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ISBN: 9781457303456

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Introduction

SpringBoard instruction in writing is addressed in two integrated ways:
• through project-based, scaffolded writing assessments in the student texts
• through SpringBoard writing workshops

To support students in becoming effective writers, these writing workshops offer guided experiences in specific rhetorical and grammar and usage skills, emphasizing practice and mastery of specific writing modes. The SpringBoard writing workshops offer direct writing instruction to support and extend mastery of the writing process and commonly assessed written products. Each workshop guides students through the writing of three separate texts in the specific mode being taught: one that is constructed as a class with direct guidance from the teacher, one that is peer constructed with teacher support, and one that is written independently.

Instructional Design
The SpringBoard writing workshops follow an instructional sequence designed to support students in their initial writing efforts and to provide practice to help them gain independent writing skills. Each workshop is composed of four activities that are structured to provide a gradual release of control, moving students from a class writing exercise to writing independently.

Activity 1 requires students to read a mentor text and to study it from the perspective of a writer to understand structure and stylistic techniques the author uses to create meaning in the text.

Activity 2 has students participate in a class-constructed writing practice in which the teacher guides students in writing a model text that incorporates learning from the analysis of the mentor text in Activity 1. Activity 2 enables the most proficient writer in the room—the teacher—to model SpringBoard writing strategies and to help students move successfully through the writing process to create a text that adheres to the Learning Targets outlined for the activity.

Activity 3 has students work in collaborative groups to apply knowledge learned from the first two activities and to produce a writing product that meets the expectations for writing in the specific mode. For this activity, students do the planning and writing, while teachers monitor their work and provide mini-lessons as needed to differentiate instruction and to support student learning.

Activity 4 requires students to work on their own to produce writing that demonstrates all the characteristics of the mode they have been learning and practicing.

Vertical Articulation of Writing Skills and Concepts
The SpringBoard writing workshops provide extensive coverage in essential modes, as well as in creative modes. For each writing mode, there is a clear sequence of writing development, taking students through organizational structure, presentation of ideas, use of stylistic techniques, use of sentence structure for effect, and incorporation of grammar and language conventions. Each writing workshop is accompanied by a Scoring Guide that outlines the performance expectations for each writing mode and provides accountability for the learning targets identified at each grade level.
In the upper grades these writing workshops provide several opportunities for students to practice responding to writing prompts that are modeled on AP-type prompts, thus preparing them to demonstrate the skills needed for college entrance exams, AP assessments, and high-stakes state assessments.

Through writing experiences in the SpringBoard texts as well as in these writing workshops, students will be prepared to write in any tested genre and will gain the following:

• Reading-writing connections that result in transferable literacy skills
• Ability to produce writing in a variety of modes
• Experience in using research to inform writing and to support credible argument
• Skills in collaborating and communicating with other writers
• Language development in writing and speech, as well as embedded grammar instruction that focuses on structure and effect in writing

Acknowledgments

The College Board gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following classroom teachers and writers who contributed to the revision of these writing workshops.

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Writing Process: Strategies for Writing

Learning Targets
• Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
• With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
• Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
• Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on middle school topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing your own clearly.

The Writing Process
Writing is a recursive process, meaning that writers may repeat the steps of drafting, revising, and polishing many times before they are satisfied with their product. Successful writers are flexible in how they approach a writing situation. They use a variety of strategies to carry out and manage the task of composing. This workshop is designed to help you understand the stages of the writing process and the strategies that will help you develop your own writing process.

To complete this workshop you will work with your teacher and your classmates to follow the writing process in planning, drafting, organizing, and revising and editing a model piece of writing. You will then use the writing process to independently write a piece of your choosing.

ACTIVITY 1
Exploring the Writing Process

Before Reading
1. What do you know about the writing process? Describe the stages you go through, from beginning to end, to publish a piece of writing.

Stages of the Writing Process
2. Consider the traditional stages of the writing process represented below and placed in random order. Work with a partner to brainstorm the role of the writer within each stage of the writing process.
Notes about and discussion of the stages of the writing process should produce a rich discussion of the recursive and fluid nature of this process. Encourage discussion so students have a full understanding of each of the stages.

3 The “Writer’s Role” graphic organizer places the writer at the center of the writing process. Have students work in pairs or small groups for initial sharing of information, then open the discussion to the whole class. Be sure students take notes.

4 Give students time to create their own graphic representation of the writing process. This could be in the form of a circle, a Mobius strip, a pyramid, a tree, etc. Once students have gone through the guided practice of the writing process, they will be asked to revise this graphic to reflect their new understanding.

5 In order to prepare for the After Reading exercise, lead students in a class discussion of the choices writers must consider when crafting a text: audience, genre, purpose, organizational structure, point of view, stylistic considerations. You may limit this list depending on the readiness of your students. For any choices you discuss, define the component and add its elements to the class Word Wall.

6 During Reading: As you read aloud the student essay, “My Long-Distance Life,” published in Newsweek, ask students to mark the text for information about the writer and his viewpoint, as well as the issue at the center of this reflective essay, which blends narrative with exposition.

Writing Process Graphic

3. After discussing the writing process, use your imagination to create a graphic representation of the writing process that shows its stages and their recursive nature.

During Reading

As you read the following student sample, read the text from the perspective of a writer.

4. As you read this text, identify as much as you can about the writer and his viewpoint. Highlight statements the writer makes that present his point of view.
Sample Text

My Long Distance Life

by Nick Sheff

I was born in Berkeley, where I lived in a small house in the hills surrounded by firs and redwoods. My mom, my dad and me. As early as I can remember, there was arguing. When I was 4, my parents decided that they could no longer live together.

That same year, my mom moved to Los Angeles, and a therapist was hired to decide where I would live. My dad called her my worry doctor. Playing with a dollhouse in her office, I showed her the mother's room on one side and the father's room on the other. When she asked me about the little boy's room, I told her he didn't know where he would sleep.

Though I was very young, I accepted my parents' separation and divorce and somehow knew it wasn't my fault. Yet I was intensely afraid. Not only was my mom more than 500 miles away, but she had a new husband. My dad had a new girlfriend, and my custody was unresolved. Everyone said I'd spend time with both parents, but I wanted to know where I would live.

The therapist finally decided I'd stay with my dad during the school year and visit my mom on long holidays and for the summers. I began flying between two cities and two different lives. I've probably earned enough miles for a round-trip ticket to Mars. Some people love to fly, but I dreaded the trips.

For the first year, one of my parents would accompany me on the flights. At 6, I started traveling on my own. I would pack my toys and clothes in a Hello Kitty backpack and say goodbye to my parent at the gate. The flight attendant would lead me onto the plane.

When I was 7, the woman sitting next to me on the plane tried to convert me to Christianity. A few years later I was on a flight with such bad turbulence that the luggage compartments opened and the man behind me threw up. When I was 12 and on my way to L.A. for Christmas, a lady refused to check her bag and shoved a flight attendant. We couldn't take off for two hours; the police came and dragged her off, to the cheering of other passengers. But flying was just part of what made long-distance joint custody so difficult.

I remember the last day of school in sixth grade. All my friends made plans to go to the beach together—all my friends, but not me. I couldn't join them because I had to fly to L.A. It wasn't that I didn't want to see my mom and stepdad. I just didn't want to leave my friends. As the school year came to a close, I began to shut down. I hated saying goodbye for the summer. It was easier to put up a wall, to pretend I didn't care. My dad drove to school with my packed bags. My friends went off together and I headed to the airport.

Arriving in L.A., I was excited to see my mom and stepdad. It had been almost three months since my last visit. But it took a while to adjust. Each set of parents had different rules, values and concerns.
I am 16 now and I still travel back and forth, but it’s mostly up to me to decide when. I’ve chosen to spend more time with my friends at the expense of visits with my mom. When I do go to L.A., it’s like my stepdad put it: I have a cameo role in their lives. I say my lines and I’m off. It’s painful.

What’s the toll of this arrangement? I’m always missing somebody. When I’m in northern California, I miss my mom and stepdad. But when I’m in L.A., I miss hanging out with my friends, my other set of parents and little brother and sister. After all those back-and-forth flights, I’ve learned not to get too emotionally attached. I have to protect myself.

Many of my friends’ parents are divorced. The ones whose mom and dad live near each other get to see both their parents more. These kids can go to school plays and dances on the weekend, and see their friends when they want. But others have custody arrangements like mine. One friend whose dad moved to New Hampshire sees him at Christmas and for one month during the summer. My girlfriend’s dad lives in Alaska. They know what I know: it’s not fair.

No child should be subjected to the hardship of long-distance joint custody. To prevent it, maybe there should be an addition to the marriage vows: Do you promise to have and to hold, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health, as long as you both shall live? And if you ever have children and wind up divorced, do you promise to stay within the same geographical area as your kids? Actually, since people often break those vows, maybe it should be a law: If you have children, you must stay near them. Or how about some common sense? If you move away from your children, you have to do the traveling to see them.

In two years I go to college. I’ll be living away from both homes, which will present new problems, such as where I will spend holidays. Whatever happens, I’ll continue to do the traveling to see them.

Before I have children of my own, I’ll use my experiences to help make good decisions about whom I choose to marry. However, if I do get a divorce, I will put my children’s needs first. I will stay near them no matter what happens.

After Reading
5. When you have finished reading, respond to the questions below in the space provided. Be prepared to discuss your answers with your classmates.

a. **Purpose**: What was the writer’s purpose for composing this text? Was it to inform, to entertain, to persuade, to reflect, or to share an experience? Explain. Sample response: The purpose of this essay is to explain the effect of a divorce on a child when the child has to travel a great distance to have a relationship with both parents and families.

b. **Audience**: Who is the intended audience for this piece? Sample response: The target audience seems to be other children of divorced parents and maybe the parents who do not consider the best interests of their children.

c. **Position/Thesis**: What central idea and/or message did the writer want to convey? Sample response: Parents should consider the best interests of their children when they divorce, especially regarding making children travel great distances to have relationships with their parents.
Check Your Understanding

With a partner, evaluate the effectiveness of blending the two modes of writing. How would the essay have been different if it had only been narrative, or only expository?

**ACTIVITY 2**

**Working Through the Writing Process as a Class**

**Stage 1: Choosing a Topic**

As a writer, you may have the opportunity to choose an original topic for your writing or you may write in response to a prompt. Either way, you will benefit from going through the stages of the writing process.

“It seems to me that writing is a marvelous way of making sense of one’s life, both for the writer and the reader.” —John Cheever

1. Use the chart below to brainstorm a list in each category of potential writing topics for you to explore and share with your readers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Writing Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the best things that have happened to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample responses: Got my braces off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time I went bungee-jumping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 **Check Your Understanding** is intended to have students notice and analyze the role of modes in writing. Be sure they understand the difference in purpose between narrative and explanatory/expository writing.

**ASSESS**

The After Reading and Check Your Understanding questions should act as formative assessments to gauge students’ understanding of the purposes of texts. Be sure students have spent sufficient time thinking about and discussing the stages of the Writing Process before beginning Activity 2.

**ADAPT**

In order to make the writer’s perspective more explicit during discussion of this text, be sure to ask students to think about why the writer made the choices he did. For example, why did he blend narration and exposition, why did he use an organization that waits to the end to explain and reflect, why did he choose to write about this topic, and what was his purpose?

**ACTIVITY 2**

**Working Through the Writing Process as a Class**

**PLAN**

Materials: Overhead or whiteboard to display group work

Pacing: 1–2 class periods

**TEACH**

1. **Choosing a Topic:** To begin this process, you may want to ask students to make a connection between Cheever’s quote and choosing a topic.
This activity is intended to be a guided writing activity involving the entire class. However, you may want to use small groups for specific parts of the activity. If so, writing groups should be organized so that specific roles are assigned to each member of the groups of four (e.g., two recorders, a manager, and a presenter).

2 Students will now work through the writing process to plan a first draft for which they select an appropriate topic, genre, target audience, and position.

3 Ask students to complete the Potential Writing Topics graphic organizer. You may want to create a larger version of the graphic organizer.

4 Invite students to pair-share their responses to the questions. You may want to model responses to the questions using your own brainstorming responses to the chart.

5 Present the RAFT strategy and have the class brainstorm potential options for each category: roles, audience, format, and topic.

Introducing the Strategy: RAFT

Primarily used to generate text, the RAFT strategy helps writers plan for writing by focusing on the writer’s role, audience, format, and topic. RAFT can also be used to analyze a text by examining and identifying the role of the speaker, the intended audience, the format, and the topic of the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of the writer: What perspective or persona will you take on to meet your goals for writing and to establish a connection with your readers?</th>
<th>Audience: Who is your target audience? What information might you include to capture their interest?</th>
<th>Topic: What is your purpose for writing this piece? Use strong verbs to describe your purpose.</th>
<th>Format: What writing mode or genre would be best to represent this topic? Explain.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
5. Now use this sentence frame to consider your goal for writing.

From the perspective of a(an) Sample responses: activist, I am writing a(an) editorial.

to convince my classmates that bullies in school are everyone’s problem, not.

Topic Audience

Stage 2: Prewriting

“I suppose some writers begin with a phrase, an idea, or a concept. I always begin with an image.” — Gabriel García Márquez

1. How do you begin to explore a subject before writing? Consider what you currently know and need to know in order to guide the exploration of your selected topic.

2. Review the purpose of the prewriting strategies (e.g., free-writing and looping, mapping, outlining, sketching, or webbing) in the Resources section of your SpringBoard book. Select an appropriate strategy, and begin prewriting to generate ideas, explore connections among them, and organize information.

Introducing the Strategy: Free-Writing, Looping, and Adding

Free-writing consists of using a fluid brainstorming process to write without constraints in order to generate content and clarify and convey the writer’s purpose.

After free-writing, looping focuses on one section of a text which is identified to promote elaboration or the generation of new ideas for that section. This process is repeated to further develop ideas from the newly generated segments.

Adding consists of making conscious choices to enhance a text by adding additional words, phrases, sentences, or ideas.

Sample Looping and Adding to part of a free writing activity:

“Arriving in L.A., I was excited to see my mom and stepdad. It had been almost three months since my last visit. But it took a while to adjust. Each set of parents had different rules, values, and concerns.”

Material added as a result of looping: “But it took a while to adjust.”

With my father, I am an only child, and I have an active social life, but with my mom and step-dad, my time is spent entirely with my younger brothers.

3. Review your prewriting, and consider how the ideas generated fit your goals and purpose for writing. This might be an appropriate time to settle upon a preliminary position or controlling idea to shape your point of view or your underlying message.

4. Think about the format or mode you selected while completing the RAFT organizer, and consider the conventions of the format in preparation for a first draft. Consult resources as necessary to familiarize yourself with the organizational structure of your selected type of text.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

In this workshop students will be given the freedom to choose their own topic, format, and audience. You may want to guide them based on students’ readiness for writing. You may consider having all students use the same topic, format, and audience even though the subject matter may be different.

6. Ask students to choose one item in each category and complete the sentence frame provided to establish a possible focus for the writing process work product.

7. Prewriting: Ask students to revisit the role of the writer in the prewriting stage.

8. As the class begins reviewing prewriting experiences and strategies, you might use a KWL chart to record their thinking and review.

9. Students will next be introduced to three specific prewriting strategies. Feel free to model other strategies. It will be important to note that these strategies can be used at different stages of the writing process, including drafting and revision.

10. The modeling of free-writing, looping, and adding can help students. You may want to begin with a class free-write, then model finding a section to elaborate (looping), and then model adding material. This should help students think about format and audience.
11 Use the Check Your Understanding to ensure that students understand the benefits of prewriting.

12 Drafting the text: Lead students in a class discussion on the role of the writer while drafting.

13 Organizing the text can happen organically as part of the drafting process or you can model organizing through webbing or outlining. The suggestions for mapping the organization of the student text can be used as a way of focusing students on creating a structure for their draft.

14 Before students begin drafting, you may want to do another guided reading. Analyze the model text for genre conventions and the way the text develops ideas to create a focused, organized, coherent narrative. Have students focus on how the writer uses details to support his position and appeal to a particular audience.

15 Provide writing time for students to generate a draft that incorporates the ideas generated during prewriting.

16 Sharing and Responding in Writing Groups: Students will now practice the important stage of peer review and discussion in writing groups. Ask students to share and respond in a class discussion about Gallagher’s quote. Have them reflect on the role of the writer during this stage as well as the value of sharing writing with others for the purpose of revision before publication.

Check Your Understanding
You have completed the Prewriting stages in the writing process. Explain why these stages are important steps before the actual drafting of your writing. How can they help make drafting your writing easier and more fully developed?

Stage 3: Drafting the Text
Once you have finished the prewriting stage, you are ready to create a working draft of your text. Using your RAFT thinking, your free-writing, looping, adding and any other brainstorming, you are ready to write.

"Writing should be like riding a bike down a hill, bouncing along, going fast."
—Don Murray

1. Revisit the Writer’s Role graphic organizer and discuss how this quote pertains to the drafting stage of the writing process. Then describe your experiences with drafting in the past.

2. Before you begin drafting, think about organizing your ideas. Create a preliminary organizational structure by creating a topic outline that shows what ideas you will include and in what order the ideas will be developed. Be sure to focus your attention on building ideas to create a focused and coherent piece of writing. For help in doing this, examine and track the organization of the model essay. Note how the narrative develops and when it shifts to explaining or expository development.

Sample response: Paragraphs 1–9 are narrative, each with a specific incident and arranged chronologically. Note the time transitions. Paragraphs 10–15 shift to explanatory mode and answer the rhetorical question posed in paragraph 10.

3. Once you have completed your draft, read through it and use looping to pinpoint areas where you might further refine your writing for clarity and detail in preparation for sharing your draft with your peers. Consider the areas of the draft where you would like peer support, and note appropriate questions and/or comments to share in a small group.

Stage 4: Sharing and Responding in Writing Groups
“Reader response drives revision.” —Kelly Gallagher

1. Revisit the Writer’s Role graphic organizer, and discuss how this quote pertains to the sharing and responding stage of the writing process.

2. In a writing group, all members work collaboratively to assist the writer through the revision process by asking clarifying questions that may help to develop a quality piece of writing. Look at the “Roles of the Participants in Writing Groups” for things to consider while sharing and responding.
**Stage 4: Sharing and Responding in Writing Groups**

Once you have finished the prewriting stage, you are ready to create a working draft where you would like peer support, and note appropriate questions and/or arranged chronologically. Note the time transitions. Paragraphs 10–15 shift to the drafting stage of the writing process. Then describe your experiences to the sharing and responding stage of the writing process.

Revisit the Writer’s Role graphic organizer, and discuss how this quote pertains to the drafting stage of the writing process. Then describe your experiences to the sharing and responding stage of the writing process.

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**Roles of the Participants in Writing Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>Guidelines</th>
<th>Response Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The reader:</strong></td>
<td>Reads the text silently, then aloud. Begins the conversation after reading.</td>
<td>The reader’s focus is to share an understanding of the writer’s words. Reader’s and listeners’ compliments: • I liked...about this piece • This piece made me feel... • This piece reminded me of...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The reader will also see the physical structure of the draft and may comment on that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The reader follows all listeners’ guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The listener:</strong></td>
<td>Takes notes and prepares open-ended questions for the writer or makes constructive statements.</td>
<td>The listeners begin with positive statements. Listeners’ comments and suggestions: • I really enjoyed the part where... • What parts are you having trouble with? • What do you plan to do next? • I was confused when...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The listeners use “I” statements and talk about the writing, not the writer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The listeners make a statement but must support it with a reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The writer:</strong></td>
<td>Listens to the draft, takes notes, responds to questions, and asks the writing group questions.</td>
<td>As his or her work is being read aloud by another, the writer can get an overall impression of the piece. The writer asks the writing group questions to get feedback that will lead to effective revision. Writer’s comments/questions: • My initial writing goals were... I’m struggling with or I’m requesting support with... • What do you want to know more about? • What part does not make sense and/or align with the goals I stated? • What section of the text does not work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Also, the writer can take notes on what might need to be changed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

3. Use the Roles of Participants in Writing Groups to guide your writing group as you share your writing with each other and provide feedback for one another to help lead to focused revision.

**Stage 5: Revision**

“Rewriting is when playwriting really gets to be fun. In baseball, you only get three swings and you’re out. In rewriting, you get almost as many swings as you want and you know, sooner or later, you’ll hit the ball.” —Neil Simon

1. Describe your experience with revision. What revision strategies have you used in the past and what effect did they have on your text?

---

**DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION**

Extend or support learning by explaining that skilled writers compose a draft to get ideas on paper; at this stage, the focus is on fluency. Increase students’ writing fluency by providing regular writing time in class to compose rough drafts. Celebrate student writing by asking students to share drafts orally, and provide feedback that focuses on meaning and content.

17 Review the roles of writing-group members and discuss students’ observations. Use a fishbowl strategy to model the interaction of a writing group. To encourage thoughtful commentary, remind students to sit in close proximity so they can hear one another and display active listening.

18 Use a volunteer student’s draft or revisit “My Long-Distance Life” to model the kind of reader response that leads to effective revision. Think aloud open-ended questions pertaining to the text’s organization, details for engagement, and writer’s position. Encourage students to generate open-ended questions that could help the writer add, delete, rearrange, or substitute content to improve the draft. Brainstorm how a writer might revise the opening segment for more engaging details, organization, or to clarify the author’s position.

19 Debrief students after this practice. If you have not already done so, move students into groups of 3 or 4 for sharing and responding to peer feedback in order to guide revision.

20 Revision: Ask students to respond to the revision quote and to refer back to the Writer’s Role graphic organizer, which illustrates the revision stage of the writing process. Have students reflect on revision strategies that have worked well for them in the past as well as consider new strategies found in their SpringBoard book.
21 Students will use the Revision Checklist to plan and implement revision in their next draft. Use the revision checklist graphic organizer to discuss priorities for revision, strategies to use, and necessary resources to successfully refine the next draft.

22 Provide mini-lessons as needed to support students through the revision process. For example, a sample mini-lesson might include revisiting the student exemplar, “My Long-Distance Life,” to examine the writer’s style (e.g., word choice to emphasize position or details to convey the significance of the memory). Ask students to consider the organizational structure and style characteristics of their selected genre and revise their drafts accordingly.

23 Once students have revised and perhaps typed their new drafts, have them share the next draft within writing groups to get additional feedback on changes made.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION
You may want to support or extend learning by conferring with students individually or in small groups (3–5 minutes), asking probing questions to assist with revision. You could also use a SMARTboard or other available technology to project the draft and model revision. Use the track changes feature to highlight revisions and ask students to reflect on the changes made from one draft to the next.

24 Editing: Ask students to revisit the role of the writer in the editing stage and use a think-pair-share to respond to the series of prompts within the editing section. Note that instruction in grammar and conventions are best taught in the context of students’ writing. Therefore, this section will ask that you provide mini-lessons on aspects of grammar and conventions that you have noticed are a challenge in your students’ writing.

2. In your writing groups, you received feedback on what is working well in your draft and suggestions for improvement. Review your notes, read through your draft, evaluate it for clarity of focus, progression of ideas, organization and development of ideas. Consider which writing group suggestions are appropriate to improve the draft.

3. Review the revision strategies and choose one or more to use as you revise your draft, considering the priorities listed below, your own insights, and the feedback from your writing group.

Revision Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision Priorities</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Consult Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write an engaging lead to hook readers.</td>
<td>Sample responses: Use a prewriting strategy (e.g., free writing or mapping) to add new ideas.</td>
<td>Review published texts to examine the leads used by experienced writers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence ideas to create coherence in my text.</td>
<td>Use an outline to create a sequence of events using transitions.</td>
<td>Consult a grammar handbook to find out how to use transitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop ideas fully with examples and details as evidence</td>
<td>Use free writing and looping to find places to expand and develop ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a conclusion that follows from the ideas presented</td>
<td>Reread and mark body of the writing to find ideas that appeal to your audience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Complete your revision checklist and create a plan to begin revising your draft. You might want to use a computer to type your next draft. Print multiple copies to share in your next writing group meeting.

Stage 6: Editing
“The writer will also discover surprises in the process of editing, and the writer should delight in them.”—Donald Murray

1. Reread your notes on editing from “Writer’s Role” descriptions. Describe your experiences with editing and the editing strategies or techniques you have used in the past.

2. Use the Grammar Handbook in your SpringBoard book and other grammar references to identify the punctuation marks below and describe their function.
Writing Workshop 1 (continued)

3. Think about how you might use a punctuation mark to express who you are. Then complete the sentence frame below:

I identify myself as a __________________ because ________________________.

(punctuation mark)

4. Use the Common Proofreading Marks to self-edit your current draft. Share your edited draft in your next writing group meeting.

**Common Proofreading Marks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proofreading Symbol</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❄️</td>
<td>Insert a comma.</td>
<td>My cat has one white paw, two brown paws, and one brown and white paw.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❄️</td>
<td>Insert an apostrophe or a single quotation mark.</td>
<td>Her mother’s job involves a lot of travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❄️</td>
<td>Insert double quotation marks.</td>
<td>Have you read the poem, “My Father’s Son”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🌈</td>
<td>Add a period.</td>
<td>The roses are in bloom.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Review the grammar topics on the Editor’s/Writer’s Checklist graphic organizer and highlight the concepts in the first column that are unfamiliar to you. Take notes on grammar rules and copy sample sentences from published writers into the graphic organizer to refer to when you edit your next draft.
Next, direct students’ attention to the Editor’s/Writer’s Checklist in order to review grammar and sentence elements. Students should mark the text to identify practices and/or definitions that are unfamiliar to them (e.g., verb tense, compound or complex sentences, appositives, etc.). Provide a mini-lesson on unfamiliar concepts by reviewing the grammar rules that apply along with samples from published writers for students to emulate. Students should take notes on the Editor’s/Writer’s Checklist. Students can then self-edit their drafts, applying knowledge of the concepts learned. Have students share their next drafts in their writing groups and peer-edit as necessary.

**Publishing:** Ask students to revisit the role of the writer in the publishing stage and use a think-pair-share to respond to the series of prompts. This step ends the guided practice of the writing process.

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### Writing Workshop 1 (continued)

#### Editor’s/Writer’s Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Editing Rule</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization:</td>
<td>Did you capitalize the first word of sentences, proper nouns, and titles?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Sentences:</td>
<td>Are all of your sentences complete thoughts? Correct all fragments and run-ons that might be present in your draft.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent Voice:</td>
<td>Is your point of view consistent? (first, second, or third person)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject-Verb Agreement:</td>
<td>Are verb endings correct?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns:</td>
<td>Is pronoun use appropriate and consistent?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varied Sentences:</td>
<td>Are your sentences (simple, compound, complex) and lengths varied for interest and emphasis?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spell Check:</td>
<td>Circle words that might be misspelled. Use available resources (e.g., spell check, dictionary, or peer) to correct errors in spelling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typographical Errors:</td>
<td>Read your draft aloud, and carefully watch for typographical errors. Correct errors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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#### Stage 7: Publishing

“The best way out is always through.” — Robert Frost

1. Describe your experiences with publishing your writing for a larger audience.

2. After completing a written piece, a writer has many choices for publication. Brainstorm a list of publishing options available to you. Examples of authentic audiences appropriate for students’ selected genre might include the school or local newspaper, a school or syndicated literary magazine, online student writing contests, shared reading to an audience of peers or younger students, etc.

3. In preparation for completing a final draft, consider the following:
   - If appropriate, review your research on the conventions of your selected genre. Type your final draft and adhere to appropriate formatting. Incorporate illustrations into your final if they support your writing and add reader interest.
   - Brainstorm a list of possible titles by listing key words or phrases. Identify a word or phrase that captures the central idea of your text. Choose an appropriate title for your final draft.

4. Your teacher will provide you with the final guidelines for publication. Take notes on those guidelines, and revise your draft accordingly.
Check Your Understanding
Now that you have gone through the stages of the writing process as a group, consider what you have learned about yourself as a writer. Describe your writing process, which might be unique to you, and your growth as a writer. Revisit the writing process graphic you created in Activity 1, and consider whether it is still accurate. Modify it as needed in order to capture your process for writing, and create or select a quote to accompany your visual. In your writing group, share your visual.
   a. Discuss your writing process.
   b. Explain how you have developed as a writer.

ACTIVITY 3
Working Through the Writing Process Independently

WRITING PROMPT: Use your understanding of your writing process to develop an original text. Choose a topic, a genre, and an audience to which your topic will appeal. The following is an overview of the writing process presented in Activity 2. Use it as a reference as you craft your next piece.

➢ Prewriting
   • Review your Potential Writing Topics list and select another topic of interest for you to take through the writing process.
   • Use the RAFT strategy to establish a preliminary target audience, topic, position, and genre.
   • Choose an appropriate prewriting strategy to generate content and consider a preliminary organizational structure.

➢ Drafting
   • Review ideas and information generated from prewriting to create a draft.
   • Read through your draft to refine it for clarity and coherence in preparation for sharing it with your peers.

➢ Sharing and Responding
   • Work collaboratively within writing groups to provide effective responses that will lead to revision.
   • Share your draft multiple times for help with revising and editing.

➢ Revising
   • Review and evaluate your draft to make any appropriate changes.
   • Consider the feedback received from peers or your teacher, and decide how you will incorporate those suggestions into your next draft.
   • Create a “Revision Checklist” that identifies what needs to be done with the draft as well as the strategies and resources needed to accomplish the task.

➢ Editing
   • Review your draft and edit it for conventions of standard written English and usage (e.g., grammar and conventions) appropriate for the genre.
   • Consult additional resources (e.g., mentor texts, handbooks, style manuals, dictionaries, spell check, thesaurus, and peer editors) to correct errors in spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation.
   • Read through your draft and self-edit it using proofreading marks to signal changes that need to be made in the final draft.
This writing workshop provides students with an outline for the writing process. Students may have discovered their own process for writing, and they may wish to incorporate their own stages as they generate a new text. For students who are struggling with some element of writing, intervene when necessary to provide direct instruction via mini-lessons on the procedural components of the writing process, writing skills, and/or the use of writing strategies.

**ASSESS**

Use the Scoring Guide to assess each student’s independent essay, looking at whether the essay includes the elements of an argument and incorporates the transitions and language that create coherence.

**ADAPT**

For the independent essays, the selection of topic and position can affect the level of challenge the task poses for a student. To differentiate, you might assign specific topics or positions, or expand or limit options based on the level of challenge you believe the students need.

**SCORING GUIDE**

Use the Scoring Guide throughout this workshop to remind students of the elements expected to be included in their essays.

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**Writing Workshop 1 (continued)**

➢ **Publishing**

- Consider multiple venues to publish your work.
- Produce a final draft that follows guidelines specified by your teacher, which might require, for instance, a typed or legible handwritten draft, an original title, and formatting appropriate for the genre selected.

When you finish this writing project, complete a written self-evaluation of your process and your finished piece. Attach your evaluation to your writing project.

- What do you think you did particularly well in this piece of writing?
- Locate the best sentence in your draft, and explain why this line is so powerful.
- If you could spend more time, what would you do to make the draft better?
- What have you learned about writing and about yourself as a writer?

**SCORING GUIDE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The essay asserts an original focus on an idea or concept to be developed</td>
<td>The essay presents a clear focus on an idea or concept for development</td>
<td>The essay presents a limited and/or unfocused concept or central idea</td>
<td>The essay lacks a clear claim or focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>develops specific ideas skillfully and fully using examples, details and/or evidence</td>
<td>develops ideas clearly using examples, details and/or evidence</td>
<td>presents ideas vague or incomplete with examples, details and/or evidence</td>
<td>ideas are not developed nor supported with relevant or clarifying examples, details and/or evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The essay leads with a convincing and engaging introduction</td>
<td>The essay presents a clear and focused introduction</td>
<td>The essay contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction</td>
<td>The essay contains a minimal or incomplete introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>uses meaningful transitional devices to guide understanding of the relationship among ideas</td>
<td>uses transitions to create coherence and evidence in a way that supports understanding</td>
<td>makes limited use of transitional devices</td>
<td>uses few or no meaningful transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>logically organizes and effectively sequences ideas</td>
<td>provides a conclusion that connects the larger ideas presented</td>
<td>does not present ideas in a logical order</td>
<td>uses a confusing organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>provides a thoughtful conclusion that extends thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td>contains an underdeveloped or unfocused conclusion</td>
<td>provides minimal concluding material or none at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The essay uses a variety of sentence structures to enhance the effect</td>
<td>The essay uses a variety of sentence structures</td>
<td>The essay shows little or no variety in sentence structure</td>
<td>The essay shows no variety in sentence structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>uses diction that is deliberately chosen for the topic, audience, and purpose</td>
<td>uses diction that is appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose</td>
<td>uses inappropriate diction for the topic, audience, and purpose</td>
<td>uses little or no purposeful diction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>incorporates rhetorical devices skillfully to advance ideas presented</td>
<td>incorporates rhetorical devices effectively</td>
<td>uses few or no rhetorical devices in the text</td>
<td>uses no rhetorical devices effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English</td>
<td>demonstrates general command of standard English conventions; minor errors do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>demonstrates limited command of standard English conventions; errors interfere with meaning</td>
<td>demonstrates poor command of standard English conventions; multiple serious errors interfere with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WRITING WORKSHOP

Argumentative Writing

Learning Targets
• Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
• Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
• With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
• Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing your own clearly.

Writing an Argumentative Essay
The ability to argue for your ideas is one of the most important skills that a writer can develop. Writers use argumentative writing to influence the attitudes or actions of their intended audience regarding a wide variety of issues. Effective argumentation involves clearly identifying issues, stating a claim or position, presenting support for a position, anticipating and responding to alternative viewpoints, and using sound reasoning to help convince the audience.

To complete this workshop on writing effective arguments, you will work with your teacher and with your classmates to construct two argumentative essays. You will then use these models to write your own argumentative essay.

ACTIVITY 1
Discovering the Elements of an Argumentative Essay

Before Reading
1. Imagine that you are trying to persuade your classmates to try a pastime that you enjoy, but that most sixth graders don’t. What are some things you should keep in mind when approaching this audience with your suggestion? In other words, what are the interests and values of the audience, and why is it important to keep these in mind when making suggestions?

2. Now imagine that you are trying to persuade your classmates’ parents to let their children (your classmates) try the same pastime. What are the interests and values of this new audience and how are they different from those of your classmates? How does this new audience change your approach?
During Reading

1. It is important to acknowledge the interests and concerns of the audience in argumentative writing, even when the topic is personally important to you. When considering your argument about a topic, members of your audience must be able to grasp why your position may also benefit them. Therefore, it is your job to show the audience why your idea is good for others, not just for yourself.

In the following text, the writer explains the benefits of owning pets. As you read the sample text, highlight the sentences that offer details about the benefits of pet ownership. Then, circle the sentences that show an opposing or alternate point of view about pet ownership.

Sample Text

The Benefits of Pets

In our fast-paced, modern society, when most families barely have time to sit down together to have a meal, it may seem that having a pet dog or cat is a luxury demanding too much time, money, and attention. After all, sports activities, time spent on digital devices, and even school work all demand our attention. So who has time to care for a pet, and what are the benefits of having a pet? Beyond the simple joy of companionship, household pets can help to improve mental and physical health. Even though having a pet may involve additional cleaning, spending, worry, and time, pets can have a very positive overall impact on one’s life.

Researchers are only just beginning to explore the health benefits of pet ownership. Most of us know the importance of Seeing Eye dogs, and may know that there are even dogs that help those confined to bed, as well as dogs that assist the deaf. Also, a growing number of studies have suggested that kids growing up in a home with “furred animals”—whether it’s a pet cat or dog—have less risk of allergies and asthma, according to James E. Gern, MD. But above and beyond these dramatic benefits of owning a pet, a study at the Cambridge University found that the overall wellbeing of pet owners improved after only one month of pet ownership. Pets have been shown to help lower blood pressure and improve quality of life. In addition, active pet owners who care and play with their pets enjoy an additional dose of daily exercise, which is always healthy. Children and adults have a dependable source of physical contact and a feeling of security if a pet is present in their life. According to Lawrence Robinson and Jeanne Segal, Ph.D of Helpguide.org, “stroking, holding, cuddling, or otherwise touching a loving animal can rapidly calm and soothe us when we’re stressed.” Even watching fish in a tank can promote relaxation. Pets help us lead less stressful, more healthful lives.

To be sure, owning a pet is not always a blessing. Pets can be costly, demanding time, care, and energy. They can even become a source of family conflict when a parent ends up having to walk, feed, or play with the dog his child had agreed to care for. City pet owners may find large pets to be more of a bother than a benefit, and in some cases, pets can be a source of allergic reactions or sickness for their owners. Still, the many benefits of owning a pet are obvious.
For children, pets help to teach responsibility, compassion, and life lessons. Most pets depend entirely on their owners, so owners have to make room in their schedules and get organized in order to meet the demands of a pet's schedule and needs. Pets get us up in the morning, take us for a walk, play with us on demand, and make sure we make time to feed them—that they organize our day. One of the best benefits of having a pet is coming to understand that living beings have needs and that these needs have to be taken care of. All pet owners who have strong relationships with their pets also have a strong sense of compassion for their pet's welfare. Having a pet helps children understand the cycle of life and that everything we have is bound to end someday. Dealing with life and death is one of the most difficult tasks in life, and owning a pet can help prepare individuals to deal with the harsh emotional events of life. Pets can also be a source of comfort and help to soften negative emotions like anger and disappointment. Just about everyone talks to their pets, and some people use them to work through conflicts or problems.

These are some of the most important benefits of pet ownership for everyone. Not only do pets encourage responsibility, compassion, and improve health, but they also help us learn about life and death and they teach us about bonding and nurturing. So if you have been thinking about getting a pet for you and your family, consider adopting a homeless animal from your local shelter or rescue group. It is almost certain that you will not regret it!

After Reading
4. When you have finished reading, respond to the questions below in the space provided. Be prepared to discuss your answers with your classmates.

   a. Purpose: What is the writer's purpose for writing this argument? What is the main idea the writer is arguing for?
      Sample response: The purpose is to convince the audience of the benefits of pet ownership. The main idea is that pets are beneficial to people.

   b. Audience: Who do you think the writer had in mind as an audience for this argument? To whom do the reasons and evidence seem addressed? Could there be more than one audience in mind? How do you know?
      Sample response: The writer is addressing anyone who might get a pet for their family, but is most likely trying to convince an audience of parents, who usually make the final decision to get a pet.

   c. Support: What reasons does the writer present as evidence to support the argument? What evidence is most relevant and effective, and why?
      Sample response:
      1. Reason: The health benefits of pet ownership
         Evidence: Guide dogs, stress relief, allergy and asthma prevention
      2. Reason: Pets help teach responsibility, compassion, and life lessons
         Evidence: the responsibility of feeding and caring for a pet; concern for the pet's welfare; cycle of life and death.
      Students' responses will vary regarding relevance and effectiveness.

5. Use the After Reading question about purpose to engage in a discussion of students' understanding of the claim. Once they fully understand the claim, arrange for them to work in pairs or small groups to respond to items b, c, and d. Emphasize the importance of citing textual evidence from the essay. Point out to students that in the organization of the essay, paragraph 2 acknowledges possible alternative points of view. After students have found textual evidence for their responses to items b, c, and d, conduct a class discussion in which you evaluate the effectiveness of the evidence that supports the claim.

6. Ask students to reread the essay, looking for transitional phrases and sentences. It will be important to note transitions longer than single words.

7. Review the meanings of the words relevant and credible and ask students to give examples of how they would use those words in describing evidence and research sources.

8. Have students scan the sample essay for evidence cited in support of the benefits of owning pets. Ask them to choose the sources that are most relevant in supporting the argument that owning a pet is beneficial to the owner.

9. Have students discuss whether the sources are relevant and credible to the audience.
Writing Workshop 2 (continued)

10 Use the Check Your Understanding feature to emphasize the essay’s use of logical reasoning and relevant facts. Conduct a class discussion to review the essay’s organization and how the thesis helps identify the claim and supporting evidence. Be sure to ask students to note how textual evidence is fact-based and uses logic to support the claim.

ASSESS

Based on your observations and students’ responses, assess which students need additional support and resources as the group moves from analyzing a model to constructing an argument as a class.

ADAPT

Consider leading students in a close reading of the sample essay to focus on the use of logos (logic) versus pathos (emotion) in an argument. Logical appeals should take precedence in an argument. You may also differentiate by asking students to go beyond reading and highlighting the sample text and have them write annotations in the margins. Students could annotate each paragraph individually to define its purpose and summarize its main idea.

ACTIVITY 2

Writing an Argumentative Class Essay

PLAN

Materials: Overhead or whiteboard to display group work; materials from Activity 1 to use as models; paper, markers, and tape for displaying potential thesis statements

Pacing: 1–2 class periods

TEACH

1 Analyze the prompt for Activity 2 either as a class or in pairs. Be sure to review and clarify the elements that must be incorporated into the class-generated essay. You may want to refer to the Scoring Guide to inform areas to emphasize.

d. Organization: How does the thesis statement set up the organization of the essay?
   Sample response: Introduction: Pet ownership has “positive overall impact” is the claim introduced. Opposing points of view also show up in the introduction and in the second paragraph.
   Body paragraphs
   1. Health benefits
   2. Acknowledgment of counterclaims
   3. Teach responsibility, compassion
   Conclusion

Check Your Understanding

What evidence does the writer present to support the idea that owning a pet has health benefits? Is this evidence presented as logical or as emotional reasoning?
   Sample response: The writer presents the following evidence:
   • Pets are used to assist people with disabilities – blind, deaf, confined
   • Pets help prevent allergies and asthma
   • Pets lower blood pressure
   • Pets promote a healthy life style with increased exercise
   • Touching and stroking soothe the stressed person
   The evidence is presented as logical reasoning.

ACTIVITY 2

Writing an Argumentative Class Essay

WRITING PROMPT: Consider something (such as pet ownership) that is important to you and that you believe would benefit other sixth graders (your audience) to experience. Be sure to choose a topic with two sides that can be defended—in other words, an idea that is arguable. Write an argumentative essay encouraging other sixth graders to try your idea. Back up your position with relevant evidence and clear reasoning. Your essay should meet the requirements listed in the learning targets for argumentative essays.

Be sure to
• Establish a clearly stated position
• Include relevant evidence that is logically organized and supports the writer’s viewpoint
• Include a variety of evidence from credible sources, including personal experience, based on fact rather than opinion
• Consider possible audience concerns and/or questions
• Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY
Evidence is said to be relevant if it is closely related to the issue or topic. A credible source is one that is convincing or believable because it is reliable, accurate, and trustworthy.
Prewriting

1. Read and mark the writing prompt above to clarify the task.

2. As a class, brainstorm ideas for the class-generated essay, and create a list of possible topics for which two equally strong and reasonable claims can be made.

   Sample responses:
   - More varied lunch menu
   - More after school sports opportunities
   - More art and music classes
   - Adopt or purchase a pet
   - Participating in volunteer work to benefit others

3. With your class, choose a topic for the essay and write it here.
   
   Students' responses will vary.

4. An argumentative writer must first state an opinion on the topic. This is called a claim. For example, if your topic is “pet ownership,” then a possible claim could be “pet ownership is highly overrated.” Remember that your claim has to be arguable, meaning that it needs to be something that could be reasonably debated.

   To present a more convincing argument, a writer must turn a claim into a position, or thesis, by adding his or her judgment and reasoning about that claim. One way to state this thesis is by using “either/or” phrasing as follows:

   Although _______ (side A) ____________, _________ (side B) ____________
   because ________ (explanation) ________.

   Use this sentence stem to write the claim for the sample argumentative essay.

   Sample responses:

   Although pets may be expensive and worrisome, owning pets is beneficial for both mental and physical health.

   Although fast food is tasty and convenient, a prepared meal from home is a better choice because it is healthier and cheaper.

5. With your class, brainstorm the two sides to several possible topics for the class essay. Record the two sides of each issue in the left column of the graphic organizer below. Then, write a thesis statement for each that explains why one option is better than another. Use the model above. One example is given.

   Writing Workshop 2 • Argumentative Writing
This activity will work best if you can show the co-constructed work as it is created in class. Using an overhead projector or SmartBoard (or even sentence strips) will allow you to guide the writing and clearly demonstrate how to incorporate the elements of an argument.

5 Students can use the thesis in Step 4 as practice for considering opposing viewpoints and writing thesis statements to recognize different points of view. If students need additional space to record opposing viewpoints and to practice writing thesis statements, have them create a similar graphic organizer on their own paper.

6 At this point you may want to place students in writing groups, have them share ideas and viewpoints with one another, and draft/revise a thesis to be shared with the class.

7 Give each group a marker, a piece of paper, and a strip of tape. Ask the presenter to write the group’s chosen thesis statement on the paper and post it in the room.

8 Lead the class in a discussion of the merits of varying thesis statements posted by small groups. Allow the class to select one thesis statement to be used in the class-constructed essay. Post this claim in the room and ask students to copy it onto their pages.

9 Students may work in groups, in pairs, or individually to generate a list of reasons to support their chosen claim. Then, ask them to share their work with the large group while you record their ideas on the whiteboard or overhead.

10 Have groups report their ideas and record quality examples of opposing points of view and audience concerns on the overhead or whiteboard. This is an excellent time to discuss the importance of considering the intended audience in order to predict and respond to their concerns and questions.

11 The use of logos (logic) and pathos (emotion) are both important parts of argumentative writing, although the emphasis should be more on logos than pathos (convincing with logic rather than emotion).
8. Once you have brainstormed reasons, go through the list and determine which reasons are the most relevant and logical in support of your position for your audience. What evidence can you cite that supports your reasoning (e.g., if pets create responsibility, what evidence is there for this claim)?

9. You have identified your claims and possible opposing points of view, as well as the evidence you will provide to support your opinions. Next, the class must decide the order in which to present these points. Working with your teacher, generate a class-constructed topic outline of the overall organizational plan for your argumentative writing.

Drafting the Essay

10. Working with your teacher and classmates, draft the introduction to your argumentative essay. Be sure to include the following elements:
   • Lead, or hook (the attention grabber)
   • Context (the situation that establishes the topic and its importance)
   • Thesis (the position of the class on the topic), using a complex sentence as in the model above.

To check your understanding: Look at the first paragraph of the sample text, and identify the hook, context, and thesis. Then, as a class, draft the introduction to your class-constructed essay. Copy your draft below.

11. You have learned how to organize ideas in body paragraphs using
   • A topic sentence that includes a reason for supporting your thesis
   • Evidence, which includes facts, stories, etc., to support your reasoning
   • Transitions, which are words or phrases that make the relationship between ideas obvious for the reader
   • Commentary, which includes an explanation of the significance of the evidence or its connection to the topic sentence.

With your class, use these elements to draft the body paragraphs for your class essay.

12. Working with your teacher, draft the conclusion to your argument. In this last paragraph, be sure to provide a call to action (encouragement to the audience to take action based on your claim), and highlight the urgency or importance of the issue you are presenting. The conclusion should follow from and support your argument without introducing ideas that have not already been addressed.

13. Ask students to identify whether potential evidence supporting claims uses pathos or logos to appeal to the audience. Lead students in an activity that allows them to identify whether this evidence involves an appeal to pathos, logos, or both.

14. If evidence is needed for the class essay, either give students time to conduct research or provide needed research for them.

15. Lead the class in creating a topic outline, specifically focusing on an order to use to present the claims and acknowledge opposing or alternate claims. Ask students to articulate why they are choosing a specific order. Should the strongest point be made first, or should it be saved for the end? Should opposing claims be placed after the claims are established, or is it better to first entertain the other side of the discussion?

16. Drafting the Essay: When the group outline is completed, begin drafting. Point out the elements of an introduction (hook, context, and thesis) in the sample text.

17. Lead the group in a guided writing of the introduction. Think aloud from the perspective of a writer as you draft this paragraph. Ask students to record copies of the introduction on their own paper, revising as necessary. Review the final product with the class, explaining the hook, context, and thesis and why they should be present.

18. Instruct students to craft a paragraph that will support the class-constructed claim. Assign a unique claim or an opposing claim from the outline to each group.

19. Be sure students include commentary showing their own thinking about the value of the evidence.

20. When all groups are finished, ask each group’s presenter to read the paragraph aloud and/or write the paragraph on the overhead or whiteboard. Ask for peer feedback, and then allow students to make revisions and adjustments to their paragraphs.

21. Lead the class in a group construction of the conclusion. Be sure that your conclusion includes a call to action, highlights the urgency or importance of the issue at hand, and offers closure without introducing new ideas or unnecessary repetition.
21 Use the **Check Your Understanding** questions to guide students’ ideas for revising for content and organization.

22 Emphasize adding transitions. Model this process, taking suggestions from the class. Add transitions to the class-constructed essay.

23 **Revising:** After reviewing and revising the essay for content and organization, the next set of tasks focuses on revising for language. This language activity emphasizes editing for correct usage of verb tense and pronouns.

24 Guide students through a discussion of how pronouns replace nouns and must agree in person and number with the antecedent.

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### Writing Workshop 2 (continued)

#### Check Your Understanding

Now that the class essay has been drafted, refer to the Scoring Guide to help determine how well the essay meets the expectations. After looking at the Scoring Guide:

- Underline the topic and the claim or thesis in the introduction.
- Identify the reasons given in each paragraph that prove that the thesis is correct.

Consider the following:

- What concerns and opposing viewpoints of the audience are mentioned?
- Is there a strong connection (relevance) between the evidence and the claim in each body paragraph?
- Are the body paragraphs placed in the order that makes the most sense and clearly supports the argument?
- Does the essay rely primarily on sound reasoning rather than emotional appeals?
- How does the conclusion include a call to action and offer closure?
- What transitions connect the ideas being developed?

#### Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft

**Language Activity—Pronoun Use: Agreement in Number and Person**

One way writers establish ethos or credibility in their arguments is by paying attention to the conventions of writing, such as correct spelling and verb tenses, and correct use of pronouns. The activity below examines the proper agreement of pronouns in number and person.

Closely read the following definitions:

- **Pronoun:** a word that replaces a noun
- **Antecedent:** the noun(s) that the pronoun is replacing

**Example:**

John laughed and then turned **our** eyes to **his** feet.

Which pronoun does not agree in person and number to the antecedent, John? our

Because antecedent and pronoun have such a strong connection, it is important that they agree in number (singular or plural) and person (first, second or third).

#### Review of Pronouns: Person and Number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; person</td>
<td>Words used to describe the individual speaking: I, me, myself, mine</td>
<td>Words used to describe a group that includes the individual speaking: we, us, ourselves, ours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; person</td>
<td>Words used to describe an individual being spoken to: you, yourself, yours</td>
<td>Words used to describe the group being spoken: you, yourself, yours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; person</td>
<td>Words used to describe an individual being spoken about: he, she, it, him, her, his, hers, its</td>
<td>Words used to describe the group being spoken about: they, them, theirs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Read the following sentences. Some pronouns do not agree with their antecedents.
   • In each sentence, replace the boldface pronoun (which is incorrect) with a correct pronoun.
   • For each replaced pronoun, circle the antecedent(s) to which the pronoun refers. In the space to the right, indicate whether you have made changes based on number, person, or both.
   A. When a person is a pet owner, they can learn love and compassion.
   B. You can’t live on bread alone; we must have emotional nurturing too.
   C. Those who don’t have a pet cannot understand how calming and supportive they can be in times of need.
   D. Let yourself imagine the soft fur, the gentle chirp, or the comforting meow waiting for me after a hard day.
   E. My mom thought having a pet would be a bad idea because I wasn’t responsible enough to take care of them and had too many other things to do in my day.

14. Once you understand how pronouns in a sentence must agree in person and number, use this new information to check your class-constructed essay to make sure pronouns and their antecedents agree in person and number. Use what you’ve learned about pronoun agreement to correct any mistakes you find.

15. After presenting your revisions to the class and hearing the revisions of others, it’s time to polish the final draft of the argumentative writing. Consider all of the elements listed in the Language category of the Scoring Guide and correct any errors you find.

ACTIVITY 3
Writing an Argumentative Essay with Peers

WRITING PROMPT: Within discussion groups, your task is to choose one of the following:
   • Adopt the opposing viewpoint of your class-constructed essay and persuade the same audience of your new point of view.
   • Choose an entirely new argumentative topic that is important to your group (e.g., using cell phones in the classroom, convincing the adults in your life to take you somewhere that you really want to visit, or anything else that you care about). The point is to write an effective argument that will persuade your audience about your selected topic.

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

25. Ask students to explain why it is appropriate that the first sentence is expressed as a simple sentence.

26. As a class, re-examine selected sentences to determine if they have pronoun errors.

27. Editing: When producing the final draft of the essay, be sure to check for formal style and model editing skills to eliminate mistakes in spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.

Each student should create an individual copy of the completed essay to serve as an example for future exercises.

ASSESS

Observe students as they revise the class-constructed essay. Determine which ones need support with utilizing the elements of an argumentative essay or with working with pronouns and antecedents.

ADAPT

Support students by providing sentence stems as needed to help them present evidence and address counterclaims. You might opt to differentiate by including a fishbowl discussion or debate as an idea or evidence-generating activity. Students could use their fishbowl notes as raw material for ideas on constructing body paragraphs.

ACTIVITY 3
Writing an Argumentative Essay with Peers

PLAN

Materials: Materials from Activities 1 and 2 to use as models
Pacing: 2 class periods

TEACH

1. Consider putting students in groups of no more than three for the peer-writing activity. Trios could then combine to form larger groups for sharing and responding to the drafts.

2. Monitor groups as they analyze the prompt to ensure they understand the purpose for writing. Remind students to review the organizational elements to incorporate into their group essay. Refer to the Scoring Guide to review areas of emphasis.
3 Prewriting/Drafting: Remind students of the process that was followed while writing the class-constructed essay. Students should follow that same prewriting and drafting process to generate a new essay in their small groups.

4 Assign each group a topic and perspective if you prefer, or let them choose for themselves.

5 Assist students as necessary throughout this process. Groups will move at different paces and need direct instruction on a case-by-case basis.

6 Peer Review: When groups have completed their drafts, guide them through the peer-review process. Ask teams to trade papers and use the Revision Checklist to review the work of their peers. Encourage students to provide written feedback on the essay they are reviewing.

7 When groups have finished the peer review and provided written feedback, combine two groups for sharing and responding. Each group should present verbal feedback at this time, as well as explain the written feedback they provided. Each group should take careful notes of the peer feedback they receive to aid their revisions in the next step.

Prewriting/Drafting
1. With your writing group, review the writing steps from the class-constructed argumentative essay and apply them to your group-constructed essay.
   a) Brainstorm and choose a topic. Agree on a claim.
   b) Generate relevant, sound reasons that your claim or thesis is correct.
   c) Anticipate audience concerns and any opposing or alternate claims.
   d) Draft an introduction with a hook, context and thesis.
   e) Draft a body paragraph (or two) of support.
   f) Draft a body paragraph that addresses opposing viewpoint(s).
   g) Draft a conclusion that provides closure and additional commentary.
   h) Revise the work.

Peer Review
2. You will evaluate and provide feedback for another group’s essay, based on criteria established in the writing prompt and the Scoring Guide. Another group will review the work your group has done. Use the following revision checklist to guide your peer review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argumentative Essay Revision Checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue/Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is the topic made clear in the introduction? Does it have importance or urgency?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis (includes claim)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the thesis combine the topic and an opinion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the writer give reasons for taking this position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What facts, statistics, examples, and personal experiences does the writer use to support the thesis?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the writer use sound reasoning and relevant details?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is the evidence accurate, current, and relevant to the topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who is the target audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are the thesis, topic, and supporting ideas appropriate for the target audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposing Viewpoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the writer identify opposing or alternate viewpoints clearly and fairly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the writer conclude the essay in a way that convinces the audience to support the position and take action?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Revising/Editing
After meeting with your peer reviewers and hearing their feedback, work with your discussion group to revise and edit your argumentative writing. Produce a final draft of your polished work.

**Editing:** Are there mistakes in conventions, such as a misuse of pronouns, that should be corrected before the draft can be considered polished?

**ACTIVITY 4  
Independent Writing**

**WRITING PROMPT:** Consider an experience that is important to you and that you believe would benefit other sixth graders (other than the topic chosen for Activity 2 and Activity 3). Be sure to choose a topic that has two sides that can be defended—in other words, an idea that is arguable. You may choose whether you’d like to write to an audience of peers or an audience of parents. Then write an argumentative essay encouraging other sixth graders to try your idea or one that convinces their parents to allow them to try it. Back up your position with sound and relevant reasons and evidence.

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task. It will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts. Your essay should meet the requirements listed in the learning targets for argumentative essays.

• Establish a clearly stated claim and position.
• Include relevant evidence that is logically organized and supports the writer’s viewpoint.
• Include a variety of evidence from credible sources based on fact rather than opinion.
• Consider possible audience concerns and/or questions.
• Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.

Use the process from your previous activities to accomplish your task.

---

8 After the combined groups have reviewed both essays, have students revise their work to produce a final, polished draft.

**ASSESS**

Collect students’ drafts and review student work before having them proceed to Independent Practice.

Assess which students may need additional support and resources as the group moves from writing an argumentative essay with peers to writing one independently. Use the Scoring Guide to provide written and/or verbal feedback on the essays.

**ADAPT**

Because recognizing opposing viewpoints is so important to argumentation, consider using a debate or fishbowl discussion after Activity 3 if students need additional support. Students can see multiple sides of an issue, generate a wider variety of evidence, and use ideas from the fishbowl or debate for their independent essay.

**ACTIVITY 4  
Independent Writing**

**PLAN**

**Materials:** Materials from Activities 1 and 2 to use as models

**Pacing:** 1 class period or homework

**TEACH**

1 Students should plan and draft this essay independently. This prompt could be used as homework, as a timed writing, or simply as formative assessment.

2 Assign the independent writing prompt, being responsive to students’ needs during the writing process. Remind them of the steps they’ve practiced in class.

3 You may want to monitor how students analyze the prompt (allowing 5–7 minutes) to ensure that they understand the requirements.
**ASSESS**

Use the Scoring Guide to assess each student's independent essay, looking at whether the essay includes the elements of an argument and incorporates transitions and language to create coherence.

**ADAPT**

For the independent essays, the selection of topic and position can affect the level of challenge the task poses for a student. To differentiate, you might assign specific topics or positions, or expand or limit options, based on the level of challenge you believe students need.

**SCORING GUIDE**

Use the Scoring Guide throughout this workshop to remind students of the elements expected to be included in their essays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The essay • asserts an insightful claim and position • supports reasons with convincing evidence based on fact (not opinion) and clear, effective commentary • convincingly anticipates possible alternative or opposing viewpoints</td>
<td>The essay • presents a clear claim and position • supports reasons with relevant evidence based on fact (not opinion) and commentary • mentions possible alternative or opposing viewpoints</td>
<td>The essay • presents a limited or unfocused claim and position • contains reasons with insufficient evidence that sometimes confuses fact with opinion and vague commentary • does not mention alternative or opposing viewpoints</td>
<td>The essay • lacks a clear claim to be proven • contains irrelevant or insufficient reasoning • does not present any alternative points of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The essay • leads with a convincing and engaging introduction • uses meaningful transitions to guide understanding of the relationship among ideas • logically organizes relevant evidence • effectively sequences ideas to support the argument • provides a thoughtful conclusion that follows from the position to extend thinking</td>
<td>The essay • presents a clear and focused introduction • uses transitions to create coherence • orders evidence in a way that generally supports the argument • sequences ideas to generally support the argument • provides a conclusion that connects the larger ideas presented</td>
<td>The essay • contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction • makes limited use of transitions • does not present evidence in a logical order • presents ideas in an unorganized way • contains an underdeveloped or unfocused conclusion</td>
<td>The essay • contains a minimal or incomplete introduction • uses few or no meaningful transitions • uses a confusing organization for evidence and ideas • provides a minimal conclusion or none at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The essay • uses a variety of sentence structures • Uses diction that is deliberately chosen for the topic, audience, and purpose • pronoun use in number and person is consistently correct • demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English</td>
<td>The essay • uses a variety of sentence structures • uses diction that is appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose • pronoun use in number and person is usually correct • demonstrates general command of standard English conventions; minor errors in punctuation, grammar, capitalization, or spelling do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The essay • shows little or no variety in sentence structure • uses inappropriate diction for the topic, audience, and purpose • pronoun use in number and person is not consistently correct • demonstrates limited command of standard English conventions; errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The essay • shows little or no variety in sentence structure • uses diction that is inappropriate for the topic, audience, and purpose • pronoun use is confusing • demonstrates limited command of standard English conventions; multiple serious errors interfere with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Targets

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Writing an Expository Essay

The purpose of an *expository essay* is to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Expository essays are some of the most common types of essays you will write throughout your academic career. They are often written to define or describe a subject, to provide directions for how to do something, to describe problems and offer solutions, to show cause and effect, or to explore how subjects are similar and different.

To complete this workshop on effective expository writing, you will work with your teacher and your classmates to construct two model expository essays. You will then use these models to write your own expository essay.

Activity 1

Discovering the Elements of an Expository Essay

Before Reading

1. Quickwrite: Think of a time when you had to explain or describe something. What ideas or information did you need to communicate? Who was your audience, and what was your purpose?
This sample essay was chosen to model an expository essay. You may opt to select a different essay that meets this same criterion.

4 During Reading instructions require students to interact with the text as they read. Lead a shared reading of “Fun and Feisty,” or an alternate text of your choosing. You may choose to have students first read the essay silently, following the directions for marking the text.

5 Use the After Reading question about purpose to engage in a discussion of students’ understanding of the topic and thesis. Once they are clear about the thesis, arrange for them to work in pairs or small groups to respond to items b, c, and d. Emphasize the importance of citing textual evidence from the essay.

Sample Text

Fun and Feisty

Imagine an energetic white fur ball with bright, dark eyes, capering along the sidewalk. This is a Westie (West Highland terrier), a feisty little dog that demands a lot of attention but makes a great family pet.

Most breeders will tell you that Westies are among the most attractive small dogs around. Their bright eyes, eager manner, and perky ears give these little dogs tons of character and charm. The Westie’s thick coat, black or white, is beautiful when well maintained, but keeping your pup dog-show clean can be difficult. These dogs love to follow their inquisitive noses into the mud.

Most important is the Westie’s winning personality. Like all terriers, Westies are feisty critters, and they also expect you to pay attention to them. They are not easily impressed by huge Siberian huskies or by their own stern owners. At a training session with my dog, I ferociously roared, “OH!” to make Stixie back away from a forbidden item. I impressed the teacher. I impressed the other owners. The only one I did not impress was Stixie, who completely ignored me.

Although Westies like Stixie require an owner with a stout heart and firm hand, the effort is worthwhile because they are so intelligent, playful, and affectionate. Once Westies understand who is boss, they can easily be trained to do tricks (hopping around on her back legs, Stixie seems to have a secret yen to join the circus.) Westies just naturally take to games like catch and hide-and-seek. Above all, they love to love their human families. They enjoy being cuddled, and they’ll follow you everywhere for a scrap of affection.

As a Westie owner, I can say that a day with a Westie is not necessarily a relaxing one, but it is a day filled with laughter and love. Who could ask for more?

After Reading

4. When you have finished reading, respond to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to discuss your answers with your classmates.

a. Purpose: What is the writer’s purpose for writing this essay? (Refer to the first paragraph in which the writer introduces the topic.) Sample response: The purpose is to describe a dog breed—the West Highland Terrier, or Westie—in a flattering light.
b. Audience: Whom do you think the writer had in mind as an audience for this essay? How do you know?
Sample response: The target audience seems to be dog lovers of all ages, particularly anyone who is interested in getting a dog as a pet. Textual evidence includes the following: “demands a lot of attention but makes a great family pet” and “they’ll follow you everywhere for a scrap of affection.”

c. Organization: What is the purpose or main idea of each paragraph?
Sample response: Introduction: Begins with a descriptive lead and then introduces the topic. Body paragraph 1: Gives descriptions to support the idea that Westies are attractive dogs. Body paragraph 2: Provides an anecdote illustrating how they love attention. Body paragraph 3: Describes other aspects of their personality. Conclusion: Ends with a summary and rhetorical question.

d. Evidence: What facts, examples, and personal experiences does the writer use to support and develop the topic? What evidence is most relevant?
Sample response: Details, examples, personal experiences presented as evidence: “At a training session with my dog,” “thick coat, black or white,” “hopping around on her back legs”

e. Transitions: What words does the writer use to connect and clarify relationships between ideas and create and move the reader from one part of the essay to the next?
Sample response: Transitions include the following: “Most important,” “Although,” “Like all terriers,” “As a Westie owner”

f. Language and Style: What are examples of precise and vivid diction (word choice) that the writer uses to explain and describe the topic? Which words or phrases show that the writer is knowledgeable about the topic?
Sample response: Examples of vivid and precise diction include the following: “capering,” “feisty,” “inquisitive” Examples of writer’s knowledge include the following: “Most breeders will tell you,” “keeping your pup dog-show clean,” “not easily impressed by huge Siberian huskies”

Check Your Understanding
Think of a topic you might need or want to describe to one of your peers or in one of your classes. How would you use expository writing to achieve this purpose? What evidence might you use to support your ideas? Provide examples.
ACTIVITY 2
Writing an Expository Class Essay

PLAN

Materials: Overhead or whiteboard to display group work; materials from Activity 1 to use as models; paper, markers, and tape for displaying potential thesis statements

Pacing: 1–2 class periods

TEACHER TO TEACHER

This activity is intended to be a guided writing activity involving the entire class. However, you may want to use small groups for specific parts of the activity. If so, writing groups should be organized so that specific roles are assigned to each member of the groups of four (e.g., two recorders, a manager, and a presenter).

TEACH

1. Review the prompt for Activity 2, either in pairs or with the entire class. Be sure to review and clarify the elements that must be incorporated into the class-generated essay. You may want to refer to the Scoring Guide to inform areas of emphasis.

2. Lead the class in a prewriting brainstorming session about potential topics for the class-generated expository essay. Record suggestions on the whiteboard or overhead as students make notes of ideas on their student pages.

3. You will need to guide the topic selection to one that can be easily navigated by your class.

4. Once a topic has been selected, review the terms thesis and thesis statement as well as the sentence stem, which can be used as a model for a thesis. Here is another example of a thesis using the sentence stem:

   My computer is essential because it is entertaining as well as helpful.

5. At this point you may want to place students in writing groups, and have them draft/revise a thesis to share with the class.

ACTIVITY 2
Writing an Expository Class Essay

WRITING PROMPT: Think about a piece of technology (e.g., cell phone, MP3 player, computer, TV, video game console, digital camera/video camera) that you could not live without. Choose one, and write a multi-paragraph essay that explains the function of that piece of technology and its significance in your life today. Be sure the essay does the following:

• Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
• Guides and informs the reader’s understanding of key issues in body paragraphs
• Includes specific facts, evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs.
• Uses an appropriate organizational structure
• Uses a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link sentences and paragraphs and to guide readers

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task to help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

Prewriting

1. Reread and mark the writing prompt to clarify the task.

2. As a class, brainstorm ideas for the class-generated essay, and create a list of possible topics.

3. With your class, choose a topic for the essay and write it here.

4. To create an effective draft, you will need a thesis to give focus to the essay. A thesis is not the title of an essay (e.g., Computers) or an announcement of the subject to the reader (e.g., In this essay, I will tell you about computers). A thesis is a writer’s opinion about a topic—the point that he or she is making about it.

   Using the sentence stem below, write a thesis statement for the sample expository essay.

   Sample response:

   The Westie makes a great family pet (topic and opinion) because of its looks, personality, and intelligence (explanation).

   Thesis:

   Evidence:

   Transition:

   Topic sentence:

   Sentence that explains how the information is relevant to the topic sentence.
Writing Workshop 3 (continued)

SpringBoard Writing Workshop

Prewriting

• focus your attention and efforts.

• the essay does the following:

not live without. Choose one, and write a multi-paragraph essay that explains the computer, TV, video game console, digital camera/video camera) that you could

Writing an Expository class Essay

Ac

paragraphs and to guide readers

Uses a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link sentences and

Uses an appropriate organizational structure

Includes specific facts, evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs.

Guides and informs the reader's understanding of key issues in body paragraphs

Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs

1. The Westie

2. Using the sentence stem below, write a thesis statement for the sample

3. To

4. With your class, choose a topic for the essay and write it there.

5. Reread and mark the writing prompt to clarify the task.

A thesis is not the title of

A thesis is a writer's opinion about a topic—the point that the or she is making

the subject to the reader (e.g.,

Evidence: Facts, Examples, Details

In this essay, I will tell you about computers

) or an announcement of

(continued)

Sample response: My cell phone keeps me safe.

Sample response: calling 911 in an emergency; using the map app when lost; calling home when I miss the bus; finding medical information on the Internet

Sample response:

Sample response:

5. With your class, decide how you will organize your body paragraphs to support the thesis. Complete the graphic organizer by choosing supporting ideas and brainstorming how you will use evidence to develop each one.

Organizing Supporting Ideas and Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Idea</th>
<th>Evidence: Facts, Examples, Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample response: My cell phone keeps me safe.</td>
<td>Sample response: calling 911 in an emergency; using the map app when lost; calling home when I miss the bus; finding medical information on the Internet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Drafting the Essay

6. Working with your teacher and classmates, draft the introduction to your expository essay. Be sure to include the following elements:

• Lead, or "hook": a quote, question, anecdote, or intriguing statement used as an attention grabber

• Context: a connection between the lead and the thesis

• Thesis: the position of the class on the topic

7. Working with your teacher and classmates, draft the body paragraphs for your expository essay. Be sure to include the following elements in each paragraph:

• Topic sentence: A sentence that states the supporting idea

• Transition: Words used to connect ideas (e.g., for example, for instance)

• Evidence: Specific examples, details, and facts

• Commentary: Sentences that explain how the information is relevant to the topic sentence and bring a sense of closure to the paragraph

6 Give each group a marker, a piece of paper, and a strip of tape. Ask the presenter to write the group's chosen thesis statement on the paper and post it in the room.

7 Lead the class in a discussion of the merits of the various thesis statements posted by small groups. Allow the class to select one thesis statement to be used in the class-generated essay. Post this thesis statement in the room and ask students to copy it onto their pages.

8 Guide the class in selecting supporting ideas for the thesis. Have students copy these into the first column of the graphic organizer before they begin brainstorming elaboration. If students need additional space to record supporting ideas and elaboration, have them create a similar graphic organizer.

9 Students may work in groups, pairs, or individually to generate a list of examples, facts, and details to elaborate on each supporting idea. Then, ask them to share their work with the class while you record their ideas on the whiteboard or overhead.

10 Use think aloud to consider in what order the supporting ideas might be introduced in the essay. Consider drafting a basic working outline with input from the class.

11 Drafting the Essay: When the prewriting is completed, begin drafting. Point out the elements of an introduction (lead, context, and thesis) in the sample text.

12 Lead the class in a guided writing of the introduction. Think aloud from the perspective of a writer as you draft this first paragraph. Ask students to record copies of the introduction on their own paper, making revisions as necessary. Review the final product with the class, explaining the lead, context, and thesis and why they should be present.

This activity will work best if you can show the co-constructed work as it is created in class. Using an overhead projector or SmartBoard (or even sentence strips) will allow you to guide the writing and clearly demonstrate how to incorporate the elements of an expository essay.
13 Instruct students to craft a paragraph that will support the class-constructed thesis statement. Assign a unique supporting idea from the graphic organizer to each group. When you run out of supporting ideas, assign a second group one of the supporting paragraphs already being written.

14 When all groups are finished, ask each group’s presenter to read the paragraph aloud and/or write the paragraph on the overhead or whiteboard. Ask for peer feedback, and then allow students to make revisions to their paragraphs.

15 Lead the class in a group construction of the conclusion. Be sure that your conclusion follows from and supports the thesis statement and supporting ideas.

16 Use the **Check Your Understanding** questions to guide students’ ideas for revising for content and organization.

17 **Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft**: After checking and revising for content and organization, the next set of tasks focuses on revising for language. This language activity explicitly addresses creating coherence through transitions and sentence variety.

18 Guide students through a discussion of the definition of *coherence* and its importance in expository writing.

19 Introduce the list of transitions used for different purposes, and then ask students to identify the transitions used in the class essay. Discuss the purpose of these transitions.

20 Have students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups to revise a sentence from the class essay to include transitions. As students share their revisions, discuss with the class which ones to add to the draft.

---

**Writing Workshop 3 (continued)**

8. The conclusion should follow from and support your thesis. Use the following questions to guide your thinking in drafting a conclusion:
   - What did you say? (literal)
   - What does it mean? (interpretive)
   - Why does it matter? (universal)

**Check Your Understanding**

After you have completed this process, read over the completed expository essay that your class has created. Refer to the Scoring Guide to help determine how well the essay meets the expectations. Next, consider the following:
   - Underline the thesis statement in the introduction and the topic sentence of each body paragraph.
   - Does the essay have a clear purpose and audience?
   - Circle the transitions. Do transitions connect the ideas being developed?
   - How relevant are the examples and details we used for evidence and support?
   - Is the essay’s style appropriate for our audience?
   - Does the essay include precise and vivid language?
   - Does the conclusion follow from the information in the essay?

**Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft**

**Coherence**: A coherent essay is one that ties ideas together and flows smoothly, making the essay easy for the reader to follow. One way to revise for coherence is to use transitional words within and between paragraphs. Another way is to use varied sentence structures.

**Transitional words and phrases** guide your reader from one sentence, paragraph, or thought to another.
   - **Transitions that show examples**: that is, such as, for example, in other words, for instance
   - **Transitions that show time**: first, next, after, finally, then, at the same time
   - **Transitions that show importance**: second, more important, most important, most of all, least, last but not least

9. Make a list of transitional words and phrases in the class essay:

10. Rewrite at least one sentence from the class essay to add transitional words or phrases, and then share your proposed revision with the class.
Varied sentence structures add interest for the reader. Combine short simple sentences by using coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or) to show relationships between ideas. Notice the punctuation in the following examples:

- Use the coordinating conjunction and to express similar ideas. Example: “Riding a bike is an efficient mode of transportation for teenagers, and it provides health benefits to the rider.”
- Use the coordinating conjunction but to express different ideas. Example: “Riding a bike is an efficient mode of transportation for teenagers, but most teenagers would prefer driving a car.”
- Use the coordinating conjunctions or to express a choice. Example: “Would most teenagers like to drive a car, or would they prefer to ride with another driver?”

11. Revise at least one sentence from the class essay by using coordinating conjunctions to vary the sentence structure, and then share your proposed revision with the class.

Editing
12. After presenting your revisions to the class and hearing the suggested revisions of others, it’s time to polish the final draft of the expository essay by editing for mistakes. Consider all of the elements listed in the Scoring Guide in the Language category.

ACTIVITY 3
Writing an Expository Essay with Peers

WRITING PROMPT: Describe a geographical feature (such as a mountain range, desert, valley, ocean, river, or lake) that is essential to your hometown or state. Explain how this feature contributes to the economy, culture, and/or personality of a place (for example, how a mountain range attracts skiers and hikers to the region, or how an ocean supports the local fishing industry).

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts. Be sure the essay:
- Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
- Guides the reader’s understanding of key issues in body paragraphs
- Includes specific facts, evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs
- Uses an appropriate organizational structure
- Uses a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs

21. Use the same process to introduce, discuss, revise, and share sentences that use coordinating conjunctions for varied sentence structure.

22. Editing: When producing the final draft of the essay, be sure to check for formal style and model editing skills to eliminate mistakes in spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. Each student should create an individual copy of the completed essay to serve as an example for future exercises.

ASSESS
Observe students as they work on revising the class-constructed essay to determine which ones may need additional support with writing an expository essay.

ADAPT
Support students by providing sentence stems as needed to draft topic sentences and elaborate on supporting ideas.

ACTIVITY 3
Writing an Expository Essay with Peers

PLAN
Materials: Materials from Activities 1 and 2 to use as models
Pacing: 2 class period

TEACH
1. Consider putting students in groups of no more than three for the peer-writing activity. Groups could then combine to form larger groups for sharing and responding to the drafts.

2. Monitor groups as they analyze the prompt to be sure they understand the purpose for writing. Remind students to review the organizational elements to incorporate into their group essay. Refer to the Scoring Guide to review areas of emphasis.
3 Prewriting/Drafting: Remind students of the process that was just followed in writing the class-constructed essay. Students should now follow that same prewriting and drafting process to generate a new essay in their small groups.

4 Assign each group a topic and perspective if you prefer, or give them the option of choosing for themselves.

5 Monitor group work and assist as needed to keep students on track.

6 Peer Review: When groups have completed their drafts, guide them through the peer-review process. Ask teams to trade papers and use the Revision Checklist to review their peers’ work. Encourage students to provide written feedback.

7 When groups have finished the peer review and provided written feedback, combine two groups for sharing and responding. Each group should present verbal feedback at this time, as well as explain the written feedback. Each group should take careful notes of the peer feedback they receive to aid their revisions.

Prewriting/Drafting
1. With your writing group, reread and mark the prompt to highlight major elements of the task you are being asked to do.

2. Review the writing steps from the class-constructed expository essay and apply them to your group-constructed essay.
   - Brainstorm and choose a topic.
   - Draft a thesis that includes your topic and opinion.
   - Create a graphic organizer (such as the one on page 5) to brainstorm and organize your supporting ideas and details.
   - Draft an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.

Peer Review
3. You will evaluate and provide feedback for another group’s essay, based on criteria established in the writing prompt and the Scoring Guide. Another group will review the work your group has done. Use the revision checklist that follows to guide your peer review.

Expository Essay Revision Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Is the topic made clear in the introduction? Does it respond to the prompt?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>Does the thesis combine the topic and an opinion? Does the writer provide explanation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>What facts, statistics, examples, and personal experiences does the writer use to support the thesis? Does the writer include relevant details? Is the evidence accurate, current, and relevant to the topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Who is the target audience? Are the thesis, topic, and supporting ideas appropriate for the target audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Style</td>
<td>Does the writer use precise and vivid diction? Does the writer use a style that is appropriate for the purpose and audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Does the writer conclude the essay in a way that follows from and supports the ideas presented in the essay?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Revising/Editing

4. After rereading your group’s draft, discuss these strategies for revision:

Adding: Are there any changes we could make to strengthen the essay? Does anything need to be explained more clearly?

Rearranging: What revisions should be made to rearrange the structure of paragraphs or sentences?

Deleting: Is there information that does not directly support the main idea?

Editing: Are there mistakes in conventions that should be corrected?

ACTIVITY 4
Independent Writing

WRITING PROMPT: Think about a goal or aspiration that middle school students typically have (e.g., entering high school, learning to drive, dating, getting a job). Choose one and write a multi-paragraph essay (at least four paragraphs) that describes that goal or aspiration and explains why you think it is an important part of teenage development. Be sure the essay:

- Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
- Guides and informs the reader’s understanding of key issues in body paragraphs
- Includes specific facts, evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs
- Includes an appropriate organizational structure for the essay
- Uses a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs

Use the process from your previous activities to accomplish your task. Be sure to refer to the Scoring Guide before you write.

8. After the groups have reviewed both essays, have students revise their work to produce a final, polished draft.

ASSESS

Collect students’ drafts and review their work before having them proceed to Activity 4. Use the Scoring Guide to provide written and/or verbal feedback on the essays.

ADAPT

If there is an aspect of the essay that students are struggling with, consider projecting or making copies of parts of the group essays that demonstrate this aspect. You can then use think aloud or guided writing to revise the essays.

ACTIVITY 4
Independent Writing

PLAN

Materials: Materials from Activities 1 and 2 to use as models

Pacing: 1 class period or homework

TEACH

1. Students should plan and draft this essay individually. This prompt could be used as homework, a timed writing activity, or as formative assessment.

2. Assign the independent writing prompt, being responsive to students’ needs during the writing process. Remind them of the steps they’ve practiced in class.

3. You may want to monitor how students analyze the prompt (allowing 5–7 minutes) to ensure that they understand the requirements.
**Writing Workshop 3 (continued)**

### SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The essay • presents a topic that is focused and well developed throughout the essay • incorporates specific and relevant facts, evidence, details, and examples to guide the reader's understanding of the main ideas</td>
<td>The essay • presents a topic that is clear throughout the essay • uses facts, evidence, details, and examples to guide the reader's understanding of the main ideas</td>
<td>The essay • presents a topic that is unfocused and/or minimally developed throughout the essay • contains insufficient or vague facts, evidence, details, and examples that confuse the reader's understanding of the main ideas</td>
<td>The essay • lacks an appropriate topic in response to the prompt • contains minimal or irrelevant facts, evidence, details, and examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The essay • leads with an effective and engaging introduction • effectively sequences ideas and uses meaningful transitions to clarify the relationship among ideas • provides an insightful conclusion that follows from and supports the explanation presented</td>
<td>The essay • presents a clear and focused introduction • sequences ideas and uses transitions to create coherence • provides a conclusion that connects the larger ideas presented</td>
<td>The essay • contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction • presents disconnected ideas and limited use of transitions • contains an underdeveloped or unfocused conclusion</td>
<td>The essay • contains a minimal or incomplete introduction • uses a confusing organization for evidence and ideas and/or few or no meaningful transitions • provides a minimal conclusion or none at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The essay • uses a variety of sentence structures to enhance the explanation • uses diction that is deliberately chosen for the topic, audience, and purpose • demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English</td>
<td>The essay • uses a variety of sentence structures • uses diction that is appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose • demonstrates general command of standard English conventions; minor errors in punctuation, grammar, capitalization, or spelling do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The essay • shows little or no variety in sentence structure • uses diction that is inappropriate at times for the topic, audience, and purpose • demonstrates limited command of standard English conventions; errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The essay • shows incorrect or inconsistent use of sentence structure • uses diction that is inappropriate for the topic, audience, and purpose • demonstrates limited command of standard English conventions; multiple serious errors interfere with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASSESS**

Use the Scoring Guide to assess each student's independent essay, reviewing whether the essay includes the elements of an expository essay and incorporates transitions and language to create coherence.

**ADAPT**

For the independent essays, the selection of topic and position can affect the level of challenge the task poses for a student. To differentiate, you might assign specific topics or positions or expand or limit options based on the level of challenge you believe is appropriate.

**SCORING GUIDE**

Use the Scoring Guide throughout this workshop to remind students of the elements expected to be included in their essays.
Narrative Writing: Short Story

Learning Targets
• Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
• Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
• Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
• Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
• Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
• Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
• With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
• Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
• Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
• Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.

Writing a Short Story
A short story is a type of creative text in which writers share deep insights and observations about life through characters and theme. You’ve probably heard dozens of stories from your friends, though they probably weren’t written down. Some of the same rules apply for a good written short story. The story should have details to bring it to life, it should be ordered so that it makes sense, and it should have an ending that brings everything together or makes a point. Most importantly, it shouldn’t be too long! When writing short stories, writers can draw on their own personal experiences and use imaginative thinking.

In this workshop you will work with your teacher and with your classmates to construct two model short stories. You will then use these models to construct your own story.

Activity 1
Discovering the Elements of a Short Story

Before Reading
1. Think about a story you’ve read that you really enjoyed. What did you like about the story?
   Students’ responses will vary.
4 Brainstorm with students a list of elements common to all great short stories. As a class, streamline the list, creating a Writer’s Checklist of the elements of a good short story. Copy or post the list for students to consult. Be sure to include the elements of a short story listed in the Learning Targets.

5 Lead a shared reading of “The Fun They Had.” Ask students to keep the elements of a good short story in mind as they read along. They might mark the text by putting a checkmark in the margin when they notice an element of a good short story. You might split up this task by assigning specific elements to small groups and have them search for only those.

Writing Workshop 4 (continued)

2. What are some elements that are common to good short stories? Students’ responses might include an exciting plot, characters that the reader cares about, and a believable setting.

During Reading

3. As you read “The Fun They Had,” look for elements of a good story and mark the text when you find them.

Students’ responses might include realistic dialogue on page one, an exciting plot, characters that the reader cares about, and a believable setting.

The Fun They Had

By Isaac Asimov

Margie even wrote about it that night in her diary. On the page headed May 17, 1957, she wrote, “Today Tommy found a real book!”

It was a very old book. Margie’s grandfather once said that when he was a little boy, his grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper. They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to—on a screen, you know. And then, when they turned back to the page before, it had the same words on it that it had had when they read it the first time.

“Gee,” said Tommy, “what a waste. When you’re through with the book, you just throw it away, I guess. Our television screen must have had a million books on it and it’s good for plenty more. I wouldn’t throw it away.”

“Same with mine,” said Margie. She was eleven and hadn’t seen as many telebooks as Tommy had. He was thirteen. She said, “Where did you find it?”

“In my house.” He pointed without looking, because he was busy reading. “In the attic.”

“What’s it about?”

“School.”

Margie was scornful. “School? What’s there to write about school? I hate school.”

Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography, and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had shaken her head sorrowfully and sent for the County Inspector.

He was a round little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires. He smiled at Margie and gave her an apple, then took the teacher apart. Margie had hoped he wouldn’t know how to put it together again, but he knew how all right,
and, after an hour or so, there it was again, large and black and ugly, with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked. That wasn't so bad. The part Margie hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always had to write them out in a punch code they made her learn when she was six years old, and the mechanical teacher calculated the mark in no time.

The Inspector had smiled after he was finished and patted Margie's head. He said to her mother, "It's not the little girl's fault, Mrs. Jones. I think the geography sector was geared a little too quick. Those things happen sometimes. I've slowed it up to an average ten-year level. Actually, the over-all pattern of her progress is quite satisfactory." And he parted Margie's head again.

Margie was disappointed. She had been hoping they would take the teacher away altogether. They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.

So she said to Tommy, "Why would anyone write about school?"

Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes. "Because it's not our kind of school, stupid. This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago." He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, "Centuries ago."

Margie was hurt. "Well, I don't know what kind of school they had all that time ago." She read the book over his shoulder for a while, then said, "Anyway, they had a teacher."

"Sure they had a teacher, but it wasn't a regular teacher. It was a man."

"A man? How could a man be a teacher?"

"Well, he just told the boys and girls things and gave them homework and asked them questions."

"A man isn't smart enough."

"Sure he is. My father knows as much as my teacher."

"He can't. A man can't know as much as a teacher."

"He knows almost as much, I betcha."

Margie wasn't prepared to dispute that. She said, "I wouldn't want a strange man in my house to teach me."

Tommy screamed with laughter. "You don't know much, Margie. The teachers didn't live in the house. They had a special building and all the kids went there."

"And all the kids learned the same thing?"

"Sure, if they were the same age."

"But my mother says a teacher has to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently."

"Just the same they didn't do it that way then. If you don't like it, you don't have to read the book."

"I didn't say I didn't like it," Margie said quickly. She wanted to read about those funny schools.

They weren't even half-finished when Margie's mother called, "Margie! School!"

Margie looked up. "Not yet, Mamma."

"Now!" said Mrs. Jones. "And it's probably time for Tommy, too."

6 As you read the story, note where Asimov uses commas to set off a parenthetical clause (the focus of this Workshop's Language and Writer's Craft feature). Asimov uses this both to insert comments or descriptions into a sentence and to indicate who is speaking in dialogue. For samples of where Asimov uses this technique, see the Language and Writer's Craft Activity.
Margie said to Tommy, "Can I read the book some more with you after school?"

"Maybe," he said nonchalantly. He walked away whistling, the dusty old book tucked beneath his arm.

Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It was always on at the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday, because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

The screen was lit up, and it said: "Today's arithmetic lesson is on the addition of proper fractions. Please insert yesterday's homework in the proper slot."

Margie did so with a sigh. She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighborhood came, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things, so they could help one another on the homework and talk about it.

And the teachers were people...

The mechanical teacher was flashing on the screen: "When we add the fractions $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}...$"

Margie was thinking about how the kids must have loved it in the old days. She was thinking about the fun they had.

After Reading

4. What is the main focus of this short story?

Students' responses might include kids' attitudes about school, “the grass is always greener,” predicting the future, and appreciating what you have.

The Elements of a Short Story

The short story mode includes these elements: plot, point of view, characterization, setting, and dialogue. In order to write a short story, you need to be able to recognize these basic elements of a work of fiction:

Plot

The plot is the sequence of events and actions that get the characters in the story from point A to point B, then to point C, and so on. The structure of a plot includes the Exposition, or starting point for the story; the conflicts of the Rising Action, which lead to the Climax; and the Falling Action, which leads to the Resolution.

5. Use the Plot Diagram graphic organizer below to sketch out the plot of "The Fun They Had."
Point of View

Stories are often told from either a first-person or a third-person point of view. In this story, an outside narrator tells the story and reveals only Margie’s thoughts and feelings. The outside narrator indicates that the author is using third-person limited point of view.

6. Underline or highlight the language in the story that reveals Margie’s thoughts and feelings.
Writing Workshop 4 (continued)

**Characterization**
Characterization is the way in which the writer reveals the personality of a character.

7. What does the reader know about Margie? What has the writer revealed about her? Add your findings to the Characterization graphic organizer.

![Characterization Graphic Organizer]

**Setting**
Setting is the time, place, and conditions in which the story happens.

8. What is the setting for the story? Circle the words and phrases that help make the setting believable.

**Dialogue**
The main purpose of dialogue is communication between characters. It provides information, reveals the characters, and helps to move the story along.

9. Reread the first dialogue between Tommy and Margie. What does the conversation reveal about the following?

- Margie:
- Tommy:
- The setting:
- The plot:

Facilitate a discussion of the use of characterization in the story, and have students use the Characterization graphic organizer to take notes.

Ask students to identify the setting and to circle words and phrases, including sensory details, that make the setting believable. Point out that even though the story takes place in the future, the author has created a believable setting.

Have a pair of volunteers read aloud the first dialogue between Tommy and Margie. Ask pairs to identify how the author uses dialogue to reveal character traits and to advance the plot.

**ASSESS**
Students have worked to show their understanding of plot, point of view, characterization, setting, and dialogue. Consider which students may need additional support and resources as the group moves from reading a story to creating one as a class.

**ADAPT**
Consider including supplemental explanation of story elements that students found difficult to identify. It may be helpful to pair some of those students together for activities such as brainstorming dialogue during Activity 2.
ACTIVITY 2
Writing a Class-Constructed Short Story

WRITING PROMPT: Write a short story that meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets at the beginning of this lesson. Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task. It will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

You can find ideas for a story by putting an original twist on a familiar story. For example, at the end of “The Fun They Had,” Margie is daydreaming about schools of the past—which would be our schools today! Imagine that she suddenly finds herself at your school, at an event or a time of day when she would actually experience “the fun they had.”

Prewriting
Planning the Plot
1. With your class, brainstorm the possibilities of this situation. What might happen to Margie? Take notes on the ideas suggested. Use the following Plot Diagram to guide your brainstorming.

[Plot Diagram]

2. With the class, brainstorm what might happen if this girl from the year 2157 suddenly arrived in your school. What conflicts could occur?

3. Use the plot diagram to sketch out a plot, letting students know that the plan might change as they develop the story. Published authors often say that their stories take a different direction than they had originally expected. If possible, create your diagram on an overhead or whiteboard while they add to theirs at their desks.

PLAN
Materials: Overhead or whiteboard to display group work; materials from Activity 1 to use as models
Pacing: 1–2 class periods

TEACH
1. Prewriting: Challenge students to imagine that Margie is magically transported to your school. Lead the class as they come to a consensus on an event or time of day that she would enjoy.

2. With the class, brainstorm what might happen if this girl from the year 2157 suddenly arrived in your school. What conflicts could occur?

3. Use the plot diagram to sketch out a plot, letting students know that the plan might change as they develop the story. Published authors often say that their stories take a different direction than they had originally expected. If possible, create your diagram on an overhead or whiteboard while they add to theirs at their desks.
4. Once the class agrees on a setting, have them visualize it and think-pair-share their notes on sensory details for the setting.

5. With input from the class, draft an opening for the story, using third-person limited point of view. Remind students that in this limited point of view, the author can communicate only what is apparent to Margie. Begin with Margie’s initial reaction to the new setting, asking students to select which of their brainstormed sensory details you should include to describe the setting in your exposition.

6. Have the class create a character for Margie to encounter. Tell students that the character can be based on a real person or can be invented. Replicate the graphic organizer that students used to take notes about Margie and have them take notes about the new character.

7. In pairs, students should role-play a dialogue to further the action of the story. Allow volunteers to present their work. Then, work with the class to draft a written dialogue. They should incorporate the character description, following Asimov’s example of describing Tommy during dialogue.

8. Drafting: With student input, continue writing the story, following the plot diagram to the climax.

9. Allow the class to direct you as you draft the climax and resolution of the story. Remind students that they can use dialogue throughout the story. It may be helpful to refer back to the plot diagram and determine where there are good opportunities to use dialogue.

---

**Planning the Setting**

2. Close your eyes and visualize the place where Margie has magically appeared. What does it look like? What time of day or what time of year is it? Think about ways in which the setting may appeal to the senses. In a class discussion, share your responses to the questions below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does Margie see? (Include colors, objects, activities, etc.)</th>
<th>Answers will vary.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What sounds does she hear?</td>
<td>Answers will vary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What textures does she feel?</td>
<td>Answers will vary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What scents or odors does she smell?</td>
<td>Answers will vary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What might she taste in this setting?</td>
<td>Answers will vary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Planning Point of View**

3. Based on what you know about Margie, how would she respond to this new place? Using notebook paper, jot down some of her observations and responses, using third-person limited point of view. Remember that in your story, you will use Margie’s name and the pronouns she and her.

**Planning Characters and Dialogue**

4. Think of a character Margie would encounter during her visit. Describe this character.

   **Answers will vary.**

5. With your class, write and role play dialogue that moves the plot forward. Aim for a minimum of five sentences of dialogue in your story.

**Drafting**

6. Revisit the class list of possible events in this story. Refine the rising action, climax, and resolution.

7. Write a first draft of your class-constructed story. Use your notes and your graphic organizers to guide your writing. Be sure to include two parentheticals to add information and two parentheticals in dialogue to show who is speaking.
Check Your Understanding

After you have drafted your short story, use the following checklist and the Scoring Guide to evaluate your story and consider revisions.

• Does the story include well-structured event sequences?
• Is there a well-defined narrator and/or characters?
• Have you chosen and kept one point of view throughout your story?
• Have you included descriptive, sensory details to make the setting and characters clear?
• How is dialogue used to show character and move the plot?

Revising

Revising for Sensory Details

8. Review the first draft of your class-constructed short story. Where might you add sensory details to make the setting more believable? Make any necessary revisions.

Revising for Dialogue

Look over your draft again. Where might you use dialogue to reveal information about the characters and to move the plot along? Revise and add dialogue or substitute text with dialogue. Aim for a minimum of five sentences of dialogue.

Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft

Now that the short story is fully drafted, consider more carefully the language used to convey your ideas. A writer makes deliberate stylistic choices in language for effect. A parenthetical is a phrase that is inserted into a sentence to add a little extra information or description. They are called parentheticals because we often use parentheses to show where they begin and end.

Example: Dad picked up the jar of sauce (his secret recipe) and carried it out to the barbecue.

Writers can use other punctuation besides parentheses to add a parenthetical. Dashes and commas also work. Isaac Asimov uses commas to insert parentheticals in his story, “The Fun We Had.”

They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still...

Margie had hoped he wouldn’t know how to put it together again, but he knew how all right, and, after an hour or so, there it was again, large and black and ugly, with a screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked.

Asimov also uses parentheticals with his dialogue to indicate who is speaking:

“Gee,” said Tommy, “what a waste.”

It’s important to insert the parenthetical smoothly, at a good moment in the sentence. Look for a pause or sentence shift, which is usually indicated with a comma.

Correct: “Maria took the keys,” warned Jose, “there’s no way to get in.”
Incorrect: “Maria took the keys, there’s no” warned Jose, “way to get in.”

10 Check Your Understanding:

Revisit the elements of a good short story. Have students indicate where in the story a particular element appears or justify why they think that element of has been successfully utilized. Using class suggestions, revise the class-constructed story as needed.

11 Revising:

Students have been shown how Asimov uses commas to offset parentheticals in “The Fun They Had.” Note that students can also use dashes or parentheses for similar effect. Revise the story to include at least two sentences that have a parenthetical set off by punctuation. In addition, the class should revise at least two sentences of dialogue so that the phrase that indicates who is speaking operates as a parenthetical at an appropriate point in the sentence.
Sample response:

Without the parenthetical: The dirty car drove up the hill.
With the parenthetical: The dirty car, spewing exhaust, drove up the hill.

Practice
Use a parenthetical to add more information or description to the sentence below:

David picked up the broken toy, ________ barely held together by a few wires, ________ and walked slowly into the house.

Rewrite the next sentence, moving the parenthetical that tells who is speaking to a new position in the sentence. Remember to look for a pause or sentence shift.

“This is the strangest party I’ve ever been to, but I’m having fun,” said Lee. “This is the strangest party I’ve ever been to,” said Lee, “but I’m having fun.”

In the short stories that you will create as a class and with a partner, include at least two parentheticals to add information or description, and at least two parentheticals in dialogue to indicate who is speaking.

Revising for Parentheticals
9. Reread your draft. Have you included at least two parentheticals to add information or description, and at least two parentheticals in dialogue? Use your Language and Writer’s Craft Practice as a guide as you look over and revise your draft.

Editing
10. Review the final draft of your class-constructed story to be sure it meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets. Revise as necessary.

ACTIVITY 3
Writing a Short Story with a Partner

WRITING PROMPT: Write a short story that meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets and the Scoring Guide. Be sure to
• Establish setting
• Include clear sequences of events
• Develop a well-defined narrator and/or characters
• Choose and maintain a definite point of view throughout the story
• Include descriptive sensory details to make the setting and characters clear and interesting
• Use dialogue to show character and move the plot
• Use parentheticals to add information or description

1  Begin by creating a web and asking students to brainstorm ways to give a twist to the class-constructed story. For example, they might rewrite the story from a different point of view or with different characters or a new setting.
Prewriting

Generating Content
1. On separate paper, create a web and brainstorm as many twists on the class-constructed story as you can.

2. Work with your partner and take prewriting notes for your shared story.

Planning the Plot
3. Copy the Plot Diagram graphic organizer and use it to plan the plot of your story. Remember that each event must lead believably to the next.

Planning the Setting
4. Use the Setting graphic organizer to plan how you can use sensory detail to make your setting believable.

Planning Characters
5. Use the Character graphic organizer to plan each of your characters. Add more spokes to the graphic organizer as needed, and create additional graphic organizers for other characters on separate sheets of paper.
As partners move into drafting a short story, monitor and provide support as needed. If they are writing by hand, encourage them to write on every other line to accommodate revisions.

**Drafting:** Have partners draft an opening, encouraging them to experiment with various ways of beginning their stories.

Combine pairs into larger groups to create writing groups for sharing and responding. Have the pairs read their openings to their writing groups, soliciting feedback, marking their draft, and taking notes on student feedback to use later.

Partners should now draft the rising action and climax; then writing groups should meet for sharing and responding.

Next, partners should craft the resolution of their story, aiming for a conclusion that is a natural result of the events that preceded it. After partners write the resolution for their stories, have writing groups meet once again for sharing and responding.

**Drafting**

6. Refer to Asimov’s story and your class-constructed model story, your notes, and your graphic organizers as you and your partner draft an opening to your story together. You might begin in the middle of the action or begin with dialogue between two characters, or you might have another opening in mind.

7. Join another partner pair to share and respond to ideas for refining your story opening. Mark the draft, and take good notes so you will remember what you discuss.

8. Use your models and your notes while you and your partner continue drafting your story. Don’t be afraid to change your original plot line, as long as you and your partner agree.

9. With your other partner pair, share and respond to ideas for refining the middle of your story. Remember to take good notes.

10. Reread the endings of your model stories. With your partner, draft an ending for your story.

**Revising**

11. With your other partner pair, share and respond to ideas for refining your story’s ending. Again, take good notes.
12. Reread your draft and find each detail of the setting. Consider where you might add sensory details to make the setting believable for the reader, and revise accordingly.

13. Reread your draft and consider where you might use dialogue to reveal information about the characters and to move the plot along. Revise and add dialogue or substitute text with dialogue. Aim for at least five sentences of dialogue.

14. Using your Language Practice as a guide, make sure that you have included at least two parentheticals to add information or description, and at least two parentheticals in dialogue to indicate who is speaking.

Peer Review

15. Reread your draft and check your work against the list of different parts of a good short story that the class created. Take notes on any missing elements and discuss areas where you agree that you need to revise. Make a plan for revision.

16. Join your other partner pair in sharing and responding to thoughts and suggestions about your writing. Use their feedback on your story to help you discover additional ideas for revision.

17. Use your notes and the feedback from your writing discussions as you revise your short story.

Editing

18. Edit your story to correct errors and prepare your work for publication.

**ACTIVITY 4**

**Independent Writing**

WRITING PROMPT: Write a short story that meets the requirements listed in Learning Targets and the Scoring Guide. Be sure to

- Establish setting
- Include clear sequences of events
- Develop a well-defined narrator and/or characters
- Choose and maintain a definite point of view throughout the story
- Include descriptive sensory details to make the setting and characters clear and interesting
- Use dialogue to show character and move the plot
- Use parentheticals to add information or description

You may want to use the graphic organizers from the earlier activities to help you create plot and characters for your new short story.

Revisit the web that you and your partner created for Activity 3. Think of twists on other stories that you know, or go through your own portfolio and then brainstorm ideas for a story that you want to write. Complete your story, revise as needed, and prepare it for sharing with peers. As in the story you wrote with a partner, include at least two parentheticals to add information or description, and at least two parentheticals in the dialogue to indicate who is speaking.

---

8 Revising: Pairs now should revise their stories by adding sensory details and dialogue. You might want to refer back to Asimov’s story to provide examples of ways to integrate dialogue at this time. Check for understanding by looking over student work to ensure that they are successfully revising to include the Language Element—parentheticals set off by punctuation.

9 Next, revisit the elements of a good short story. Have each pair self-assess its story in terms of these elements and make a plan for revision.

10 Peer Review: Have the writing groups use the list of elements of a good story, from Activity 1, to provide feedback. Pairs should use their notes and this feedback to revise their short stories.

**ASSESS**

Continually monitor pairs as they work, having them share their progress. You might require each pair to share their plot diagram or other graphic organizers before moving on.

**ADAPT**

Pairs that have been very successful with the early stages of story development might be given the option to move forward with less guidance. High-functioning pairs might even skip some of the graphic organizers such as sensory details if they feel they can add that type of description as they draft.

**ACTIVITY 4**

**Independent Writing**

**PLAN**

*Materials: Materials from Activities 1–3 to use as models*

*Pacing: 1–2 class periods (depending on homework)*

**TEACH**

1 As a class, review the prompt for the activity, and examine the scoring guide to help students determine the necessary elements of success. Assign this activity as independent work, monitoring and providing support as needed.
### Writing Workshop 4 (continued)

#### SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The story • creates a vivid setting through the effective use of sensory details • provides an intriguing plot that that unfolds naturally and logically to sustain reader interest • presents a consistent and distinct point of view</td>
<td>The story • creates a believable setting through the use of sensory details • includes a logical, clearly defined plot contains a clearly defined point of view</td>
<td>The story • presents an unbelievable setting with limited use of sensory details • contains a confusing plot • contains an unfocused or inconsistent point of view</td>
<td>The story • presents a setting that is not believable and provides no sensory details • contains no recognizable plot • contains no recognizable point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The story • leads with an appealing opening that entices reader • effectively sequences events to steadily build toward a climax • provides an insightful ending with a clear and reasonable resolution</td>
<td>The story • presents an opening that grabs reader’s attention • includes a sequence of events that build toward a climax • provides an ending that contains a clear resolution</td>
<td>The story • contains an opening that is underdeveloped or lacks interest for readers • presents disconnected events or an incomplete or unfocused climax • contains an ending that is underdeveloped with little or no resolution</td>
<td>The story • contains an opening that is undeveloped or lacks interest for readers • presents disconnected events and an unfocused, confusing climax • contains an ending with no recognizable resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The story • uses well-written dialogue to enhance the story line and deepen reader’s understanding of characters • effectively uses details and sensory language to enhance the effect. • demonstrates technical command of standard English conventions • effectively uses punctuation to insert parentheticals into sentences</td>
<td>The story • uses dialogue to develop the story line and characters • uses details and sensory language to create a clear effect • demonstrates general command of conventions; minor errors in punctuation, grammar, capitalization, or spelling do not interfere with meaning • occasionally uses punctuation to insert parentheticals into sentences</td>
<td>The story • uses incomplete or inappropriate dialogue • uses little or no detail or sensory language to establish a vivid impression • demonstrates limited command of conventions; errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning • does not use or incorrectly uses punctuation to insert parentheticals</td>
<td>The story • uses little or no dialogue • misuses or does not use detail or sensory language • misuses conventions to the degree that it interferes with meaning • misuses or does not use correct punctuation to insert parentheticals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**ASSESS**

Having students share their pre-writing could allow you to assess their progress before they begin drafting the story itself. A detailed Scoring Guide is included to help assess students’ performance as independent writers. It is also a useful tool to communicate to students so that they are able to understand their own progress and make goals for further growth.

**ADAPT**

This activity can be adapted to meet the needs of individual students by adding more or less structure. For example, students who are ready for more independence could opt for any topic for their story rather than depicting a twist on the previous one. Graphic organizers have been included, but may not be necessary for all students.

**SCORING GUIDE**

Use the Scoring Guide throughout this workshop to remind students of the elements expected to be included in their stories.
Response to Literary Texts: Short Story

Learning Targets

• Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
• With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
• Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
• Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
• Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Response to Literary Texts: Short Story

The purpose of a response-to-literature essay is to demonstrate thoughtful understanding of a literary text. The writer identifies a central idea about the text and supports it with evidence from the text to convey meaning to the reader. In a multi-paragraph response to literature, you should:

• Present effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
• Develop an interpretation and state it as a thesis
• Provide evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding
• Guide and inform the reader’s understanding of key issues in body paragraphs
• Include specific evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs
• Include an appropriate organizational structure for the essay
• Use a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs

You will work with your teacher and classmates to construct two model essays. Then you will use these models to write your own essay. Be sure to review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.

ACTIVITY 1

Discovering Elements of a Multi-Paragraph Response to Literature

Before Reading

1. Quickwrite: What do you know about writing a response to literature? How does an essay of this type differ from other essays you have written in the past?

Sample response: The main goal of responding to literature is to demonstrate thoughtful comprehension of a literary text. The writer produces an assertion about a text and supports it with textual evidence to show an insightful response to the text. Connections are made to the main idea of the text, the reader’s viewpoint, and the author’s style.
3 Use close reading to derive meaning from the short story “Thank You, Ma’am,” by Langston Hughes. Conduct a shared reading of the short story and ask students to mark the text to identify Roger’s actions. Have students pair-share what those actions reveal about Roger’s character.

4 Work with students to identify the key elements (e.g., actions, character traits, changes, and lessons learned) and the supporting information (e.g., details, examples, quotes from the text). Solicit responses and redirect thinking as needed by pointing out key insights and supporting information not shared by the students. Have students take notes from the class discussion on the graphic organizer provided.

## Writing Workshop 5 (continued)

### During Reading

2. Conduct a close reading of Langston Hughes’s short story “Thank You, M’am.” As you read, mark the text to identify Roger’s actions.

### Sample Text

**Thank You, M’am**

by Langston Hughes

She was a large woman with a large purse that had everything in it but hammer and nails. It had a long strap, and she carried it slung across her shoulder. It was about eleven o’clock at night, and she was walking alone, when a boy ran up behind her and tried to snatch her purse. The strap broke with the single tug the boy gave it from behind. But the boy’s weight and the weight of the purse combined caused him to lose his balance so, instead of taking off full blast as he had hoped, the boy fell on his back on the sidewalk, and his legs flew up. The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter. Then she reached down, picked the boy up by his shirt front, and shook him until his teeth rattled.

After that the woman said, “Pick up my pocketbook, boy, and give it here.” She still held him. But she bent down enough to permit him to stoop and pick up her purse. Then she said, “Now ain’t you ashamed of yourself?”

Firmly gripped by his shirt front, the boy said, “Yes’m.”

The woman said, “What did you want to do it for?”

The boy said, “I didn’t aim to.”

She said, “You a lie!”

By that time two or three people passed, stopped, turned to look, and some stood watching.

“If I turn you loose, will you run?” asked the woman.

“Yes’m,” said the boy.

“Then I won’t turn you loose,” said the woman. She did not release him.

“I’m very sorry, lady, I’m sorry,” whispered the boy.

“Um-hum! And your face is dirty. I got a great mind to wash your face for you.”

“M’am?”

She said, “You gonna take me to jail?” asked the boy, bending over the sink.

“Not with that face, I would not take you nowhere,” said the woman. “Here I am eleven o’clock at night, and you trying to get home to cook me a bite to eat and you snatch my pocketbook! Maybe, you ain’t been to your supper either, late as it be. Have you?”

The water dripping from his face, the boy looked at her. There was a long pause.

“Then, Roger, you go to that sink and wash your face,” said the woman, whereupon she turned him loose—at last. Roger looked at the door—looked at the woman—looked behind. But the woman were not alone. The woman still had him by the neck in the middle of her room.

Jones got up and went behind the screen. The woman did not watch the boy to see if he held him. But she bent down enough to permit him to stoop and pick up her purse. Then she said, “Now ain’t you ashamed of yourself?”

Firmly gripped by his shirt front, the boy said, “Yes’m.”

The woman said, “What did you want to do it for?”

The boy said, “I didn’t aim to.”

She said, “You a lie!”

By that time two or three people passed, stopped, turned to look, and some stood watching.

“If I turn you loose, will you run?” asked the woman.

“Yes’m,” said the boy.

“Then I won’t turn you loose,” said the woman. She did not release him.

“I’m very sorry, lady, I’m sorry,” whispered the boy.

“Um-hum! And your face is dirty. I got a great mind to wash your face for you. Ain’t you got nobody home to tell you to wash your face?”

“No’m,” said the boy.

“Then it will get washed this evening,” said the large woman starting up the street, dragging the frightened boy behind her.

He looked as if he were fourteen or fifteen, frail and willow-wild, in tennis shoes and blue jeans.

The woman said, “You ought to be my son. I would teach you right from wrong. Least I can do right now is to wash your face. Are you hungry?”

“No’m,” said the being dragged boy. “I just want you to turn me loose.”

“Was I bothering you when I turned that corner?” asked the woman.

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“No’m.”

“But you put yourself in contact with me,” said the woman. “If you think that that contact is not going to last awhile, you got another thought coming. When I get through with you, sir, you are going to remember Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones.”

Sweat popped out on the boy’s face and he began to struggle. Mrs. Jones stopped, jerked him around in front of her, put a half-nelson about his neck, and continued to drag him up the street. When she got to her door, she dragged the boy inside, down a hall, and into a large kitchenette-furnished room at the rear of the house. She switched on the light and left the door open. The boy could hear other roomers laughing and talking in the large house. Some of their doors were open, too, so he knew he and the woman were not alone. The woman still had him by the neck in the middle of her room.

She said, “What is your name?”

“Roger,” answered the boy.

“Then, Roger, you go to that sink and wash your face,” said the woman, whereupon she turned him loose—at last. Roger looked at the door—looked at the woman—looked at the door—and went to the sink.

Let the water run until it gets warm,” she said. “Here’s a clean towel.”

“You gonna take me to jail?” asked the boy, bending over the sink.

“Not with that face, I would not take you nowhere,” said the woman. “Here I am trying to get home to cook me a bite to eat and you snatch my pocketbook! Maybe, you ain’t been to your supper either, late as it be. Have you?”

“There’s nobody home at my house,” said the boy.

“Then we’ll eat,” said the woman. “I believe you’re hungry—or been hungry—to try to snatch my pocketbook.”

“I wanted a pair of blue suede shoes,” said the boy.

“Well, you didn’t have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes,” said Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones. “You could of asked me.”

“M’am?”

The water dripping from his face, the boy looked at her. There was a long pause.

A very long pause. After he had dried his face and not knowing what else to do dried it again, the boy turned around, wondering what next. The door was open. He could make a dash for it down the hall. He could run, run, run, run, run!

The woman was sitting on the day-bed. After a while she said, “I were young once and I wanted things I could not get.”

There was another long pause. The boy’s mouth opened. Then he frowned, but not knowing he frowned.

The woman said, “Um-hum! You thought I was going to say but, didn’t you? You thought I was going to say, but I didn’t snatch people’s pocketbooks. Well, I wasn’t going to say that.” Pause. Silence. “I have done things, too, which I would not tell you, son—neither tell God, if he didn’t already know. So you set down while I fix us something to eat. You might run that comb through your hair so you will look presentable.”

In another corner of the room behind a screen was a gas plate and an icebox. Mrs. Jones got up and went behind the screen. The woman did not watch the boy to see if he was going to run now, nor did she watch her purse which she left behind her on the day-bed. But the boy took care to sit on the far side of the room where he thought she
Roger's character as it is developed in the short story.

Writing Workshop 5 (continued)

My Notes

Roger's Actions | What the Actions Tell About His Character – Interpretation
---|---
Sample responses: “It was about eleven o'clock at night, and she was walking alone, when a boy ran up behind her and tried to snatch her purse.” | He is desperate enough to steal.

“I’m very sorry, lady, I’m sorry,” whispered the boy. | He is willing to show remorse.

“I wanted a pair of blue suede shoes,” said the boy.” | He is honest. His desire is for more than just the necessities of life.

could easily see him out of the corner other eye, if she wanted to. He did not trust the woman not to trust him. And he did not want to be mistrusted now.

“Do you need somebody to go to the store,” asked the boy, “maybe to get some milk or something?”

“Don't believe I do,” said the woman, “unless you just want sweet milk yourself. I was going to make cocoa out of this canned milk I got here.”

“That will be fine,” said the boy.

She heated some lima beans and ham she had in the icebox, made the cocoa, and set the table. The woman did not ask the boy anything about where he lived, or his folks, or anything else that would embarrass him. Instead, as they ate, she told him about her job in a hotel beauty-shop that stayed open late, what the work was like, and how all kinds of women came in and out, blondes, red-heads, and Spanish. Then she cut him a half of her ten-cent cake.

“Eat some more, son,” she said.

When they were finished eating she got up and said, “Now, here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes. And next time, do not make the mistake of latching onto my pocketbook nor nobody else's—because shoes come be devilish like that will burn your feet. I got to get my rest now. But I wish you would behave yourself, son, from here on in.”

She led him down the hall to the front door and opened it. “Goodnight!” Behave yourself, boy!” she said, looking out into the street.

The boy wanted to say something else other that “Thank you, m'am” to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, but he couldn't do so as he turned at the barren stoop and looked back at the large woman in the door. He barely managed to say “Thank you” before she shut the door. And he never saw her again.

After Reading

3. Next, share your marked text with a partner and then the class. After class discussion, use the graphic organizer provided to chart responses and to consider how Roger changes. You are preparing to write a character analysis essay.
Roger looked at the door—looked at the
woman—looked at the door—and went to the
sink.”

Roger has a choice he can try to escape or stay.
Perhaps he is afraid of what Mrs. Jones will do if he
leaves. Maybe he wants to know what she will do to
help him if he stays.

“But the boy took care to sit on the far side of
the room where he thought she could easily
see him out of the corner other eye, if she
wanted to. He did not trust the woman not to
trust him. And he did not want to be mistrusted
now.”

4. Review Roger’s actions you charted on the graphic organizer, and discuss the
following questions with your partner:
• How does Roger’s character change in this story?
• What do you think Roger learned from his encounter with Mrs. Jones?

Check Your Understanding
How does Langston Hughes use dialogue to create tension and intrigue for the
audience? What is the purpose of having Mrs. Jones speak more than Roger?
Is this effective? Why or why not?

ACTIVITY 2
Writing a Class Essay

WRITING PROMPT: In the short story, “Thank You, Ma’m,” Langston Hughes
creates two memorable characters whose chance encounter causes a change in
both characters. In a multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay, analyze what
text reveals how Roger’s actions over the course of the story change. Be sure the
essay meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets for writing an effective
multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay.

Review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing
activity.

Prewriting
1. Write ideas for your response here.

ASSETS
Evaluate students’ comfort level with the material by discussing their
responses to the questions in the graphic organizers and the Check Your
Understanding questions.

ADAPT
Work with students to use direct quotes when they are providing
evidence of character development from the short story provided. Novice
writers often feel that simply including quotes from the text, regardless
of their importance, will suffice as “evidence.” However, it is important
that students understand that they should choose their quotes with a
purpose.

ACTIVITY 2
Writing a Class Essay

PLAN

Materials: Overhead or whiteboard;
materials generated in Activity 1 to
serve as models

Pacing: 1–2 class periods

TEACH

1 Use a think-pair-share to review the prompt and discuss the
requirements for the class essay. Refer to the Scoring Guide to inform
your areas of emphasis.

2 Ask students to generate a
list of an essay’s organizational
components (intro, body, conclusion,
transitions) and characteristics (key
issues, supporting information). Chart
responses on the board. Co-construct with students a graphic organizer of
the components and characteristics of a multi-paragraph response-to-
literature essay that can be used to plan their own essay.

3 Prewriting: Begin the writing
process by brainstorming a variety
of prewriting strategies (e.g., free
writing/looping, webbing, and
mapping) to generate ideas. Direct
students to select a prewriting
strategy and use it. If necessary, use
guided writing to model how to use
a particular prewriting strategy to
generate ideas.
4 Drafting: Show students how to move from prewriting to the draft stage by using guided writing to co-construct with students an outline that includes a working thesis, supporting topic sentences, and relevant examples and details.

Writing Workshop 5 (continued)

Preliminary Outline
2. Before drafting, create an outline with the class to consider the order of your main ideas. To create an effective draft, you will need a thesis to give focus to the essay. A thesis consists of an opinion and a subject. Use the frame provided to develop a working thesis.

Working Thesis: Sample responses:
Roger's actions show that his character changes from _____(adjective 1) at the beginning of the story to _____(adjective 2) by the end of the story.

Topic Sentence 1
3. A topic sentence consists of a subject and an opinion that supports the thesis. The first topic sentence should support the first adjective in your thesis.

Sample response: At the beginning of the story, Roger's selfish actions reveal his greedy character.

Examples and Details for Topic Sentence 1
4. Return to the Character Analysis Chart or prewriting activity, and select the best examples or details to support the first adjective in your topic sentence. Write those examples below.

Sample responses:
Roger wanted some blue suede shoes.
He did not have the money, so he decided to steal it.
He tried to escape from the woman he was trying to rob.

Topic Sentence 2
5. Review the second adjective in your thesis and create a second supporting topic sentence.

Sample response: By the end of the story, Roger's remorseful actions reveal a more appreciative character.

Examples and Details for Topic Sentence 2
6. Choose examples and details to support your second topic sentence.

Sample responses:
Roger could have run out the open door at Mrs. Jones's house, but he decides not to.
Roger wants to thank Mrs. Jones for her kindness.

Drafting
Based on your prewriting and outline, you are now ready to create a first draft the essay including body paragraphs, the introduction and the conclusion.

Body Paragraphs
A body paragraph has these elements:
- **Topic sentence:** A sentence that has a subject and an opinion that works directly to support the thesis.
- **Transitions:** Words or phrases used to connect ideas (for example, for instance).
• Supporting information: Specific examples and details.
• Commentary: Sentences that explain how the information is relevant to the thesis/topic sentence and bring a sense of closure to the paragraph.

7. Read the class sample provided below and mark the text to identify the elements of a body paragraph.

At the beginning of the story, Roger's selfish actions reveal a greedy character. For example, Roger wanted to buy some blue suede shoes, but he did not have the money to buy them. So he decided to steal the money from a woman walking down the street. The decision to steal the money rather than to earn it illustrates that Roger is only thinking of himself and his desires. He is not considering the feelings of the hard working woman, Mrs. Jones, he tries to rob. Also, Roger's plan to use the money to buy extravagant shoes is not out of necessity, but rather merely a desire to indulge himself at someone else's expense. However, Roger soon realizes that his unexpected encounter with Mrs. Jones will teach him an unforgettable lesson.

8. Draft a body paragraph for the second body paragraph on a separate sheet of paper.

Introduction and Conclusion

With the class, you have constructed a thesis statement and one body paragraph. You are ready to create the introduction and conclusion of the essay. Introductory paragraphs consist of

• A hook/lead: Question, Quote, Anecdote, or Statement of Intrigue (QQAS) that is related to the topic. If you ask a question, answer it. If you use a quote, analyze it. If you use an anecdote or statement of intrigue, explain it.
• A connection between the QQAS and the thesis, using a TAG (title, author, genre) statement (Langston Hughes's short story, “Thank You, Ma’m,” explains ...).
• A thesis statement describing a subject and an opinion.

9. Review the class sample provided below and mark the text to identify the components of the introductory paragraph.

Change is a difficult process and does not just occur out of sheer will. Often, it is a life-altering event that causes a change in one's character. Langston Hughes’s short story, “Thank You, Ma’m,” explores how a young man’s unexpected encounter with a stranger fosters a significant change in his character. Roger's actions show that his character changes from being greedy at the beginning of the story to being appreciative by the end of the story.

10. Concluding paragraphs close the essay by examining insights presented in the text and analyzing the larger ramifications of those ideas. Use the following levels of questions to guide your thinking in crafting a conclusion:

• What did you say? (Literal)
  How does the character change in the story?

• What does it mean? (Interpretive)
  What is the significance of those changes?

5 Have students review the components of a body paragraph in conjunction with the student sample provided. Ask students to mark the text to identify the elements of a body paragraph in the student draft. Critique the draft and discuss ways to refine it. Model an appropriate revision strategy to refine the draft.

6 Now that students have studied a model, have students revisit the outline co-constructed in class and use guided writing to draft a body paragraph for the second topic sentence. Review and revise the draft for coherence and clarity of ideas to make sure it guides the reader's understanding.

7 Ask students to mark the text to identify the elements of an introductory paragraph within their draft. Critique the draft and discuss ways to refine it.

8 Use guided writing to co-construct an introductory paragraph with students that incorporates the refined thesis and demonstrates an engaging lead. Review and model revision strategies to create an effective organizational structure.

9 Review the elements of an effective concluding paragraph. Use the levels of questions on the student page to co-construct a draft of a concluding paragraph.
Check Your Understanding
Use the bullet points to guide students thinking about the need for revision. First drafts always need revision.

Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft
This language activity explicitly addresses coherence, and sentence structure. Students will practice using transitional phrases and varying sentence structures. Guide students through the activity, checking for understanding by having selected students share their responses. Highlight the effects of using transitional phrases and varying sentence structures in their essays.

Check Your Understanding
Use the bullet points to guide students thinking about the need for revision. First drafts always need revision.

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Check Your Understanding
In a first draft the most important thing is to organize and develop your ideas as fully as you can. The first draft prepares you for the next step of revision by considering what can be added, deleted, or rearranged. As you reread your draft,
• Present effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
• Develop an interpretation and state it as a thesis
• Provide evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding
• Guide and inform the reader’s understanding of key issues in body paragraphs
• Include specific evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs
• Include an appropriate organizational structure for the essay
• Use a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs

Revising
Language and Writer’s Craft: Revising for Coherence
Coherence
A coherent essay is one that presents ideas that tie together and flow smoothly, making the essay easy for a reader to follow. Two ways to revise for coherence are to use transitional words within and between paragraphs and to use varied sentence structures.

Transitions: Revise to help your reader move through the essay by adding some of these types of transitions:
• Transitions to show examples: for example, for instance, such as, in other words
• Transitions to show time: initially, next, after, finally, then, at the same time
• Transitions to show importance: more importantly, most important, most of all, least, last but not least

Varying Sentence Structure
Review your draft to see where you can vary your sentence structure in your paragraphs by using simple sentences or compound sentences. A simple sentence contains one independent clause. Example: The singer bowed to her adoring audience.

A compound sentence contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) or a semicolon (a mark that indicates a pause between two complete thoughts). Example: The singer bowed to the audience, but she sang no encores.

Combine short, simple sentences to create compound sentences by using coordinating conjunctions. Look at these examples:
• Use the coordinating conjunction and to express similar ideas.
  Sometimes people make poor choices, and they do not consider the consequences of their actions.
• Use the coordinating conjunction but to express different ideas.
  At some point, everyone will make a bad decision, but it is the learning that comes as a result of a bad decision that builds character.
• Use the coordinating conjunction or to express a choice.
  In life, we can choose to appreciate the lessons learned from our experiences, or we can choose to be bitter from the experiences we encounter.

Why does it matter? (Universal)
What do you think the character learned about life as a result of the changes mentioned above? How does this apply to me or others?
Find two sentences in the class-composed essay that could be combined using coordinating conjunctions to create a compound sentence. Write them below:

1.

2.

Now, using a coordinating conjunction, combine the sentences to create a compound sentence. Write that sentence below.

Once you have completed your new sentence, insert it in the class-generated essay. Remember to use compound sentences in your group-generated and individually composed essay as well.

**Editing**

Also check your essay for complete sentences to make sure each of your sentences

- Begins with a capitalized first word
- Includes an end punctuation mark (period, question mark, exclamation point)
- Contains a subject (noun or pronoun the sentence is about) and a predicate (verb describing the action of the subject)
- Has no misspelled words

11. Next edit your essay for coherence and complete sentences.

12. Reflection: What additional support do you need in writing a multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay?

10 Guide students through the editing process to correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

11 **Editing**: Invite students to reflect on their learning in preparation writing the second essay in their writing groups.

**ASSESS**

Review the class-composed essay. Then, review the Scoring Guide, and model how you would use it to score this essay. Be sure to use the language of the Scoring Guide during the process. This will help students to understand the scoring process and it will help them evaluate their essays.

**ADAPT**

When you are working with the class-composed essay, be sure to include direct quotations from the text in order to enhance the essay. Provide specific instruction as to how to embed quotes correctly. Model choosing quotes with a purpose and demonstrate the most effective ways to include them fluidly into the class-composed essay.
**Activity 3**

**Writing an Essay with Peers**

**Plan**

**Materials:** Materials generated in Activities 1 and 2 to serve as models for partner work

**Pacing:** 2 class periods

**Teach**

1. **Prewriting:** Review the prompt for Activity 3. Be sure to remind students of the elements they should incorporate in the class-generated response-to-literature essay. Refer to the Scoring Guide to inform your areas of emphasis.

2. Organize students into writing groups of two or three students. Direct writing groups to follow a similar process for writing their essay in response to the same prompt while using a new character, Mrs. Jones.

3. During the revision stage, remind students of the **Language and Writer’s Craft Activity** to assist in the development of the student’s essays.

4. Ask students to reflect on their experience and to set individual writing goals in preparation for composing the third essay.

5. Be sure students carefully and precisely fill out the **Character Analysis Chart** detailing the textual evidence and inferences about Mrs. Jones before they begin drafting the essay.

**Writing Workshop 5 (continued)**

**Activity 3**

**Writing an Essay with Peers**

**Writing Prompt:** In a multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay, analyze how Mrs. Jones’s actions over the course of the story reveal a change in her character. Be sure the essay meets the Learning Targets for writing an effective multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay:

- Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
- Analyzes a literary text and provides evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding
- Guides the reader’s understanding of key issues in body paragraphs
- Includes specific evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs
- Includes an appropriate organizational structure for the essay
- Uses a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs

Review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.

**Prewriting**

1. In your writing group, review and discuss the prompt. Revisit the short story to mark the text to identify the actions of Mrs. Jones. Use the **Character Analysis graphic organizer** to make note of what those actions reveal about her character, how she changes, and perhaps lessons learned. Discuss your findings and select an appropriate prewriting strategy to generate ideas in response to the prompt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ms. Jones’s Actions</th>
<th>What the Actions Tell About Her Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample responses: She brings Roger to her home, even though she is angry.</td>
<td>She is starting to forgive Roger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She fed him dinner.</td>
<td>She is starting to be kind to Roger even though he tried to rob her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She listens to why he was trying to rob her.</td>
<td>She is trying to understand Roger’s motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She gives Roger the money for the shoes.</td>
<td>She forgives him, is no longer angry, and helps him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing Workshop 5 (continued)

She gives Roger the money for the shoes. She forgives him, is no longer angry, and helps him. She listens to why he was trying to rob her. She is trying to understand Roger's motivation. She fed him dinner. Sample responses: She brings Roger to her

WRITING PROMPT:

Writing an Essay with Peers

Activity 3

Mrs. Jones’s actions over the course of the story reveal a change in her character. Be sure the essay meets the Learning Targets for writing an effective multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay:

1. Select the best ideas from your prewriting activity to construct a working thesis.
2. With your writing group, co-construct a preliminary outline that includes your thesis and supporting topic sentences with relevant examples and details.

DRAFTING

4. Review the ideas from your prewriting activity and co-construct a draft of your body paragraphs.
5. Read your body paragraphs and discuss an effective way to introduce and conclude your key ideas. Use a prewriting strategy to generate a draft that demonstrates the parts of effective introductions (hook/lead, connection, and thesis) and conclusions (response to the levels of questions).

REVISING

6. Read aloud your draft to your writing group. Gather feedback based on the criteria of an effective response to literature essay found under the goals section at the beginning of the workshop.
7. Review your draft for coherence:
   • Discuss which transitions can be used to link ideas effectively within and between your body paragraphs. Incorporate at least two into your draft.
   • If your draft contains too many short, choppy sentences, discuss the ideas that can be combined and revise using coordinating conjunctions.

EDITING

8. Read your draft and, with your peers, edit to correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
9. Discuss the key ideas present in your essay and generate a list of potentially creative titles. Rank them and select one. Place a title at the top of your essay.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Review the Scoring Guide. Compare your essay with the scoring guide to ensure your essay meets all of the requirements. If possible, exchange your essay with another group and allow them to evaluate it against the Scoring Guide to ensure your essay is successful.

6 As groups follow a similar process for writing the essay, facilitate and monitor their progress. Clarify students’ understanding as needed.

ASSESS

Have student writing groups evaluate their essays by comparing them to the Scoring Guide. Remind students to follow the example you provided when you modeled evaluating the essay from Activity 2 against the Scoring Guide. If possible, have groups exchange essays and allow them to score their peers’ work using the Scoring Guide.

ADAPT

Because students’ are responding to a short story, it may be constructive to engage students in a conversation about what authors choose to include or not include in their stories and how that might impact their essays. For example, it is worth noting that neither character is described in great detail—instead, Hughes relies on their actions and the dialogue. Discuss with students why Hughes may have decided not to provide detailed physical descriptions of the two characters.
**ACTIVITY 4**

**Independent Writing**

**PLAN**

**Materials:** Materials generated in Activities 1–3 to serve as models for individual work

**Pacing:** 1–2 class periods (depending on homework)

**TEACH**

1. Review the prompt explained in Activity 4. Be sure to remind students of the elements they should incorporate in response to literary or expository writing:

2. Assign the independent writing prompt, monitoring and responding to students’ needs during the writing process.

3. Refer to the Scoring Guide to inform your areas of emphasis.

**WRITING PROMPT:** In a multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay, analyze how Myop’s actions in the story “The Flowers” reveal a change in her character. Be sure the essay

- Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
- Develops an interpretation of the text and states it as a thesis
- Provides evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding
- Guides and informs the reader’s understanding of key issues in body paragraphs
- Includes specific evidence, details, and examples in body paragraphs
- Includes an appropriate organizational structure for the essay
- Uses a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs

Review the Learning Targets and Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.

**Sample Text**

**The Flowers**

by Alice Walker

It seemed to Myop as she skipped lightly from hen house to pigpen to smokehouse that the days had never been as beautiful as these. The air held a keenness that made her nose twitch. The harvesting of the corn and cotton, peanuts and squash, made each day a golden surprise that caused excited little tremors to run up her jaws.

Myop carried a short, knobby stick. She struck out at random at chickens she liked, and worked out the beat of a song on the fence around the pigpen. She felt light and good in the warm sun. She was ten, and nothing existed for her but her song, the stick clutched in her dark brown hand, and the tat-de-ta-ta-ta of accompaniment.

Turning her back on the rusty boards of her family’s sharecropper cabin, Myop walked along the fence till it ran into the stream made by the spring. Around the spring, where the family got drinking water, silver ferns and wildflowers grew. Along the shallow banks pigs rooted. Myop watched the tiny white bubbles disrupt the thin black scale of soil and the water that silently rose and slid away down the stream.

She had explored the woods behind the house many times. Often, in late autumn, her mother took her to gather nuts among the fallen leaves. Today she made her own path, bouncing this way and that way, vaguely keeping an eye out for snakes. She found, in addition to various common but pretty ferns and leaves, an armful of strange blue flowers with velvety ridges and a sweet sudsy bush full of the brown, fragrant buds.

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By twelve o’clock, her arms laden with sprigs of her findings, she was a mile or more from home. She had often been as far before, but the strangeness of the land made it not as pleasant as her usual haunts. It seemed gloomy in the little cove in which she found herself. The air was damp, the silence close and deep.

Myop began to circle back to the house, back to the peacefulness of the morning. It was then she stepped smack into his eyes. Her heel became lodged in the broken ridge between brow and nose, and she reached down quickly, unafraid, to free herself. It was only when she saw his naked grin that she gave a little yelp of surprise.

He had been a tall man. From feet to neck covered a long space. His head lay beside him. When she pushed back the leaves and layers of earth and debris Myop saw that he’d had large white teeth, all of them cracked or broken, long fingers, and very big bones. All his clothes had rotted away except some threads of blue denim from his overalls. The buckles of the overall had turned green.

Myop gazed around the spot with interest. Very near where she’d stepped into the head was a wild pink rose. As she picked it to add to her bundle she noticed a raised mound, a ring, around the rose’s root. It was the rotted remains of a noose, a bit of shredding plowline, now blending benignly into the soil. Around an overhanging limb of a great spreading oak clung another piece. Frayed, rotted, bleached—barely there—but spinning restlessly in the breeze. Myop laid down her flowers.

And the summer was over.
**SCORING GUIDE**

Use the Scoring Guide to assess individually written response-to-literature essays in this assignment.

### Ideas
- **Exemplary**
  - Presents a focused, insightful thesis
  - Uses details from the text to support analysis
  - Analyzes ideas to show insightful thinking about the text
- **Proficient**
  - Presents a clear thesis
  - Uses details from the text appropriately
  - Analyzes ideas to show clear thinking about the text
- **Emerging**
  - Presents an unfocused or limited thesis
  - Uses few, if any, details from the text
  - Contains little or no analysis or states the obvious
- **Incomplete**
  - Presents limited thesis or thesis is absent
  - Uses few, if any, details from the text
  - Contains little or no analysis or states the obvious

### Structure
- **Exemplary**
  - Contains an inviting introductory paragraph that draws in the reader
  - Uses transitions to guide the reader’s understanding throughout the essay
  - Presents a concluding paragraph that extends the ideas of the essay
- **Proficient**
  - Contains an effective introductory paragraph
  - Uses transitions to link the reader’s understanding throughout the essay
  - Presents an effective concluding paragraph
- **Emerging**
  - Contains an underdeveloped introductory paragraph
  - Uses few, if any, transitions and/or paragraphs that are disconnected
  - Presents a limited concluding paragraph
- **Incomplete**
  - Contains a minimal or incomplete introduction
  - Uses a confusing organization for evidence and ideas and/or few or no meaningful transitions
  - Provides a minimal conclusion or none at all

### Use of Language
- **Exemplary**
  - Uses an effective variety of sentence types
  - Uses precise, academic language
  - Contains few, if any, errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation
- **Proficient**
  - Uses a variety of sentence types
  - Uses appropriate diction
  - May contain minor errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation that do not affect the reader’s understanding
- **Emerging**
  - Uses mostly simple or incomplete sentences
  - Uses vague words
  - Contains many errors in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation that interfere in the reader’s understanding
- **Incomplete**
  - Shows incorrect or inconsistent use of sentence structure
  - Uses diction that is inappropriate for the topic, audience, and purpose
  - Uses no rhetorical devices
  - Illustrates limited command of standard English conventions; multiple serious errors interfere with meaning
Research Writing

**Learning Targets**

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

**Research Writing**

To write reports or communicate information to others, you may need to conduct research on a chosen topic. Creating and following an organized plan for your research will help you collect appropriate information for your finished report or communication. When conducting and presenting research, it is important to follow a process that includes:

- A research plan with the topic, research question, and possible sources to be consulted
- Relevant, valid, and reliable primary and/or secondary sources
- Relevant research information recorded in notes
- Bibliographic information recorded in a standard format
- Demonstrated understanding of plagiarism and paraphrasing
- Review of research results, clarifying questions, and assembled findings
- Findings organized and presented to address a specific purpose and audience

To complete this workshop, you will work with your teacher and classmates to conduct research and present your findings. You will then use these models to plan, conduct, and present research on a topic of your choice to your classmates.
1. Preview the learning targets with students. Activate prior knowledge and evaluate students’ past experience and understanding by having students share their responses to the Before Reading questions.

2. Engage in guided exploration through the sample research paper. The class can use the During Reading items as focus points for discussion.

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Writing Workshop 6 (continued)

**Activity 1**

**Discovering the Elements of Research Writing**

**Before Reading**

1. Think about your previous experiences with research. In small groups, discuss the following questions. Share your responses with the group.
   - How did you choose a topic to research?
   - What role did audience and purpose for writing play in helping you to choose a topic?
   - How did you find sources to research your topic?
   - What types of sources did you use?
   - How did you decide which sources were good?
   - How did you take notes and summarize the information you found?
   - How did you write about or present your findings?

**During Reading**

2. Below is a sample research presentation for your review.
   - What is the research topic? What do you think would be a good research question for this topic?
   - Underline key points of information in each paragraph.
   - Look at the sources for the information presented. How do you know they are good sources? Which are primary and which are secondary sources? Which is a print source and which is electronic?

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**Sample Student Text**

**Banning Soda in Schools—Is It Enough?**

Many schools are changing. The long line of soda machines in the halls are disappearing. Bottled water is replacing Coke and Pepsi, and for a good reason. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that “seventeen percent of children in this country are obese.” That is three times as many children as there were in the previous generation. It's important to do what we can to fight obesity and poor nutrition, especially in our schools. Banning soda from schools is one step to improve this problem, but we're learning that it can't be the only one. More information is showing that banning soda doesn't do enough to really improve students' diets.

Once soda machines were removed from schools, many thought there would be a quick reduction in the amount of obese students. That is understandable, soda accounts for more calories than any other food or beverage groups for teens between the ages of 14 to 18. However, a recent study showed that, in fact, the move has had almost no impact at all. This may be surprising, but in fact, it seems that banning soda is not enough. It's only a half-step that removes sodas from schools but not Snapple, Gatorade, and other sugary drinks. In fact, many young people avoid drinking sodas like Coke, but regularly drink sports drinks and energy drinks that are not covered by the soda-only ban.
The facts are clear; more needs to be done. All beverages that contain high amounts of sugar should be removed from schools, even if this means losing the money that schools make off of their sale. More schools should be like the ones in the Eula Independent School District in Texas. There, students are told that sodas purchased outside the school are not allowed in their cafeterias. Also, if school is the only place where young people are discouraged from drinking unhealthy beverages, it seems unlikely that we’ll ever really put a stop to the obesity crisis. The study that showed students shifting to different sugary drinks also warned about other ways that students make up for school-based bans. While students who were not heavy soda users did drink less due to bans, heavy drinkers made up for the bans with increased consumption outside of school. This is not to say that soda bans should be abandoned. Instead, we need to do more, expanding the bans to more sugary beverages and looking for ways to discourage children and teens from drinking these drinks in their free time. The country faces a genuine health crisis that is threatening our youth. This is no time for half measures.

Works Cited

After Reading
Language and Writer’s Craft Practice: Paraphrase or Direct Quotation
When writing to present information that you have researched, you should remember three important terms:
Plagiarism, which is using information as your own without identifying its source.
Paraphrase, which is restating information in your own words.
Direct Quotation, which is using the exact sentence or phrase that you read in your source.

Practice: Take the following quote from the previous activity and practice paraphrasing.
The study that showed students shifting to different sugary drinks also warned about other ways that students make up for school-based bans. While students who were not heavy soda users did drink less due to bans, heavy drinkers made up for the bans with increased consumption outside of school.

Responses will vary

Punctuating Direct Quotations
When directly quoting, it is very important to avoid plagiarism by setting off words taken from another source with quotation marks.
For example:
“To thine own self be true.”

or
Shakespeare once wrote, “To thine own self be true.”

Expressions
ASSESS

This activity provides opportunities for students to show their initial understanding of key elements that will be explored when presenting research. Note any difficulty that students have with any of the elements discussed, especially students who might have struggled to identify major ideas or key points of information in the sample text.

ADAPT

If students struggled to identify important elements of the sample text, you might provide other examples using excerpts from additional texts. Noting where students needed additional support can be helpful when introducing those same elements into the writing process.

ACTIVITY 2: Constructing a Research Presentation Together

PLAN

This set of steps takes students through the research process by having them create a class-constructed research topic, open-ended questions, and a research plan.

Materials:
- Copies of books, magazines, or other print items for research on specific topics chosen by teacher
- Reliable URLs for student research such as www.netTrekker.com
- Research materials with charts and/or graphs

Pacing: 1–2 class periods

Sometimes, you might want to shorten a quotation by leaving out part of the middle or by leaving out unnecessary information. When you do this, use an **ellipses (…)**

For example, when quoting:

“The team, after many challenging seasons with no playoff games at all, finally made it to the championship in 2009.”

you might simply write:

“The team ... finally made it to the championship in 2009.”

Other times, you might have a quote that needs to be altered to fit the rest of your writing. For example, the verb tense may need to be changed, or language that is vague and confusing for your audience may need adjusting. You can make small changes to quotations as long as you indicate where the changes are with brackets. However, you should not change the meaning of the quote. (For example, do not change “It is a good idea” to “It is [not] a good idea.”)

To alter a quote so that it works with the rest of your writing, you might change this:

“It is very beneficial to run or briskly walk for twenty minutes a day.”

to this:

Dr. Ray recommended “run[ning] or briskly walk[ing] for twenty minutes a day.”

To alter language that is unclear and confusing for your audience, you might change this vague quote about Chancellor Merkel of Germany:

“Eventually, her opponents decided to make a compromise with her.”

to this:

“Eventually, her opponents decided to make a compromise with [Chancellor Merkel].”

or this:

“Eventually, her opponents decided to make a compromise with her [Chancellor Merkel].”

**Practice:** Take the following quote from the research presentation above and practice shortening the quote. Then change the writing to the present tense.

The study that showed students shifting to different sugary drinks also warned about other ways that students make up for school-based bans. While students who were not heavy soda users did drink less due to bans, heavy drinkers made up for the bans with increased consumption outside of school.

Answers will vary.

ACTIVITY 2

**Constructing a Research Presentation Together**

1. As a class, brainstorm some possible topics for a research project that involves the idea of change.

   Students’ responses will vary. Possible topics include telephone technology, climate change, computer technology, agriculture, or cosmetics testing.
2. With your teacher, you and your classmates will choose a research topic, develop possible questions to guide your research on this topic, and create a research plan.
• What topic has the class chosen to research?

• In small groups, compose at least three open-ended questions that could be used to investigate the topic the class has chosen. Then, as a class, you will decide which questions you want to pursue.

3. Use the following graphic organizer to create a plan for conducting the class research. Decide what information you will need to answer your questions and what sources would best provide that information.

Research Plan

Looking for Expertise: What sort of journalistic sources (newspapers, magazines, news websites) might have useful information on this topic?

Looking for Expertise: What sort of government agencies might provide useful information?

Looking for Expertise: What sort of educational institutions might provide useful information? (For example, what department at a university might share information that would be helpful?)

Specific Questions to Answer | Ideas for Where to Find the Answer
---|---

TEACHER TO TEACHER

Check online sites prior to sharing them with students to avoid inappropriate sites. You may want to explore the site, www.netTrekker.com, which is an educator’s clearinghouse for classroom research use.

**TEACH**

1. Students can brainstorm topics for research that involve the idea of change. Students should share their favorites. Once you have decided on a class research topic with students, model for them how to create open-ended questions that will help focus and limit a broad topic such as “changes in computers.”

2. After the class has decided upon preliminary questions to help focus their research, create a research plan using the graphic organizer provided that describes what information is needed and where that information might be found.
3 Next, discuss primary and secondary sources. The categorization exercise should help solidify their learning.

4 Supply source documents (both primary and secondary) that can be used for the class research. Help students understand the differences between primary and secondary sources and print and electronic sources by showing relevant examples to the class. Share situations in which each type of resource would be most appropriate for specific research topics.

5 After discussing research sources, have student groups use the research plan to guide note-taking on the class-chosen topic. You may want to spend a few minutes sharing methods for taking notes, such as using 3 x 5 cards or separate notebook pages for the notes from each source. Groups can split up the task of creating notes and then share them with you.

6 Assign students to take notes or to create notecards on the class research topic. Check that students are selecting information that is relevant to the topic and that they are correctly paraphrasing or quoting the information.

7 Provide an example of the format you want students to use for their bibliographies. The sample text uses MLA format.

8 Be sure to supply a source that has data presented in a graph or chart so students can practice converting data displayed in chart or graph form into written descriptions. Guide students through analyzing the data. Then have them write the interpretation of the data as a class.

9 Now, guide the class in evaluating the information they have collected for the class research.

### Writing Workshop 6 (continued)

#### Gathering Relevant and Reliable Information

1. To gather relevant information about a topic, researchers use either primary or secondary sources.
   - A primary source is an original document that provides firsthand information about a subject.
   - A secondary source summarizes or interprets information from a primary source.

Your topic will help determine the relevance of each type of source to your research question.

Read the following list of sources. Categorize each as a primary or secondary source.

- Diaries of soldiers (Primary)
- Encyclopedia articles (Secondary)
- Interviews (Primary)
- Documentary films about the Civil War (Secondary)
- Letters (Primary)
- Ship logs of passenger names (Primary)
- Nonfiction books about specific battles of the Civil War (Secondary)
- Newspaper articles (Secondary)
- Biographies (Secondary)

5. In your research, you will use both print and electronic sources. What are the benefits and drawbacks of each kind of source? In general, why are print sources such as encyclopedias and books more reliable than Internet sources? Why might electronic sources be more valuable for certain topics?

6. You will now examine source documents related to the research topic chosen by the class. Your goal is to determine whether each resource is valid (authoritative) and reliable. Using the information below, evaluate the reliability and validity of the sources provided. How can you tell that information is relevant and reliable? Why is this information important for you to know?

#### Internet Sites

Some Internet sites may contain more valid information than others. A valid Internet source is one that contains information that is well researched, a bibliography or list of resources, and a statement of the site’s purpose. One way to know whether a Web site is valid is through its domain suffix. The domain name is the Web address, or Internet identity. The domain suffix, typically the three letters that follow the “dot,” is the category in which that Web site falls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain Suffix</th>
<th>Definition/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.com</td>
<td>Stands for “commercial.” Web sites with this suffix are created to make a profit from their Internet services. Typically these Web sites sell goods or services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.org</td>
<td>Stands for “organization.” Primarily used by non-profit groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.net</td>
<td>Stands for “network.” Primarily used by online service providers, or Web-hosting companies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.edu</td>
<td>Stands for “education.” Used by major universities or educational organizations or institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.gov</td>
<td>Stands for “government.” Used by U.S. government sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Evaluating Online Resources

Anyone can publish on the World Wide Web. This is both one of the strengths and one of the flaws of the Internet. If you are going to use online sources, you must be aware of the differences in quality that exist among Web sites. The following is a list of measures that you should use to judge any Internet source you use. You want to be able to answer “yes” to as many of the questions as possible in the far right column to use the source as authoritative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Is the site free from grammatical and typographical errors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the links and graphics operate properly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Was the information verified by a third party?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity or Objectivity</td>
<td>Does the information appear to be well researched?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there a bibliography or list of sources?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there a statement about the purpose of the site?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there a list of measures that you should use to judge any Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>source you use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the site appear to be free from bias or a single position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Are the author’s name and qualifications clearly identified?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the URL address match the site’s name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the site listed as a .gov or .edu or .org, rather than.com?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the author appear to be well qualified to write on the subject?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the site part of a university or similarly respected institution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency and Uniqueness</td>
<td>Does the date the site was last updated appear?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has the site been updated recently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are any parts of the site “under construction?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are the majority of the articles on the site a part of that site (as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>opposed to links to other sites)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage</td>
<td>Does the site seem to cover the topic in full?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there other, related topics discussed on the site?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there a resources section with links to other sites?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 Help students develop an understanding of the characteristics that make sources valid and reliable, such as the expertise of the writer or publisher and relevant knowledge and experience. This is also the time to have a discussion about reliability and validity issues in print versus online sources. Information to help students evaluate Internet sites is included.

11 With the class, create a plan for an oral or written presentation of the research information. Use the Learning Targets and descriptors of an Exemplary essay product from the Scoring Guide as a checklist. Determine how to sequence the information on the cards. Evaluate which ones may not be necessary, considering that the topic may be refined or cards may have redundant information. You might then solicit members of the class to present the information. Include quoted material, and model the correct use of brackets and or ellipses to edit quoted material.
12 With students, write secondary questions to refine the original research topic and then, if necessary, complete the research to answer those additional questions.

**ASSESS**

Review the elements of the Scoring Guide for research writing. Model how you would score this work using the Scoring Guide. This will help students understand the scoring process and it will assist them with their own evaluation of their work.

Over the course of the activity, there have been various opportunities to check for understanding. Consider how well students were able find useful information in their sources as well as their ability to assess the reliability of those sources. What steps needed additional context or examples? Where did the entire class struggle? Where did individuals struggle? The next activity allows students to go through the research process in a group, so there will be the opportunity to add extra support where needed.

**ADAPT**

Based on how students performed in this activity, you may revisit some elements of research writing for additional review and clarification before moving on to the next activity. If certain students seem to need additional support, you might group them together to differentiate instruction by offering some brief direct instruction while other partners begin the initial steps of Activity 3.

**ACTIVITY 3:**

**Creating a Group Research Presentation**

**PLAN**

**Materials:**
- Materials from Activities 1 and 2 to use as models
- Access to library and online materials

**Pacing:** 2–3 class periods

Students will use the modeling and practice from the class-generated research and note-taking to plan and conduct research on a group chosen topic.

**Researching and Taking Notes**

1. Working in groups, take notes on your research topic from the sources provided. Remember to choose information that is relevant to the topic and research question(s).

2. Take your notes on separate cards or pages, numbering each note card with the same number as the source card number. Practice paraphrasing information rather than copying it word-for-word from the source.

3. Create bibliography cards for each source you consult for information. Number each source card for easy reference.

4. In your research, you may find relevant information in a graph or a chart. Choose an example of this from the source materials provided and summarize the represented information in written form.

**Refocusing Research**

5. After taking notes about your topic, refine the research question by evaluating and synthesizing the information that you have gathered.

6. As you examine your findings, you may see that you need more information. To guide additional research, think about secondary questions whose answers will fill in needed information. As a class, write three or four secondary questions for your research question.

7. Complete the research by collecting information on your secondary questions. Create additional note cards and bibliographic information as necessary.

8. With your class, you will prepare and carry out a presentation plan for the information you have assembled to answer your research questions. Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task. It will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts. Be sure to
   - Answer your research question
   - Develop an organization to present your evidence, reasoning, and conclusions
   - Include topic sentences and well-organized information in your body paragraphs
   - Choose what you consider important quotations from your sources and work these smoothly into your report
   - Include a Works Cited page

**ACTIVITY 3**

**Creating a Group Research Presentation**

1. With your writing group, use the brainstorming process to choose a topic. Show some of your work here.
2. Next, generate open-ended questions about your topic. Refine, add, and delete questions as needed. Then choose one question as your major research question. Write your major research question here.

3. Use the graphic organizer to develop a plan that explains how you will research this topic and gather information to answer the major research question.

**Research Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Looking for Expertise: What sort of journalistic sources (newspapers, magazines, news websites) might have useful information on this topic?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looking for Expertise: What sort of government agencies might provide useful information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for Expertise: What sort of educational institutions might provide useful information? (For example, what department at a university might share information that would be helpful?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Questions to Answer</th>
<th>Ideas for Where to Find the Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION**

Create small discussion groups for students to work in on a peer constructed research project. You might choose to assign these groups based on their readiness, as determined by the previous work. That way you can differentiate instruction and provide additional support for groups that need it. Because students will conduct research on their group topic in the next activity, you may want to provide possible topics from which they can choose.

Depending on the access your students have to library and online materials, you may want to assign some or all of the research for the small group constructed research paper as homework or library work.

**TEACH**

1. With their writing groups, ask students to brainstorm and generate a research topic.

2. Students should apply their new learning about evaluating and refining a research question for their group created research.

3. Writing groups should work together to write a research plan. As groups are writing their plans, monitor their understanding of the research process and redirect to address any misunderstandings.
4. Ask groups to find valid and reliable primary and secondary sources for the topic their group has chosen to research.

5. Assign students to take notes on cards and to record bibliographic information for each source.

**TEACHER TO TEACHER**

In order to monitor students’ use of primary and secondary sources, as well as paraphrasing and plagiarism, you might require students to make copies of their online sources and to mark and annotate the source texts; then have them attach the sources to their final papers.

6. When students are considering whether to broaden or narrow the extent of their questions during the refining stage, have each group report as a check for understanding.

7. Work with students to refine their thesis, asking them to evaluate for clarity and effectiveness when introducing the research topic.

8. Remind students to consider the audience for their presentation. They should consider if they have provided the appropriate level of background information for their classmates or if they’ve included information that is not necessary for this audience.

9. Have each group present its findings to the class in a manner you determine. They should also turn in a written copy as well as printed copies of any online sources.

**ASSESS**

Have the groups compare their work to the Scoring Guide to evaluate their work. Ask them to follow the example you provided when you modeled evaluating the class-constructed research against the Scoring Guide in an earlier activity.

Continually monitor students as they work, having them share their progress. Note which students need additional support or intervention, as they will likely need more attention during the independent research phase. Look over the students’ use of quotations and paraphrasing to assess the need for further instruction for the class or selected groups.

**Writing Workshop 6 (continued)**

4. Using the previous class activities as a model, work with your small group to find valid and reliable primary and secondary sources for the selected research topic. Use questions from the chart “Evaluating Online Sources” to help you evaluate the sources that you find.

5. Once you have found, examined, and evaluated these sources, take notes on cards and record the bibliographic information for each source from which you have taken information.

6. After finishing the first round of research on your group topic, examine and discuss the research you have done. Create additional questions that will help broaden or narrow your original topic so you can refine the topic and collect more focused information, if necessary.

7. After completing your research, assemble the information into a report and prepare to present the report orally. Use the following process to build your report:
   - Write a thesis statement and paragraph that answers your research question.
   - Compose one or two paragraphs that support the thesis with the most useful and meaningful information you have gathered.
   - Write a conclusion to your report that follows from and supports the research information presented.
   - Read and revise your paragraphs for effective topic sentences and the organization of the information.
   - Use both paraphrased and direct quotations. When quoting, use ellipses and brackets when appropriate.
   - Present your research findings, including a Works Cited page.

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task. It will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

8. In groups, be ready to present your findings orally to the class.

**ACTIVITY 4**

**Independent Research**

1. For this task, follow the same process to research a topic and present it to your peers. Remember to:
   - Choose a topic that can be researched
   - Write a research question
   - Use the “Research Plan” graphic organizer to create a research plan, identifying valid sources
   - Conduct the research and take notes
   - Evaluate your findings and determine whether to write additional questions for research
   - Assemble your findings into a report for presentation to your peers
Research Plan

- Write a well-organized thesis paragraph, supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion
- Include paraphrased information as well as correctly punctuated quotations (use ellipses and brackets when appropriate)
- Use the Scoring Guide to review and revise your writing to correct errors in conventions
- Present your report in a manner directed by your teacher

Looking for Expertise: What sort of journalistic sources (newspapers, magazines, news websites) might have useful information on this topic?

Looking for Expertise: What sort of government agencies might provide useful information on this topic?

Looking for Expertise: What sort of educational institutions might provide useful information on this topic? (For example what department at a university might share information that would be helpful?)

Specific Questions to Answer | Ideas for Where to Find the Answer
--- | ---

ACTIVITY 4:
Independent Research

**PLAN**

**Materials:**
- Materials from Activities 1 and 2 to use as models
- Access to library and online materials

**Pacing:** 2–3 class periods

**TEACHER TO TEACHER**

Though this activity is meant to be independent work, consider which students may need more direct intervention. Also, you may wish to have some general ideas for research topics. Consider what access you can provide students to print and online resources.

**TEACH**

1. Review the prompt, the Learning Targets, and the Scoring Guide to help students understand the requirements of the activity.

   Students are directed to work independently. They will choose a research topic, follow the same process from prior activities to plan and conduct research, and present their findings to the class in a manner you determine.

**ASSESS**

Having students share their planning or first few sources with you could allow you to assess their progress before they begin drafting the presentation itself. A detailed Scoring Guide is included to help assess students’ performance as independent writers. It is also a useful tool to communicate expectations to students so that they are able to understand their own progress and make goals for further growth.
ADAPT
This activity can be adapted to meet the needs of students by adding more or less structure. The graphic organizer can be used to plan research by considering potential sources of information. However, this may not be necessary for all students.

**SCORING GUIDE**
Use the Scoring Guide throughout this workshop to remind students of the elements expected to be included in their essays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development of Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The presentation • communicates a well-developed answer to a research question • presents relevant and credible information from multiple sources to thoroughly guide the reader’s understanding of the main ideas • incorporates quotes or paraphrases the ideas of others effectively while providing standard bibliographic information</td>
<td>The presentation • presents a clear answer to a research question • uses credible information from relevant sources to guide the reader’s understanding of the main ideas • uses quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while providing basic bibliographic information</td>
<td>The presentation • presents an unfocused and/or minimally developed answer to a research question • contains information that may not be credible and/or may confuse the reader’s understanding of the main ideas • contains few quotes or paraphrasing of others’ ideas and/or provides incomplete bibliographic information</td>
<td>The presentation • does not present an answer to a research question • does not support main idea with information • lacks a bibliography or works cited page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Structure</strong></td>
<td>The presentation • leads with an effective, engaging introduction • effectively sequences ideas and uses meaningful transitions to clarify the relationship among ideas • provides an insightful conclusion that follows from and supports the research presented</td>
<td>The presentation • presents a clear and focused introduction • sequences ideas and uses transitions to create coherence • provides a conclusion that connects the larger ideas presented in the research</td>
<td>The presentation • contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction • presents disconnected ideas and limited use of transitions • contains an underdeveloped or unfocused conclusion</td>
<td>The presentation • contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction • presents disconnected ideas and no use of transitions • lacks a conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The presentation • is deliberately chosen to the research topic • uses a variety of sentence structures to enhance the explanation • demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English, including correct punctuation of quotations</td>
<td>The presentation • uses diction that is appropriate to the research topic • uses a variety of sentence structures • demonstrates general command of conventions; minor errors in punctuation, including punctuation of quotations, grammar, capitalization, or spelling do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The presentation • uses diction that is inappropriate at times to the research topic • shows little or no variety in sentence structure • demonstrates limited command of conventions; errors in grammar, punctuation, including punctuation of quotations, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The presentation • uses diction that is inappropriate to the research topic • shows no variety in sentence structure • makes frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, including punctuation of quotations, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing Workshop 6 (continued)

ScORiNG GUiDE

Scoring criteria

Exemplary

Proficient

Emerging

incomplete

Development of ideas

• The presentation communicates a well-developed answer to a research question
• Presents relevant and credible information from multiple sources to thoroughly guide the reader’s understanding of the main ideas
• Incorporates quotes or paraphrases the ideas of others effectively while providing standard bibliographic information

The presentation
• Presents a clear answer to a research question
• Uses credible information from relevant sources to guide the reader’s understanding of the main ideas
• Uses quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while providing basic bibliographic information

The presentation
• Presents an unfocused and/or minimally developed answer to a research question
• Contains information that may not be credible and/or may confuse the reader’s understanding of the main ideas
• Contains few quotes or paraphrasing of others’ ideas and/or provides incomplete bibliographic information

The presentation
• Does not present an answer to a research question
• Does not support main idea with information
• Lacks a bibliography or works cited page

Organizational Structure

The presentation
• Leads with an effective, engaging introduction
• Effectively sequences ideas and uses meaningful transitions to clarify the relationship among ideas
• Provides an insightful conclusion that follows from and supports the research presented

The presentation
• Presents a clear and focused introduction
• Sequences ideas and uses transitions to create coherence
• Provides a conclusion that connects the larger ideas presented in the research

The presentation
• Contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction
• Presents disconnected ideas and limited use of transitions
• Contains an underdeveloped or unfocused conclusion

The presentation
• Contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction
• Presents disconnected ideas and no use of transitions
• Lacks a conclusion

Use of Language

The presentation
• Uses diction that is deliberately chosen to the research topic
• Uses a variety of sentence structures to enhance the explanation
• Demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English, including correct punctuation of quotations

The presentation
• Uses diction that is appropriate to the research topic
• Uses a variety of sentence structures
• Demonstrates general command of conventions; minor errors in punctuation, including punctuation of quotations, grammar, capitalization, or spelling do not interfere with meaning

The presentation
• Uses diction that is inappropriate at times to the research topic
• Shows little or no variety in sentence structure
• Demonstrates limited command of conventions; errors in grammar, punctuation, including punctuation of quotations, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning

The presentation
• Uses diction that is inappropriate to the research topic
• Shows no variety in sentence structure
• Makes frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, including punctuation of quotations, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning