative.

Student Handout

- Ten Ways to Vary Sentences

Instructional Steps

1. Provide students with a copy of the handout, Ten Ways to Vary Sentences.
2. Review each of the ten suggestions to be sure students understand the different sentence structures.
3. Stress to students that incorporating these methods is probably best completed in the revision stage of the writing process.
4. Ask students to retrieve their latest piece of writing.
5. Instruct them to look for sentences that could be changed using one of the methods on the handout. Note: some students might find it helpful to require a minimum number of changes. For example, students might be instructed to change five sentences using different methods. Students might also find the task more approachable if working with a partner.
6. Tell students to underline the sentences they plan to revise. Have students use a colored pencil or highlighter.
7. Have them rewrite the sentence in its new form in the margin of their paper. As they rewrite their essays, these sentences will be used in the final draft.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Start with only two of the methods and add additional tips as students are ready.

Increased Rigor

- Locate a newspaper article containing mostly factual information and challenge students to rewrite the article using various types of sentences.

Ten Ways to Vary Sentences

- 1. Write in an inverted order.**
Down the street came the parade.
An interesting pet was my cat,
Sugar. Up the hall came the group
of giggling cheerleaders.
- 2. Start with an infinitive or infinitive phrase.**
To finish painting the bathroom is
a huge accomplishment. To begin
my new job, I plan to be early on the
first day.
- 3. Start with a gerund or gerund phrase.**
Evaluating an essay takes time
and patience. Observing the team
celebrate their victory was
a rewarding experience.
- 4. Write with a prepositional phrase.**
From the top of the building, we could
see the damage from the tornado.
Since my daughter's birth, I have
worked at home.
- 5. Write an exclamatory sentence.**
How excited we were to be nominated
for the award! What the group of
volunteers did today was amazing!
- 6. Write a sentence with a compound subject.**
The musicians and singers requested
more rehearsal time before the first
performance. The refrigerator and
dishwasher were delivered yesterday
but at different times.
- 7. Write a sentence with a compound verb/predicate.**
The toddler stomped and screamed
when her mother told her she couldn't
buy the new doll. The coach listened
and praised her players on their
behavior after the loss at the regional
tournament.
- 8. Begin with an adverb.**
Forcefully, she slammed the car door.
Carefully, I crept down the icy sidewalk.
- 9. Start with an introductory word.**
No, you cannot drive the car tonight.
Still, people were not happy with the
mayor's plan for a new bridge.
- 10. Write an imperative sentence with "you" understood.**
Consider your options before selecting
a college. Stop arguing with each other.

Showing vs. Telling

Goal

Students will improve their writing by using specific words to paint a picture.

Rationale

Another method of adding excitement and interest to writing is through the use of specific word choice that “shows” the reader what is happening instead of merely “telling.”

Student Handout

- Telling Sentences

Instructional Steps

1. Post the following sentences on the board or display with a projector:

I saw birds in the sky.

I watched the Canadian geese fly south in a V shape until they disappeared.

Grandmother’s house smelled good on Thanksgiving.

Aromas of turkey, gravy, and pumpkin floated out of Grandmother’s kitchen on Thanksgiving.

2. Ask students to identify the differences between the individual sentences in each pair. Circle key words that are specific in the second sentence in each pair.
3. Stress to students that the second sentences “show” the reader by using specific, concrete words instead of “telling” the reader in a general way. Make sure students understand the difference.
4. Arrange students in pairs or small groups of three, depending on class size.
5. Give students a copy of the handout, Telling Sentences.
6. Assign one sentence to each group. Explain the task: rewrite each sentence so the words “show” the reader instead of “tell” the reader about the object or event. Rewritten versions may be more than one sentence in length.
7. Share revised sentences with the entire class. The rest of the class listens for powerful words or phrases. They should take notes to help them remember these words as they might use them in their own writing.

8. Brainstorm a list of words students overuse in their writing that “tell” the reader. They might need to review their essays to find words to put on the list. Typical words might be “good,” “bad,” “tired.”
9. Have the same groups work on creating a continuum from abstract to concrete.
10. Assign a word from the brainstorm list and have each group create the continuum on cardstock that can be displayed in the classroom. Share the following examples to be sure students understand the task.

abstract —————> concrete
animal canine dog beagle Fido

11. Post continuums in the classroom, perhaps on a Word Wall, for student reference as they write.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Rewrite the first two sentences working together as a whole class.

Increased Rigor

- Assign students a “scavenger hunt” to find examples of “showing” words, phrases, or sentences. Ask them to collect examples of this type of writing from the various rigorous texts previously studied in class. With each example they find, instruct students to analyze and explain the impact the text has on the overall literary element development. For example, if the text is a description of a character, explain the impact of that description on the overall character development.

Telling Sentences

Below is a list of 10 “telling” sentences. Revise the sentence below that was assigned to you. You may need as many as 3–4 sentences to do this. Use specific concrete words and phrases so the sentence “shows” the reader the image or characteristics.

1. The pizza was delicious.
2. The room was so messy.
3. He was so angry.
4. The party was wild.
5. The class is exciting.
6. The weather was bad.
7. The morning was beautiful.
8. He is sick.
9. The cafeteria was chaos.
10. The restaurant was fancy.

Thesis Statements

Goal

Students will write stronger thesis statements.

Rationale

A student who can write a strong thesis statement has a much better chance of developing a coherent essay. A concise thesis statement captures the essay's ideas into a sentence and helps to organize the points, thus providing the reader with a guide to the essay.

Instructional Steps

1. Explain the characteristics of a thesis statement to students.
 - a) It is a full sentence.
 - b) It states the topic of the essay and contains an assertion about that topic.
 - c) It is debatable—not a statement of the obvious or a statement of fact. But rather, it requires convincing proof of the validity.
 - d) It is specific, focusing on particular aspects rather than general statements.
 - e) It controls all other paragraphs in the essay.
2. Tell students that the class is going to practice the steps for creating a thesis sentence. Have a prompt ready appropriate to the level of your class.

Project the prompt. (Example: Pick one of the novels you read this year. Select 2–3 characters and discuss which of those characters best expresses the theme of the book and why.)

Step 1: Be sure you understand what the prompt is asking you to do. (Choose, discuss, and explain.) **Step 2:** Decide on a topic, such as characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Step 3: Narrow the topic. (compare and contrast Scout and Jem)

Step 4: Put the topic in a sentence. (In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Scout and Jem have two distinct views of the events in Mayfield.)

Step 5: Add the argument, viewpoint, or debatable assertion. (In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Scout sees the events through a lens of innocence, which is essentially more compelling than Jem's disillusioned or cynical view.)
3. Provide students with 2–3 writing prompts appropriate for their level from state assessment, AP exams, Common Core writing tasks, etc.
4. Have students work with a partner. Students develop a thesis statement following the five steps detailed above.
5. Share several examples with the class and debrief the strong and weak points.
6. Apply these five steps to the current essay assignment.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Take the class through several examples, from prompt to thesis statement, before breaking into groups.

Increased Rigor

- Have students work independently and then pair up to evaluate each other's thesis statements.

Tone in Lyrics

Goal

Students will recognize tone of popular songs.

Rationale

Recognizing tone in its various avatars is a goal for English students, and lyrics contained in music are a source for good examples. That music lyrics have a tone should not be a surprise for students since one of the reasons students enjoy the experience of listening is the messages lyrics deliver. For variety, tone in music could be a good fit for teachers who need other resources.

Instructional Steps

1. Explain to students that music reflects the culture and time in which it was written, but that the lyrics, too, have tone. Stress that tone is the author's attitude toward something. For example, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again" was written in 1863, a time when the Civil War was still raging. The title is the first line in the song. The next line is "Hoorah. Hoorah." Ask students what tone this implies.
2. Ask students to predict what the lyrics might be about in Cat Stevens' 1971 "Peace Train." What would they expect to hear with a title like this or what the connotation of the title (i.e., the feeling given by an association with a word or a thing) implies? Explain to them that Americans would not pull out of Vietnam until 1972 as the war continued. As they know, musicians frequently create lyrics to show how they are feeling about the times or the lives of their peers.
3. Challenge them to look through their own collection to find music lyrics that indicate a tone in some way. After they listen to the music, have them design and write a one-pager that explains and illustrates the tone in one musical selection. (For one-pager directions, see *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*.)
4. Let students know that they will be sharing their one-pagers with the rest of the class.

NOTE: To avoid possible copyright infringement, do not copy off lyrics to give to students.

“You write with ease to show your breeding,

But easy writing’s curst hard reading.”

– Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *Clio’s Protest*

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Bring in more examples of lyrics that reflect their culture or time and go over them with the whole group until students feel more comfortable identifying tone.

Increased Rigor

- Suggest, if they have access to the music, that students listen to Ben Harper’s “Excuse Me Mr.” (or another musical selection that has characters) and create and perform role play of the lyrics for the rest of the class. They will be discussing the elements of their role play that demonstrate the tone in the music.

Using Technology

- Use a PBS site to access American Roots Music information that can be studied in the classroom. The lesson plans are at <http://tinyurl.com/be9l2wq>.
- Internet Resources for lyrics:
http://www.ted.com/talks/bobby_mcferrin_hacks_your_brain_with_music.html
<http://www.rootsworld.com/>
<http://store.mindblue.com/litega.html>

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Tone/Satire Map

Goal

Students will have a clear understanding of what makes a piece satirical in tone.

Rationale

Having students work through the creation of a graphic tone/satire “map” in collaboration with a team enables all in the team to refine an understanding of what tone and satire are and sharpen their facility with forensic language.

Student Handout

- Tone and the Elements of Satire

Instructional Steps

1. Explain the standard definition of **tone** (the author’s attitude toward the subject of what she or he has written or toward the audience and even himself or herself).
2. Add that every text has a tone. Every writer has an attitude toward the subject, even if that attitude is objective.
3. Have students listen to a recording of the 1937 Hindenburg disaster on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgWHbpMVQ1U&feature=fvwp&NR=1>
4. Ask them to think of and list as many words as they can to describe the announcer’s attitude as he describes the incident.
5. Ask the students to volunteer three words they listed to describe the announcer’s attitude. As they contribute words, scribe those on the whiteboard or a document camera. If the same word is announced more than once, put tally marks beside the word and continue with the list.
6. Point out to students that in speaking as in writing, the choice of words (diction) is one of the determiners of tone. As proof, point to the numbers of words that were selected by students, including those that were common to more than one person.
7. Have them look at the Student Handout on Tone and Satire and direct them to highlight the definition of tone.
8. Ask them to focus on satire. Explain this is a type of literature that occurs when the author wants to encourage change and the tone turns ironic and critical.

9. Explain that a) writers and speakers who use the skill of satire have a desire to see reform and that b) satire usually shows in irony or c) criticism. All three combined in one essay or other writing develops “satire.”
10. Divide the class into groups of four.
11. Review the list of characteristics and elements of satire and instruct the groups to create a large tone/satire map or a graphic that depicts the examples of satire. The example could be from literature, a television program, a movie scene, a cartoon, or any other text or media. Most classes know about and use Swift’s “A Modest Proposal” and the website “The Onion.” <http://www.theonion.com/>.
12. Ask them to be ready to explain their visuals and post for a display that will serve as a visual reminder of the aspects of a satirical tone as students continue in their studies.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Show a YouTube video on parody, a type of tone.
- Have students brainstorm phrases to describe the tone/parody. (“The New iPhone 5”) <http://tinyurl.com/ajttvzb>

Increased Rigor

- Invite students to pick an issue that concerns them and write a satirical song, poem, or fairy tale that addresses it.
- Have students work in groups of 3 to create and present a satirical television commercial.

Tone and the Elements of Satire

Tone is the author's attitude toward the subject, the audience, and even the self. Every writer has an attitude toward a subject, even if the attitude is objective.

Examples of words that show tone:

Arrogant	Dark	Grim	Morbid	Sacred
Angry	Depressed	Gruesome	Naïve	Sad
Anxious	Disapproving	Hopeful	Optimistic	Sarcastic
Apprehensive	Disgusted	Indignant	Playful	Satirical
Bitter	Excited	Insulting	Reflective	Serious
Cautious	Frantic	Irate	Resentful	Sorrowful
Comical	Gloomy	Ironic	Romantic	Whining

There are many other words that "show" tone/attitude in writing.

Satire is a genre of literature in which the writer uses **irony** and **criticism** and **a desire to see reform or change of society's flaws**. In order to be satirical in TONE, the writer has to want to see reform, and he or she uses irony and criticism in the written piece.

Horatian satire is light and humorous. **Juvenalian** satire is dark and bitter.

Specific types of satire:

- Parody:** A humorous imitation of a serious subject.
- Caricature:** Humorously exaggerates a feature or quality or characteristic of a person or group.
- Burlesque:** Talks about a serious subject in a trivial manner or an unimportant subject in a serious manner.

People who write satire or are satirical use several methods:

- wit**, which is a quick mind and great verbal skill.
- sarcasm**, a type of irony intended to insult and wound.
- repartee**, the ability to answer quickly with wit and sarcasm.
- allusion**, referring to something without directly mentioning it.
- understatement**, stating something and making it seem less important than it actually is.
- exaggeration**, overstating something; to make something seem more important than it actually is.

Tone Vocabulary

Goal

Students will have a bank of words to use for identifying and discussing tone.

Rationale

Students often have a difficult time writing about tone because they lack a vocabulary to accurately express themselves. Tone, the author's attitude toward the subject, the audience, and even the self, is a central feature of interpreting language and understanding meaning. To facilitate student understanding of tone, this foundational activity will give students the language to use when analyzing and writing about tone.

Instructional Steps

1. Distribute 3 x 5 cards or the same size slips of paper with the instruction to write three words that indicate an attitude a person might have toward something: angry, ecstatic, sorrowful, etc. Write one word per card.
2. Have students number the words on their cards 1 to 3. Once they have finished numbering, ask them to stand up.
3. Begin with one designated student, to share his/her word with the class. Then go around the room with each student stating the first word on the card. If the word has already been said, he or she should state the second word.
4. Tell the students they are to sit down when all their words have been shared with the class.
5. Collect the cards when all students are sitting down. Prepare an alphabetical list of the words collected to distribute to the class the next day.
6. Post a large copy of the list of words on the wall for students to use when speaking or writing about tone.
7. Allow students to add to the list on the wall anytime they think of a new tone word. The advantage of spending 10 minutes on this activity is that everyone now has an idea of how tone might be described.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Remind students that if they do not know a word on the list, they should ask for the definition.

Increased Rigor

- Have students rewrite a selected paragraph using tone words they can find on the class list.

Transitions

Goal

Students will be able to identify and use transitional words and phrases.

Rationale

In the process of writing papers, students often struggle to connect their ideas in a way that flows smoothly. In addition, students often struggle to achieve clarity and/or persuasive appeal because of their inability to connect ideas with strong transition words that clarify relationships. The reader will struggle to get from one idea to the next without effective transitions.

Student Handout

- Common Transitional Words and Phrases

Instructional Steps

1. Clarify the role of transitions for students:
 - a) Transitions are phrases or words used to connect one idea to the next.
 - b) Transitions are used by the author to help the reader progress from one significant idea to the next.
 - c) Transitions also show the relationship between the main idea and the support the writer gives for those ideas within a paragraph or sentence.
 - d) Transitions have a variety of specific uses.
2. Select an essay paragraph from a published author. Be sure the paragraph uses transitions effectively.
3. Write the series of sentences but do not include transitions. Use 3 x 5 cards and write one sentence per card.
4. Arrange students into groups of three or four; distribute a set of cards and a sheet of chart paper.
5. Have students discuss the cards and move them around, putting them in an order that makes sense.
6. Provide students with a copy of the handout, Common Transitional Words and Phrases. Tell students to select the best transitional word or phrase to connect the ideas in the paragraph.
7. Have students write their finished paragraph on chart paper and post in the classroom.
8. Ask students to complete a Gallery Walk and read the various paragraphs.
9. Provide students with a copy of the original paragraph.

10. Debrief the activity, focusing students on the different paragraphs and different transitions.
11. Instruct students to review their current essay. Highlight transition words used in the essay. Have students write in transitional words where needed.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Circle places in the students' essays where you think they need transitional words; give them a choice between two transitional words or phrases in the first spot, then have them continue to write in their own choices in any other places you have indicated.

Increased Rigor

- Have students write their paragraphs independently, and then share them with each other in groups of 3 or 4, comparing and evaluating the differences among their versions.

Other AVID Resources

- *High School Writing Teacher Guide*

Common Transitional Words and Phrases

Ways to transition between opening sentences and the thesis:

This (situation, story, case) illustrates the point that...

This (situation, story, case) is an example of today's problem of...

As in the above situation, I believe...

Although some people believe _____, I think...

In a similar way...

In view of this...

Today...

Ways to transition between body paragraphs:

One of the most important reasons why ... is...

Another point is ... Besides...

Similarly ... In fact...

Also ... In other words...

Moreover ... Next...

Likewise ... Nevertheless...

In addition ... On the other hand...

Furthermore ... However...

Another example of this is ... Consequently...

Ways to transition from body paragraphs to the conclusion:

All things considered ... In conclusion...

Finally ... Lastly...

To sum up ... It becomes clear that...

Thus ... Therefore, in summary...

As a result ... Clearly...

Obviously ... From this we see...

Listed below are words you can use to show:

Support

as an example, for example, further, furthermore, similarly, also, for instance, as shown by

Main Points

and most important, a major development, there are three reasons why, remember that, now this is important

Contrast

on the one hand/on the other hand, on the contrary, in contrast, however, yet, still, nevertheless, not withstanding, for all that, by contrast, at the same time, although, while, a different view, in spite of, despite

Addition

one, another, similarly, moreover, furthermore, in addition, too, equally important, next, finally, first, second, third, besides, likewise, in the same way

Comparison

similarly, likewise, in like manner, both, each, in the same way

Conclusion

therefore, thus, then, consequently, as a consequence, as a result, accordingly, finally, for this (these) reason(s), on that account, because of, under these conditions, since

Explanation

for example, to illustrate, by way of illustration, to be specific, specifically, in particular, thus, for instance, in other words

Concession

naturally, granted, of course, to be sure, although, despite, in spite of, not withstanding, for all, while

Time

when, immediately, upon, since, first, earlier, meanwhile, at the same time, in the meantime, soon afterward, subsequently, later

Summation, Repetition, Intensification

to summarize, in brief, in short, in fact, indeed, in other words

Writing Conclusions

Goal

Students will be able to identify and apply elements for writing strong conclusions.

Rationale

As they prepare to write conclusions, students often complain they have nothing more to say. In an attempt to help the struggling masses, teachers say: “Summarize, tie back to your thesis, and state a universal truth.” (Not bad advice!) Confused and uncertain about what these words of wisdom mean, and with a certain degree of desperation, students simply repeat the thesis, word-for-word, and call it a wrap. The result? An essay that seems to lose “steam” and fizzle out.

Student Handout

- Techniques for Conclusions

Instructional Steps

1. Explain to students that the conclusion is the place to reinforce the essay’s point and help the reader to understand why the point matters in the grand scheme of things (answering the “so what?”).
2. Share with students a common way to represent a conclusion: inverting the introduction triangle so the narrow end, representing the specific focal point (the thesis), is on top and the wide end, representing significant implications to the greater society, is at the bottom.
 - a) Summary: re-emphasize the thesis, but do not repeat it word for word.
 - b) Broader background: relate the thesis to a point with larger implications for the reader or the world.
 - c) Intensified insight: reinforce the significance of the argument; leave the reader thinking about the points made in the essay, considering some action or recognizing a “universal truth.”
3. Provide students with a copy of the handout, Techniques for Conclusions. Review each type of conclusion, highlighting words that demonstrate vivid images, quotations, or calls to action.
4. Arrange students in small groups. Give each group copies of a published essay.
5. Instruct students to read the thesis statement and find where in the conclusion a reference is made back to it. Key question for group discussion: “How did the writer summarize the thesis?” Have students discuss how the writer referenced the thesis without restating it directly.
6. Conduct a class discussion on the methods used by the writer.
7. Have students look at each sample again and identify how the writers related their thesis to a broader point (if they did). For those who didn’t, ask students how that could have been accomplished.

8. Re-examine each sample again and identify the “intensified insight” made by each writer. Key question:
“How did the writer answer the ‘so what’ of his/her main point?”
9. Apply this knowledge to students’ current writing projects. Tell them to exchange their rough draft with a partner.
10. Have them examine their partner’s conclusion in the same way they just did with the sample, highlighting thesis statements, broader statements, and intensified insight.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Present the focus lesson before students finish the body section of the essay and then develop a conclusion as a large group.
- Have students work in pairs to develop the conclusion after the focus lesson is presented.

Increased Rigor

- Challenge students to identify effective conclusions in the texts they encounter and share ones of particular interest with the class.

“When you catch an adjective, kill it.”

– Mark Twain

Techniques for Conclusions

A good conclusion wraps up an essay in a memorable and powerful way. In doing so, a strong conclusion reminds readers of the gist of the essay and leaves them feeling that they know a good deal more than when they began. Effective strategies for concluding an essay include vivid images, quotations, and calls for action.

Concluding With a Vivid Image

It is, in any case, finally that I end up having to trust not to laugh, not to snicker. Even as you regard me in these lines, I try to imagine your face as you read. You who read “Aria,” especially those of you with your theme-divining yellow felt pen poised in your hand, you for whom this essay is yet another “assignment,” please do not forget that it is my life I am handing you in these pages—memories that are as personal for me as family photographs in an old cigar box.

RICHARD RODRIGUEZ

From a postscript to “Aria: A Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood”

Concluding with a Quotation

Despite the celebrity that accrued to her and the air of awesomeness with which she was surrounded in her later years, Miss Keller retained an unaffected personality, certain that her optimistic attitude toward life was justified. “I believe that all through these dark and silent years God has been using my life for a purpose I do not know,” she said. “But one day I shall understand and then I will be satisfied.”

ALDEN WHITMAN

From an essay on Helen Keller (June 2, 1968)

Concluding with a Call to Action

It is now almost 40 years since the invention of nuclear weapons. We have not yet experienced a global thermonuclear war—although on more than one occasion we have come tremulously close. I do not think our luck can hold forever. Men and machines are fallible, as recent events remind us. Fools and madmen do exist, and sometimes rise to power. Concentrating always on the near future, we have ignored the long-term consequences of our actions. We have placed our civilization and species in jeopardy.

Fortunately, it is not yet too late. We can safeguard the planetary civilization and the human family if we so choose. There is no more important or urgent issue.

CARL SAGAN

“The Nuclear Winter”

The concluding paragraph provides the last opportunity for a writer to impress the message of an essay on the readers’ minds and to create desired effects. As such, it is well worth the time and effort to develop a strong conclusion.

Writing Introductions

Goal

Students will identify and use three important elements in an introductory paragraph.

Rationale

Students often struggle with how to write an introduction. They need clear direction about—and practice with—pulling together a cohesive and engaging introduction. No single method of opening an essay will always be the best choice, even an appropriate choice. An essay cannot always begin with a rhetorical question, or a joke, or a statistic. What works in one setting will not necessarily work in another. This lesson helps students to uncover the elements of an introduction and then apply that knowledge to their own work.

Student Handout

- Techniques for Introductions

Instructional Steps

1. Gather and copy several sample introductions from different types of essays (or from one type of essay if students are all writing a particular type of paper—samples from openings of books or non-fiction texts are good options).
2. Arrange students into triads; give each student a highlighter and an introduction.
3. Have students work in their triads to review the introduction and highlight what they believe to be the thesis statement.
4. Have triads share their thesis statements and write them on the board. Project a copy of one of the introductions. Discuss, as a class, whether or not the thesis has been accurately identified.
5. Define opening sentences for students and briefly explain their role in an introduction.
6. Have triads underline the opening statements.
7. Distribute the Student Handout: Techniques for Introductions, and review the various techniques with students.
8. Have students identify which technique was used in the example.
9. Ask students to read the sentences between the opening and thesis statements.
10. Discuss the way the author's transition sentences move from the opening to the thesis. What makes it an effective transition?
11. Have students work on their current writing projects. Tell them to exchange their introduction drafts with a partner and examine their partner's introduction in the same way they just did with the samples: highlighting the thesis and underlining the opening sentences.

12. Ask them to read and assess the transition sentence.
13. Have partners evaluate and revise their introductions together, using information from the focus lesson.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Present the focus lesson before students begin their essay and then develop an introduction as a large group. All students use the introduction for their essay.
- Have students work in pairs to develop the introduction after the focus lesson is presented.

Increased Rigor

- Challenge students to identify effective introductions in the texts they encounter and share ones of particular interest with the class.

Using Technology

- The following blog using “Notable Sentences for Imitation and Creation” is a great resource for teachers: <http://greatsentences.blogspot.com/2007/06/strong-leads-for-imitation-and.html>. It is interactive and has several links to other notable sentences.

“Writing is an act of faith, not a trick of grammar.”

– E. B. White

Techniques for Introductions

An introduction usually has three parts:

- Opening or lead sentences: several sentences that grab the readers' attention
- Transition sentences: sentences that connect the lead to the thesis statement
- Thesis statement: single sentence that states the main idea/claim of the essay

There are many types of lead statements that a writer can use. Some of the most common are listed below.

1. Ask a question.

A meaningful, often rhetorical, question can get the reader thinking about the topic of the essay. As common as this method is, there are some pitfalls in this approach that a writer should watch for when using. A reader may answer in a way that makes it hard for the writer to proceed. If the question asks, "Haven't you always wondered what it would be like to soar above the canyons in a hang glider?" and the reader shudders and says no, the writer has lost the audience. If the question is not rhetorical, the risk is even greater. "Who was the greatest quarterback ever to play in the NFL?" might elicit a response of "I don't care."

2. Use a quotation.

Another way to get a reader's attention is to use dialogue or a quotation that will interest the reader and lead to the point the writer wants to make. Consider using a quotation as an epigram. A quotation is a nice technique that allows the writer to return to that quotation near the end of the essay and thereby achieve some unity.

3. Supply statistics.

Sometimes numbers are surprising, and if surprising the audience is appropriate, this can work as a good introduction technique. But numbers quickly become obsolete, and irrelevant statistics are counterproductive. Statistics are easily verified, so the writer needs to be accurate.

4. Tell a relevant story/anecdote.

One way to get a reader's attention is to use an anecdote. This is a story that will interest the reader and lead to the point the writer wants to make. The important word here is "relevant." This is often a good method for establishing a comfortable atmosphere. Keep the anecdote short and be sure the connection to the topic is established soon.

5. Mention an allusion to history or literature.

This can work well, especially to demonstrate that the writer is knowledgeable about the topic. The support of a generally recognized or admired figure in previous literature or history can be an effective way to begin an essay.

6. Provide a definition.

Still another way to get a reader's attention is to start with a definition, especially if your topic is centered on a key term or concept that is complex or unique. Avoid dictionary definitions because these are often trite and will bore the reader. Instead, use an expanded definition.



Oral Language

Introduction

Listening and Speaking are important components of the English language arts classroom both for the sake of increasing students' skills as listeners and as speakers and also for the sake of increasing rigor with respect to reading and writing.

When we develop students' listening skills, we help them to evaluate others' spoken ideas critically and to then speak persuasively and credibly about their own ideas. As we engage students in speaking about their reading and writing, we increase the level of student critical thinking and ownership of the learning, tap into students' inherent need to socialize (based on brain development), and create a community of thinkers who can hold intellectual discourse.

The Common Core State Standards further articulate the importance of listening and speaking by stipulating that "to become college and career ready, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner—built around important content in various domains. They must be able to contribute appropriately to these conversations, to make comparisons and contrasts, and to analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in accordance with the standards of evidence appropriate to a particular discipline. Whatever their intended major or profession, high school graduates will depend heavily on their ability to listen attentively to others so that they are able to build on others' meritorious ideas while expressing their own clearly and persuasively."

Common sense tells us that students who are comfortable speaking in both formal and informal situations are well prepared to navigate situations both in and out of school. The primary goal is to help build students' confidence and their ability to articulate and support their ideas. Teachers need to provide multiple opportunities for students to engage in oral presentations both formal and informal, providing the skills and guidelines students need to be successful at public speaking, reaching group compromise, and extending class discussion.

While informal speaking may not require much direct instruction, creating situations that promote active participation by all students is something that needs to be deliberately planned. Whole group discussion, for example, is a common way to engage students in informal speaking, but it is imperative that teachers and students expect every child to participate orally every day, and that requires planning on the part of the teacher. Teachers have to know how they will call on students to ensure equitable participation, not relying on volunteers for every answer. If teachers give students wait/think time and some "rehearsal" through a quickwrite or a pair-share, students will be better prepared to share in informal discussions. This enables teachers to regularly call on students who are not raising their hands, encouraging the quieter students to participate more and helping everyone realize they need to be prepared and engaged at all times.



Formal speaking can be taught directly as students read, listen to, and analyze great speeches such as the *Gettysburg Address*, Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech, Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech, Lois Lowry's acceptance speech of the Newbery Award, or a compelling TED Talk. Students can be led to understand what makes a good speech or a good speaker through the trial and error of giving presentations, performances, and speeches with the opportunity to focus on targeted skills such as organization of ideas, using visual supports, enunciation, projection, and eye contact. Inherent in this process is the need for students to think metacognitively about their work, setting goals for their skill development and reflecting on their progress and learning after each formal speaking opportunity.

The Oral Language section is divided into Listening and Speaking, with Speaking subdivided into Discussion and Debate, Presentations, Interpretation and Performance, and Speeches and Public Speaking. These subsections contain resources and strategies for helping students listen actively and critically and engage in substantive discussion, debate, presentations, performances, and speeches. Scoring guides are provided for each type of speaking for use as self, peer, or teacher evaluation and feedback. There are also additional resources in Appendix A for structuring collaboration so that students have accountable and meaningful talk with their peers. Appendix A also reinforces the need for developing a safe classroom environment; which must be created for oral language skills to flourish.

While using any of the strategies in the Oral Language section, it is important for teachers to see themselves as "coaches" who guide student progress by encouraging, correcting, probing, and pushing while a student is engaged in speaking or listening. Teachers must hold students accountable

for using the oral language skills they have been taught, and part of that accountability includes setting up structures for students to follow while learning and practicing effective speaking and listening skills. Here are some examples:

- Whenever a student or the teacher is formally presenting to the class, the audience should have a task to complete (notes, a study guide, a peer evaluation, etc.); the speaker must be accountable for good communication to his/her audience, and the audience must be accountable for being good listeners.
- Before they share their ideas with the class or answering the teacher's questions aloud, give students an opportunity to write and/or pair-share their ideas so they can figure out what they think and so they can formalize their oral responses. This is especially important for English language learners as well as struggling readers/writers who need the "rehearsal" time that writing or a pair-share provides.
- Give struggling speakers the opportunity to share someone else's idea (that they heard in a pair-share) or to read a pre-written idea given to them by the teacher as a way to speak "safely" in front of their peers. Remove this scaffold as the struggling speaker gains confidence.
- To reinforce the main ideas that students should be capturing as effective listeners, provide visuals to supplement verbal instructions/information. As students, especially English language learners and students who struggle with auditory input, build their listening and attention skills, they need visual models to "hook" into the auditory input. These visual supplements can also occur after the listening to help students check their understanding of the main ideas they think they've heard.



Listening

Introduction

In order for students to be critical consumers of information that comes to them through auditory channels, they must be able to attend to and comprehend verbal messages as well as to evaluate the quality and credibility of the message. Being able to discern a speaker's intention or purpose and point of view allows students to think more critically about the validity of the content, analyzing, evaluating, and applying the information. Listening skills can be enhanced in a number of ways, and teaching students how to be active listeners is a crucial first step. Asking

them to paraphrase, summarize, question, take Cornell notes, or create graphic organizers for "oral texts" (conversations, speeches, presentations, performances, etc.) puts these skills into action. Another necessary step is to teach students how to listen critically—that means listening to discern purpose, bias, validity, and other aspects of a speaker's message. The two strategies in this section demonstrate how teachers might engage students in both active and critical listening.

Active Listening

Goal

Students will understand and practice the principles of active listening.

Rationale

Students often come to school unaware of the “etiquette” of listening, and they often harbor the belief that what their peers say is unimportant. To combat both of these mindsets, we must teach students the habits of active listening and then hold them accountable for using these habits during classroom interactions. This will foster greater collaboration and inquiry as students learn to really hear what others say.

Instructional Steps

1. Partner students so they can participate in a pair-share activity—they should be facing each other.
2. Have students in each partnership label themselves an “A” and a “B.”
3. Have all students close their eyes and think about an important place to them. Ask them to visualize the place—what it looks like, what it sounds like, what it feels like, etc.
4. Ask students to open their eyes after a few seconds of thinking.
5. Ask each “A” to spend ONE MINUTE (time this) explaining their important place to their partner (“B”). “B” only listens during the one minute.
6. Ask each “B” to spend ONE MINUTE explaining their important place to their partner (“A”). “A” only listens during the one minute.
7. Ask students what their partners did that encouraged them to keep speaking. List their ideas on the board.
8. Have students switch partners and repeat the A/B process (Steps 3–6), describing an important person this time.
9. Add to the brainstormed ideas on the board.
10. Explain that what they’ve been brainstorming are the traits of active listening.
11. Clarify where active listening might occur in the classroom: during student or teacher presentations, during class or small group discussion, during partner work, during a teacher conference, etc.
12. Have students switch partners one more time, if desired, and repeat the A/B process describing a time when they faced a difficult challenge—how they handled it and what they felt about it. (To challenge students this time, increase the time to 2 minutes.) Both partners should focus on practicing the active listening habits.

“You do not need to leave your room. Remain sitting at your table and listen....The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked, it has no choice, it will roll in ecstasy at your feet.”

– Franz Kafka

13. Have students identify the active listening habits they most need to work on and have them set 1–2 goals for the next 1–2 weeks that will help them practice and improve in these areas.
14. Prior to the next listening opportunity, have students take out their goals and keep them in mind as they engage in the listening activity. Continue to follow up with students being mindful of the habits they are practicing, and ask them to revise or write new goals as their skills progress.
15. Hold students accountable for active listening habits in class by creating the appropriate structures for them to be attentive and focused and for monitoring their use of the habits.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Let students develop scenarios for practicing active listening habits with their peers.

Increased Rigor

- Have students consider how they can be active listeners in their other classes or in their personal interactions and what the benefits might be. They might report their findings about what happens in another class when they are active listeners to the teacher and to their peers.

Using Technology

- Prior to engaging in collaborative online work, facilitate student discussion and brainstorming about what “active listening” might “look like” online. How do they show respect to the “speaker” online as they would face-to-face?

Critical Listening Purpose, Point of View, and Bias

Goal

Students will be able to discern point of view and bias when listening to oral texts.

Rationale

Critical listening involves active listening (engagement), understanding the speaker's purpose, comprehension, analysis, and evaluation. Students need to be able to hear and understand a speaker—both for content and intent—and then analyze and evaluate the ideas presented so they may form their own judgments about the issues presented. These are skills students often develop with respect to reading, but they are just as important for oral text given that much information in our lives is presented in multi-media formats.

Teacher References

- Sources of Sample Speeches for Critical Listening and Analysis
- Guiding Questions to Listen for and Discuss Critical Listening Features—Part 1

Instructional Steps

Note to teacher: In order for students to become critical listeners, they should first understand and be able to practice active listening—the habits that keep the listener fully engaged with the speaker. See the Active Listening strategy in this same section.

1. Discuss with students the different purposes people have for speaking. Some common purposes: to make social connections, to communicate ideas/information, to teach, to persuade, to figure things out, to warn, criticize, compliment, or praise. Have students brainstorm some examples of these purposes from their own lives.
2. Use the Teacher Reference: Sources of Sample Speeches to identify possible resources for oral texts. Play an audio recording (very short) of an oral text (speech, presentation, debate, performance, conversation, complaint, exchange between a customer and a business owner, etc.) and have students identify the speaker's purpose. What is the speaker trying to achieve? What clues tell you this?
3. Play the recording over again or play more of it and have students consider point of view (define what this means). What is the speaker's point of view and how can you tell? What other points of view might there be that aren't represented in this recording?
4. Explore what the word *bias* means (if appropriate for your students) and discuss why point of view and the identification of possible bias are important when listening critically. Consider the question: How might a speaker's bias influence my understanding or interpretation of the speaker's message? This is best considered while listening to oral texts with clear biases first before listening to oral texts with more subtle biases. For example, editorial-type speeches tend to have more obvious biases.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Engage students with shorter oral texts (speech, presentation, debate, performance), slowly building capacity for longer texts.

Increased Rigor

- Engage students with a longer oral text (speech, presentation, debate, performance) that requires increased stamina and focus.

Using Technology

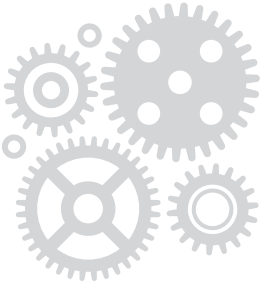
- Use short speeches such as TEDTalks as sources of oral text. Students can view the same TEDTalks as a class or multiple talks on the same topic could be viewed by small groups.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading:* “Summarizing,” “Paraphrasing,” “Assessing Source Material,” “Charting the Text”

*“The practice of ‘reviewing’...
in general has nothing in common
with the art of criticism.”*

– Henry James



Sources of Sample Speeches for Critical Listening and Analysis:

- Inaugural Addresses of Presidents of the USA
- “The President’s Speech to Students” by Barack Obama
- Fireside Chats of Franklin D. Roosevelt
- Nelson Mandela Speeches
- Fidel Castro Speeches
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Speeches
- John F. Kennedy Speeches
- Winston Churchill Speeches
- Malcolm X Speeches
- Gloria Steinem Speeches
- Al Gore Speeches
- Toni Morrison, Barnard College Address, “Cinderella’s Stepsisters”
- Steve Jobs, Stanford University Commencement Address, 2005
- Bono, University of Pennsylvania Commencement Address, 2004
- J. K. Rowling, Harvard Commencement Address, 2008
- Ellen Degeneres, Tulane University Commencement Address, 2009
- Oprah Winfrey, Stanford University Commencement Address, 2008
- Severn Suzuki’s speech at the UN Earth Summit
- Other speeches available electronically on YouTube or TEDTalks

Guiding Questions to Listen for and Discuss Critical Listening Features

Part 1

Purpose

- Why is the speaker sharing these ideas? What does he or she want to achieve?
- Does the speaker want to make social connections, to communicate ideas/information, to teach, to persuade, to figure things out, to warn, criticize, compliment, or praise?
- What clues reveal the speaker’s purpose?

Point of View

- What is the speaker’s point of view and how can you tell?
- From what “angle” or perspective is the speaker presenting his/her ideas?
- What other points of view might there be that aren’t represented?

Bias

- Is the speaker presenting information in an objective manner? How can you tell?
- Does the speaker seem to favor a particular position, group of people, set of beliefs, etc.? If so, how do you know?
- How might a speaker’s bias influence the listener’s understanding or interpretation of his/her message?

Critical Listening

Multiple Perspectives

Goal

Students will evaluate differing perspectives on a single subject.

Rationale

Critical listening skills will assist students when they are presented with multiple perspectives or conflicting information about a topic or issue. Through careful analysis, students will learn to identify objective speakers as opposed to subjective speakers using specific intent or bias.

Instructional Steps

1. Listen to audio sources that present more than one speaker on the same topic. Possible topics include animal rights, bullying, obesity, politics, human rights, leadership, teamwork, special needs, or charity. For the obesity topic, teachers might use two TEDTalks videos, such as Jamie Oliver’s “Teach Every Child about Food” (International TV Chef) and Ann Cooper’s “Talk about School Lunches” (Director of School Nutrition). Have students keep track of the purpose, point of view, and possible bias of each speaker, as well as their feelings for each speaker.
2. Have students discuss their ideas in small groups and reach consensus on point of view, purpose, and bias. Continuing in small groups, have them discuss their feelings and determine which speaker is more believable—there may not be consensus on this—and have students support why one speaker is more believable than another. They should consider the speakers’ ways of speaking and the language they use, as well as any biases they identified to determine what influences their opinions.
3. Conduct a whole class discussion to determine the influences on the listeners’ feelings and opinions about the speakers’ believability. Work to put names to how they describe a speaker’s bias. Did the speaker have a liberal or conservative bias? A bias toward students, teachers, reporters, slaves, the Amish, or...? Sometimes it helps to frame discussions of bias around whom the speaker “favors.” The important thing for critical listeners is to be able to determine WHY the listener thinks the speaker has a bias. Immature listeners frequently feel that just because a speaker agrees with a position, that means the speaker favors the people who hold that position (they are biased toward them). This is a good time to introduce the terms “objective” and “subjective” so they can talk about whether or not a speaker appears to be objective.

4. Use additional audio resources to continue to practice identifying the purposes, points of view, and biases of various speakers and to help students practice their reasoning as they arrive at and support their conclusions. These oral texts should be connected to topics or texts being studied in class as well as connected to students' lives outside of class.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Engage students with shorter oral texts (speech, presentation, debate, performance), slowly building capacity for longer texts.

Increased Rigor

- Engage students with a longer oral text (speech, presentation, debate, performance) that requires increased stamina and focus.
- Engage students with an oral language text that has a more complex set of ideas or reasoning to follow. There might be many counter arguments, points of evidence, etc.

Using Technology

- Use short speeches such as TEDTalks as sources of oral text. Students can view the same TEDTalk as a class, or multiple talks on the same topic could be viewed by small groups.
- Use examples of annotated speeches that integrate video and analyses as part of the experience of hearing or reading the speech. Students engage in their own analysis and compare theirs to the experts' and/or analyze the experts' analyses to determine credibility, appropriateness, etc. Example: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/interactive/speeches/1/annotated-state-of-the-union/>

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading: "Summarizing," "Paraphrasing," "Assessing Source Material," "Charting the Text"*

Critical Listening

Other Critical Listening Features

Goal

Students will attend to details of form and content to skillfully analyze and evaluate oral texts.

Rationale

Given that much information in our lives is presented in multi-media formats, students should incorporate more advanced listening skills to carefully analyze and evaluate spoken information. Examining the speaker's specific use of language, details, evidence, content, and merit will afford students the opportunity to formulate their own opinions about the presented information.

Teacher References

- Guiding Questions to Listen for and Discuss Critical Listening Features - Part 2

Instructional Steps

1. Progress to the study of other features of critical listening once students have a good sense of purpose, point of view, and bias. These features include:
 - Language: Understanding a speaker's use of language (this includes figurative language, imagery, denotative and connotative meanings (especially heavily charged or "loaded" words), repetition, etc.)
 - Main Ideas: Comprehending a speaker's main idea(s)—the gist (this means helping students to monitor their "intuitive" sense of understanding as well as their explicit, "right there" understanding)
 - Details/Evidence: Recognizing a speaker's details and points of evidence (this means finding the back-up or support for the main idea(s))
 - Content: Analyzing the content of the speaker's ideas (looking closely at the ideas to see if they are complete, supported, believable, and credible; this may require using prior knowledge and/or research to determine how "true" the speaker's ideas are; also includes monitoring the listener's own opinions that might color the interpretation of the speaker's credibility)
 - Merit: Evaluating the merit of the speaker's ideas and determining whether or not the listener agrees or disagrees and why (involves making informed judgments and supporting those judgments with logical reasoning/justification)
2. Studying each of these features should be completed using sample oral texts and collaboration. See the Teacher Reference for a list of questions that can guide student listening and discussion about the critical listening features. Ideas include:
 - Class brainstorming about definitions and examples of each feature and key terminology relevant to that feature; this is a perfect time to teach academic vocabulary related to the skills of listening and language discussion as well as content of the oral text.
 - Using relevant oral texts that tie to the topics under study in class and/or to students' lives; select oral texts that distinctly exemplify the targeted feature before moving to texts where the feature is depicted more subtly.
 - Having students listen individually with a particular listening task that allows them to document key points about the targeted feature.

- Using small group discussion to help students talk about their individual observations/thoughts and to then arrive at questions, conclusions, and justifications
- Facilitating whole class discussion of key ideas from the small groups to guide students' understanding and to challenge one another's conclusions and justifications.
- Adding additional oral texts and practice, as needed, to ensure students have mastered the ability to discern, analyze, and explain the targeted critical listening feature.

NOTE: Some of the tools/strategies used to analyze written text can also be useful for analyzing oral text. Look at the *Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading* references below to find some of these relevant tools/strategies.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students consider only one or two of the critical listening features as they engage in an oral text.

Increased Rigor

- Engage students with a more challenging oral text with allusions, figurative language, dialect, etc.
- Engage students with an oral language text that has a more complex set of ideas or reasoning to follow. There might be many counter arguments, points of evidence, etc.

Using Technology

- Use short speeches such as TEDTalks as sources of oral text. Students can view the same TEDTalk as a class or multiple talks on the same topic could be viewed by small groups.
- Use examples of annotated speeches that integrate video and analyses as part of the experience of hearing or reading the speech. Students engage in their own analysis and compare theirs to the experts' and/or analyze the experts' analyses to determine credibility, appropriateness, etc. Example: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/interactive/speeches/1/annotated-state-of-the-union/>
- Consider what it takes to develop and produce a quality online speech that will be viewed credibly by an audience. Facets to consider: structure of the speech, lighting, positioning to audience, visual supports, sound quality, persuasiveness or appeal of the topic, etc. Example of online resource: <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1A68533491F57B30>

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading:* "Summarizing," "Paraphrasing," "Assessing Source Material," "Charting the Text"

Guiding Questions to Listen for and Discuss Critical Listening Features

Part 2

Use of Language

- How does the speaker use words to create an impact?
- Does he or she use figurative language, imagery, denotative and connotative meanings (especially heavily charged or “loaded” words), repetition, etc. to communicate a particular feeling, to reinforce a point, to paint certain images, to create a specific tone?

Speaker’s Main Idea (the gist)

- What is the “big picture” message this speaker is communicating?
- How do you know this? Did you make connections between what you were hearing and what you already knew about this topic? Did you form images in your head as you were listening? Were you asking questions in your head to help you understand? What inferences did you have to make?

Speaker’s Details and Points of Evidence

- What cues did the speaker give to follow the details? For example, “There are three reasons why...” provides a clue that the listener should listen for three details or sets of details.
- What evidence does the speaker give to support his/her ideas?
- What kind of evidence does the speaker use: facts, figures, statistics, and quotations from an expert or text source or personal experience?

Analyzing the Content

- Looking at the speaker’s main idea(s), details, and evidence, are there gaps in the information?
- Are there details or evidence missing that leave you wondering whether or not to believe the speaker?

Evaluating the Merit

- Knowing the speaker’s purpose, point of view (possible bias), use of language, main idea(s), details, and evidence, how believable or credible do you find the message?
- How did you arrive at this conclusion? Do you have prior knowledge, experience, and/or research that supports or contradicts the speaker’s ideas?
- Do you agree or disagree with the speaker’s message and why?
- What biases do you hold that might impact your opinion of the speaker’s ideas?

Some portions of this strategy were informed by information from this website:
<http://literacyandnumeracyforadults.com/The-Learning-Progressions/Literacy/Listen-and-Speak-to-Communicate/Activities-table/Listening-critically>

Speaking

Introduction

Presidents and generals have teleprompters and keynoters. Club chairmen have unobtrusive notes. Somewhere down the line are the students presenting with quaking hands and unreliable voices. They are OUR students. Of course, we do not expect 99% of our students to choose public speaking as a career move, but numerous instances exist in life where an assertive speaker is required to have a voice, to be knowledgeable about audiences and what it takes to move them to thought or to bring them out of inertia. What can we do to move our students closer to the keynoter stage, and why would we need to do that? Given the demands upon our class time, what are the skills we can hone for speaking, and what are the reasonable expectations we should have? And, since we are holding our students as well as

ourselves accountable for this use of time, how will we score these oral activities? Because speaking is not only an oral but a mental exercise, we can foster public speaking confidence and organizational maturity in our students so they can participate in academic discussions, to be assertive in speaking as well as writing and connecting to others in peer responses. They will not likely need teleprompters in their lives, but they surely will need to know how to speak from notes. Our students are going to college, and to reap the most value from a college education, they will need to know themselves and others through not only their writing, but also through their utterances. Body language is important, but so is talk because talk is not cheap when one is speaking from conviction.



“The mutual confidence on which all else depends can be maintained only by an open mind and a brave reliance upon free discussion.”

– *Learned Hand*

Discussion and Debate

Supporting the development of discussion and debate skills is often overlooked in many ELA classrooms because many mistakenly assume that because students can talk, they have the necessary tools. However, even though students are capable of having informal conversations, many are unable to participate and contribute appropriately in a rigorous, structured conversation. Students need to know how to articulate relevant ideas and pose questions to connect claims, ideas, people, and evidence. Holding classroom debates and the less formally conducted discussions can have many advantages for all students, especially since these techniques encourage practice and improvement in problem solving, research, leadership, and oral presentation, which are all skills English teachers foster across many other types of lessons.

Though the oral language skills required for discussion and debate are similar, the intent and outcome of each are vastly different. Debates are oppositional with two opposing sides trying to prove the other side wrong. In debates, students listen to find flaws, identify differences, and develop counter arguments. Though classroom debate involving individuals or groups may not be as formal as those in events sponsored by the National Forensics League, rules still govern how participants and audiences conduct themselves and their presentations. The structure of debate has distinct time allotments for presentation of pro and con positions, rebuttals and responses to rebuttals, further pro/con statements, and eventual voting by the participating audience.

Whereas debate is argumentative, even combative, holding discussions among individuals and groups emphasizes student collaboration with various people working toward a shared and deeper

understanding of a topic or text. In discussions, students listen to understand, to make meaning, and to find common ground. Discussions remain open-ended while debates come to a formal conclusion.

English teachers can create situations during the various lessons in the classroom for students to practice and refine discussion and debate oral language skills. These opportunities include:

- Participation in variety of small group collaborative discussions on topics or over texts (pairs, small groups, and large groups) where students build on each other’s ideas and express their own appropriately and persuasively. Students need to be prepared, having read and studied the content material. They need to consider multiple perspectives and ask questions that contribute to the conversation by clarifying or challenging the ideas.
- Integration of a variety of information in different formats, print and digital, so that students must determine the credibility and validity of the sources.
- Evaluation of a speaker’s point of view to determine if those claims are supported by logical, substantive evidence and detect those that are not.

A Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide is provided that teachers and students may use to help guide and evaluate behavior in a number of the strategies included here, as well as in other classroom discussion situations. Additional, more particular evaluation tools will be found with their respective strategies.

Adapted from *The Write Path English Language Learners Teacher Guide*

Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide

Name: _____ Date: _____

+ = Exceeds expectations ✓ = Meets expectations ⊖ = Incomplete and/or does not meet expectations

Area of Focus	Characteristics	+ ✓ ⊖	Comments
Content	Comes prepared to participate		
	Asks thoughtful questions connected to others' ideas and to the text (if appropriate)		
	Uses a variety of question levels (Costa)		
	Makes personal connections or connections to other texts, ideas, or real-world examples		
	Uses the discussion/dialogue to explore ideas or the text, not just to get to an "answer"		
	Uses the discussion/dialogue to learn about the content under discussion, to learn about oneself, and to learn about others		
	Refers directly to the text as appropriate (page numbers, paragraphs, sentences, etc.)		
Delivery	Contributes ideas readily		
	Paraphrases and adds to another speaker's ideas		
	Avoids interrupting others		
	Asks for clarification as needed		
	Listens actively (eye contact, positive non-verbal body language, genuine interest, no side conversations)		
	Does not dominate discussion; may invite others to speak		
	Speaks clearly and with appropriate volume		
	Uses academic language scripts		
	Uses complete sentences to express ideas		
	Uses language accurately		

Additional Comments

Academic Language Scripts

Goal

Students will increase understanding of the language appropriate for academic settings.

Rationale

A valuable skill for all students is the ability to communicate clearly in an academic setting. Students should be encouraged to speak frequently in class to actively practice academic vocabulary. Academic language scripts are used to support students in the acquisition of this vocabulary. This practice will support student learning and retention of academic English and content vocabulary necessary for success in college and career. Students need to understand the difference between informal language and formal academic language and when it is appropriate to use either one.

Student Handout

- Academic Language Scripts for Discussion

Instructional Steps

1. Introduce students to the concept of using academic language scripts during discussion in class and explain why it is important for them to learn to use academic language.
2. Model the practice by asking leading questions that will require students to use the various academic language scripts in response. Provide students with the Student Handout: Academic Language Scripts for Discussion, to refer to when responding to the questions.
3. Place students in pairs and have them create an interview using the Academic Language question and response prompts. Ask for several groups to volunteer and read their interview to the class. Discuss the interviews, noting the differences between and appropriateness of the language.
4. Develop a small group discussion activity about a text. Have students use the academic language scripts in their discussion. Instruct students to highlight the academic language they used during the discussion. At the end of the discussion, ask students to write a brief reflection on the activity. How proficient were they in the use of academic language? Describe instances when they forgot to use academic language. What is one goal for improving the use of academic language in class?
5. Create various scenarios for students to explicitly practice using the academic language scripts.
6. Model appropriate use of the language consistently in class. The more students practice using academic language, the more natural the language will become for them.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Isolate a word or phrase of academic language and ask students to create scenarios when the word/phrase could be used. Have students rehearse the identified word or phrase.
- Create posters of each category on the Student Handout: Academic Language Scripts for Discussion. Post around the classroom for students to be visibly reminded of the academic language and to remind them of the language prompts.

Increased Rigor

- Ask students to use the academic language scripts in a Socratic Seminar and assess their ability to effectively implement the prompts in their discussion.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Academic Language Scripts for Discussion

Clarifying

- Could you repeat that?
- Could you give us an example of that?
- I have a question about ...?
- Could you please explain what _____ means?
- Would you mind repeating that?
- I'm not sure I understood that. Could you please give us another example?
- Would you mind going over the instructions for us again?
- So, do you mean ...?
- What did you mean when you said ...?
- Are you sure that ...?
- I think what _____ is trying to say is....
- Let me see if I understand you. Do you mean _____ or _____?
- Thank you for your comment. Can you cite for us where in the text you found your information?

Probing for Higher-Level Thinking

- What examples do you have of ...?
- Where in the text can we find...?
- I understand . . ., but I wonder about. . .
- How does this idea connect to ...?
- If _____ is true, then ...?
- What would happen if _____?
- Do you agree or disagree with his/her statement? Why?
- What is another way to look at it?
- How are _____ and _____ similar?
- Why is _____ important?

Building on What Others Say

- I agree with what _____ said because ...
- You bring up an interesting point and I also think ...
- That's an interesting idea. I wonder ...? I think ... Do you think ...?
- I thought about that also and I'm wondering why ...?
- I hadn't thought of that before. You make me wonder if ...? Do you think ...?
- _____ said that ... I agree and also think ...
- Based on the ideas from _____, _____ and _____, it seems like we all think that...

Expressing an Opinion

- I think/believe/predict/imagine that ... What do you think?
- In my opinion ...
- It seems to me that ...
- Not everyone will agree with me, but ...

Interrupting

- Excuse me, but ... (I don't understand.)
- Sorry for interrupting, but ... (I missed what you said.)
- May I interrupt for a moment?
- May I add something here?

Disagreeing

- I don't really agree with you because ...
- I see it another way. I think ...
- My idea is slightly different from yours. I believe that ... I think that ...
- I have a different interpretation than you. ...

Inviting Others into the Dialogue

- Does anyone agree/disagree?
- What gaps do you see in my reasoning?
- What different conclusions do you have?
- _____ (name), what do you think?
- I wonder what _____ thinks?
- Who has another idea/question/interpretation?
- _____ (name), what did you understand about what _____ said?
- We haven't heard from many people in the group. Could someone new offer an idea or question?

Formal Debate

Goal

Students will use appropriate language and presentation skills in a formal debate as active participants or judges.

Rationale

The formal debate offers an opportunity for students to discuss a topic in a structured talk format. This strategy provides a learning opportunity for critical thinking and clear communication. Additionally, it allows students to work on building appropriate teamwork strategies, developing skill in researching current issues, preparing logical arguments, listening actively to different perspectives, asking higher-level questions, using relevant information, and formulating their own opinions based on evidence.

Student Handouts

- Dialogue vs. Debate
- Debate Preparation
- Debate Structure
- Debate Scoring Guide

Instructional Steps

1. Present students with a question or statement for debate.
2. Assign one team to argue in favor of the topic and one to argue against the topic. Also, select a team of students who will act as judges for the debate.
3. Review the handout, Dialogue vs. Debate, to clarify the purpose of the strategy.
4. Review the handout, Debate Structure, to familiarize students with the procedures for the strategy.
5. Provide time for students to prepare for the debate. To guide their preparation, give students a copy of the handout, Debate Preparation.
6. Arrange the classroom to facilitate the debate.
7. Allow for sufficient class time for the debate.
8. Ask audience/judges to give their completed form to the teacher at the end of the debate.
9. Debrief the debate. Have students reflect on the effectiveness of the strategy and their role in the process.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Ease students into the debate structure by having them perform dry runs, having them watch a student debate, and scheduling the speech teacher to give them some training tips. If the school does not have a speech teacher, invite a community person who makes professional presentations. An ideal community person would be a local politician since they are often involved in debates. This person can provide speaking tips for students.

Increased Rigor

- Use a timer to allow a specific number of minutes to present “the case” for each side.
- Have a moderator with a stopwatch who will preside over the time limits.
- Allow a specific number of responses for each side. Overages take away points, if points are assigned for adherence to the time rule.
- Train student judges to watch for hesitations (the “er” or “uh” or “like”) that students use as time fillers. Train others to watch for body language, including placement of hands, looking directly at the speakers, ability to be heard, use of voice for emphasis (not yelling!), and so on.

Dialogue vs. Debate

Dialogue is collaborative; multiple sides work toward shared understanding.	Debate is oppositional; two opposing sides try to prove each other wrong.
In dialogue, one listens to understand, to make meaning, and to find common ground.	In debate, one listens to find flaws, to spot differences, and to counter arguments.
Dialogue enlarges and possibly changes a participant's point of view.	Debate affirms a participant's point of view.
Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude and an openness to being wrong and to change.	Debate creates a closed-minded attitude and a determination to be right and defends assumptions as truth.
In dialogue, one submits one's best thinking, expecting that other people's reflections will help improve it rather than threaten it.	In debate one submits one's best thinking and defends it against challenge to show that it is right.
Dialogue calls for temporarily suspending one's beliefs.	Debate calls for investing wholeheartedly in one's beliefs.
In dialogue, one searches for strengths in all positions.	In debate, one searches for weaknesses in the other position.
Dialogue respects all the other participants and seeks not to alienate or offend.	Debate rebuts contrary positions and may belittle or deprecate other participants.
Dialogue assumes that many people have pieces of answers and that cooperation can lead to workable solutions.	Debate assumes a single right answer that someone already has.
Dialogue remains open-ended.	Debate demands a conclusion.

Debate Preparation

Each side needs to prepare for the debate by recording content in the following format.

Part 1: List arguments, facts, evidence to support your viewpoint.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Part 2: List possible arguments that the opposing team might make, either for or against the topic.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Part 3: Create a set of arguments that counter or discredit the arguments in Part 2.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Debate Structure and Sequence

Sequence

Affirmative Team: Opening Statement	2 minutes
Negative Team: Opening Statement	2 minutes
Argument Organization: The Debate	5–15 minutes
Affirmative Team: Rebuttal	2 minutes
Affirmative Team: Rebuttal	2 minutes
Affirmative Team: Closing Statement	3 minutes
Negative Team: Closing Statement	3 minutes

Guidelines for Judges

1. Make sure participants stop when time is up.
2. Do not allow a speaker to be interrupted during his/her turn. Deduct points from teams that interrupt.
3. Be objective in your decision.
4. Use the Debate Scoring Guide to assess performance of the debaters.

Debate Scoring Guide

Debater 1: _____ Debater 2: _____

Moderator (if not the teacher): _____

Debate Topic: _____ Pro / Con (circle)

+ = Exceeds expectations ✓ = Meets expectations ⊖ = Incomplete and/or does not meet expectations

Area of Focus	Characteristics	+ ✓ ⊖	Comments
Opening Statement (2 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderator introduces topic and sets tone with clear direction. The debaters' position is clear. The opening is well-organized and easy to follow. The opening grabs audience's attention. 		
Argument Organization: The Debate (5–15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first argument in support of their position is stated clearly. The first argument is important and uses relevant evidence to support. Moderator manages timing and debaters firmly and keeps orderly debate progressing. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The second argument in support of their position is stated clearly. The second argument is important and uses relevant evidence to support. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The third argument in support of their position is stated clearly. The third argument is important and uses relevant evidence to support. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The transitions between ideas help the audience to follow the sequence of the presentation. 		
Rebuttal (3 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The moderator makes orderly transition to rebuttals and moves the debate along. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rebuttal to opposing side's first argument is clear, relevant, and effective. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rebuttal to opposing side's second argument is clear, relevant, and effective. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rebuttal to opposing side's third argument is clear, relevant, and effective. 		

Area of Focus	Characteristics	+ ✓ ⊖	Comments
Closing Statement (2 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The closing statement effectively summarizes up the debaters' position. The closing statement leaves the audience with something to do or think about—it is convincing. Moderator starts and stops closing statements firmly and with authority. 		
Delivery	• Makes regular eye contact with the audience.	D1	
		D2	
	• Shows energy and enthusiasm.	1	
		2	
	• Uses appropriate volume.	1	
		2	
	• Speaks in a varied tone, creating audience interest.	1	
		2	
	• Speaks clearly, enunciating words.	1	
		2	
	• Speaks at an appropriate rate— not too fast/slow.	1	
	Adjusts tone and voice to control and deliver message.	2	
• Uses hand gestures and body language.	1		
	2		
• Is confident, demonstrating organization and rehearsal.	1		
	2		
• Uses appropriate grammar and syntax.	1		
	2		
• Respects moderator's authority to set time limits.	1		
	2		

+ = Exceeds expectations ✓ = Meets expectations ⊖ = Incomplete and/or does not meet expectations

Evaluator Name: _____

Comments and Questions for the Debaters: _____

Teacher Grade: _____

“I” Statements

Goal

Students will be able to use effective “I” statements in discussion.

Rationale

An “I” statement is a tool for honest, helpful communication and a way to demonstrate active listening. “I” statements require speakers to take responsibility for communicating their honest responses through the use of carefully constructed statements. This helps in building relationships, trust, and a healthy culture in the classroom.

Instructional Steps

1. Explain the need for and uses of “I” statements during one-on-one, small group, and class discussions. They help communicate how the speaker personally feels and why he/she feels that way. “I” Statements evoke positive expectations and trust. The listener may then create responses based on statements.
2. Provide the basic “I” statement sentence frames as examples for students:
 - I feel (an emotion) when you (an action) because I (an effect of the action).
 - I think you said (paraphrase) and I agree/disagree with you because I (your emotion or experience).
 - I wanted to hear more about (topic).
 - I don’t understand why (event) happened.
 - I was (an emotion—excited, confused, engaged, scared) when (specific event).
3. Clarify the need to resist the urge to provide a directive in the “I” statements to the listener. Emphasize that the point is to communicate feelings, not to direct or question the action of others. Avoid the word “you” if possible, as this may indicate a directive to the listener or can be seen as blaming the listener, possibly leading to defensiveness and an end to the exchange. Do NOT make statements like:
 - I think you should change...
 - I believe that you should...
 - I think it would be better if you...
4. Pair students for practice and use of “I” statements. Provide a scenario for them to consider: During a class discussion, a student offers an opinion about homeless people with which you really disagree. Perhaps the student said they were lazy, all on drugs, or mentally ill. Ask students to use a sentence frame to practice communicating their disagreement with their partners. Point out multiple ways to use different frames as “I” statements.
5. Brainstorm other uses for “I” statements during personal and academic discussions. Relate the use of “I” statements in providing authentic feedback to others about their writing. Reinforce the use of this powerful strategy when possible in future lessons.
6. Create a poster for the classroom that lists possible “I” statements or stems. This is a visual reminder to students to use “I” statements.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Let students develop scenarios for use in practicing “I” statements.
- Have students use “I” statements for several days and report specific instances in their personal or school lives when they were used appropriately.
- Encourage students to incorporate “I” statements during reader response strategies used in the feedback stage for process writing.

Increased Rigor

- Challenge students to work in pairs to create a dramatic dialogue in which two characters get into an argument, then rewrite it with the characters using “I” statements. Invite them to perform the different scenarios for the class.

“The great struggle of a writer is to learn to write as he would talk.”

– Lincoln Steffens

Mock Trial

Goal

Students will improve presentation and listening skills by actively participating in a mock trial.

Rationale

The Mock Trial structure provides a method of debating an issue or story situation. The trial format follows a formal structure and procedure. Since students assume various roles for the trial, they are required to synthesize information to present during the trial and evaluate the most essential information to be used in the presentation. Students practice oral presentation skills as well as active listening skills.

Student Handout

- Tips for Mock Trials

Instructional Steps

1. Determine the topic of the trial. The topic could be a controversial issue students have researched, or taken from a piece of literature students have studied. This could be a literal application such as *Twelve Angry Men* or *To Kill a Mockingbird*. information synthesized from a story or novel. For example, the soldier in "Horseman in the Sky" could be on trial. In "Monsters Are Due on Maple Street," students would determine if the main character is guilty of murder given the extenuating circumstances.
2. Have students become familiar with the elements and layout of a courtroom. Depending on the time element, students can view clips of TV courtroom situations or the teacher can project a copy of the courtroom layout.
3. Ask students to brainstorm a list of events that occur in a trial and write the list on the board or document camera.
4. Write the following roles on the board: judges, jury, defense attorney, prosecutor, witnesses, and audience. Encourage students to select a role based on their abilities and comfort levels.
5. Place students in groups based on roles.
6. Review the tips on the Student Handout: Tips for Mock Trials.
7. Provide students sufficient time to prepare for and rehearse their roles. Students should be allowed to work with other groups as necessary. For example, attorneys might need to visit with witnesses as part of their preparation.
8. Explain to audience members that their task is to assess the presentation skills of those involved in the trial. Students in the audience will shadow and assess one other student involved in the mock trial. All students need to be very familiar with the Presentation Scoring Guide that is included in the next section of this book.
9. Conduct the trial. Be sure to allow enough time for each segment. A student can be a timekeeper, or the teacher can keep time as part of facilitating the activity.

10. Allow time for the audience members to meet with their partners (the student they shadowed and assessed during the trial) to discuss the assessment of oral presentation skills. A good time for this might be when the jury and judges are meeting to determine the verdict.
11. Debrief the activity. Have students write a reflection of their performance in their role. Also have them reflect on what they learned during the process of the mock trial.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Modify the process to be more informal at first to allow students to be comfortable with their roles.
- Allow students to view a courtroom procedure during a field trip.
- Invite an attorney to be a guest speaker to explain elements of the courtroom and trial procedures.

Increased Rigor

- Check with the local bar associations to see if there is anyone sponsoring or mentoring such mock trials in their areas. Some local bar associations help organize and assist in a mock trial day.

Using Technology

- Record the trial so parents, administrators, etc. can view and offer feedback.

Tips for Mock Trials

Suggestions for Student Attorneys

- Always be courteous to witnesses, other attorneys, and the judge.
- Always stand when talking in court and when the judge enters or leaves the room.
- Dress appropriately.
- Always say, “Yes, Your Honor” or “No, Your Honor” when answering a question from the judge.
- If the judge rules against you on a point or in the case, take the adverse ruling gracefully and be cordial to the judge and the other team.
- Present your questions in a relaxed and clear fashion; be sure to listen to the answers.
- Ask open-ended questions. These usually begin with “who,” “what,” “when,” “where,” “why,” or “how,” or by asking the witness to “explain” or “describe.”
- Be fair and courteous; don't quarrel with the witness.
- Eye contact with the witness is recommended.
- Listen carefully, objecting when appropriate.

Opening Statements

Inform the judge and jury with the case and outline what you are going to prove through witness testimony and the admission of evidence. Include the following information: names of attorneys (you and your partners), name of client, and a short summary of the facts.

- Avoid providing too much detail or an argument. The goal is to provide facts of the case from the defendant's or prosecutor's view point.
- Do not read the entire presentation; try to look at the judge and jury and tell your story, preferably without the use of notes.
- Make the first and last sentences the strongest to capture the judge and jury's attention and leave them with a lasting impression.
- Be sincere, loud, and clear.
- Speak slowly!!!

Tips for questioning witnesses

- Be a “friendly guide” for the witnesses as they tell their stories.
- Be prepared to think and respond quickly to an unexpected answer from a witness and add a short follow-up to be sure you obtained the testimony you wanted.

Closing Arguments

Provide a clear and persuasive summary of: (1) the evidence you need to prove the case, and (2) the weaknesses of the other side's case.

- Thank the judge for his/her time and attention.
- Isolate the issues and describe briefly how your presentation resolved those issues.
- Review the witness testimony. Outline the strengths of your side's witnesses and also the weaknesses of the other side's witnesses.
- Argue your side, but don't appear to be vindictive. Fairness is important.
- Do not read throughout your presentation. It is much easier to avoid reading if your notes contain only a brief outline/list of the important points you want to remember to cover. If you are using notes, make eye contact with the judge and jury as often as possible.
- Rehearse as much as possible (this will help you feel comfortable presenting your closing argument without reading it).
- Make sure your statement is well-organized.

Suggestions for Student Witnesses

Witnesses play a key role on the mock trial teams. Many a trial has been won or lost on the witness stand.

- Know what you should testify to and what other witnesses know. Witnesses may not use notes while being questioned.
- Do not try to memorize what you will say in court, but try to recall what you observed at the time of the incident. You must accurately portray the character.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the person (both their strengths and weaknesses).
- Listen carefully to the questions. Before you answer, make sure you understand what was asked. If you do not understand, ask that a question be repeated. If you realize that you answered a question incorrectly, ask the judge if you may correct your answer.
- Speak clearly so you will be heard. The judge and jury must hear your answer; therefore, do not respond by shaking your head “yes” or “no.”
- Do not give your personal opinion or conclusions when answering questions unless specifically asked. Give only the facts as you know them, without guessing or speculating. If you do not know, say so.
- Be polite while answering questions. Do not lose your temper with the attorney questioning you.
- Always be courteous to witnesses, other attorneys, and the judge(s).
- Dress appropriately. Your personal appearance affects the way people view you and your performance; therefore, always dress appropriately for the courtroom.
- Don’t read or recite your witness statement verbatim. You should know its contents beforehand.
- Avoid using slang. Always use your best vocabulary.

- Use variety in your delivery. You can emphasize major points in several different ways, i.e., pause before an important idea; raise your volume slightly to accentuate an important idea; or slow down to draw attention to an important idea.
- Use natural gestures to emphasize ideas. Don't force gestures and always avoid repetitive or unnecessary gestures.

SOURCE: Adapted from *A Guide for Conducting Mock Trials in the Classroom*, Citizenship Law-Related Education Program for the Schools of Maryland, 1984, accessed online <http://www.hawaiifriends.org/mtstrat.html>.

Suggestions for Judges and Jury Members

The judges’ role is to guide the trial procedures and maintain order of courtroom. The jury members will take notes on all aspects of the trial in order to make an informed decision of guilty or not guilty.

Judges

- Facilitate courtroom procedures and ensure that all parties, including the audience, follow procedures.
- Take notes on evidence and witness testimonies.
- Deliver the verdict once the jury has reached a decision.

Jury Members

- Listen carefully to and take notes on opening statements, the witness testimonies, evidence, and closing statements.
- Collaborate with other jury members to arrive at a verdict.
- Write an explanation of the verdict using evidence to support the decision.

Philosophical Chairs

Goal

Students will discuss different sides of a controversy in a manner that emphasizes appropriate language to demonstrate higher level thinking and argument.

Rationale

While focusing on inquiry, Philosophical Chairs is a collaborative activity also requiring students to read, make notes, and organize their thoughts and arguments. It is a form of structured dialogue in which students develop a deeper understanding of a text or subject. While the format is similar to a debate, Philosophical Chairs emphasizes dialogue rather than competition. This strategy offers a process which gives students opportunities to improve verbal capability and fluency as well as develop skills in the precise use of academic language.

Student Handouts

- Guidelines for Participation in Philosophical Chairs
- Philosophical Chairs Evaluation/Reflection
- Philosophical Chairs Report

Instructional Steps

1. Develop a controversial statement based on the objectives of the unit/text. These should generally be simple “agree or disagree” scenarios. The statement must be divisive in nature and will often utilize language that we typically try avoid: “all,” “never,” “every.” Example: “All forms of censorship are wrong.”
2. Allow students time to process the statement individually and to figure out why they think as they do: personal experience, knowledge they have from history/current events, etc. This is typically done as a quickwrite just before the Philosophical Chairs activity.
3. Have students complete their quickwrite and decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement. If this is a text-based conversation, have students select quotations and/or paragraph/page numbers supporting their positions.
4. Review the Guidelines for Philosophical Chairs Participation handout. Stress to students that the dialogue is about the content/ideas, not the person speaking.
5. Ask students who agree with the statement to sit/stand on one side, and those who disagree to sit/stand on the other side. If you allow a “middle ground,” ask students who are undecided to sit or stand in the middle.
6. Encourage students to keep open minds and be willing to be swayed by a good argument.
7. Have the students discuss the merit of the statement in a structured manner. To begin the activity, the facilitator recognizes someone from the side of the classroom who agrees with the central statement. That person states the argument in favor of the stated position.
8. Pause the activity at strategic points—especially after many points have been aired and considered—and ask students to consider where they are now in their thinking—do they still agree/disagree; have they changed positions? Invite students to move and change sides if they are so compelled. Note: Many students do not want to be that first person to show they have changed their minds by moving across the room. If they seem reluctant to move, ask all students to reconvene in the middle and then prompt them back to a side—this way everyone moves. Typically, once movement has begun, students feel more at ease with showing they have changed their minds.
9. Limit student comments, sidebar conversations, etc., for maximum effect.

10. Have the two groups form a team huddle and decide on a closing argument as time draws to a close. One student from each side will be chosen to deliver the closing argument. Final movement should be encouraged at this time. **Note:** Philosophical Chairs is an open-ended activity and often will not have a “conclusion.” The purpose of this debate is to evoke thought on controversial issues.
11. Follow the end of the activity with a written reflection and Philosophical Chair evaluation, so students have time to process what they learned from the experience and so they can set goals for improving their discussion/debate skills. (See Student Handout: Philosophical Chairs Evaluation/Reflection.) **Note:** The evaluation and reflection are critically important steps in this strategy. Be sure to allow enough time for these two. Students should not leave the activity without spending some time debriefing the content and process.
12. Extend the Philosophical Chairs experience by having students do extended writing (such as a position paper), make deliberate connections back to the text as reading continues, track whether or not their position changes as the reading continues, etc.
13. Finish the activity by having students complete the Student Handout: Philosophical Chairs Report.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Choose topics in which students are inherently invested. Example: Every school should require a formal dress code.
- Make the topic as divisive and controversial as possible; this will actually help them keep their thinking clear.
- Give time for students to write their reasons for their position, asking them to use personal experience, knowledge from literature, history, etc. This is “rehearsal” for saying their reasons aloud.

Increased Rigor

- Turn your discussion into a Four Corners discussion simply by adding modifiers: “strongly agree, moderately agree, moderately disagree, and strongly disagree.” This will require a more nuanced debate, forcing students to clarify their positions more acutely.
- Have your students argue the statement from the point of view of an author or character. If needed, divide your time in half: the first half of the activity is what the students agree or disagree with, while the second is supporting whether the author seems to agree or disagree.

Example: “We are all murderers and prostitutes—no matter to what culture, society, class, nation one belongs, no matter how normal, moral or mature, one takes oneself to be.” —R. D. Laing

Once students have debated this topic from their own point of view, ask them whether William Golding or Joseph Conrad believes this, using *Lord of the Flies* or *Heart of Darkness* as their support.

- Philosophical Chairs can also include a “forced choice.” If done in this way, students are assigned to a side, or position. The student argues the designated point of view. This approach serves as an excellent critical thinking activity because it forces students to think through an argument that may not be in line with their own thinking.

Using Technology

- Try pairing a class with another class via a supervised social networking site approved for classroom use. Often, students in other geographical locales will have cultural subtleties that add a global aspect to the discussion. Because such technical utilities as Wikispaces are real-time, conducting a Philosophical Chairs activity will take collaboration and pre-planning by the instructors involved.

“Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.”

– John Milton

Guidelines for Participation in Philosophical Chairs

1. Be sure you understand the central statement or topic before the discussion begins.
2. Read your opening statement carefully.
3. Listen to the person who is speaking.
4. Understand the person's point of view, seeking to understand his/her arguments even if you don't agree.
5. Contribute your own thoughts, offering your reasons as succinctly as possible.
6. Respond to statements only, not to the person giving it.
7. Change your mind about the statement as new information or reasoning is presented.
8. Move to the opposite side or to the undecided chairs as your thinking grows and changes.
9. Support the discussion by maintaining order and contributing constructive comments.
10. Summarize the main ideas presented on all sides.
11. Reflect on the experience during the closing activity.

Adapted from The San Diego County Office of Education.

Retrieved from http://www.sdcoe.net/lret/avid/Resources/Philosophical_Chairs.pdf

Philosophical Chairs Evaluation/Reflection

1. What was the most frustrating part of today's activity?
2. What was the most successful part of today's activity? (What did I learn the most from in the discussion?)
3. What statements led you to change your seat or to remain sitting in your original position?
4. What conclusions can you draw about how you formed your beliefs based on today's activity?
5. What would you change about your participation in today's activity? Do you wish you had said something that you did not? Did you think about changing seats but didn't? Explain.

Philosophical Chairs Report

Directions: Provide a written reflection of the philosophical activity you participated in during class. Be sure you include the following points in your reflection:

- The statement discussed
- The arguments for the statement
- The arguments against the statement
- Your position and the reasons that support this position
- Whether or not you changed your mind during the activity, which arguments swayed your thinking, and why

“Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.”

– John Milton

Socratic Seminar

Goal

Students will participate in an intelligent, respectful discussion about a complex text to interpret and analyze the text.

Rationale

Socratic Seminars are formal discussions based on a text in which open-ended questions are posed and discussed. Students must listen, reference the text, think critically, respond appropriately, and question intelligently to participate. This collaborative, inquiry-based discussion strategy teaches students to understand the ideas, issues, multiple meanings, and values reflected through the close analysis of complex texts.

Student Handouts

- Socratic Seminar Resources

Teacher References

- Socratic Seminar Resources

Instructional Steps

1. Select a text as the basis for the seminar. Socratic Seminars are based on close textual analysis, and it is important to select a text that provides ample avenues for interpreting, analyzing, and discussing. Students must have multiple opportunities to read the text before participating in the seminar. The text itself must be constantly referred to during the seminar, so all students must have a copy of the text in front of them. Texts may include print or non-print sources. Use the Teacher Reference materials for guidance.
2. Prepare the students for participating in Socratic Seminar. Use the Student Handouts for reference. Establish group norms for participation. Review the norms prior to every Socratic Seminar in class. Ask students to differentiate between behaviors that characterize debate (persuasion, prepared rebuttals, clear sides) and those that characterize discussion (inquiry, responses that flow from the thoughts of others, communal exploration). Remind students that an important part of participation is the ability to listen to others and respond appropriately. This includes paraphrasing, summarizing, and practicing the art of discussion.
3. Prepare the questions for discussion. Generate as many open-ended questions as possible, aiming for questions where value lies in their exploration, not just in their answer. Consider using world connection questions, core content questions, and literary analysis questions.
4. Arrange the desks/chairs appropriately and consider the room arrangement best conducive for a discussion.
5. Define necessary roles. Though students may eventually be given responsibility for running the entire session, the teacher usually fills the role of discussion leader as students learn about seminars and questioning. Monitor the discussion and remind students of necessary behaviors from time to time. It may be helpful to designate a timekeeper. All students should practice the roles of speaker and listener during the seminar.

6. Conduct the seminar. Use the inner (discussion group) and outer (observation group) circles to teach the process. Consider using a shorter text the first time so students can easily master the process and content at the same time. Encourage students to reference the text as often as possible to keep the conversation focused on the topic and not into off-topic discussions.
7. Assess the effectiveness of the seminar and encourage individual reflection. Socratic Seminars require assessment as an inquiry strategy. Provide comments about the Socratic process, seminar behaviors, and the content and thinking reflected in the questions and discussion. Reflective writing asking students to describe their own participation and establishing goals for future seminars can be effective as well.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide sentence frames for constructing questions or academic talk during the seminar.
- Discuss ways for students to disagree appropriately or challenge the thinking of other students.
- Track the students who respond and the number of times they talk during the seminar to monitor participation of all students.
- Use the inner and outer circle until students are comfortable with the strategy.
- Use the triad model to involve all students in the Socratic process.
- Use Philosophical Chairs to develop students' communication skills before Socratic Seminar.

Increased Rigor

- Allow students to coach each other regarding seminar behaviors and content.
- Encourage students to write the questions to be used during Socratic Seminar. Monitor to be sure questions are high-level and reflect the content and level of analysis required to master the text.
- Use the "hot seat" to allow more students the opportunity for input.
- Consider having students manage the process and conducting multiple seminars at the same time once students are proficient in using the strategy.
- Provide opportunities for students to incorporate the information discussed during the seminar into writing assignments.

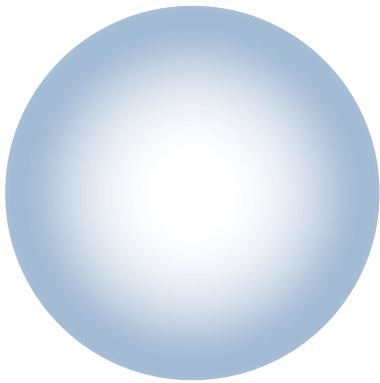
Using Technology

- Record the discussion and have students critique their own performance and/or the performance of the group.
- Extend the discussion to a web-based medium, such as a discussion board or blog, so the dialogue may continue after class is over.

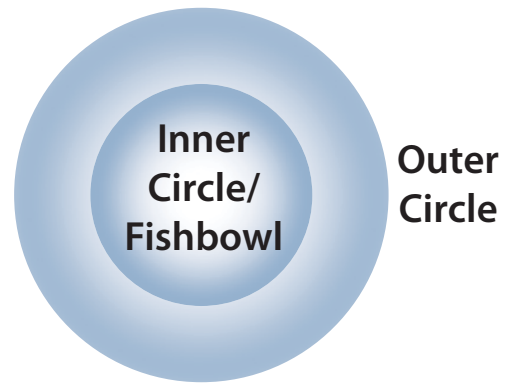
Socratic Seminar

Sample Class Arrangements

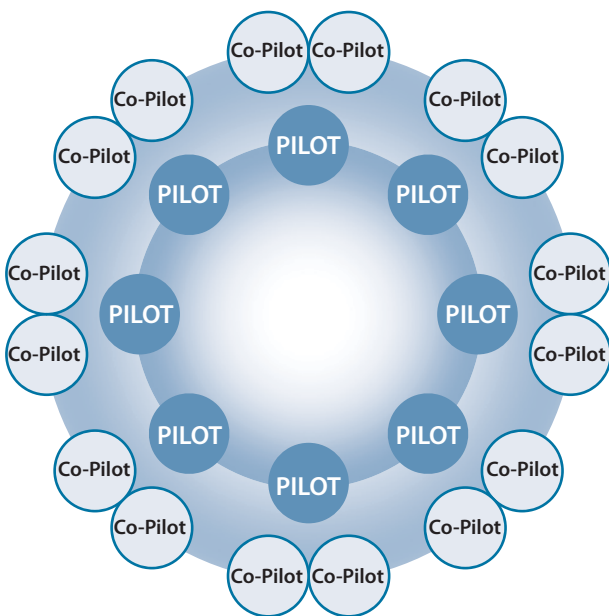
One Large Seminar



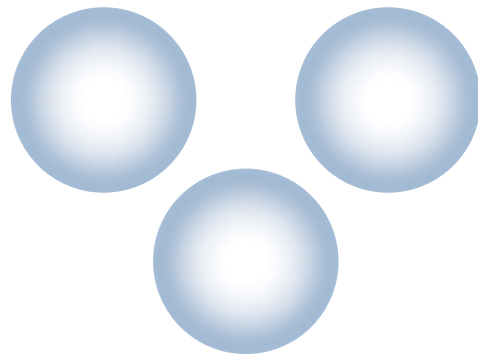
Inner/Outer Circle or Fishbowl



Triad Seminars



Simultaneous



The Elements of Socratic Seminars

A good seminar consists of four interdependent elements: (1) the text, (2) the questions raised, (3) the seminar leader and (4) the participants. A closer look at each of these elements helps explain the unique character of a Socratic Seminar.

The Text

Socratic Seminar texts are chosen for their richness in ideas, issues and values and their ability to stimulate extended, thoughtful dialogue. A seminar text can be drawn from readings in literature, history, science, math, health and philosophy or from works of art, photography or music. A good text raises important questions in the participants' minds, questions for which there are no right or wrong answers. At the end of a successful Socratic Seminar, participants often leave with more questions than they brought with them.

The Question

A Socratic Seminar opens with a question either posed by the leader or solicited from participants as they acquire more experience in seminars. An opening question has no right answer; instead, it reflects a genuine curiosity on the part of the questioner. A good opening question leads participants back to the text as they speculate, evaluate, define and clarify the issues involved. Responses to the opening question generate new questions from the leader and participants, leading to new responses. In this way, the line of inquiry in a Socratic Seminar evolves on the spot rather than being pre-determined by the leader.

The Leader

In a Socratic Seminar, the leader plays a dual role as leader and participant. The seminar leader consciously demonstrates habits of mind that lead to a thoughtful exploration of the ideas in the text by keeping the discussion focused on the text, asking

follow-up questions, helping participants clarify their positions when arguments become confused and involving reluctant participants while restraining their more vocal peers. As a seminar participant, the leader actively engages in the group's exploration of the text. To do this effectively, the leader must know the text well enough to anticipate varied interpretations and recognize important possibilities in each. The leader must also be patient enough to allow participants' understandings to evolve and be willing to help participants explore non-traditional insights and unexpected interpretations.

Assuming this dual role of leader and participant is easier if the opening question is one which truly interests the leader, as well as the participants.

The Participants

In Socratic Seminar, participants share with the leader the responsibility for the quality of the seminar. Good seminars occur when participants study the text closely in advance, listen actively, share their ideas and questions in response to the ideas and questions of others and search for evidence in the text to support their ideas. Participants acquire good seminar behaviors through participating in seminars and reflecting on them afterward. After each seminar, the leader and participants discuss the experience and identify ways of improving the next seminar. Before each new seminar, the leader also offers coaching and practice in specific habits of mind that improve reading, thinking and discussing. Eventually, when participants realize that the leader is not looking for the "right" answers, but instead is encouraging them to think out loud and to openly exchange ideas, they discover the excitement of exploring important issues through shared inquiry. This excitement creates willing participants, eager to examine ideas in a rigorous, thoughtful manner.

Tips for Teachers and Socratic Seminar Leaders

Leaders

- Your task is not to make participants “cover” the topic, but to help them use their minds well. You are a co-learner, not an authority on “right” answers.
- Read the text in advance and take ample notes to have a deep understanding of the text yourself.
- Get the group focused on the opening question as quickly as possible.
- Allow for “think” time. Pauses are OK; participants need time to think and process information and ideas.
- Model thoughtful behavior. Ask clarifying and probing questions if others seem stuck or are not asking for evidence, reasoning or connections back to the text.
- Rephrase a question if participants seem confused by it (or ask another participant to rephrase it).
- Don’t let sloppy thinking or gross misinterpretations go unexamined. Ask participants to offer textual support for their thinking or to consider what _____ would say about their interpretation.
- Encourage participants to use the text to support their responses.
- Pay attention to what is NOT being discussed. If there is a perspective that is not being represented, introduce it.
- Guide participants to discuss their differences and work through conflicts respectfully.
- Help participants work cooperatively, not competitively.

- Involve reluctant participants (carefully, so as not to alienate or scare participants), while restraining more vocal members. Examples: “What do you think John meant by his remark?”; “What did you take John to mean?”; “Jane, would you summarize in your own words what Richard has said?”; “Richard, is that what you meant?”
- Avoid making eye contact with participants if they continually talk to you rather than the group.
- Strive for balance. Do not dominate the discussion or withdraw entirely; you are a participant, too.

Teachers

- Don’t try long texts or long seminars at first; build gradually.
- At the start of each seminar, set the stage. Review the guidelines of the seminar, but don’t deliver a lecture.
- Take notes during the seminar: evaluate students, chronicle main ideas discussed, etc. Use the notes during the debrief to help coach individual students and to help students set goals for the next seminar.
- Never neglect the debriefing. The feedback is vital if the group is going to grow with each Socratic Seminar. Request specific non-judgmental comments to help improve future Socratic Seminars.
- Over time, use a variety of print and non-print texts: arguments, proofs, fiction, essays, poetry, quotations, artwork, editorial cartoons, etc.

Socratic Seminar as Dialogue vs. Debate

The best Socratic Seminars are those in which something new and unexpected is discovered. This happens when the seminar is approached as a joint search or exploration through dialogue, rather than a defense of ideas.

Dialogue	Debate
Dialogue is collaborative with multiple sides working toward shared understanding.	Debate is oppositional; two opposing sides try to prove each other wrong.
In dialogue, one listens to understand, to make meaning and to find common ground.	In debate, one listens to find flaws, to spot differences and to counter arguments.
Dialogue enlarges and possibly changes a participant's point of view.	Debate affirms a participant's point of view.
Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude and an openness to being wrong and to change.	Debate creates a close-minded attitude and a determination to be right and defends assumptions as truth.
In dialogue, one submits one's best thinking, expecting that other people's reflections will help improve it, rather than threaten it.	In debate, one submits one's best thinking and defends it against challenge to show that it is right.
Dialogue calls for temporarily suspending one's beliefs.	Debate calls for investing wholeheartedly in one's beliefs.
In dialogue, one searches for strengths in all positions.	In debate, one searches for weaknesses in the other position.
Dialogue respects all the other participants and seeks not to alienate or offend.	Debate rebuts contrary positions and may belittle or deprecate other participants.
Dialogue assumes that many people have pieces of answers and that cooperation can lead to workable solutions.	Debate assumes a single right answer that someone already has.
Dialogue remains open-ended.	Debate demands a conclusion and a winner.

Developing Opening, Guiding, and Closing Questions

Seminar participants and leaders can use the ideas below to help develop questions appropriate to key stages of the Socratic Seminar. Opening questions should get the seminar off to a start; guiding questions should help to examine deeper meanings in the text and to adjust the seminar if it is getting off track; closing questions should help the group bring the seminar to a close, though not necessarily to a conclusion. Use the examples on this page to help you record questions in preparation for the seminar.

Opening Questions

Description

- Stem from context
- Direct participants into the text
- Elicit more than one-word responses
- Are generally concrete questions

Examples

- What does this text ask us to do?
- What is the theme of the reading?
- What significance is this to _____?
- What are the assumptions of this text?
- Could the two main characters have switched places? Why or why not?
- What might be some other good titles?
- Is it better to be _____ or _____?
- In recent times, what well-known people are like _____?

Guiding Questions

Description

- Move participants deeper into the text and to examine the content of the text
- Help participants examine their own thinking and encourage revision of ideas
- Help participants examine the seminar dynamics to keep it/get it on the right track
- May ask for the interpretation of a specific line or passage—often “how” or “why” questions
- May ask for clarification
- May probe for assumptions, reasons, other interpretations, etc.
- Generally move the discussion into the abstract

Examples

- What other ideas have we learned about that might help us understand this text?
- Why does the main character think _____?
- How do you support that position from the text?
- How does this idea connect to _____?
- If _____ is true, then _____?
- Can you define what you mean by _____?
- Why do you say that?
- What do we already know about _____?
- How can you verify or disprove that assumption?
- What would happen if _____?
- Do you agree or disagree with his/her statement? Why?
- What would be an example of _____?
- What is another way to look at it?
- How are your thoughts now different from your initial ideas?
- What would you say to someone who said _____?
- How are _____ and _____ similar?
- Why is _____ important?
- How can we move from debate back to dialogue?
- Who has another perspective to offer that will help us re-energize the conversation?

Closing Questions

Description

- Establish relevance
- Connect to the real world
- Relate to the lives of the participants
- Are generally abstract

Examples

- What can we do with our understanding of this text?
- If you were writing this work, what would the ending be?
- How does this idea connect to _____?
- Explain the consequences of the ideas in the text.
- Predict/justify future developments.

Socratic Seminar Guidelines

Before the Seminar

Read and prepare your text before the seminar using the Critical Reading Process (as developed in The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading).

1. Make sure you **understand your purpose for reading**. Follow the teacher's reading prompt, if provided.
2. **Pre-read** by previewing the text and determining how it is structured, thinking about any background information you already know or you discussed in class and noticing the questions you have before you read.
3. **Interact with the text** so you read it closely. This includes annotating by:
 - Marking the text
 - Number the paragraphs
 - Circle key terms
 - Underline important parts of the text that are connected to your purpose for reading
 - Writing in the margins
 - Write notes in the margins or use sticky notes to write your thoughts and questions
 - Use Cornell notes, a dialectical journal or some other form of note-taking to keep track of your thoughts, being careful to note passages/paragraph numbers, page numbers, etc. You want to easily reference the text.
4. **Extend beyond the text** by writing several open-ended, higher-level questions that have no single right answer and will encourage discussion. Areas to consider for questions:
 - Ask "Why?" about the author's choices in the text, about a character's motivation, about a situation described in the text, etc.
 - Ask about viewpoint or perspectives (realist, pessimist, optimist, etc.).
 - Examine the title or tone of the text or connect to current issues, theme, etc.
 - Ask, "If the author were alive today, how would he or she feel about...?"
 - Ask questions that explore your own interpretation of the reading.
 - Ask about importance: "So what...?" "What does it matter that...?" "What does it mean that...?"

During the Seminar

Use all of your close reading to participate in a discussion that helps you understand the text at a deeper level. Be ready to discuss the text like the scholar you are!

1. Be prepared to participate and ask good questions. The quality of the seminar is diminished when participants speak without preparation.
2. Show respect for differing ideas, thoughts and values—no put-downs or sarcasm.
3. Allow each speaker enough time to begin and finish his or her thoughts—don't interrupt.
4. Involve others in the discussion and ask others to elaborate on their responses (See Student Handout: Academic Language Scripts for Socratic Seminar).

5. Build on what others say. Ask questions to probe deeper, clarify, paraphrase and add and synthesize a variety of different views in your own summary. Examples:
 - **Ask questions to probe deeper:** “Juan makes me think of another point: why would the author include...?” or “Sonya, what makes you think that the author meant...?”
 - **Clarify:** “I think what Stephanie is trying to say is...” or “I’m not sure I understand what you are saying, Jeff. What is...?”
 - **Paraphrase and add:** “Lupe said that... I agree with her and also think...”
 - **Synthesize:** “Based on the ideas from Tim, Shanequia and Maya, it seems like we all think that the author is...”
6. Use your best active listening skills: nod, make eye contact, lean forward, provide feedback and listen carefully to others.
7. Participate openly and keep your mind open to new ideas and possibilities.
8. Refer to the text often and give evidence and examples to support your response. Example: “The author has clearly stated in line 22 that...”
9. Discuss the ideas of the text, not each other’s opinions or personal experiences.
10. Take notes about important points you want to remember or new questions you want to ask.

After the Seminar

Think about what you’ve learned as a result of participating in the Socratic Seminar.

1. **Summarize:** Use writing to think about and **summarize the content** of the seminar, especially to capture new understandings of the text.

Examples of Summary Questions/Prompts:

- Based on this seminar, what are the most important points about this text?
- How does my understanding of the text connect to other things I’m learning?
- What major ideas do I better understand about this text because of this seminar?
- There are three main ideas I’m taking away from this seminar...

2. **Reflect:** Use writing to think about and **reflect on the process** of the seminar—both your contribution and the group’s process.

Examples of Reflection Questions/Prompts:

- How did I contribute to this discussion—what did I add to it?
- What questions do I now have as a result of this seminar?
- Who helped move the dialogue forward? How?
- At what point did the seminar lapse into debate/discussion rather than dialogue? How did the group handle this?
- Did anyone dominate the conversation? How did the group handle this?
- What would I like to do differently as a participant the next time I am in a seminar?

3. **Set Goals:** Be prepared to set goals for improvement in the next seminar.

Examples of Goal-Setting Questions/Prompts:

- What will I do differently to make the next seminar better?
- Two things I will do in the next seminar to be a more active listener...
- To be better prepared for the seminar, I will do _____ with the text.

Academic Language Scripts for Socratic Seminar

Clarifying

- Could you repeat that?
- Could you give us an example of that?
- I have a question about that: ...?
- Could you please explain what _____ means?
- Would you mind repeating that?
- I'm not sure I understood that. Could you please give us another example?
- Would you mind going over the instructions for us again?
- So, do you mean ... ?
- What did you mean when you said ...?
- Are you sure that ...?
- I think what _____ is trying to say is...
- Let me see if I understand you. Do you mean _____ or _____?
- Thank you for your comment. Can you cite for us where in the text you found your information?

Probing for Higher-Level Thinking

- What examples do you have of ... ?
- Where in the text can we find...?
- I understand . . . , but I wonder about ...
- How does this idea connect to ... ?
- If _____ is true, then ... ?
- What would happen if _____?
- Do you agree or disagree with his/her statement? Why?
- What is another way to look at it?
- How are ____ and ____ similar?
- Why is ____ important?

Building on What Others Say

- I agree with what _____ said because ...
- You bring up an interesting point, and I also think ...
- That's an interesting idea. I wonder ...? I think ... Do you think ... ?
- I thought about that also and I'm wondering why ... ?
- I hadn't thought of that before. You make me wonder if ... ? Do you think ... ?
- _____ said that ... I agree and also think ...
- Based on the ideas from _____, _____ and _____, it seems like we all think that...

Expressing an Opinion

- I think/believe/predict/imagine that . . . What do you think?
- In my opinion . . .
- It seems to me that . . .
- Not everyone will agree with me, but . . .

Interrupting

- Excuse me, but . . . (I don't understand.)
- Sorry for interrupting, but . . . (I missed what you said.)
- May I interrupt for a moment?
- May I add something here?

Disagreeing

- I don't really agree with you because . . .
- I see it another way. I think . . .
- My idea is slightly different from yours. I believe that . . . I think that . . .
- I have a different interpretation than you . . .

Inviting Others into the Dialogue

- Does anyone agree/disagree?
- What gaps do you see in my reasoning?
- What different conclusions do you have?
- _____ (name), what do you think?
- I wonder what _____ thinks?
- Who has another idea/question/interpretation?
- _____ (name), what did you understand about what _____ said?
- We haven't heard from many people in the group. Could someone new offer an idea or question?

Offering a Suggestion/Redirecting the Seminar

- We can't seem to find the connection to the text. Could you point out what and where that connection is?
- We all want to remember that our goal is a flow of questions and comments and ideas to be shared, rather than a debate to be won. How could your comment be rephrased to reflect our goal?
- Maybe you/we could . . .
- Here's something we/you might try: . . .
- What if we . . . ?
- We seem to be having a debate instead of a dialogue, can we . . .
- Who has another perspective to offer that will help us re-focus the conversation?
- Let's look at page _____ and see what we think about . . .

Socratic Seminar Observation Checklist

Directions: Each time your partner does one of the following, put a check in the box.

Your Name: _____ Partner's Name: _____

Speaks in the discussion.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Makes eye contact with other speakers or as she/he speaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refers to the text.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asks a new or follow-up question.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responds to another speaker.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paraphrases and adds to another speaker's ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourages another participant to speak	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupts another speaker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engages in side conversation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dominates the conversation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

After Discussion:

What is the most interesting thing your partner said?

After Discussion:

What would you like to have said in the discussion?

Socratic Seminar Observation Notes

Name: _____

Directions: Choose three participants in the seminar to observe. Write examples of the behaviors listed below as you see or hear them occur.

Participant Name	Offers New Idea	Asks a Question	Refers to Text	Builds on Other's Idea	Distracting Behavior	Other Notes/Observations
1.						
2.						
3.						

Evaluating a Socratic Seminar as a Whole

Consider the following questions as you prepare to talk about the strengths of a seminar and the areas for growth. Check off the areas below that were evident in this seminar.

Did the participants . . .

- seem prepared?
- speak loudly and clearly?
- cite reasons and evidence for their statements?
- use the text to find support?
- build on each other's ideas?
- paraphrase accurately?
- ask for help to clear up confusion?
- ask higher-level questions to move the dialogue forward?
- stick with the subject?
- listen to others respectfully?
- talk to each other, not just the leader?
- encourage everyone's involvement and avoid dominating the conversation?
- avoid hostile exchanges and debate?
- question each other in a civil manner?

Did the leader . . .

- get participants engaged early?
- make sure that questions were understood?
- ask questions that led to further questions?
- draw out reasons and implications?
- keep attention on ideas in the text being discussed?
- question misreadings of the text?
- allow time (pauses) for thinking?
- draw in all participants?
- listen carefully to participants' statements?
- accept participants' answers without judgment?
- allow for discussion of disagreements?

Our class/seminar group demonstrated these major strengths:

Our class/seminar group can grow in the following ways:

Using Facts and Opinions to Summarize Another Person's Ideas

Goal

Students will understand the difference between fact and opinion and be able to use that discernment to help them restate the main ideas of an oral text.

Rationale

The key to knowing which points are important in other people's ideas is being informed first about the topic to be able to anticipate likely concepts in a discussion, and then listening carefully for facts and opinions. Any retelling or summary of another person's ideas should include facts and concepts central to the topic, and the place to start is in the individual components of the topic itself. (Wormeli, 2005, p. 129)

Instructional Steps

1. Begin the process by teaching students to "hear" main points of an argument or any other kind of speech. Review the difference between facts and opinions first if they seem to have a misconception of the difference between the two.
2. Have them listen to a speech such as this one on teenage driving: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1gVjWtwVrU>.
3. Tell them to listen at the start of the speech for the main idea, or the subject the speaker wants the audience to hear, and to write the subject in a complete sentence at the top of a T-chart they create on notebook paper.
4. As they listen, ask them to take notes in the T-chart by listing only the facts on the left side of the T and opinions on the right side of the T.
5. When they are finished, discuss the statement at the top. Did they get the main idea right? Do they need to add or revise anything to that statement? If they are ready at this point, go to the next step.
6. Conduct a discussion on the T-chart columns. Ask them how they knew which points were facts and which were opinions. If students do not focus on the idea that facts are supported and opinions are not, share this with them. **A special note: Opinions supported by fact are *informed opinions*, the ideas of the speaker. Explain this difference.**
7. Have them note that the opinions they listed are in essence the summary of the speaker's ideas in the speech. Emphasize that when students are listening to other people's ideas, they are performing the same listening they did with the speech.
8. Have them write a summary using complete sentences to write the ideas from the T-chart, starting with the statement they wrote at the top of the chart. When they are finished, ask them to share out.
9. Have students summarize another speech or audio discussion.

10. Familiarize students first with the background information they will need in order to be able to understand other ideas on one topic, whether the ideas are in a memoir, a speech, an interview, or any other medium. This includes, but is not limited to, asking students to share what they know about the topic. At times, the class information is incomplete or has a few details missing.
11. Fill in any gaps in knowledge. This does not mean giving students volumes of paper to read or research to perform unless the occasion of the summary is part of a debate. In debate, of course, being informed requires careful student research.
12. Follow up this information with the assignment to listen to the speech and summarize, using the T-chart strategy as they listen.

For more information about various types of summaries, see AVID's *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Stop the YouTube video about one minute in, and have students write the subject of the speech. This will help those who take notes more slowly than others, and it pinpoints the topic they need to write about.
- Resume the video when all are ready.

Increased Rigor

- Challenge students with a longer or more complicated oral text.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Goal

Students will use small group discussion to guide problem solving of a major issue.

Rationale

The World Café strategy uses collaborative groups to investigate a large case or issue and work toward solutions. Participants are asked to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the effectiveness of solutions and respond to group decisions. Designed and outlined by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs (2005), World Café is a powerful strategy to approach critical problems and global issues. The strategy as adapted and presented engages students in deep analysis; rotates them through collaborative structures where expertise can be shared; and encourages cooperative problem solving. Presentation and discussion skills are developed and refined as each group leader must concisely present issues and facilitate the discussion between group members.

World Café

Instructional Steps

1. Arrange the room before the World Café begins. Set up a “station” for each discussion question. Tables are ideal for this strategy, but desks can be arranged in small circles if tables are not available. Each station should have chart paper and markers. The question or prompt should be attached to or printed on the chart paper.
2. Decide on an issue or problem for students to discuss. One text can be used with different questions for discussion at each station. Or multiple texts can be selected and each one read and discussed at a station. Questions should be thought-provoking and lead to analysis and evaluation of problems and solutions related to the issue.
3. Review the Student Handout: Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide (in the Discussion and Debate section of this book). If the focus will be on one or two of the discussion skills, inform students of the particular skills.
4. Assign students to small groups of 3–5 students. One student volunteers to be the group leader for this round. Students will rotate through the 10 minute phases with a partial rotation of groups after each phase. One student volunteers to stay behind in each rotation to report to the next group. This person becomes the new group leader.
5. Provide students with the text/issue for discussion.
6. Ask groups to read the text and discuss the questions. Students should record their responses and key ideas on chart paper.
7. Rotate students. Most students from each group will move to the next group. One student stays behind to summarize the work that the previous group completed. The group leader focuses on the targeted discussion skills.
8. Have students discuss and respond to the questions for this station. Responses are added to the chart paper.
9. Rotate students again and repeat the process. Continue until students have rotated through each station or as many stations as time permits.

10. Process the small group discussions with the class. How might they prioritize the various responses? Who else should be involved in the discussion? What are some next steps?
11. Debrief the World Café strategy. If time allows, this can be done at the end of the class period. If not, ask students to write their reflection and debrief as homework. Possible questions: Did everyone in the group contribute to the discussion? Did students consider other students' ideas? What can be done next time to improve the work in the groups? What presentation and speaking skills should be the focus?
12. Have students assess their performance of the targeted presentation/discussion skills using the Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide. Students should provide feedback to the teacher in a reflection—either in oral or written format.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model presentation or discussion skills that students will need to use in small groups.
- Focus on one or two skills each time before addressing all skills.
- Provide multiple opportunities to practice.

Increased Rigor

- Use case studies of complex, global issues that provide multiple viewpoints for discussion.
- Provide a more detailed rubric to assess presentation skills.

Using Technology

- Use a three-part text, reading, or case study. The text can be a longer one that is divided into three chunks, or it can be three articles on a related topic. The class responds to each part through the use of discussion forums, blogs, or Wikis.
- Debrief and/or reflection can be submitted using a specific Twitter hashtag.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Presentations

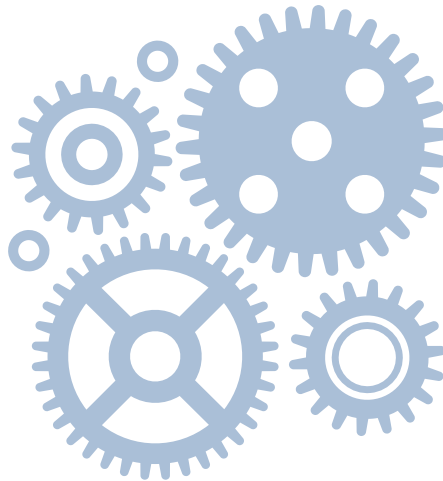
A critical aspect of a college and career-ready curriculum is that it requires students to participate in rich, structured presentations focused on rigorous content and/or controversial topics. Students should be asked to analyze and synthesize information, then report this information in a clear, concise manner so listeners can follow the content and line of reasoning. New technologies and the Internet serve to emphasize the need for proficiency in capturing and presenting information. Students need to be able to integrate digital media in their presentations in order to enhance understanding of 21st century skills.

English language arts classrooms are the ideal venue for developing these skills. ELA classes use an integrated approach to acquiring and sharing knowledge as a traditional part of the curriculum. Students are engaged in activities that require reading, writing, listening, speaking, and discussing, often using these methods simultaneously. Thus it becomes a natural evolution for students to create presentations in order to share knowledge.

ELA teachers can support and guide students in developing presentation skills by teaching and reinforcing the following:

- Organize claims along with relevant details and evidence in a logical sequence;
- Deliver the presentation using appropriate speech, volume, rate, and eye contact;
- Use language fluently and avoid unnecessary interrupters;
- Include visual displays and multimedia components when necessary to clarify or support information.

The Oral Presentation Scoring Guide that follows is a useful tool for guiding and evaluating various types of student presentations.



Oral Presentation Scoring Guide

Name: _____ Date: _____

+ = Exceeds expectations ✓ = Meets expectations ⊖ = Incomplete and/or does not meet expectations

Area of Focus	Characteristics	+ ✓ ⊖	Comments
Content & Organization	The introduction grabs audience's attention.		
	The introduction sets the purpose of the presentation.		
	Information is presented in a logical way that the audience can follow.		
	The transitions between ideas help the audience to follow the sequence of the presentation.		
	The conclusion sums up the main ideas of the presentation.		
	The conclusion leaves the audience with something to do or think about.		
Delivery	Makes regular eye contact with the audience		
	Shows energy and enthusiasm		
	Uses appropriate volume		
	Speaks in a varied tone, creating audience interest		
	Speaks clearly, enunciating words		
	Speaks at an appropriate rate—not too fast/slow		
	Maintains good posture		
	Shows confidence, demonstrating organization and rehearsal		
	Uses complete sentences to express ideas		
	Uses language accurately and avoids interrupters such as "um," "you know," etc.		
If applicable, uses appropriate visual aides to support presentation			

Additional Comments

Asynchronous Presentations

Goal

Students will create an effective presentation to be viewed online.

Rationale

Asynchronous presentations can be accessed online at any time. (Synchronous presentations require that all participants are online at the same time.) Asynchronous presentations allow for flexibility in access and amount of time needed. Since presentations of this type can accommodate a broad range of learning styles, students may feel more comfortable presenting in this format because the audience is a virtual one and not directly in front of them.

Instructional Steps

1. Identify a topic for the presentation. Will the presentation cover a research issue? A novel? A writing portfolio?
2. State the purpose of the presentation: to inform, to present an argument, to begin a discussion, or to demonstrate a process as possible ideas.
3. Determine if this will be a collaborative group project or an individual project.
4. Decide how and when the presentations will be accessed and viewed. Refer to the scoring guides in this book to determine which would be most appropriate for the type of presentation assigned.
5. Review the various formats for an asynchronous presentation: A podcast or screencast, a recorded/narrated PowerPoint, slide presentation (e.g. PowerPoint presentation), an iMovie, a discussion blog, etc. Another option is to select one format that all students will use. An important aspect of this decision is availability. What resources does your school support?
6. Explain to students they will create a plan for their presentation using a storyboard graphic organizer. (See *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*). This graphic organizer will require students to focus on key points and create a logical sequence for the presentation.
7. Distribute blank sheets of paper to students and ask them to divide the paper into 4 picture frames and number each frame.
8. Tell them to write a summary or jot a list of the details for the first key point in their presentation. Continue this process until all key points have been developed. (They may use as many pieces of paper as needed.)
9. Have students include notes or drawings in each picture frame about visuals to be included for each key point. Approve the storyboard before students begin working on the actual presentation.

10. Review the technology tools that will be used to create the presentation. This will depend on the format used as well as the resources available at the school.
11. Provide time for students to create the presentation and upload it for viewing.
12. Establish a timeframe for others in the class to view presentations and provide feedback.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Start with small projects requiring little preparation time and more focus on the technology.
- Jigsaw the activities so each group has expert roles. For example, one student can be the expert for creating the storyboard, another for finding visuals, another for learning the technology, etc. Experts can work with experts from other groups and focus on one skill set for the project.

Increased Rigor

- Have students select the format for the presentation—not necessarily the same for each group.
- Require students to synthesize information rather than to report or summarize. For example, students might create an interview between two characters in the novel or a video weather report that focuses on the setting.

“Know thyself.”

*– The Seven Sages, Inscription
at the Delphic Oracle*

Collaborative Group Presentation

Goal

Students will learn and practice the skills of presenting as a team.

Rationale

Collaborative learning brings students together to share their knowledge as they interactively work on a common task. As students work in groups to prepare a presentation of their work to other students, they must make decisions about who speaks when, how long each person will speak, what form the content will take, and what desired results they hope to achieve. This kind of decision-making is important and enables students to learn how to reach consensus and navigate the dynamics of a group.

Teacher Reference

- Preparing and Supporting Group Presentations

Student Handout

- Expectations for Group Presentation

Instructional Steps

1. Review the Teacher Reference: Preparing and Supporting Group Presentations. Follow the guidelines before presenting the academic task to students.
2. Provide students with clear instructions before they move into groups.
3. Spend time discussing what makes an effective group presentation—see (and refer to during the discussion) Student Handout: Expectations for Group Presentation.
4. Give students time to prepare to meet the above expectations, and then give them time to rehearse.
5. Monitor and coach groups during rehearsal so they can adjust and be more effective.
6. Establish the role of the audience for each presentation. They may be required to take notes, to track the evidence presented, to complete a graphic organizer with information from the presentation, etc. The audience should never be passive; they should be actively engaged in learning from the groups.
7. Give students the opportunity to receive peer evaluations or feedback on the presentation as well as to do a self-evaluation. Use the Presentation and Speech Scoring Guide. Since students need practice and time to become effective presenters, this feedback stage and subsequent discussion time is important. Students will need to be trained in how to give constructive feedback.
8. Have each student reflect on the experience, considering:
 - what they learned about the topic
 - what they learned about themselves
 - what they learned about their peers
 - what they would want to do next time they have a group presentation.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Allow students to use notes/note cards when presenting.
- Have students create a diagram showing each group member's placement for the presentation and order.
- Have two groups present to each other to practice before presenting to the entire class.

Increased Rigor

- Have students develop their own academic topic for their presentation and have it approved by the teacher.
- Require students to develop their own plan for equally dividing the duties and roles for the creating and presenting doing their own Roles and Responsibilities sheet.
- Differentiate the academic tasks assigned by giving students who are ready a more challenging group task.

Using Technology

- Have students create a PowerPoint or Prezi, or use some other online visual resource to supplement their presentation and act as a visual aid.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Preparing and Supporting Group Presentations

Preparing for Collaborative Group Presentations

1. Establish specific goals for the group presentation and develop tools for assessing both the students' product and the individual's and group's process for the collaborative group presentation.
2. Establish clear guidelines for how groups should work and specify the academic task that should be accomplished as they prepare their presentations.
3. Create the academic task: The group task should be meaningful and multi-faceted, offering enough work to engage all members of the group. The work should require students to rely on one another to problem-solve and generate new questions as they develop their presentation. The guidelines for accomplishing the academic task and for presenting the group's work should be clear before students begin preparations.
4. Determine selection of groups: There is no fixed way to group students. Depending on the class and on the assignment, the teacher may strategically choose group members, let students choose their groups, or randomly select the groups.
5. Establish a reasonable time limit. Allowing too much time for an activity can cause groups to deteriorate. It is better for groups to have too little time than too much.
6. Develop a Roles and Responsibilities sheet so students can divide duties between group members. Provide time for them to select the roles and become clear about responsibilities.
7. Develop a time management checklist for students to follow so they can monitor and track their own progress.
8. Provide students with clear instructions before they move into groups.
9. If there is to be a follow-up (such as a reflection or a specific task), prepare students for this before they prepare their presentation so they are anticipating what they will do or say.

Supporting Students as They Work in Groups

10. Reinforce expectations and instructions once students are in groups.
11. Have groups complete their Roles and Responsibilities sheet and assign someone to be the time manager (using the time management checklist).
12. Move from group to group as students work, monitoring interactions and discussions. Expect some natural digression, but listen for students to pull themselves back on task. Ask questions as a way to re-focus a group that isn't self-correcting. Do not step in to solve problems for students; use questions and coaching to help students figure out how to tackle challenges.
13. Listen for opportunities to pose questions that will challenge students to work at a higher level. This is a great opportunity to move individuals and groups to more rigorous levels of thinking.

Expectations for Group Presentation

1. Each group member must have a speaking part.
2. Each group member knows the information for ALL parts of the presentation so they can build on, make reference to, and make slight corrections/clarifications when needed.
3. There is a distinct order to the presentation and everyone knows the order and where to stand.
4. There is a planned introduction and conclusion.
5. Students have rehearsed as a group and not as individuals.
6. Each group member practices the traits of an effective speaker:
 - appropriate pacing
 - enunciation and volume
 - eye contact with the audience
 - no fidgeting or nervous habits
 - well-rehearsed—doesn't have to read notes
 - uses visual aids, when appropriate, to supplement the presentation
 - reads the audience and adjusts during the presentation
 - plans with the finish in mind

Panel Discussion

Goal

Students will learn to present different viewpoints and/or information via panel discussion.

Rationale

In a panel discussion, students talk about a specific topic. A moderator is used to guide the discussion by asking questions and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to speak. This strategy is used to display a variety of views or to provide detailed information on a topic. Allow time for participants to ask questions and talk with the panel.

Student Handout

- Panel Discussion Roles and Responsibilities

Instructional Steps

1. Determine the topic for the panel discussion. Topics might be based on contemporary issue the group has researched or based on a novel and the panelists can represent a character in the story.
2. Provide clear guidelines to the students. See Student Handout: Panel Discussion Roles and Responsibilities.
3. Place students in groups of 4–6, including a moderator.
4. Ask groups to identify the moderator for their group.
5. Instruct students to focus on the important topics of their issue or in the novel.
6. Have students create a list of questions to help identify and explore the topics/issues that moderator will ask during the panel discussion.
7. Review the necessary skills for effective oral discussions. (See the Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide in the Discussion and Debate section of this book.)
8. Provide time for the group to prepare and rehearse their presentation.
9. Determine if a “hot seat” will be used. A hot seat is used to offer participants an opportunity to represent their views.
10. Conduct the panel discussion. The moderator will facilitate the discussion by asking panel members the pre-determined questions. Panel members will respond with detailed information.
11. Have moderator take questions from the audience and designate panel members to respond.
12. Conclude with the moderator summarizing 3–5 major points highlighted in the discussion.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students view a panel discussion to see the process. Reference YouTube and other online resources.
- Model the panel discussion with one group of students with the teacher as moderator.

Increased Rigor

- Ask students to assume the identity of a character in a novel or specific person in society. Students will answer all questions from the character/person's point of view.
- Create a panel of critics with each member taking various stances of interpretation of the literature: feminist, archetypal, psychological, etc.
- Select certain students to evaluate the presentation.

Using Technology

- Have participants in the audience ask questions using Twitter and a pre-determined hashtag.
- Videotape the discussions for later viewing by another class who will conduct a panel discussion on the same topics but who will provide rebuttals to the arguments (discussions/interpretations/commentaries) of the first panel.

“The purpose creates the machine.”

– Arthur Young

Panel Discussion

Roles and Responsibilities

Moderator	Panelist	Audience
<p>Introduce panel members and ask pre-determined questions</p>	<p>Stay focused at all times and, if required, stay in character for the entire discussion</p>	<p>Determine your purpose: actively listening to the information or assessing the panelists' presentation skills</p>
<p>Ensure that all panelists have the opportunity to speak</p>	<p>Answer all questions in detail and display appropriate oral discussion skills</p>	<p>Take notes on major ideas and details in order to ask content questions if your role is to listen; stay actively engaged</p>
<p>Monitor questions from audience after the panel presentation/discussion</p>	<p>Be an active participant in the discussion</p>	<p>Determine if the panelist presents adequate information and uses appropriate presentation skills using the Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide; stay actively engaged</p>

“To be a well-favored man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.”

– *Shakespeare, Much Ado About Nothing*

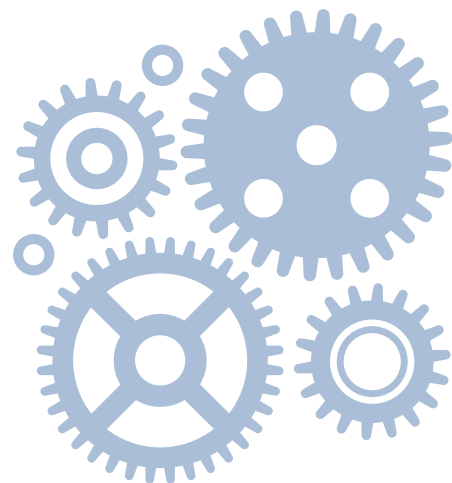
Interpretation and Performance

One of the best ways to ignite students’ engagement and enthusiasm is with a little make-believe—cue entrance! This section, Interpretation and Performance, offers unique pathways to literacy and writing.

Beginning with Readers’ Theater, students learn to share textual interpretation through the way they construct their performances. They think through and create the “rest of the story” when, for example, historic events they have read about do not supply the whole narrative. Students may create the voice and lay the scene when Grant and Lee met at Appomattox Court House or bring to life the events leading up to the signing of the Magna Carta. Students make use of inference and interpretation to invent the dialogue for the scripts they create in Role Play; they initiate a new form of the classroom conversation when they venture into “what if.” They are empowered to become witnesses to human triumphs and dilemmas as they tackle writing and performing Plays and Monologues. They use props, music and other art forms to interpret and assume other personas based on their own logic and intuitive knowledge of human tendencies.

In Performance Poetry and Prose, students use their voices, bodies, gestures, and purposeful tone to give the audience help

in extracting meaning from difficult text. Taken to the next level, students can perform their own creations, offering an exciting new way of expressing themselves. Yet another form of performance is Choric Reading. By joining voices to share aloud a poem or any other written medium and by virtue of a designed tone, manipulated volume, purposeful silences, and selected gestures, students can tell a story, evoke emotion, testify to a truth, or make the audience squirm. For all these reactions, performers rely on the audience to extrapolate meaning and progress to understanding. Performance is all about interpretation—on the part of the performers as well as the audience—and interpretation is a vital literacy skill. By learning to employ performance techniques with and for our students, we can help all our students focus and join in vital real-world conversations.



Performance Scoring Guide

Name of Performers _____ Date _____

Type of Performance _____

+ = Exceeds expectations ✓ = Meets expectations ⊖ = Incomplete and/or does not meet expectations

Area of Focus	Characteristics	+ ✓ ⊖	Comments
Content & Organization	(If composed by students) Script created and delivered an appropriate message		
	(If not composed by students) Script is well-served by students who understand the message		
	Information is presented in a logical way the audience can follow		
	The transitions between ideas help the audience to follow the sequence of the presentation		
	The conclusion summarizes the main ideas of the presentation		
	The conclusion leaves the audience with something to do or think about		
Delivery	Makes direct, sustained eye contact with audience throughout performance		
	Dramatic expression is effective; tone used to reinforce change in mood, voice, setting, and meaning		
	Uses appropriate volume, gestures and body language designed to manipulate audience		
	Speaks in a varied tone, creating audience interest through emotion, logic, and/or expression		
	Speaks clearly, enunciating words		
	Speaks at an appropriate rate—not too fast/slow		
	Speakers maintain poise and do not step out of character		
	Shows confidence, demonstrating organization and rehearsal		
	Uses complete sentences, where appropriate, to express ideas		
	Uses language accurately and avoids interrupters such as “um,” “you know,” etc.		
If applicable, uses appropriate visual aides to support presentation			

Additional Comments _____

Choric Reading

Goal

Students will increase their understanding and interpretation of a text by creating and performing a choric reading.

Rationale

Jeffrey Wilhelm, expert in literacy teaching, calls activities featuring dramatic interpretation “action strategies.” This seems to remove any stigma some adolescents feel about “drama.” Among those action strategies is choric reading, which is similar to singing in a chorus when the readers are speaking the same words/lines simultaneously, with some voices starting and some continuing as others drop out. Roles can be assigned and expression is encouraged. The value in such reading lies in contextualizing and making the learning purposeful. (Wilhelm, 2008, p. 150)

Instructional Steps

1. Select one short text such as Ernest Thayer’s “Casey at the Bat” for practice and to demonstrate how to separate and perform a text into a choric reading. Prior to giving students this poem, pre-plan how students might divide it into speaking parts. Highlight lines in different colors to indicate speakers, including crowd noises.
2. Direct this practice reading as a choir director might, with different voices blending in/stopping when others join in expressively.
3. Supply students with other texts that can be divided into different voices (roles). These could be lengthy poems, a condensation of a short story or novel, a monologue or even a text without speakers indicated so students must divide the text into speaking lines. Choric reading material can be any text suited for the purpose of the activity.
4. Divide the class into small groups, and have each group use a different text. Allow them time to arrange their text into speaking parts. This might take one class period to plan and one class period to perform since there are several groups.
5. Give all students the pre-practice assignment. Tell them to be ready to explain to the class the basis on which the group arranged the spoken text as a performance to deliver a certain effect. Since this is a matter of interpretation, it applies to what they “discover” about the subject, the author, or the situation.
6. Use the Student Handout: Performance Scoring Guide if a score is needed for evaluation.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Make the selections of students for grouping, and design the groups so that a variety of abilities are represented within each group.
- Ask for several colleagues to join you in a choric reading for the class to model the strategy.

Increased Rigor

- Select a text with some references to unknown situations, people, or events or that was written in a different time period. Students must conduct brief research in order to “interpret” the text for performance.

Performance Poetry and Prose

Goal

Students will collaborate in small groups to enhance their understanding and interpretation of literary texts by performing them for one another.

Rationale

Students who do not move out of their desks to breathe life into the words they read are missing out on one of the best avenues for “speaking with the poet” or author. Interpreting a writer’s meaning through performance is basic to understanding it. Anyone who has ever written an email only to find the meaning was misunderstood has first-hand knowledge of how difficult it is to extract meaning when there’s no context of body language or tone to interpret. Performing poetry and prose is not a waste of time. It is a part of oral interpretation.

Instructional Steps

1. Explain to students they are going to be reading a part of a text aloud before analyzing it in writing.
2. Have them read a poem with some inherent difficulty due to context of format, as e.e. cummings does in his poetry such as “buffalo bill’s” or “the grasshopper.” Others to check out could be William Carlos Williams’ “This Is Just to Say” or “The Red Wheelbarrow.”
3. Read the poem to them and discuss cummings’ synesthesia (if you use cummings) or one of Williams’ poems.
4. Discuss with the class the idea that poetry they read did not seem like a poem until it was read aloud or performed.
5. Make the comparison with a short story in which they recognize the words but do not necessarily know or understand the details. (Short stories can be found online using short story URLs listed in the Appendices of this text.)
6. Tell students that prose and poetry often elicit differing interpretations from those of other people reading the same poetry/prose.
7. Show them a prose interpretation in a performance by Tom Hanks: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfWluyimme50>
8. If they had watched the sitcom that inspired the performance, would they think it was a great storyline? Why or why not? What made Hanks’ performance memorable? Name the things he did to portray the situation. Scribe the answers in list form on a document camera. (Answers will vary, but most will talk about the hand motions, the expression, the emphatic lines, and the pauses.)
9. Have the students move into groups of four. Have them select a scene from a short story, a novel, or an entire poem and create a performance similar to Hanks’ performance using the same stylistic devices they noticed. Poetry can be found at the website www.poetry.org.

“Ink runs from the corners of my mouth.

There is no happiness like mine.

I have been eating poetry.”

– Mark Strand, Eating Poetry

10. Give students time to prepare their scene. Schedule the performances, and stagger the days so there are two each day. Use the Performance Scoring Guide in this text to evaluate the portrayals.
11. Have the students reflect on their interpretations and performances in their Cornell notes or learning log. They are to explain the reason the group chose to display their scene as they did.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students practice getting the message across with something they understand well, like the class rules, or the week’s school lunch menu.

Increased Rigor

- Have students write or use their own original poetry or stories to create performances.

Using Technology

- Have students select two performances they wish to post on the class or school website. Post the announcement of the video in the school newspaper, on Twitter, or in the daily bulletin/announcement.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*

Plays and Monologues

Goal

Students will meet the challenge of creating and presenting a theatrical production in the classroom.

Rationale

Collaborating on the creation or alteration of a script, directing and practicing the characters as they move about the stage, arranging the dialogue, and rehearsing are all similar to the strategies used when students participate in a panel discussion, a debate, or a scripted presentation. All the tasks that prepare an oral classroom product are present in the planning and production of a play or monologue. The steps for producing a play or a monologue are similar to the stages in the writing process. Collaborating on the plot is pre-writing. Student directing and rehearsing are reader response and revision. Arranging the dialogue is drafting and revision at the same time. Rehearsal and performance are editing and publication. Just like the writing process, it is all recursive right up to performance.

Teacher Reference

- Production Notes

Instructional Steps

1. Determine the value of the time spent preparing and presenting the play or monologue just as it would be performed by the teacher in presenting any other lesson. Budget time carefully and display a timeline for students to see, as producing a play or monologues can easily take weeks unless time is controlled.
2. Present students with a purchased script on a topic or one found in a textbook, or design the script specifically for the class studies. It is more advantageous to design the initial script because the presentation can be made to fit the number of students available and the class timeline.
3. Assign the whole class to read the script.
4. Conduct a brief discussion about any changes in the basic plot. If the presentation is a series of monologues, divide the class into groups to fit the number of monologues available. Group jobs will be smaller versions of play preparation.
5. Divide the class into actors and stagers (set/costume/props). Have the actors choose a director from their group and have the stagers choose a stage manager. Explain that you will be the producer, helping make sure everything comes together smoothly. The director will conduct the read-throughs and rehearsals while the stage manager will oversee the set/costume/props, and act as the liaison between the director/actors and the stagers. Divide the staging group into their separate duties as necessary. The actors will sit separately from the staging groups and will begin immediately with another read-through and rehearsal of the script.
6. Allow appropriate dialogue changes as the actors deem necessary. Also, as they proceed, have actors make a prop list of any new changes to give to the stage manager.
7. Begin the series of rehearsals, as indicated in the timeline, and designate the last rehearsal as a “dress.” Remember: It is fine to use scripts as the students conduct the final production.

“They are children of many men, our words.”

– George Severis, On Stage

8. Have the stagers view rehearsals because minor changes will occur as the rehearsals continue. The changes may need some adjustments in the staging support.
9. Start thinking of the potential audience and have all parties design and issue invitations for a time to present the “final” production.
10. Notify students of the audience date. Continue overall control of the production and schedule.
11. Take any last-minute preparations in control since these are the things that make glitches affecting smooth proceeding. They include things like loss of scripts, audience seating within the classroom, interruptions of unplanned intercom announcements, and the like.
12. Assign all groups to write notes of appreciation to the audience members, the administration, and their office assistants for support and any other out-of-class help from others. To their notes, have students add a reflection: What did they learn? What did they do that reflected upon the curriculum (name the area of study in the class)? What other aspects of play making/monologue production do they see affecting what they will do in the future or in school?
13. Complete the activity by having a reflective discussion with the entire class. Take notes, because the next time may be sooner than originally planned!

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Assign a few students to be “reporters” for the student newspaper or photographers for the planning and production. This will ensure the quieter students have a starring role if they wish.

Increased Rigor

- Assign everyone to a small monologue team. This will consist of an actor, a producer, and a stager. The producer will assist the actor in practicing and designing delivery of the lines. The stager does everything else.

Using Technology

- Have students create a video to post to a school website (with parental and administration permission). Invite school board members to view it.

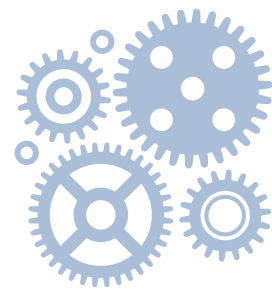
Production Notes

Planning

1. Creating a time budget is crucial. Student productions involving an entire class take time to arrange and produce. The more pre-planning done before involving students, the better.
2. Always clue in administration first and share the timeline. Innumerable communication and arrangement problems, including any parental refusal to allow student participation, can be mostly averted if they are anticipated. Be sure to invite the administrative team to the final production.
3. Recognize there will always be right-up-to-production absences, and those are often students who have a vital role. Plan ahead for a team member to “understudy” (just in case!).
4. Notify the students’ coaches, band directors, and others likely to ask to excuse a student to participate in an extracurricular activity. The in-class play or monologue is not extracurricular, however. Enlist cooperation beforehand!
5. Sometimes illness or other mass absences emerge. On the time budget, plan for an alternate presentation date if possible.
6. Remember this is not a school production. It is a class production. Try to rein in student enthusiasm for elaborate costuming or lighting or staging.

Student Involvement

1. Actors do not have to memorize the script in such a time-budgeted production. Allow use of scripts for the performance.
2. Have an alternate activity for any students whose parents voice objections to their participation in the activity.
3. Student reflection afterward is vital. Since the time commitment is substantial, it is important to decide if it is something that can or should be done again, and the reflections will show that to all, including the students.



Readers' Theater

Goal

Students will experience the power of interpretation through presentation by participating in a Readers' Theater performance.

Rationale

Readers' Theater is described as the theater of the imagination because the events are strictly in the minds of the audience and the performers rather than acted out on stage. Readers' Theaters have performers holding the script and turning pages carefully, as if reading. The use of "off-stage" focus where the performers imagine and speak to the other characters as if they are out in the audience, and the use of a narrator who speaks directly to the audience are hallmarks of Readers' Theater. When used as form of explication and interpretation, performers and audiences create an opportunity for meaningful discussion.

Teacher Reference

- Evaluating a Readers' Theater Performance

Instructional Steps

1. Select a passage for a demonstration of Readers' Theater. Make sure the passage has three to five characters or "voices" for use in a group presentation.
2. Include "the narrator" as part of the cast.
3. Have students fasten the script in a hard-backed folder for use in the performance. This makes the script more stable and less likely to cause audience distraction.
4. Explain the "off-stage" focus of the performers. Off-stage enlivens the performance and makes it easier for the audience to imagine the characters even though they are not physically present. NOTE: In an off-stage focus, the performers speak to their absent (off-stage) characters as if the characters are situated in the center of the room. To help the performers focus on the off-stage characters, place visible name cards in the middle of the room where the performers can focus on them or have the teacher stand in the center of the room to provide a focus.
5. Have the narrator focus directly on the audience as he or she speaks.
6. Instruct the performers to enter from both sides of the stage simultaneously and then take their places quietly. This "stage" could also be an empty space at the front of the classroom.
7. Begin the performance by having the narrator set the scene for the event being reenacted.
8. Have the performers read their parts with emotion but without extraneous hand gestures, eye-rolling, or any physical action other than speaking with meaning.
9. Conclude the Readers' Theater with a debriefing discussion involving the audience as well as the performers.
10. Assign all groups a reflective prompt on which they will respond after the performance and debriefing. Make sure the reflective prompt is tailored to the debriefing.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Give performers time to rehearse how they will enter and leave the stage, how they will take their places, and how they will bow simultaneously at the end.
- Show a video clip of Readers' Theater. Search YouTube or TEDTalks for possible examples appropriate for the class.
- Create the script as a large group and then select performers.

Increased Rigor

- Give students a list of "moments in history" (or in the life of a character) from which they are to select and create their scripts. Make sure they know how they will be scored on their choices.
- Give students a passage with *implied* characters from which they are to create the scene and the dialogue as well as the narration. For example, give them a newspaper clipping reporting the peace talks between two countries at war.
- Use the entire "cast" or a small group of students as "the" narrator, speaking together as one.

Using Technology

- Select some appropriate YouTube Readers' Theater performances for students to view, such as: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2Nx9nzMXAU>

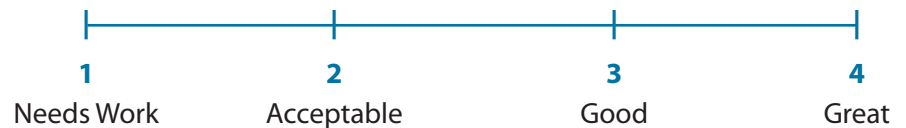
*"When we play the fool, how wide
The theatre expands! beside,
How long the audience sits before us!
How many prompters! what a chorus!"*
– Walter Savage Landor

Evaluating a Readers' Theater Performance

Peer Evaluation: Since Readers' Theater places the audience as an important part of the performance, the students in the audience need to listen, watch and be responsible for providing peer feedback to the performers. To do this, provide a Likert scale which has a 1–4 rating for the same elements on which the teacher is evaluating the performance. The below samples are easy to demonstrate to the students, and the scale ranges from a score of 1 (Needs Improvement) to a score of 4 (Great).

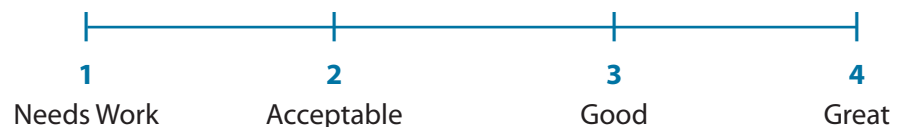
Self-Control

Students do not lose focus.
Students do not fidget, laugh, or interact personally with members of the audience unless this is intentionally part of the script.



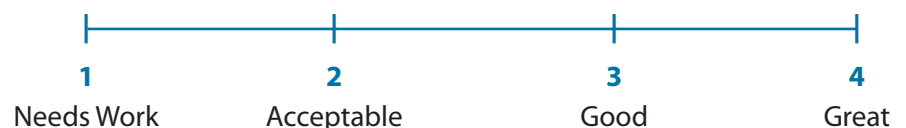
Characterization Display

Students utilize facial expressions and hand gestures to portray character.



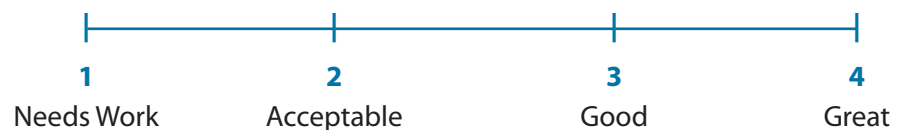
Voice Projection and Diction

Students do not lose focus.
Students do not fidget, laugh, or interact personally with members of the audience unless this is intentionally part of the script.



Teamwork

Student collaboration is evident on the timing and pace of the presentation. All students are in sync with the presentation.



Role Play

Goal

Students will act out scenarios to achieve a specific learning objective.

Rationale

From the time children are able to play dress-up, role play provides the ability to assume some other person's life, work, interpersonal conversations, and decisions. Role playing brings the outside world into the classroom, allowing the player to experience a character's motivations or to see how a culture different from his or her own affects interpretation.

“Speech is a mirror of the soul: as a man speaks, so is he.”

– Maxim 1073

Instructional Steps

1. Design several scenarios to suit the learning objectives of the lesson and the outcomes assigned to the class. These scenarios could also be reenactments of texts studied in class. It is important to allow students to appropriately alter the scenarios.
2. Explain the purpose of the role-play scenarios. It is important to let students know that the activity has a purpose, which could be an interpretation of a literary excerpt, a dialogue, a moment in history, a presidential address, and so on. Also model and train the students using the evaluation format.
3. Assign a scenario to an individual or a group of students and have them elaborate on the scenario.
4. Allow the students some time to collaborate on research, to create the script, and to practice the roles. Depending upon the requirements of the scene and the parameters of class time, multiple class periods might be necessary for this process.
5. Have the students create any props or other resources they wish to use, though it is best if the students do not become elaborate with extraneous materials. The focus should be on the interpretation and oral presentation of the scenario.
6. Prepare a site for presentation of the role plays if the role play has an expectation for audience participation. This could be as simple as a corner of the room. Role plays do not require stage sets.
7. Allow for time after the performance for a class debriefing or for discussion regarding issues raised based on the interpretation.
8. Each role-player should write a reflection on the reason the group interpreted the scenario as it did.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have small groups participate in the role play instead of being assigned solo presentations.
- Give students short lists of the scenes from which to choose a role play.
- Allow students to record their role plays for class viewing.
- View role plays available on YouTube or other Internet video sites so students can see the expectations of the strategy.

Increased Rigor

- Give students an “artifact” from a literary period and have them create the role play to answer the questions of who, what, when, why, where, and how.
- Have students use a text from a different time or culture to analyze through role play. An example is Jonathan Edwards' sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”

Speeches and Public Speaking

Teachers should strive to include opportunities for students to speak and listen throughout the year, including opportunities to present formal speeches and to speak publicly. Being able to verbally communicate effectively is essential in school, work, and personal lives. Since some students may be apprehensive about public speaking, it is helpful to make the experience as positive and non-threatening as possible. Encourage students to be supportive of each other and never critical. Talk with students about their possible fears of public speaking and how to overcome them. Model the expectations and skills for public speaking in your classroom so students become comfortable with them.

Here are some suggestions that may help you when planning and incorporating speaking opportunities in the classroom:

- Teach students how to create outlines and to use notecards when presenting. Consider using key-word outlines. If they must hold a paper during the speech, show them how to hold it without having quavering hands. (They apply slight outward pull on a sheet of paper they hold in both hands.)
- Identify a purpose for speaking and always consider the audience.
- Discuss ways to calm nervousness, and model strategies students can use, such as suggesting they hold a pencil or pen in one hand while they speak. This “crutch” is only a prop, but it helps them calm themselves.
- When students present, always provide positive comments aloud for the class to hear and written feedback to the speaker that

includes tips to try in the future. Include the grade in the written feedback. Consider grading students based on their growth in using the skills over time.

- Teach students to incorporate the basic components of a speech when planning:

Title

Introduction

- Attention-Getter
- Three Main Points

Body

- Support and Elaboration

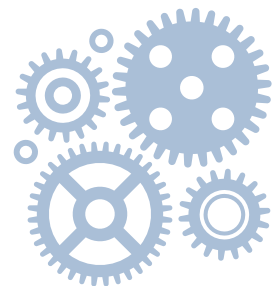
Conclusion

Visual Aid

Sources of Information

- Give students the catchy formula “Tell ‘em, tell ‘em, tell ‘em” to guide their planning: Tell the audience what you are going to be speaking about (intro); tell them your points in more detail (body); tell them what you told them (conclusion).

The information in this section may be presented as a unit or adapted for inclusion into other curriculum plans to support public speaking.



Public Speaking Scoring Guide

Name: _____ Date: _____

+ = Exceeds expectations ✓ = Meets expectations ⊖ = Incomplete and/or does not meet expectations

Area of Focus	Characteristics	+ ✓ ⊖	Comments
Content & Organization	The introduction grabs the audience's attention and sets the purpose of the presentation.		
	The content is appropriate and sufficient to cover the topic.		
	Information is presented in a logical way so the audience can follow.		
	The transitions between ideas help the audience to follow the sequence of the presentation.		
	The conclusion summarizes the main ideas of the presentation.		
	The conclusion is appropriate and leaves the audience with something to do or think about.		
Delivery	Makes regular eye contact with the audience.		
	Shows appropriate energy and enthusiasm.		
	Uses appropriate gestures, body language, and facial expressions to support delivery of the topic.		
	Speaks in a varied tone, creating audience interest.		
	Speaks clearly, enunciating words.		
	Speaks at an appropriate volume and rate—not too fast/slow or low/high.		
	Uses language appropriate to the audience, topic, and setting.		
	Shows confidence, demonstrating organization and rehearsal.		
	Uses complete sentences to express ideas.		
	Uses language accurately and avoids interrupters such as "um," "you know," "like," etc.		
	If applicable, uses appropriate visual aids to support presentation.		
Observes the established time limit, if applicable.			

Additional Comments

Impromptu Speeches

Goal

Students will increase their comfort level with oral presentations by performing two brief impromptu speeches.

Rationale

Fear of public speaking is said to rank higher than fear of death among many people. Creating low-pressure speaking opportunities can help reduce that fear. A spur-of-the-moment speech removes anxieties about writing and remembering. Also, seeing classmates speak one after the other in rapid succession—and survive—can be reassuring.

Thus, the use of timed, one-minute impromptu speeches allows students the opportunity to practice and become comfortable with public speaking skills.

Teacher Reference

- Impromptu Speaking

Instructional Steps

1. Present or review the skills for public speaking (reference the Student Handout: Skills for Public Speaking from the Formal Speeches Strategy).
2. Create a bag of common objects to use for the first activity. Use the Teacher Reference: Impromptu Speaking for suggested objects. Select objects with which students will be familiar and about which they can easily talk in front of the class. The idea is for them to be able to focus not so much on content as on practicing the elements of public speaking.
3. Explain to students that the process will rotate until all students have had a turn. The first student selects an object from the bag and immediately presents a one-minute impromptu speech to the class about the object. The speech should summarize the use of the object, relate personal connections to the object, or tell its importance in everyday life.
4. Time students and stop them when one minute has elapsed.
5. Provide opportunities for reflection on their use of the public speaking elements after each impromptu speech. Teachers should provide positive oral comments and more detailed written comments for improvement to students.
6. Provide a second opportunity for students to talk in front of their peers and to practice the elements of public speaking. This time, put typed topics in a bag for students to select. Use the Teacher Reference: Impromptu Speaking for suggested topics.
7. Allow three students at a time to choose their topics and give them 2 minutes to organize their thoughts.
8. Time students for one minute as they present to the class.
9. Provide appropriate oral and written comments to students again.
10. Challenge students to incorporate the skills they have practiced into their formal speeches.
11. Use the Formal Speeches Strategy after students have practiced with impromptu speeches.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Present a sample impromptu speech of your own as a model for students.
- Give students sample categories, such as school subjects, transportation, or household appliances, and have them collaborate to select a category or topic for YOU to present a one-minute impromptu speech about. Be sure to incorporate and model the required skills!

Increased Rigor

- Give students 5 minutes to prepare a 2-minute speech on one of the impromptu topics. Encourage them to open with an attention-getter.

“Speech is the image of actions.”

– Solon, *Diogenes Laertius,*
Lives of Eminent Philosophers

Impromptu Speaking

Suggested Items for “Objects in a Bag” Impromptu Speeches

Ruler	Large Paper Clip	Highlighter	Post-It Notes	Coin
Envelope	Scissors	Hole Punch	Crayons	Paperweight
Bookmark	Dice	CD	Calculator	Deck of Cards
Coaster	Flash Drive	Pencil	Index Cards	Stickers
Picture	Harmonica	Nails or Screws	Movie Ticket Stub	Hammer

Suggested Impromptu Speech Topics

An important person in my life	A character I'd like to meet	A place I would like to visit	A TV show I like to watch	My favorite food
A hero in history	My perfect day	A pet I would like to own	Me in 2035	How to stay healthy
An age I'd like to be	Something I'd like to achieve	My favorite hobby	A sport I enjoy	My favorite season
I predict....	My favorite apps	My after school job	Best qualities in a friend	The worst....

Formal Speeches

Goal

Students will improve their public speaking skills by presenting two different types of formal speeches to the class.

Rationale

To be college- and career-ready means to be able to speak to groups large and small. Good speakers employ public speaking skills when presenting. Allowing students to research, plan, rehearse, and present formal speeches fosters the development and practice of these skills in a non-threatening classroom setting.

Teacher Reference

- Evaluate the Professionals

Student Handouts

- Skills for Public Speaking
- Possible Speech Topics

Instructional Steps

1. Discuss and model the skills required for mastering public speaking. Use the Skills for Public Speaking handout to reference the skills.
2. Provide opportunities for students to watch speeches presented by local, national, and international leaders. Students should analyze and evaluate the merits of the content as well as the elements and skills of public speaking incorporated by the speakers. Teachers may provide the sample speeches or use this as a research opportunity for students. Possible sources are listed on the Teacher Reference: Evaluate the Professionals.
3. Use the Impromptu Speeches strategy here as students practice with the required skills.
4. Provide sample topics (reference the Student Handout: Possible Speech Topics) for students to select from as they plan and present two formal speeches for the class.
5. For the first speech, have students pick a topic from the “Using visual aids” list on the Possible Speech Topics handout.
6. Allow time for students to research, plan, and rehearse their speeches.
7. Encourage students to practice at home with friends and family, to video themselves, or to practice in front of a mirror. Create a non-threatening, safe environment in the classroom as students prepare and present.
8. Review the Public Speaking Scoring Guide and skills on which students will be evaluated using the Student Handout: Skills for Public Speaking.
9. Conduct the first round of in-class speeches. Provide oral commendations along with written comments to help students improve.

“The folly of mistaking a paradox for a discovery, a metaphor for a proof, a torrent of verbiage for a spring of capital truths, and oneself for an oracle, is inborn in us.”

– Paul Valéry, *Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci*

10. Reflect in a whole-class discussion on what they experienced and learned about public speaking and what their goals might be for improvement in the next round of speeches.
11. Assign the second speech from the “Challenging and Persuading” list on the Possible Speech Topics handout. You may want to review some of the elements of argumentative writing. Again, allow time for students to do research, plan, and practice. Conduct the second round of formal speeches and provide oral and written feedback.
12. Consider using the Myself as a Speaker strategy after students have presented their impromptu and formal speeches as a metacognitive reflection and analysis of their work.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Have students present the first formal speech in small groups of 4–5.
- Consider allowing pairs of students to speak together the first time they deliver a speech. This would not be a panel discussion, but rather, a paired talk.

Increased Rigor

- Allow students to provide feedback to each other for each speech presented. Carefully instruct students to only allow constructive feedback and commendations. Model and post appropriate constructive feedback “stems.” Monitor to make sure comments are appropriate before feedback is given from students to each other.
- Give each student a speech topic at the end of class as they walk out the door. This gives them time to prepare a short speech. Then, select a few (four or five) daily to speak.

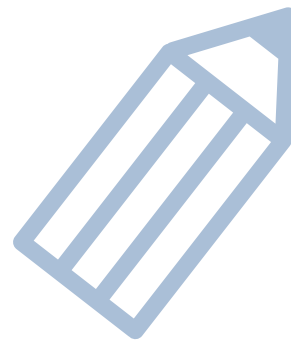
Using Technology

- Allow students access to the computer lab or media center to research topics of interest and assist with adding support to their speeches.

Evaluate the Professionals

Possible sources of sample speeches include:

- Inaugural Addresses of Presidents of the USA
- “The President’s Speech to Students” by Barack Obama
- Fireside Chats of Franklin D. Roosevelt
- Nelson Mandela Speeches
- Fidel Castro Speeches
- Winston Churchill Speeches
- Malcolm X Speeches
- “Cinderella’s Stepsisters” by Toni Morrison
- Other speeches available electronically



Skills for Public Speaking

Eye Contact

Maintain eye contact with the audience by looking at them frequently. Do not read your speech.

Pace/Rate of Speech

The speech is given at an acceptable rate for understanding, avoids halting expressions such as “um,” and is not presented so fast that it is difficult to understand.

Volume

The speaker addresses the audience at an appropriate level so all members of the audience can hear the speaker clearly at a comfortable level.

Facial Expressions

The use of facial expressions are appropriate to the topic and enhance the words and ideas presented in the speech.

Body Language

Gestures, stance, and movement are appropriate to the topic and setting.

Opening Statements

Carefully constructed statements capture the audience’s attention appropriately and present the topic of the speech.

Appropriate Content

All information presented is appropriate to the topic, audience, and setting.

Grammar/Formal Language

Students model the use of formal language skills without the use of slang, unless appropriate to the topic.

Focus/Organization of Ideas

All ideas are relevant and organized in a logical manner appropriate to the topic.

Time Limit Observed

Students should practice their presentations to be sure they meet the required time limits set by the teacher.



Possible Speech Topics



Using Visual Aids

Fun with Pictures – Select up to three pictures of importance in your life and tell the stories associated with each picture.

All About Me – Present autobiographical information in a speech about yourself. Perhaps tell a “scar” story in which an important lesson was learned. Or, you may include information about friends/family, favorite things, travels, future plans, etc.

“How-To” – Demonstrate steps and directions for completing a task you do well. Ideas might include how to cook, how to use sign language, how to play a game, etc.

Just for Fun – Explain something you do for fun and tell how you learned to do it. Remember to explain the skills required, necessary equipment or supplies needed, and tips for success.

Personal Treasures – Tell about several possessions of value to you. Objects may not be valuable in the monetary sense, but for other personal reasons. (Note: You should not bring valuable objects to class. Provide pictures or drawings instead to share with your classmates).

Someone Special – Think of a person whom you admire and create a speech to explain why the person is admirable. Include the person’s qualities and accomplishments you believe to be admirable.

Challenging and Persuading

Current Events – Write a speech about a current event you believe is important. Be sure to explain the event, its significance, and why others need to know about it. Consider visual aids if needed. An enjoyable twist would be creating a “current event” out of a very minor occurrence or a fairy tale (such as Jack and Jill fetching a pail of water)!

Cause and Effect – Speak about a cause and effect that is important in life. This requires analysis and critical thinking. Topics such as crimes and punishment, pollution and ecology, advertising and credit debt, or smoking and cancer are examples to consider. Be sure to tell your audience how this topic affects them.

Persuasive Speaking – Select an important school, local, national, or international issue to convince others of its importance. Provide reasons and evidence to support your perspective and present your information in a logical, organized way. Some examples include the need to preserve a vanishing historical site, an endangered species, or the need for a ban on dog fighting.

Persuasive Speaking II – Speak for the purpose to “sell” an item of little importance. For example, “sell” a bottle of water, a pair of used shoes, or an empty soda can!

Metacognition: Myself as a Speaker

Goal

Students will use guided self-reflection to improve their presentation skills.

Rationale

After presenting several impromptu and formal speeches, students will benefit from close analysis of their own performance and growth as public speakers. This strategy guides students through this reflective practice.

Student Handout

- Myself as a Speaker

“A great many people think that polysyllables are a sign of intelligence.”

– Barbara Walters

Instructional Steps

1. Engage students in reflection and analysis of their own work at the conclusion of several impromptu and formal speeches students have presented in class. Ask students to evaluate what they have learned, how they have grown, and how they view themselves as public speakers.
2. Use the handout Student Handout: Myself as a Speaker to provide a basic outline for planning the written assignment.
3. Encourage students to use returned rubrics, teacher comments, student comments, and their own self-evaluations to provide data for their self-analysis.
4. Consider facilitating opportunities for students to share the conclusions from their essays with other classmates.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Conference with students individually as they analyze their data and assist them in identifying their growth points and next steps.

Increased Rigor

- Students may share elements of their self-analysis with members of the class (in a writing group or through a small group sharing session).

Using Technology

- Students may use Word processing programs to create and revise their written products.

Myself as a Speaker

At the conclusion of several impromptu and formal speeches you presented in class, evaluate what you have learned, how you have grown, and how you view yourself as a public speaker. Use returned rubrics, teacher comments, student comments, and your own self-evaluations to provide data for your analysis. Consider the following structure to help complete a written essay:

Introduction

Explain your history with public speaking. Are you eager or reluctant to speak in front of others? Have you always felt the same way? What do others say about you as a speaker?

Body

- What are the main things you have learned about making speeches? What has been the most helpful thing you have learned? Why?
- Do you feel more confidence as a speaker? Why?
- Which was your best speech so far this year? Why do you think so? What did you like about it?
- What could you do to become an even better speaker? (Be honest in your self-evaluation)

Conclusion

Why do you think it's important to learn about public speaking? What would you recommend for next year's students to consider when studying public speaking? When might you use the skills you have learned in the future?



*“Giving credit where credit is due
is a very rewarding habit to form.
Its rewards are inestimable.”*

– Loretta Young



Appendices

Appendix A: Structuring Collaboration	414
Appendix B: Inquiry and Critical Thinking.....	424
Appendix C: Rigor and Scaffolding in Writing, Speaking, and Listening.....	428
Appendix D: Resources.....	432
Appendix E: Technology Resources	437

Appendix A

Structuring Collaboration

The key to college readiness and 21st century skills is the ability to work productively in a group toward a common goal. To support the development of this skill, teachers need to **strategically plan and implement** the regular use of collaborative activities that teach students how to focus on task, how to have authentic conversation with active listening and turn-taking, how to reach consensus, and how to be accountable to each other. Collaboration doesn't happen by accident and is more than simply small group work. Collaborative activities need to include structures and experiences that will teach students how to work together productively and efficiently.

Before collaborative activities can be successful in a classroom, it is important to create a positive learning environment—one where students feel free to express themselves and take risks in order to advance to higher levels of thinking and learning. Good collaboration rests on an **environment that fosters a sense of safety and trust in the classroom**, and positive collaborative experiences will reinforce and continue to build community in the classroom. As you work to build community and a positive learning environment, keep in mind these guiding questions:

- Do all members of the class (including the teacher) know each other's names and use them appropriately and respectfully?
- Do class members engage in activities (in class) that allow them to learn about and seek common ground with one another?
- Does the class develop and then adhere to a set of norms for behavior where the teacher and students reinforce the expectations?

- Do class members engage in authentic talk about the content material that includes expressing questions, doubts, confidence, and negotiating understanding of concepts?
- Do class members work together on learning tasks that require them to take "risks" such as working with new people or content, trying a new skill, speaking in front of class, etc.?
- Are students given the opportunity to adequately prepare before they are required to express themselves in a public manner?
- Does the teacher offer authentic feedback and validation with respect for the privacy and learning needs of students?
- Do class members have clear expectations for learning activities and outcomes and tools for measuring accomplishment (including self and peer evaluation)?

Another essential aspect of developing a collaborative classroom relates to the physical environment and room arrangement. If a classroom has desks, think about how students can be paired up or moved into groups efficiently by numbering off desks for partners or labeling desks to be assigned to certain group numbers. The most efficient method is to have tables, but if that is not possible then desks might be arranged in pods to form groups. If the classroom is too small to facilitate the more complex collaborative structures (such as a jigsaw or carousel), consider another room, such as the library, that can be used during those types of collaborative activities. Students need to be able to sit in groups with space

between other groups so that they can work with few distractions. Another factor to consider is the noise level. Teachers will need to spend time working with students on the appropriate voice level to use during collaborative group work.

Once a safe environment is established for collaborative work, collaboration skills should be taught by implementing **explicit processes that build accountability and cohesion in groups**. The Structures for Collaboration resource included in this appendix outlines a variety of collaborative structures that can be used to process content concepts/material while also teaching and reinforcing particular skills. For example, a Think-Pair-Share structure is a quick way to have students work together to process content while also focusing on how to listen actively and take turns. The Talking Chips structure allows students to discuss content while also teaching how to take turns and monitor talk time so no one dominates the conversation. Take Five focuses on how to reach consensus in a group while negotiating understanding of content, while Numbered Heads Together focuses on how each individual must contribute and is accountable to the larger group while working on a cooperative learning task. These collaborative structures are designed to be used in the classroom to organize accountability in group learning activities. When designing your own group activities and collaborative structures, keep in mind the following elements and guiding questions to insure that true collaboration is being fostered.

Groups that demonstrate true collaboration are the result of the decisions an instructor makes when planning for collaboration, and they include all five elements of collaborative groups: positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, face-to-face interaction, group skills and group processing.

- **Positive interdependence:** A task is created with a clear goal that cannot be accomplished individually, and each person's efforts benefit the individual as well as the group.
- **Individual and group accountability:** Individual effort and performance is assessed, group assistance is designed to support the individual, and there is a task that each individual must complete to contribute to the group project or task.
- **Face-to-face interaction:** The group size is appropriate for the task—usually 3–5 students, resources are shared in diverse groups, and academic and personal support is provided for peer learning in the groups.
- **Group skills:** Students need the academic skills to accomplish the task, interpersonal skills for teamwork and leadership, and communication skills to work productively.
- **Group processing:** Reflections and assessments should focus on how well the group achieves the task or goal, if the group maintains a positive and productive relationship, and an analysis of appropriate individual behavior.

(Johnson D. W., & Johnson, R. [1989]. *Cooperation and competition: Theory and research*. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.)

In order to maximize the positive impact of effective collaboration, a teacher needs to focus attention to the following guiding questions when planning.

1. **Task Identification:** What specific type of course content, concepts, or issues should be targeted and selected for collaborative work?
2. **Timing:** When should collaborative work take place in class?
3. **Group Formation:** Who should be grouped together to form learning teams?

4. **Group Size:** What should be the total number of students that comprise a learning team?
5. **Group Duration:** How long should teams remain together?
6. **Collective Responsibility:** How will a sense of positive interdependence and true teamwork be promoted among group members?
7. **Individual Accountability:** How will individuals be held personally responsible for their contribution to the group?
8. **Explicit Attention to the Development of Interpersonal Skills:** How will group members be prepared or taught to communicate and collaborate with each other in a supportive and productive fashion?
9. **Instructor as Facilitator:** What role should the instructor play during group learning to promote its effectiveness?
10. **Inter-Group Dynamics:** How should interaction between different groups be coordinated, and their separate work integrated, in order to promote class synergy and community?

(Cuseo, J. [1997, Spring]. Guidelines for group work. *Cooperative Learning and College Teaching Newsletter*, 7[3], pp. 11–16)

Student **reflections** or **metacognition** are a critical part of the collaborative process. Writing is an effective tool for monitoring students' growth toward independence in collaboration as well as their academic learning. Self-monitoring should be an ongoing part of the collaborative classroom. Initially, reflective writing should be done every class period. The reflections by the students do not need to be elaborate but need to be a routine and strategic part of the process.

One time-efficient strategy is to ask students to write a few sentences on a 3 x 5 card to be used as an exit slip from class. The teacher will provide the prompt based on different group processing skills. Examples of initial questions could be: How well did the group stay on task today? How did you support your group members? Did everyone in your group get an opportunity to contribute? What made that possible/not possible? Which active listening skills did you practice today, and what was the outcome?

Another way to use the 3 x 5 exit slip is to focus on academic learning. Ask students questions such as: What was one important fact you learned in your work today? What evidence did you use to support your opinions? Whether using the exit slip to process group skills or academic learning, the teacher must strategically direct student reflection. The prompt for the reflection should target specific areas that the teacher determines as a priority. Avoid asking general questions like, "How did your group work today?" These general questions will not lead students to explicit, deep reflection that is necessary for continued improvement in the collaborative process.

The use of an ongoing learning log or reflective journal can also be a tool for reflection. Students can set a goal for the group work each day and then assess their progress toward reaching that goal. For example, a student goal might be to ask follow-up questions during the group discussion. At the end of the period, the student will discuss his/her progress in meeting that target. Again, the teacher must direct student processing through the use of prompting questions or sentence starters.

As students improve in their group processing skills, the reflective component can be less frequent, moving to a weekly or unit basis perhaps. However, reflection is critical for self-monitoring and improvement and should always be included in the collaborative process.

Structures for Collaboration

Carousel Brainstorming

Used to elicit background knowledge, to build background knowledge, to review recently studied information, or to gather opinions.

Allows students to build on one another's ideas in a very structured manner.

1. Prepare the same number of wall charts as groups. Each wall chart will have some kind of "stimulus" to which students will respond. These can be photographs, steps in a problem-solving sequence, targeted vocabulary, quotations, text excerpts, etc.—usually one item per chart.
2. Assign each group to begin at a specific chart. It may be helpful to assign a different color marker for each group.
3. On the first signal—groups move to assigned charts and generate and record as many ideas as possible for that item.
4. On the second signal—groups rotate clockwise to the next chart, review what the previous group wrote, and generate and add additional ideas or questions.
5. On the third signal—groups rotate clockwise to the next chart, review what the previous groups wrote, generate and add additional ideas or questions. Continue until all groups have written on all charts. Then, ask the students to take a "Gallery Walk" of all charts and be seated.

Fishbowl

Used as a structure for modeling a process and for giving groups of students the opportunity to have structured talk while others have structured listening.

1. Set up a small inner circle of students to demonstrate an activity for the class. Have all other students form a larger outer circle around the inner circle (fishbowl group) of students.
2. Give the outer circle a specific listening and recording task to accomplish while they observe the fishbowl group.
3. Give the inner circle (fishbowl) directions for the activity and how they are to proceed.
4. The inner circle (fishbowl) demonstrates the activity to the rest of the class. As necessary, clarify and correct the activity steps with the fishbowl group.
5. Debrief with the entire class.

Note: The fishbowl can also be used as a structure for Socratic Seminar, where the inner-circle students participate in a discussion and the outer-circle students listen and take notes. Later, the outer-circle students can comment on the discussion, using their notes and then, possibly, exchange places with the fishbowl students.

Four Corners

Used to check for comprehension and to build student accountability for articulating their understanding. Also helps build cohesion among classmates as they discover they can help each other.

1. Allow students to divide themselves into four groups based on their perceived level of understanding or mastery of a question or concept—physically, they can move to four different “corners” of the room. 1 = least level of understanding; 4 = highest level of understanding.
2. Ask the groups to brainstorm all that they know about the question or concept, and to generate questions that would help them gain more understanding.
3. Ask a representative from the Level-1 group to share all that was on their group’s brainstorm list, saving questions until all groups have shared.
4. Proceed in turn with each sequential group, allowing them to share new information not previously mentioned.
5. Finish with the group that perceived themselves as having mastered the material.
6. Revisit groups’ questions to see if any have been answered by the other groups’ sharing, and then invite students to answer the questions still pending.
7. Clarify misconceptions and misstatements.

Give One/Get One

Interactive method for reviewing content, eliciting background knowledge, or processing newly taught information.

1. Ask each student to make a list of ideas related to a teacher-generated topic or question on a sheet of paper.
2. Give students 2–3 minutes to create as long a list as possible.
3. Tell students to draw a line after their final idea.
4. Have students stand with their list in hand and talk, one on one, with as many other students as they can in a period of 3–5 minutes.
5. Students must give each other student they meet an idea from their list; they must also write down one new idea from each partner’s list.
6. At the end of the activity, create a class list of information completed from the individual lists of students.

Inside/Outside Circles or Parallel Lineups (“Conga Line”)

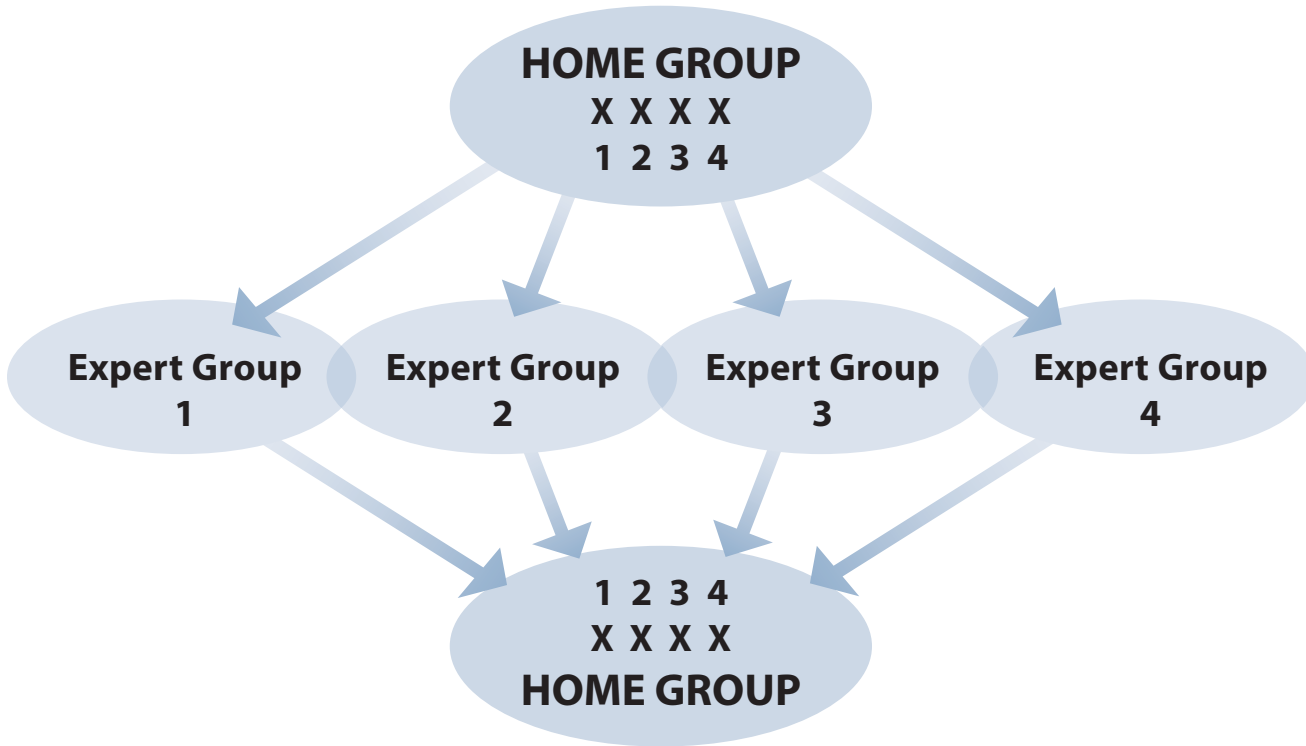
Used to review key concepts and to build academic talk.

1. Give each student a slip of paper or card with a question, vocabulary word, or some other topic they will need to explain.
2. Give them 2 minutes to think about their topic and to write notes on the paper/card.
3. Divide students into two equal groups (papers/cards can also be color-coded for easy division into two groups).
4. Place half the group in the inner circle directly facing a member of the second half of the group in an outer circle. (Alternatively, form parallel lines.)
5. Provide a limited amount of time for the partners to quiz each other on the topics from their papers/cards.
6. Coach the students to speak in complete sentences and to restate the question in their answer as they speak to their partners.
7. Coach students to ask their partner questions if the partner is not able to readily respond about the topic.
8. Have the outer circle move to the left (or right) two or three partners down. With parallel lineups, have one or two persons at one end of the line walk quickly to the other end of the line, and all other move one or two spaces to face a new partner. To form a “Conga Line,” use Conga music to cue students when to move; all the students dance while the outer circle or line moves.
9. Repeat Steps 5 through 8.

Jigsaw—Home Group/Expert Group

Used when discussion of new information is desired, but time is limited or the target text/content material is especially dense. Jigsaw provides scaffolded inquiry with accountability.

1. Divide students into small groups. The number of sections of the reading or the number of concepts being reviewed or introduced will determine the number and size of the groups.
2. Assign each member of the group a number that corresponds to the section of the text to be read or the concept to be mastered. Each member of the group is responsible for completing one part of the reading or mastering one of the assigned concepts. Encourage students to take notes.
3. Students then leave their “home” groups and form “expert” groups with other students with the same number. Each “expert” group works on its part of the assignment; members assist each other with questions, clarifications, and summaries. In preparation for going back to his or her “home” group as an “expert,” each student rehearses and teaches the lesson to the other members.
4. Students return to their “home” groups and share, discuss information, and teach their part of the assignment. Students synthesize their understanding of the whole text or set of concepts by summarizing the main ideas and identifying how all the jigsaw parts are related.
5. Students reassemble as a whole class and share their thoughts and responses.



Jigsaw Sequencing Groups

Used to structure a group for negotiation and problem-solving.

1. Cut/separate sections of a text into individual parts. Each part should have a complete meaning and show a type of transition at the beginning or the end of that section.
2. Form groups of students that correspond to the number of "jigsaw" pieces.
3. Each group member receives a different piece of the text, problem, or proof.
4. Each member of the group must then decide where their piece fits in the text, problem, or proof.
5. If a student thinks he/she has the first section of the text, problem, or proof, the student must give the reasons why without letting the group read the section. He/she tells the group, "I think I have the first piece because..."

6. If the group agrees that it is the first section, the student reads the text, problem, or proof aloud to the group and then places it on the table.
7. The group then proceeds to look for the next section following the same rules as above.
8. Once the group has identified what they think the correct sequence is, they summarize what the text or problem means or represents.

KWL

When done collaboratively, used to elicit collective background knowledge, to build purpose for a learning task, and to chronicle learning. Allows students to build on each other's learning.

1. Draw three columns on chart paper. Label the columns of the KWL chart; What we **K**now, What we **W**ant/Need to Know and What we **L**earned.

2. Identify a text selection or topic for pairs or small groups of students to consider during the activity.
3. Ask students to brainstorm and enter information in the first column to indicate what they already know about the topic—this is a way to discover students’ prior knowledge.
4. Ask students to brainstorm questions in the second column indicating what they want/need to know about the topic to better understand it—this can help establish purpose during the learning activity.
5. After engaging with the text/topic, have students revisit the KWL to identify what they’ve learned in the third column.

Note-Checking Pairs

Used to foster the 10-2 instructional model (10 minutes of “input”; 2 minutes of “processing”) and to check for comprehension.

1. At the end of a class segment (10 to 15 minutes), ask students to find a “Shoulder Partner” with whom to review their notes.
2. The note review activities could include:
 - Summarize the three most important points, using both students’ notes.
 - Choose the most important idea that will appear on the exam based on the notes.
 - Check the completeness and accuracy of each partner’s notes.
 - Use the notes together to solve an example problem.
 - Write questions together in the left column of their Cornell notes.
 - Use the notes together to work on a teacher-generated question.

Note: These notes and the “processing” that has been done can be collected as a formative assessment.

Novel Ideas Only

Structured method for eliciting collective background information, reviewing recently taught information, and for practicing academic talk, careful listening, and public speaking

1. Place students in groups and assign groups to list ideas about a given topic. Set a time limit for the task.
2. Have a spokesperson from each group stand and share one “novel” idea from the group’s list.
3. Students in each group must listen attentively to ensure that no group repeats information already provided by another group. As students hear an item shared by another group, they check it off their own group’s list.
4. Each spokesperson sits down after they have either read or checked off all the items on their list.
5. The activity continues until all “novel” ideas about the topic have been shared and all students are again sitting down.

Numbered Heads Together

Used for quick collaborative discussion with group and individual accountability.

1. Place students in groups of four.
2. Have students in each group number off from one to four.
3. Ask students a question for discussion or review or assign an academic task.
4. Have students discuss the question or complete the task in their groups, making sure that each member of the group can answer the question or recap the learning from the task if called upon.

5. Select a random number corresponding to a number of a group member.
6. Select one or two students to respond to the question/recap the learning. Additional students with the same number can respond to the question by adding new information to the previous response(s).

- a. Each student should share his or her writing one at a time.
- b. Groups should look for common themes and record consensus ideas on paper or small whiteboard.
- c. Each group should then discuss their list and identify their priorities by numbering 1, 2, 3, etc. Each small group shares their top agreements/priorities with the larger group.

Parking Lot

Used to build ownership and to encourage students to communicate their concerns and questions.

1. Provide students with sticky notes on which they can record questions and concerns.
2. Designate a location (the “parking lot”) in the room for students to “post” their questions and concerns.
3. Encourage students to add to the parking lot at any time.
4. Check the parking lot frequently and address any notes that have been posted.

Take Five

Used to gain consensus decision-making. It is an effective way to assess group needs and gather information for problem-solving.

1. Divide the larger group into smaller groups of 4–5 students each.
2. Provide quiet time for each student to complete a 5–10 minute quickwrite on a selected topic about which they are trying to make a decision.
3. Provide time for groups to collaborate and brainstorm.

4. The larger group records common themes/priorities.

Talking Chips

Used for accountable and equitable talk in small group discussions and promotes academic talk.

1. Have students each create three name cards (“Talking Chips”) with small sticky notes or slips of paper.
2. During discussion groups, have students take out their name cards (“Talking Chips”). Tell them that when they are ready to contribute to the discussion they must place one of their chips in the center of the table.
3. When they do this, all other students at the table must stop talking and listen attentively.
4. When students have used up all of their talking chips, they must wait for others to use theirs up, too, before they can contribute to the discussion again.
5. Once all chips are in the center of the table, they can be redistributed and all participants invited to join in the discussion again.

Think-Pair-Share

Used as a quick processing activity and/or check for understanding; the think/write steps are crucial for giving students time to process their understanding in preparation for sharing.

1. Instruct students to think carefully about a specific topic or a question. This may be facilitated by a quickwrite. Think-**Write**-Pair-Share is especially important for English Language Learners who need more “rehearsal” time before speaking.
2. Instruct students to find a partner near to them.
3. When you give a signal, one partner shares his/her answer to the question and the reasons that support it, while the other partner listens.
4. The partners exchange roles.
5. The partners prepare to share their answers/responses with the large group.

Think-Pair-Share—Squared

Used as a quick processing activity and/or check for understanding; the think/write steps are crucial for giving students time to process their understanding in preparation for sharing.

1. Participants listen to a question, concern, or scenario.
2. Individuals think and make notes about the questions, concern, or scenario.
3. Individuals pair and discuss their responses.
4. Pairs join into groups of four and discuss responses.
5. Foursomes prepare to share their answers/responses with the large group.

Whip Around

Used for quick processing and checks for comprehension.

1. Divide students into small groups of 4–5 students each.
2. Present a question or discussion prompt.
3. Give a time limit, usually 2–3 minutes.
4. Going around the group sequentially, each student comments on the question or discussion prompt.
5. A student may pass one time, but must comment the next time it is his or her turn.

Appendix B:

Inquiry and Critical Thinking

One of the foundations of AVID's philosophy is that inquiry is as fundamental to rigorous teaching and higher-level learning as reading and writing are. The outcome of regular inquiry is often referred to as critical thinking. Inquiry, simply put, is about questioning. One aspect of inquiry in the classroom is teacher-driven; teachers pose interesting, open-ended questions to draw students into the language arts content, and they follow up with probing questions to guide students to deeper levels of thought; they ask many "how" and "why" questions to push students to think analytically. Using open-ended questioning is the key to authentic inquiry as it models the value of considering multiple perspectives and answers; if the teacher only asks questions with one right answer, the spirit of inquiry is lost—the students are simply playing a guessing game trying to figure out what the teacher wants them to say.

The other aspect of inquiry in the classroom is student-driven. Students must learn how to ask the thought-provoking questions about content. These are the questions that lead students to Socratic discussions as they probe the various meanings of a text in order to reach a higher-level understanding and interpretation. Writing higher-level or critical thinking questions based on content material must be deliberately and strategically taught to students in incremental steps so they become aware of their own cognitive processing and can monitor their own critical thinking. The process of asking questions is essential for improvement in writing because the process of writing itself is driven by inquiry. Students need to ask themselves questions in the pre-writing and drafting stages in order to develop ideas for their essays. Questioning is a vital part of the reader-response and self-response stages also. Asking the writer probing questions will serve to guide and support the revision process.

Many teachers are familiar with Bloom's Taxonomy, but AVID uses Arthur Costa's Levels of Thinking as the

framework for driving inquiry. The three levels present a more concise, direct approach, which students might find more accessible. The chart titled, "Bloom's Taxonomy and Costa's Levels of Thinking in the ELA Classroom" clarifies the similarities between Bloom and Costa. Introduce this chart to students through direct teaching and include activities that require students to practice developing questions at all three levels. Suggested activities for introducing inquiry and questioning in your classes are listed below.

Activity 1: Developing Level 1 Questions

Have students practice formulating Level 1 questions by playing "Jeopardy" with them. Show them a word or phrase, and provide 20 seconds to write an appropriate question; tell them to read their question to a partner, who then confirms if it is indeed a Level 1 question. Select three students to read their questions aloud; have the class give a thumbs-up for each question it thinks is correct. Follow up by having students name the cognitive function that each question asks for. For example, if the question for San Francisco is, "Where is the Golden Gate Bridge located?" then the cognitive function would be "locate" or "identify."

Example words/phrases:

- San Francisco
- addition
- Zora Neale Hurston
- fruits and vegetables
- 3:00
- "Happy Birthday, dear Monica, Happy Birthday to you."
- baseball
- Any language arts content currently being studied

Activity 2: What's that Function?

Start with Level 1 questions and have students identify the cognitive function required to answer the question. For example, based on four of the “five W’s” ask:

Level 1:

- Who are your best friends?
cognitive function: name, list
- What are the lyrics to your favorite song?
cognitive function: recite
- Where is the largest muscle in your body located?
cognitive function: identify
- When does the word bear not refer to an animal?
cognitive function: define

Have students construct their own questions in pairs and then share out with the class.

Repeat the activity with **Levels 2 and 3**. Here students may need to learn the definitions of some of the cognitive function verbs, and you should provide good examples of questions for each level. A few examples:

- How are you different from your sister or brother?
cognitive function: contrast
- How are you and your best friend alike?
cognitive function: compare
- Why is your bike not working?
cognitive function: analyze
- What do you have to do to start that computer program?
cognitive function: sequence
- When do you think is the best time to go to the library so it isn't crowded?
cognitive function: speculate
- Why should we go to that restaurant; why is it good?
cognitive function: evaluate

Activity 3: Name that Level

After your students have gained a basic understanding of the three levels of thinking, frequently ask them to identify the level of questions you are using in the context of a content lesson. For example, if you ask questions of the class during a presentation or discussion, pause once in a while and ask, “By the way, what level of question am I asking?” You can also follow up by having students name the cognitive function required to answer the question.

Learning to question at higher levels can be challenging for students who are not accustomed to thinking for themselves. They often start out by developing questions they think the teacher wants to hear or questions that would be used on a quiz. It is a sometimes messy process to help students understand that the goal of questioning is to **engage in authentic inquiry** to better understand ourselves, each other, a text, and the world. Students will need to continually practice and refine their questioning skills throughout the year. Several strategies included in this book, *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking*, offer varied approaches for sustaining the process of questioning in writing and speaking in the English language arts classroom.

When Oprah Winfrey visited with Elie Wiesel on her show in November 2000, she asked Dr. Wiesel, “Is there an answer for every question?” He responded, “I have no answers for anything, really. I have shelves and shelves of books in my apartment, but none of them has answers—only questions. I teach my students how to ask questions. In the word ‘question’ there is a beautiful word—‘quest.’ I love that word. We are all partners in a quest. The essential questions have no answers.” (Winfrey, O. [Interviewer], & Wiesel, E. [Interviewee]. [2000, November 15]. *Oprah Talks to Elie Wiesel*. [Interview Transcript] Retrieved on June 1, 2010 from The Oprah Winfrey Show website: <http://www.oprah.com/omagazine/Oprah-Interviews-Elie-Wiesel/7>).

As teachers, we need to develop a partnership with our students in their quests, as Wiesel does. Then, the critical and creative cognitive skills that they need to succeed as students and in life will develop.

Bloom's Taxonomy and Costa's Levels of Thinking in the ELA Classroom

Bloom's Level	Costa's Level	Cognitive Functions		Sample Prompts & Questions
Creating Reconstruct ideas into unique or original forms or rearrange elements to form a new coherent whole	Level 3 Applying Information Demonstrates mastery of knowledge learned	alter	build	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a _____ to show... Predict what will happen to _____ What would it be like to live ...? Write a new ending to the story (event)... Pretend you are a character in the story and... Rewrite the episode from your point of view. What do you think will happen to _____? Why? Could this story have really happened? Why or why not? How would you solve this problem in your life? How does the author's claim hold up under these circumstances: _____? What if the situation changed to _____; how would that impact the outcome?
Evaluating Form judgments or opinions according to their understanding of the topic; justify a stand or decision		(OUTPUT)	argue challenge debate judge validate pretend	
Analyzing Examine sub-parts of a topic and perceive interrelationships	Level 2 Processing Information Practice knowledge learned	analyze	arrange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would you have done the same thing as...? Compare and contrast _____ to _____. What was important about...? What other ways could _____ be interpreted? What is the main idea of the story (event)? What information supports your explanation? Explain in your own words what _____ means. What does _____ suggest about _____'s character? What lines of the poem express the poet's feelings about _____? What is the author trying to prove?
Applying Solve a problem or generalize an idea to a new situation		(PROCESS)	demonstrate discuss organize report	
Understanding Understand the information and communicate knowledge	Level 1 Gathering Information Introduction of knowledge	explain	inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What information is given? Locate in the story where... When did the event take place? List the... Name the... Where did...? What is...? Who was/were...? Illustrate the part of the story that... Make a map of... What is the origin of the word _____? What events led to _____?
Remembering Learn specific facts, ideas, vocabulary and recall information or specific facts		(INPUT)	define recall describe name identify	

Costa, A. L. (1985) *Developing minds: a resource book for teaching thinking*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Practicing Inquiry: Adding Questions to Cornell Notes

Directions: Choose a partner. Locate a page of Cornell notes in your binder without questions on the left-hand side. First, identify three chunks in your notes on the right-hand side of your paper. Draw a line to separate the chunks. Then, using the chart below, write down the main idea for each of the three chunks. For each chunk of notes, create one Level 1 question, one Level 2 question, and one Level 3 question.

When you are done, exchange papers with another partnership and read the questions. If you think that a question needs revision, have a conversation about that question and make a suggestion on how to fix it.

	Main idea from your Cornell notes (right side)	Level 1 question: Gathers information	Level 2 question: Processes information	Level 3 question: Applies/Evaluates information
Example Topic: Conflict in Short Stories	The role of conflict in a short story	What are the various types of conflict found in short stories?	How is the resolution of a short story related to conflict?	Why is a short story with more than one conflict more enjoyable to read?
Chunk 1				
Chunk 2				
Chunk 3				

Appendix C:

Rigor and Scaffolding in Writing, Speaking, and Listening

“Rigor” is a term used frequently in education; however, not everyone shares the same understanding of what constitutes rigor. One definition of rigor proposed by Strong, Silver, and Perini seeks to describe the characteristics of the content with which we engage students:

Rigor is the goal of helping students develop the capacity to understand content that is complex, ambiguous, provocative, and personally or emotionally challenging (Strong, 2001).

- Complex content: Composed of overlapping and perhaps paradoxical ideas.
- Ambiguous content: Found in poetry, statistics, and primary documents packed with multiple levels of meaning.
- Provocative content: Conceptually challenging and deals with dilemmas. Students conduct inquiry and work on solving real-world problems.
- Personally or emotionally challenging content: Students study books, events, or problems that challenge them to understand how the world works.

This definition offers ELA teachers a way to think about writing assignments and content focus and opens up discussion for how to scaffold and differentiate learning activities to support students’ understanding of this rich content.

Another definition of rigor to consider is by Barbara R. Blackburn (2008): “Rigor is creating an environment in which each student is expected to learn at high levels, each student is supported so that he or she can learn at high levels, and each student demonstrates learning at high levels.” This definition focuses more on student levels of learning instead of specific content. As ELA teachers, this definition

points to the need for high expectations and strategic scaffolding.

As a part of college readiness, David Conley addresses rigor in his four components of college readiness, specifically in the area of key cognitive strategies. Conley (2011) describes these cognitive strategies as intellectual behaviors that become the foundation for learning in all content areas. Specific strategies include:

- intellectual openness
- inquisitiveness
- analysis
- reasoning
- argumentation
- proof
- interpretation
- precision and accuracy
- problem-solving

Conley’s intellectual behaviors suggest that **rigor is about how students work and think**—another call to ELA teachers for high expectations and strategic scaffolding, and also a call toward student-centeredness. If students are to develop these intellectual behaviors they have to be engaged in cognitive wrestling required in most writing strategies. They cannot be passive recipients of information.

AVID’s current definition of rigor attempts to integrate all of these aspects, focusing on rich content, high expectations, deep thinking, and engaged students. *AVID defines rigor as using inquiry-based, collaborative strategies to challenge and engage students in content, resulting in increasingly complex levels of understanding.* AVID sees WICOR as foundational to this definition; using WICOR strategies provides a way for teachers to increase

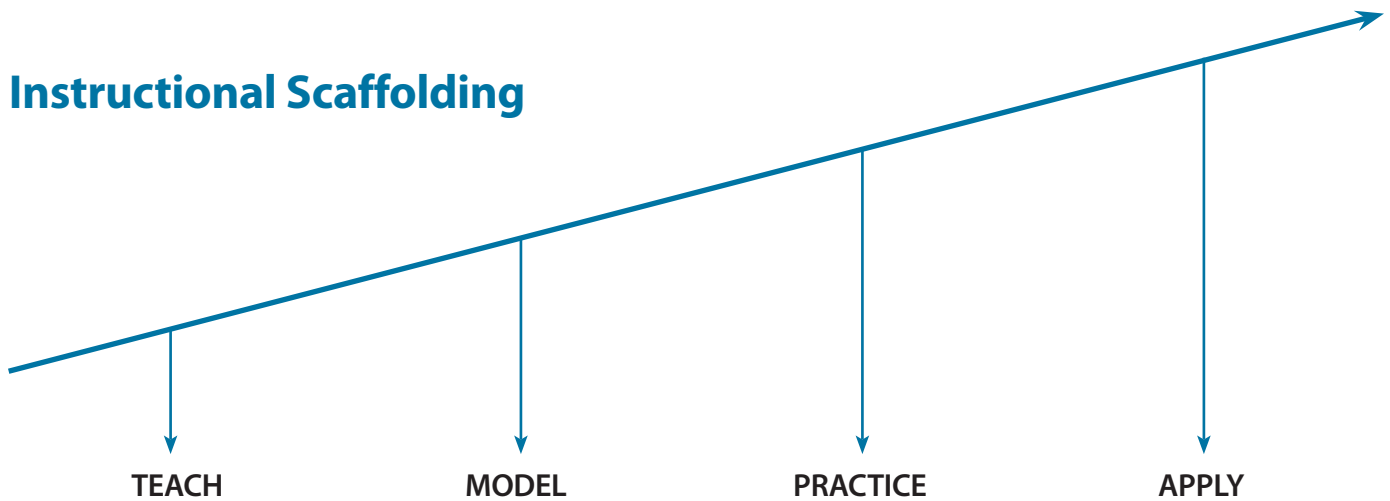
rigor and expectations in the classroom, and it also provides a means of scaffolding students' access to complex content.

The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking focuses on rigor through the use of writing and oral language strategies that move students to higher levels of thinking. The strategies in the guide students to use writing, speaking, and listening skills to communicate and inform others. Students learn to determine the purpose for the communication, identify the appropriate audience, and then formulate the written or oral language presentation.

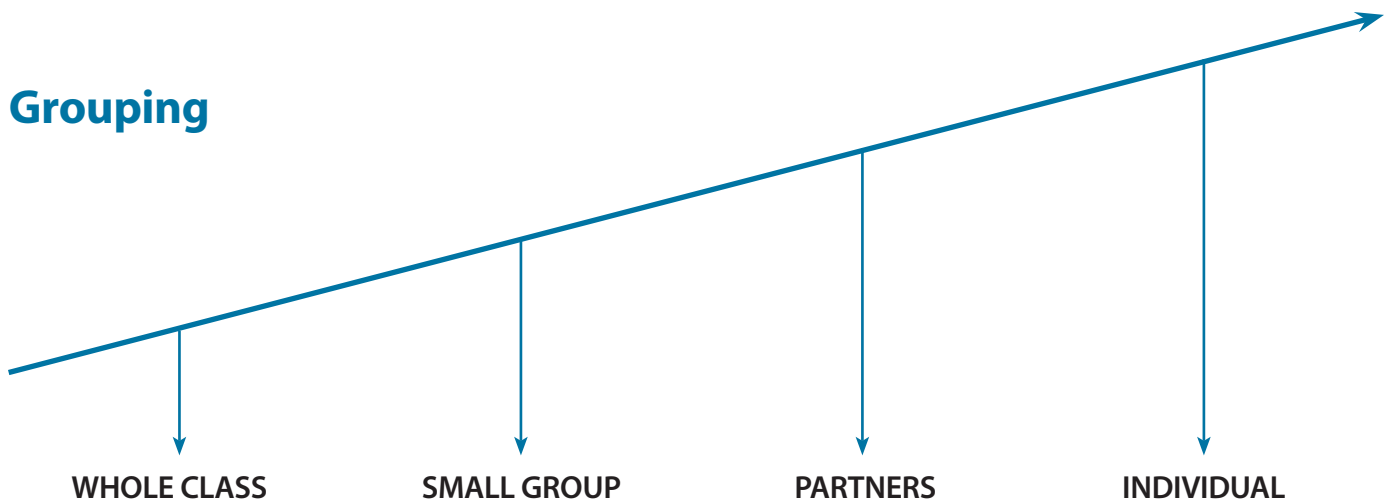
Scaffolding is a term that comes from the work of Vygotsky and his notion of the Zone of Proximal Development, the difference in where a student can learn alone and where he or she needs assistance. When teaching new concepts, teachers scaffold

instruction by providing a great deal of support in the beginning, and then giving less and less support as students have practice or multiple exposures to a concept. It is important to keep in mind that the scaffolding is part of the learning process and must eventually be taken away as the learner becomes more proficient. Teachers scaffold (build a base for learning) when they do think-alouds or model what they expect of students. One-on-one coaching and conferencing or teaching, paired reader responses, small group practice, and individual practice serve as steps in scaffolding by providing the best instructional model for the level the student needs. (Based on Echevarria, J. et al. [2000]. *Making Content Comprehensible for English Language Learners.*)

Instructional Scaffolding



Grouping



To extend Vygotsky’s idea more, scaffolding for students can strategically occur through the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR). Since the goal of an English language arts program is to increase students’ autonomy and confidence by building their written and oral language competence and increasing their academic achievement, it is important that lessons are scaffolded so that students experience both direct instruction and student-centered learning.

The Gradual Release of Responsibility model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) provides a method for scaffolding. This instructional design establishes four parts to the learning experience, and these four parts might occur over one lesson, several lessons, or over the course of a unit or semester, depending on the complexity of the knowledge and skills to be learned.

<p>Teacher-Directed (Responsibility = teacher)</p>	<p>“I Do”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher models and gives direct instruction • Teacher shares the cognitive processes with the students while engaged in the learning experience
<p>Guided Instruction (Responsibility = teacher)</p>	<p>“We all Do Together”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided by the teacher, the class practices in incremental steps • Teacher monitors progress, explains, clarifies misconceptions, and re-teaches
<p>Collaborative Learning (Responsibility = students)</p>	<p>“You all Do Together in Small Groups or Partners”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups or partners practice, problem-solve, apply their learning • Teacher monitors, asks probing questions, supports students in negotiating the tasks/thinking (keeping the “weights” in students’ hands)
<p>Independent Learning & Application (Responsibility = student)</p>	<p>“You Do on Your Own”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students practice and apply their learning independently • Teacher evaluates level of mastery and determines if more guided practice or collaboration is needed

The Gradual Release of Responsibility model of instruction has been documented as an effective approach for improving writing achievement (Fisher & Frey, 2003), reading comprehension (Lloyd, 2004), and literacy outcomes for English language learners (Kong & Pearson, 2003).

In English language arts, teachers have the opportunity to consider rigor on two fronts: complexity of the written or oral final outcome and complexity of learning tasks/thinking. To make this most strategic, we should use this opportunity to differentiate our lessons and to plan in vertical teams (across grade levels) to maximize student growth and learning. In vertical teaming, the terms *foundational*, *intermediate*, and *advanced* are used to describe different levels of learning around targeted content (concepts and skills). All of the lessons use AVID methodology—writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading—to help students become more efficient and fluent as writers, speakers, and listeners on their way to becoming college-ready students.

The strategies in *The Write Path English Language Arts: Informing Ourselves and Others Through Writing and Speaking* are specifically designed to adjust to varying levels of scaffolding. Each strategy description in the book includes ideas for how to increase scaffolding and how to increase rigor as necessary for implementation and differentiation.

All of the examples provided focus on moving students from where they are currently achieving to a higher level of learning with support provided to help them be successful. Rigor is not reserved for only advanced or honors classes; all students should be engaged in higher levels of thinking, writing, speaking, and listening.

Blackburn, B. R. (2008). *Rigor is not a four-letter word*. Larchmont: Eye on Education, Inc.

Conley, D. T. (2011). *Redefining college readiness, Volume 5*. Eugene, OR: Educational Policy Improvement Center.

Echevarria, J. et al. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners*.

Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2003). Writing instruction for struggling adolescent readers: A gradual release model. *Journal of adolescent and adult literacy*, 46, 396–407.

Kong, A., & Pearson, P. D. (2003). The road to participation: The construction of a literacy practice in a learning community of linguistically diverse learners. *Research in the teaching of English*, 38, 85–124.

Lloyd, S. L. (2004). Using comprehension strategies as a springboard for student talk. *Journal of adolescent and adult literacy*, 48, 114–124.

Strong, R. W. (2001). *Teaching what matters most: Standards and strategies for raising student achievement*. ASCD.

Appendix D: Resources

The editors and writers are grateful to the teachers who allowed us to use their classroom samples and online contributions. Each of these listed resources is used or referenced in this text. All are recommended for anyone considering materials for use at various times in an English class.

- Amram, F. (2012). The Reluctant Grown-Up. In Donna Talarico (Ed.), *Hippocampus*. Elizabethtown, PA: Hippocampus Magazine. Retrieved 2012 from <http://www.hippocampusmagazine.com/2012/01/the-reluctant-grown-up-by-fred-amram/>.
- Baca, J. S. (2000). Coming into language. In Chevigny, B. G. & Prejean, Sr. H. (Eds.). *Doing time: 25 years of prison writing*. New York: Arcade Publishing.
- Barnet, S., Morton, B., & Burto, W. (1971) *A dictionary of literary, dramatic, and cinematic terms*. (2nd ed.). Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
- Bean, J. C. (2001). *Engaging ideas: The professor's guide to integrating writing, critical thinking, and active learning in the classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Blackburn, B. R. (2008). *Rigor is not a four-letter word*. Larchmont: Eye on Education, Inc.
- Buehl, D. (2001). *Classroom strategies for interactive learning*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Brown, J. & Isaacs, D. (2005). *The world café: Shaping our futures through conversations that matter*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Campbell, D. (2007). *Middle level writing with integrated reading and oral language*. San Diego, CA: AVID Press.
- Carter, M., Hernández, A., & Richison, J. (2009). *Interactive notebooks and English learners: How to scaffold content for academic success*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Charlton, J. (Ed). (1997). *The writer's quotation book*. Boston: Faber and Faber.
- Conley, D. T. (2011). *Redefining college readiness, Volume 5*. Eugene, OR: Educational Policy Improvement Center.
- Cooper, M. (2004). *Dust to eat: Drought and depression in the 1930s*. New York: Clarion Books.
- Devaney, J. (1987). *Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President*. New York: Walker and Company.
- Duarte, N. (2010). *Resonate: present visual stories that transform audiences*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Echevarria, J. et al. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners*.
- Egan, T. (2006). *The worst hard time: The untold story of those who survived the great American dust bowl*. New York: Mariner Books.
- ElWardi, R., Butler, M., Madigan, B., & Malo, C. (2006). *The write path English language learners teacher guide*. San Diego, CA: AVID Press.
- Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2003). Writing instruction for struggling adolescent readers: A gradual release model. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 46, 396–407.
- Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing (2011) by the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the National Writing Project (NWP) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License.
- Frantz, V. (2012). *Keepin' it together: A family's adventures in survival*. Self-Published: Booklocker.com, Inc.
- Gallagher, K. (2006). *Teaching adolescent writers*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Gallagher, K. (2011). *Write like this: Teaching real-world writing through modeling and mentor texts*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Gere, A. R., Christenbury, L. & Sassi, K. (2005). *Writing on demand*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Graff, G., Birkenstein C., & Durst, R. (2011). *They say, I say: The moves that matter in academic writing* (2nd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Gray, D., Brown, S. & Macanufo, J. (2010). *Gamestorming: A playbook for innovators, rulebreakers, and changemakers*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media, Inc.
- Hastings, R. J. (1986). A nickel's worth of skim milk: A boy's view of the Great Depression. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Hesse, K. (1999). *Out of the dust*. New York: Scholastic Books.
- Hillocks, G. (2011). *Teaching argument writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Hyerle, D. (1996). *Visual tools for constructing knowledge*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Johns, A. (2007). *AVID college readiness: Working with sources*. San Diego, CA: Avid Press.
- Johnson, P. (1993). *Literacy through the book arts*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Jones, B. F., Palincsar, A. S., Ogle, D. S. & Carr, E. G. (Eds.). (1987). *Strategic teaching and learning: Cognitive instruction in the content areas*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Kittle, P. (2008). *Write beside them*. New Hampshire: Heinemann.
- Kong, A., & Pearson, P. D. (2003). The road to participation: The construction of a literacy practice in a learning community of linguistically diverse learners. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 38, 85–124.
- LaPlantz, S. (2000). *Cover to cover: Creative techniques for making beautiful books, journals & albums*. New York: Lark Books.
- LeMaster, J. (2011). Responding to a writing task. In *AVID critical reading: deep reading strategies for expository texts*. (pp. 115–126). San Diego, CA: AVID Press.
- Lloyd, S. L. (2004). Using comprehension strategies as a springboard for student talk. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 48, 114–124.
- Melzer, M. (2008). *Up close: John Steinbeck*. New York: Penquin Young Readers Group.
- Mullen, M. & Boldway, S. (2005). *High school writing teacher guide: grades 9–12*. San Diego, CA: AVID Press.
- Murphy, B. L. & Rankin, E. (2002). *5 Steps to a 5 AP English language*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Council of Writing Program Administrators. (2011). Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing. Online and print. Retrieved 2012 from <http://wpacouncil.org/framework>.
- Olson, A. (2012, February). Retrieved from in-blog post in response to question of audience in writing, in NCTE Connected Community. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/connectedcommunity> **Teacher contribution**.
- O'Donnell, J. (2011). College Board AP list. (Blog post). Retrieved 09/27/2012 from <http://slhs.pasco.k12.fl.us/AP/APLitsummernew2011-1.pdf> **Teacher contribution (AP-style prompt)**.
- Reef, C. (1962). *John Steinbeck*. New York: Clarion Books.
- Ricci, G. & Wahlgren, C. (1998, May). *The key to know "PAINE" know gain*. Paper presented at the 43rd Annual Convention of the International Reading Association, Orlando, Florida.
- Stanley, J. (1992). *Children of the dust bowl: The true story of the school at Weedpatch Camp*. New York: Crown Publishers.
- Starer, D. (1995). *Hot topics: Everything you ever wanted to know about the fifty major controversies everyone pretends to know all about*. New York: Simon and Schuster/Touchstone.
- Strong, R. W. (2001). *Teaching what matters most: Standards and strategies for raising student achievement*. ASCD.
- Thayer, E. (June 3, 1888). "Casey at the bat." *San Francisco Examiner*.

U.S. Department of Education, NCES. (2011) *The nation's report card: Writing 2011*. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2011/2012470.pdf>.

Vacca, R. T. & Vacca, J. L. (1993). *Content area reading*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Walsh, N. (1994). *Making books across the curriculum: Pop-ups, flaps, shapes, wheels and many more*. New York: Scholastic Books.

Wilhelm, J. D. (2008). *You gotta be the book*. (p. 150). New York: Teachers College Press.

Wormeli, R. (2005). *Summarization in any subject*. (p. 129). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Periodicals/E-zines

Ferriter, W. (2010). Preparing to teach digitally. *Educational Leadership*. 67 (8), n.p.

Inman, A. (2012). How to start a BYOD program. *Edtech Focus on K-12*. Accessed 12-12.n.p. <http://www.edtechmagazine.com/k12/autor/alex-inman>.

Biographical Resources

Biographical Dictionary

<http://www.s9.com> The Biographical Dictionary is a user-editable site similar to Wikipedia.

Lives, the Biography Resource

<http://amillionlives.net> A menu within a sidebar contains the biographical link to a unique biographical resource.

PBS Biographies

PBS features a link to biographies connected to historical figures.

<http://www.pbs.org/history>

Who2?

<http://www.who2.com/> Who2 is a commercial site with over 3,000 biographies.

42eXplore.com

The site contains hundreds of biographies of US Presidents and their wives. <http://www.42explore2.com/presidt2.htm>

The Internet Public Library (ipl)

<http://www.ipl.org/div/potus/> POTUS, the acronym for the President of the United States, is also featured in this web address. Mine this site for links to biographies for POTUS.

Presidents of the United States

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/index.html>

<http://www.presidentsusa.net/>

<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/presidents/>

Biography Center

Directory of Biographies on the Web

<http://www.biography-center.com/>

Useful Sites to Assist Teachers and Students

Writer's Diet Link

<http://www.writersdiet.com/WT.php>

The Writer's Diet link is an excellent free feature where writers paste in a section of their own writing, and the resulting visual and written commentary reveals areas with excessive use of verbs, nouns, prepositions, adjectives and adverbs, and other commonly used words.

YouTube Video Performance for Readers' Theater

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2Nx9nzMXAU>

Common Core Standards

<http://www.essaytagger.com/commoncore>

Essaytagger is an online tool to assist teachers in building Common Core rubrics.

Creative Commons – Verify permission to use text in class:

<http://search.creativecommons.org/>

Sources for Explanatory/ Informative Lesson:

“The Blood of Freedom” by Albert Camus (essay)
<http://members.bellatlantic.net/~samg2/freedom.html>

“Ragged Old Flag” by Johnny Cash (song lyrics/poem)
<http://tinyurl.com/annaecn>

Mishima, Yukio. (1966). --. In *Patriotism*. [--]. (Sargent, G.W., Trans.). (2nd ed., p. 64). New York: New Directions Publishing Company.

Sources for Biography Lesson:

Depression and Dust Bowl Sources

- *American Experience: Surviving the Dust Bowl*. (2007). On DVD. PBS Television special with on-the-scene photographs from the 1930s.
- “Interactive Dust Bowl” based upon the PBS documentary *The Dust Bowl* (Ken Burns) <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/dustbowl/interactive/>
- “Voices from the Dust Bowl” (An archive of the Library of Congress) <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/afctshhtml/tshome.html>
Interview with relatives of survivors of The Depression and/or the Dust Bowl
- Website for the National Heritage Museum: <http://www.nationalheritagemuseum.org/Exhibitions/CurrentExhibitions/TeenageHoboesintheGreatDepression.aspx> A voluminous site rich with stories and recordings of teenage hoboes in the Great Depression.
- Commercial sites with valuable background information: <http://www.eroluys.com/HowAmericansHelpedEachOtherDuringtheGreatDepression.htm>
<http://www.eroluys.com/HoboLettersfromRidingtheRails.htm>
A sampling of letters from boxcar children during the Great Depression.

Resources for Argumentative Lesson

- Jarrell, R. (1969). The death of the ball turret gunner. In *The complete poems*. (n.p.). New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, Inc. Retrieved October 1, 2010 from Poets.org. <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15309>.
- “Sentimental Journey” by Morley Music Co., Inc. (song lyrics). Written by Les Brown and Ben Homer in 1944 and recorded by Doris Day, it was a hit with returning veterans from World War II.
- “Two-Thousand-Yard Stare” by Thomas Lea (painting). This 1944 painting is currently at the United States Army Center of Military History at Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, D.C.
- Pyle, E. (2012). The death of Captain Waskow. In Shabo, M. & Osborne, E. (Ed.), *Reading informational texts, book I: Nonfiction passages and exercises based on the Common Core State Standards*. Clayton, DE: Prestwick House.
- Gavin, P. (1996). Statistics of World War II. *The history place*. Retrieved October 1, 2012 from <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/statistics.htm>
- **Purdue Online Writing Lab: Creative Non-fiction resource** <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/753/1/>

Resources for Non-Fiction Literary Analysis Lesson

Sources for Analysis Lesson

- Least Heat Moon, W. (1999). The deluxe cafe in Darlington. In *Blue highways: Journey into America*. New York: Back Bay Books.
- Amram, Fred. (2012a). The Reluctant Grown-Up. In Donna Talarico. (Ed.), *Hippocampus*. Elizabethtown, PA: Hippocampus Magazine. Retrieved 2012 from <http://www.hippocampusmagazine.com/2012/01/the-reluctant-grown-up-by-fred-amram/>

Other sources to use for non-fiction literary analysis:

- Furuness, B. The wonder of geese. *Brevity: Essays on the wonder and craft of creative nonfiction*. (34). n.p. Retrieved 2010 from <https://www.creativenonfiction.org/brevity/craft.htm>
- Cummings, e. e. (1923). Anyone lived in a pretty how town. In Firmage, G.J. (Ed.), *Complete poems: 1904-1962*. n.p. Liveright Publishing Corporation. Retrieved 2012 from Poetry.org. <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15403>
- **The Educational Testing Service.** (2002). [Http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/ap/students/english/b_eng_lang_frq_02.pdf](http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/ap/students/english/b_eng_lang_frq_02.pdf). The College Board. Retrieved 2012 from http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/ap/students/english/b_eng_lang_frq_02.pdf (2002 AP English Language and Composition Free Response Questions Form B.)

Online Sources for Short Stories

(Teacher contribution – steenie mcttelecom.com in Abu Dhabi)

Living Authors

- AuthorZone: <http://www.peters-books.co.uk/authorzone.htm>
- Living authors: <http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/children/authors/>
- Scholastic Books: <http://www.scholastic.com/librarians/ab/biolist.htm>

Classic Authors

- Short biographies: <http://www.short-biographies.com/Author.php>
- Classic short stories: <http://www.classicshorts.com/author.html>

- Classic short stories: <http://www.clickinks.com/classic-short-stories.html>
- Short biographies: <http://www.short-biographies.com/Author.php>

More General

- Online short stories: <http://www.readbookonline.net/shortStory/>
- All sorts of online stories: <http://goodnightstories.com/read.htm>
- Study guides and literature essays: <http://www.gradesaver.com/authors/A/>
- Litweb: <http://litweb.net/>
- Library of Congress: <http://read.gov/>
<http://www.readbookonline.net/shortStory/>
<http://goodnightstories.com/read.htm>
<http://read.gov/>
- For identifying short story authors: <http://www.classicshorts.com/author.html>
<http://www.clickinks.com/classic-short-stories.html>
- For biographies on the short story author: <http://www.gradesaver.com/authors/A/>
<http://www.short-biographies.com/Author.php>
<http://litweb.net/>

These are directories; students should look up the author's last name or the first letter of the author's last name and then look for the biography.

Appendix E: Technology Resources

Thirty years ago, students produced essays on typewriters with bottles of WiteOut™ correction fluid on the desk top and balanced on a paper pastiche of scribbled rough drafts. Fast forward to where the desktop is today, and it's likely to be carried in a backpack right next to its power cord. Each year brings new technologies such as wonderful blogs, RSS feeds, Twitters, and web tools to explore and use in the English classroom. Most are free. Some, like the Twitter microbloggers, offer PLNs (Professional Learning Network) access to world-spanning communication with other English teachers. The Youth and Media Center at Harvard (<http://youthandmedia.org/>) studies and shares trends on “research, advocacy and development initiatives” having to do with youth and technology, a service that informs educators and others of trends important to note. The *New York Times*’ Learning Network at learning.blog.nytimes.com offers an amazing service in a slant on the old time “clubhouse” idea for teachers where interesting and timely lessons are shared freely. The Daring Librarian (www.thedaringlibrarian.com, Gwyneth A. Jones) inspired one teacher to use QR Codes, those smart phone-readable symbols printed just about everywhere, to make and use a Code Quest with students. Technology has allowed us all to find and capitalize on the immediacy of colorful new formats, variety, and access to unique information to amaze and fascinate our students with their own creative potential. That’s exactly what we hope our students will do...with or without technology, but definitely more masterfully with access to all that we can offer.

BYOD or Bring Your Own Device

In view of the rapid reliance on technology, school systems are catching up to the necessity of allowing students to BYOD (Bring Your Own Device). This is a new realm for most educators and school officials who have limited fiscal ability to purchase and support newer technology as it is introduced. It is equally difficult to find time and trainers to help teachers to make optimal use of the new technological equipment. According to the online EdTech© magazine, there are schools successfully implementing the Bring Your Own Device practice and finding it less expensive than purchasing devices. The caution is careful planning had best precede jumping into the program of BYOD. Issues of equal access, resources, and availability of online access should be resolved first (Inman, accessed 12-12).

Recommended Web Sources

As always, check the sites first for appropriate content and reliability before recommending the links to students. As of press time, the following sites were viable and useful. Should any links expire, enter the unusable link in an Internet archive site such as <http://archive.org/web/web.php> to find the last time it was updated and usable, and the resulting link will open to the site. Doing this will also help the user find other viable links.

Sites for Working with Oral Language:

A speech resource example

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1A68533491F57B30>

PBS site containing examples of annotated speeches

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/interactive/speeches/1/annotated-state-of-the-union/>

Sites for Creating Videos

Animoto for creating videos

<http://animoto.com/>

Common Craft videos

<http://www.commoncraft.com/>

PowToon – animation tool

<http://www.powtoon.com/>

WeVideo

<http://www.wevideo.com/>

Sites for Online Collaboration

Protagonize provides multiple users a site on which to compose a text together.

<http://protagonize.com>

Edmodo

www.edmodo.com

Edmodo is a free social learning technology platform for electronic portfolios, and for the teachers to “post assignments, share content, create student groups to collaborate on projects and communicate with students, parents and other teachers” (The State, “Social media take a seat in SC schools,” accessed 10/16/2012).

Meeting Words

<http://meetingwords.com>

Meeting Words is a free, easy-to-use site to use for collaborative in-class brainstorming and drafting activities.

The Educator’s Personal Learning Network

<http://edupln.ning.com>

This site connects teachers to tech resources for using social media in their classrooms.

Sites Suitable for Research

Meta-Search Engine

<http://www.zapmeta.com>

ZapMeta uses *many* search engines for simultaneous searching.

CyberDewey

<http://www.dodomagnifico.com/CyberDewey/CyberDewey.html>

This hotlist of Internet sites organized using Dewey Decimal Classification codes is a usable tool.

Digital Librarian

<http://www.digital-librarian.com/>

Best Online Reference Sites (as compiled by the American Library Association)

<http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2064572/The-Best-Online-Reference-Sites>

Time Magazine Archive

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/archives/advanced>

Image and Media Searching

(If your students are going to publish on the web, be alert to copyright issues, and read the disclaimers on each site.)

<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/browse-category.php?s=8>

Sites for Images

US Government Photos and Images

<http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Graphics.shtml>

The Composites

<http://thecomposites.tumblr.com/>

This site uses published details/descriptions and police composite-sketch software to create an image of literary characters.

Comic strips

www.Toondo.com

This site allows users to create cartoon strips.

OneLook

www.Onelook.com

This site allows the user to look up one word in several dictionaries at the same time.

HapYak

www.hapyak.com

Lets students annotate any YouTube or Vimeo video with text including url addresses.

Wikis

Wikispaces

<http://school2.wikispaces.com/>

Web 2.0 tools

Google Sites: Use a classroom Wiki or website to create a secure class website.

Pinterest, a social media tool, facilitates “pinning together” pictures, videos, links that can have themes, interests, tasks, or goals focused for many classroom uses. An explanation and suggested lesson idea is featured in a Read, Write, Web article at http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/a_guys_guide_to_getting_going_on_pinterest.php.

Twitter

<http://www.grouptweet.com>

Leverage content from multiple contributors to create a more dynamic Twitter account.

<http://www.openculture.com/faq>

A Twitter Feed (or RSS) featuring free educational and cultural media on the web. As an aggregator of cultural media, Open Culture brings access to “intelligent audio and video.”

#engchat

A weekly Twitter chat hosted by a different person each week (Donalyn Miller, Carol Jago, Kelly Gallagher, and others) to discuss topics having to do with the teaching of English.

<https://twitter.com/edutopia/great-edu-orgs-to-follow>

A list of wonderful educational organizations to follow on Twitter.

Twitter.com: @wheretheclass

Two English teachers collaborate on a blog offering contemporary lessons for English classes/teachers.

Index

- 21st century skills vii, 378, 414
- 3-Column Analysis 154, 170, 171, 249, 258
- academic language scripts 161, 340, 341, 367, 369
- Academic Vocabulary in Writing Prompts 265
- A Contextual Approach to Conventions 280, 282
- Acronyms for Revision 184, 185, 236, 249
- active listening 102, 103, 326–327, 328, 349, 351, 368, 414
- active/passive voice 281, 283, 284
- Analogous Reflection 204, 206, 250
- argumentative writing 46, 72, 75, 87, 90–91, 92, 93, 131, 168, 177, 233–239, 286
- Asynchronous presentations 380
- Authentic Questioning 145, 155
- biographical writing 46, 75, 253–262
- body paragraphs, *see Writing Body Paragraphs*
- brainstorming 5, 44, 53–55, 56, 57, 59, 417
- checklist tracking 191, 193, 236, 249
- Choric Reading 389, 391
- collaborative drafting 101, 102, 103, 235
- collaborative group presentation 382–383, 384
- conclusions, *see Writing Conclusions*
- conferencing 150, 151, 152, 429
- connotation and denotation 287, 307
- Constructing a Rubric 70–71
- Cornell notes/note-taking 4, 30, 325, 367, 427
- Costa's Levels of Thinking vi, 424, 426
- critical listening 325
- critical listening features 331, 334–335, 336
- Critical Listening Multiple Perspectives 332–333
- Critical Listening Purpose, Point of View, and Bias 328–329
- Deconstructing On-Demand Prompts 270–271
- deconstructing writing prompts 63–64, 66, 67, 69, 71, 167, 234, 241, 248, 256, 274, 278
- drafting 46, 101, 102, 103, 104–105, 106, 107, 108–109, 120–121, 123, 128, 129–131, 179, 190, 224, 424
- Drafting in Chunks 101, 104–105, 106, 107, 242, 258
- editing 47, 103, 128, 144, 162, 179, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196–197, 198, 203, 224, 236, 243, 249, 259, 281, 282, 299
- editing journals 47, 194
- Embedding Research in Drafts 108, 258
- Expert Editing Groups 47, 195
- Fluency and Speed – 10-Minute Writing 272, 273
- focused note-taking 94, 96, 108, 242, 255, 257
- formal debate 338, 343
- formal speeches 401, 403, 405–406, 408, 410, 411
- Formal vs. Informal Language 288
- graphic organizers 4, 5–6, 85–86, 87, 89, 94–95, 166, 168, 204, 207, 237, 242, 325
- Graphic Organizers as Reflective Tools 207, 237
- Guided Response 157–158, 159
- Guiding Questions for Pre-Writing 78, 79, 80–81, 145, 234, 235, 248
- Guiding Questions to Lead to a Claim for Argumentative Writing 90–91, 235
- Highlighting for Self-Response 172, 235
- Identifying RAMP 73–74
- imagery 114, 291–292, 334, 336
- informative writing 87, 240–245
- Impromptu Speeches 403, 404
- interactive notebook 30–31, 33–35, 36, 187, 194, 266, 282
- Interpretation and Insight 293
- Interpreting Input 180–181, 182, 183
- Interpreting Input: Developing a Revision Plan (TEASE) 186–187, 236, 242
- introductions, *see Writing Introductions*
- “I” statements 147, 148, 160, 162, 349–350
- Jigsaw strategy 102, 103, 419, 420
- KWL strategy 4, 420–421
- Language of Authentic Feedback 160–161, 162, 235
- learning logs vi, 39–40, 41, 42, 43
- literary analysis 46, 76, 246–252
- Loose and Periodic Sentences 299, 300
- magnet words 82–83, 84
- Maxims and Inductive Writing 294, 295, 296
- mentor texts 101, 112–113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 293
- metacognition 126, 206, 222, 416
- Metacognition: Myself as a Speaker 410
- mock trial 351–352, 353–354
- Myself as a Writer 204, 205, 211, 212
- on-demand writing 264, 265, 270, 272, 273, 274, 276, 277, 278, 279
- Oral “Rehearsal” 120–121
- Organizational Words in Writing Prompts 65, 267
- Organizing Text Structure with Graphic Organizers 85–86, 242
- pair-share 323, 324, 326, 415, 423

panel discussion 386–387, 388, 394
 parallelism 297
 Pass the Draft 123
 Peer Evaluation Teams 204, 213, 214, 215
 peer response 144, 154, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 163, 337
 Performance Poetry and Prose 389, 392–393
 Philosophical Chairs 355–356, 357, 358, 359, 361
 Plays and Monologues 389, 394–395
 portfolios 49, 50, 204, 205, 211, 237, 243
 pre-writing 46, 52, 59, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 86, 90, 93, 98, 101, 146, 204, 205, 224, 234, 241, 248, 255, 277, 394
 Process Writing 46
 Prompt Writing 274, 275
 publishing (student writing) 47, 103, 149, 199, 236, 243, 250, 259, 292
 quickwrite 44, 45, 234, 248, 323, 355
 quotations (quotes) 49, 94, 95, 152, 168, 175, 192, 214, 226, 243, 272
 RAMP (role, audience, mode, purpose) iv, 46, 63, 66, 67, 68, 73–74, 75–76, 77, 234, 241, 247, 256, 274
 RAMP Shifting 124–125, 126
 Read-Around 242, 249, 258
 reader response 46, 47, 128, 144, 155, 160, 161, 165, 166, 224, 235, 242, 249, 258, 350, 394, 429
 Readers’ Theater 389, 397–398, 399
 Re-creation Reader Response 166
 Reflection (on writing) vi, 2, 39, 47, 50, 146, 179, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 210, 211, 218, 219, 224, 226, 228, 237, 243, 250, 260, 416
 reflection questions 204, 216, 217, 234, 237, 243, 260, 368
 Reflection Stems: Products and Process 218
 Research Inquiry and Focused Note-Taking 94, 242, 257
 revising 47, 48, 78, 90, 103, 124, 154, 179, 180, 184, 185, 224, 236, 242, 249, 259, 277
 Revisit the Prompt 167
 role play 389, 400
 Round Robin Draft Discussion 128, 129–131
 rubric 36, 47, 70–71, 144, 146, 149, 152, 165, 173, 174, 176, 203, 213, 214, 215, 230, 238–239, 244–245, 251–252, 261–262, 410, 411
 Rubric Analysis 154, 173
 Rubrics: Evaluating and Reflecting on the Process 204, 222–223, 224, 225
 Rubrics: Evaluating and Reflecting on the Product 220, 221
 satire 309–310, 311
 self-response 154, 172, 235, 424
 Semicolons Lesson 298
 Sentence by Sentence Correction 47, 196
 sentence variety 170, 191, 283, 301, 302
 Showing vs. Telling 303
 Socratic Seminar 100, 360–361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369–370, 371, 372, 373, 417
 Structured Talk as a Pre-Writing Strategy 98–99, 100, 235, 248, 257
 Target Areas – Small Groups 198, 243, 259
 text structures 85, 87
 thesis statements 104, 105, 173, 281, 286, 306, 322
 time management 264, 276, 384
 Tone in Lyrics 307–308
 Tone/Satire Map 309–310
 Tone Vocabulary 312
 Tracking Infographic Reflection 226–227, 228
 transitions (in writing) 48, 122, 190, 277, 281, 283, 286, 313–314, 315–316, 322
 Using Facts and Opinions to Summarize Another Person’s Ideas 374–375
 Using Mentor Texts 112–113, 114
 Using Templates and Sentence Frames 132–133
 voice (of a writer) 2, 75, 129, 144, 264, 281
 WICOR, definition of v
 WICOR, strategic use of v–vii
 What it is/is not 176, 177, 178
 Whip Activity 163–164, 165
 World Café 100, 376–377
 Write and Release 47, 200, 201–202, 259
 writer’s notebook 49
 Writing Body Paragraphs 248, 285, 286
 Writing Conclusions 278, 281, 317
 Writing Introductions 278, 281, 320
 Writing Introductions and Conclusions 278
 writing to learn 3, 4, 45, 48, 49, 50

