



Writing for Middle School 5-6 Syllabus

Course Goals

1 Growing a Writing Process

Students write essays daily, with expository and persuasive prompts, using the writing process.

2 Improving Essay Organization

Students study effective paragraph and essay structure, then practice it in their essays.

3 Effective Evidence

Students practice choosing and using effective evidence to support their arguments.

4 Persuasive Writing Techniques

Students study effective persuasive arguments.

5 Revising and Editing

Students employ effective word choice, revision, and editing to improve clarity and flow.

Course Topics

1 Reading and Responding to Essay Prompts

Students learn how to analyze and respond appropriately to prompts.

2 Essay and Paragraph Structure

Students outline and revise the structure of their essays.

3 Thesis Statements

Students evaluate thesis statements and practice writing their own.

4 Persuasive Arguments

Students practice writing their own persuasive arguments.

5 Diction

Students study how effective word choice strengthens an argument.

6 Grammar

Students practice avoiding common grammar mistakes.

7 Mechanics

Students create an individualized guide to address mechanical error patterns that emerge in their own writing.

8 Clean Style

Students practice revision techniques to improve clarity and flow.

9 Idioms

Students define and illustrate idioms.

Course Schedule

Day 1

Icebreaker

Students introduce themselves and get to know their classmates.

Intro to Course

Students preview course content and discuss the elements of writing.

Pretest

Students respond to an expository text as a measure of their writing skills.

Workshop and Goal-Setting

Students discuss and analyze their pre-test essay and make a writing goal for the next two weeks.

Day 2

Reading and Responding to Prompts

Students learn to analyze and respond to prompts.

Brainstorming

Students practice different types of brainstorming and choose one they tried that works best for them.

Persuasive Essay 1

Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on brainstorming techniques they chose earlier.

Peer Review

Students observe a model of peer reviewing and practice giving peers writing feedback.

Idioms

Students review the definition of idioms by illustrating them.

Day 3

Peer Review

Students practice reading each other's writing and providing feedback.

Reflection 1

Students reflect on Persuasive Essay 1 and its Peer Review.

Evidence-Based Claims

Students identify claims and evidence in nonfiction reading and practice creating evidence for claims and vice-versa.

Reading and Responding Review

Students review how to read and respond to a prompt.

Persuasive Essay 2

Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on evidence-based claims they studied earlier.

Day 4

Five Paragraph Essay Structure

Students practice using the five-paragraph essay structure.

Revising vs. Editing

Students review the meaning of revising and editing.

Persuasive Essay 3

Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on the five paragraph essay structure they studied earlier.

Peer Review and Teacher Conferences

Students practice reading each other's writing and providing feedback while the instructor conferences with individual students.

Day 5

Reflection 2

Students reflect on Persuasive Essay 3 and its Peer Review

Review Five Paragraph Essay structure

Students review the five-paragraph essay structure.

Persuasive Arguments

Students evaluate persuasive arguments and essays.

Thesis Statements

Students review the definition of thesis statements, practice identifying them, and practice writing them.

Persuasive Essay 4

Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on thesis statements they studied earlier.

Day 6

Revisit Goals and Preview Portfolio

Students revise their goals and preview the portfolio assignment.

Expository vs. Persuasive Writing

Students compare and contrast expository writing and persuasive writing.

Thesis Statement Competition

Students review thesis statements.

Revising and Editing

Students practice editing and revising after watching a model of each.

Expository Essay 1

Students respond to an expository writing prompt, focusing on thesis statements they reviewed earlier.

Day 7

Peer Review and Teacher Conferences

Students practice reading each other's writing and providing feedback, while the instructor conferences with individual students.

Revising with Legos

Students practice revising their essays after practicing revising with Legos.

Expository Essay 2

Students respond to an expository writing prompt, focusing on thesis statements they reviewed earlier.

Expository Writing Discussion

Students read an expository writing example as a mentor text and discuss.

Day 8

Reflection 3

Students reflect on Expository Essay 2.

Grammar and Mechanics

Students practice editing their papers after practicing grammar exercises with the class.

Intro to Visual Literacy

Students practice visual literacy with primary sources.

Visual Literacy Continued

Students practice visual literacy with primary sources.

Expository Essay 3

Students respond to a expository writing prompt, which is a response to the Visual Literacy lesson.

Day 9

Portfolio Intro

Students choose writing pieces for their writing portfolio.

Peer Review and Teacher Conferences

Students practice reading each other's writing and providing feedback, while the instructor conferences with individual students.

Expository Essay Self-Edits

Students edit their Expository Essays 1-3 independently.

Expository Writing Discussion

Students read an expository writing example as a mentor text and discuss.

Expository Essay 4

Students respond to a expository writing prompt, using describing words and phrases like those they read in the earlier discussion.

Day 10

Portfolio Preparations

Students prepare their writing for their portfolios via conferences and individual work.

Finalize Portfolios and Art Walk

Students finalize their writing portfolios, then share with the class and give one another feedback.

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Updated on 6/25/2019