

Non-Fiction Essay Writing: A Unit Plan for English 11



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Unit Title: What makes something a good piece of non-fiction writing?

Grade Level: English 11

Duration: 4 weeks—10 lessons of 80 minutes in length

Rationale:

The ability to write a coherent, unified piece of writing is an essential skill whether the student plans to attend university, enter the business world, travel or pursue some other pastime after graduation. While non-fiction writing is just one style of writing, the skills and techniques employed in writing an excellent piece of non-fiction transfer to many other forms of writing including academic research papers, business letters, hypertext and creative writing. During this unit students will learn and apply several essential writing skills including formulating a thesis, identifying audience and purpose and organizing an argument.

Students will also improve their ability to read and think critically through the examination of several non-fiction essays. They will be asked to identify the use of various essay writing techniques in an assorted selection of prose. They will also be asked to critically analyze the effectiveness of these techniques in each piece. In this way, they will familiarize themselves with the basic building blocks of effective non-fiction from sentence variety to well-constructed paragraphs to properly ordered points. They will then put these techniques into practice by writing their own pieces of non-fiction, and with practice, they will hopefully become more efficient and effective writers and communicators.

While the focus of the unit is on improving writing skills, students will also be asked to improve other communication skills during various in-class activities. These activities—including small group work and class discussion—will ask students to develop their social, speaking and questioning skills. They will also participate in peer assessment of their papers, which will help them develop the valuable skills of offering tactful, constructive criticism and praise—a valuable skill in the social, business and academic worlds.

IRP Prescribed Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the main ideas, events or themes of a variety of increasingly complex novels, dramas, stories, poetry, other print material and electronic media.
2. Analyze communication to identify weak argumentation.
3. Adjust their form, style, tone and language to suit specific audiences and purposes.
4. Develop focussed inquiry questions with specific purposes and audiences in mind.
5. Use a variety of planning strategies to generate and access ideas.
6. Clarify and focus their topics to suit their purposes and audiences.
7. Apply various strategies to generate and shape ideas.
8. Assess their own and others' work for sentence clarity, precision of language use and variety and artistry of presentation.
9. Use appropriate criteria to critique and appraise their own and others' ideas, use of language and presentation forms, taking into consideration the purposes of the communication.
10. Demonstrate a willingness to accept and provide constructive criticism and feedback to improve the clarity, meaning and style of their communication.

11. Demonstrate pride and satisfaction in using language to create and express ideas and personal viewpoints.
12. Create a variety of communications using different tones and voices to evoke emotions, influence, persuade and entertain.

Unit Goals:

Students will be able to:

1. Write a coherent, well-structured piece of non-fiction.
2. Identify the key elements of non-fiction writing (e.g. introduction, thesis, main points, conclusion, etc.)
3. Critically examine and intelligently discuss several non-fiction texts.
4. Employ sentence variety, quotations, etc. to strengthen writing.
5. Identify audience and purpose, create a narrow thesis, order main points, etc. to strengthen argument.
6. Peer edit a paper.
7. Self edit a paper.
8. Actively, cooperatively and respectfully participate in small group and full class discussions.

Teaching and Assessment Options:

This unit focuses on the reading and writing of non-fiction, so the focuses of teaching and assessment will be on getting students writing their own non-fiction and reading other pieces of non-fiction critically. Here are some activities and forms of assessment that I will employ during this unit that you may wish to try as well.

Reading Activities

- *Deceptively Simple Story:* Read a simple children's story that most of the class will be familiar with. I like Robert Munsch's *Paper Bag Princess*. Ask students if they consider this a complicated story that uses a variety of writing techniques. It is likely that they will say no. Using overheads of certain portions of the story, have the students examine the complexity and variety of many of the sentences. This activity is excellent for teaching sentence variety. It can also be used in creative writing classes to teach students about incorporating dialogue or updating traditional fairytales.
- *Paragraph Analysis:* Have students carefully examine a paragraph for its basic elements. This reading activity is a good way to illustrate the importance of topic sentences, unity and coherence for every paragraph.
- *Reading for Audience and Purpose:* Have students read a variety of articles (poems, short stories and even excerpts from novels are also options) and ask them to identify each author's audience and purpose. Have them compare how audience and purpose changes with genre, writing style, etc.
- *Critical Reading:* Select a piece of writing that will help you teach an element of non-fiction writing like introductions, development of an argument, incorporation of quotes, etc. Have students read the piece looking for these elements. Discuss how well the author used them.
- *Compare and Contrast:* Have students examine two or more pieces of writing with similar subjects, from the same genre, by the same author, etc. Have them read looking for similarities and differences. What non-fiction techniques does each piece employ? Are

- they used effectively in both pieces? What are the strengths of each piece? Is one text better than the other? How does the author make their essay stand out? Are their audiences and purposes different?
- *Putting it in Order:* Write the main points of a well-known story or essay on a sheet of paper, cut them into strips and mix them up. In groups or as a class, students can put the strips back into proper order. This activity illustrates the importance of ordering your points in a piece of writing.
 - *Title Assessment:* Have students examine several titles without their articles or stories. Have them vote on which pieces of writing they would be most likely to read based solely on the title. This reading activity is an excellent way of illustrating the importance of a good title for a successful piece of writing.

Writing Activities

- *Sentence Combining:* Develop your own worksheet or get one from a grammar textbook. Students should be asked to combine several simple sentences into more complex ones. This activity can be used to help teach students about the importance of sentence variety.
- *Round Robin Writing:* In small groups (3-5 people work best for this activity), students write portions of an essay. Everyone starts by writing their own. After a short period of time, they fold the paper so that only the last line is exposed, and the next person continues the paper using only that line as a reference to what has come before. They continue this process until each person in the group has contributed to every paper. The result is usually a very funny, but totally incoherent piece of writing. This activity can be used to teach about transitions, unity and coherence in essay writing or it can be modified into a creative writing activity.
- *Paragraph Writing:* Have students write a short, unified paragraph on a given topic that requires them to properly employ all essential paragraph elements. It is a good way to introduce them to a major building block of good essays.
- *Audience and Purpose Statements:* Students can write brief 1-2 sentence statements for their own or others work. This activity will help them understand the importance of identifying both audience and purpose before beginning the writing purpose, especially if you will be handing that piece of writing in to your teacher.
- *Writing Inquiry Questions:* To get students started on developing their own essay topics, have them write focussed, narrow questions about a topic or topics they would like to examine.
- *Thesis Statements:* Before beginning their essays, have students focus and narrow their topic by writing a thesis statement for the essay. This activity can be one stage of many that will slowly guide students through the writing process.
- *Pre-writing:* Students can use free writing, webbing, note taking, drawing and various other activities to help them generate ideas in advance of more formal writing. This activity is yet another stage in the writing process.
- *Outlining:* Have students identify the main points of their argument and organize them in an effective way. They may use a traditional outline format or they may try writing them out onto strips of paper or another method that they prefer.
- *Free writing:* Have students write without restriction for a given period of time on a topic, a quotation, a reading or a topic of their choosing.
- *Quote incorporation:* Using a worksheet, students can be taught how to incorporate quotes into their writing to improve their credibility and strengthen their arguments. They may be

- asked to incorporate quotes into a given statement, correct errors of incorporation or identify the best quote to use to illustrate a point.
- *Writing A Draft:* To begin to show students that writing is a process that requires revision; editing and proofreading, have them write at least one draft of an essay they will later hand in. Have them hand in the draft for you to mark or use the draft for a self or peer editing exercise.
 - *Writing Introductions and/or Conclusions:* As these are two of the most challenging aspects of essay writing, students can build their skills in writing both by crafting them separately from their essay and really focusing on the techniques that make an effective introduction and/or conclusion. It will also give them a good place to start from with a mind to where the essay is going.
 - *Writing A Title:* This skill is often overlooked when teaching essay writing, but students should be encouraged to practice writing in this format as well. Students may be asked to write a title for an essay they are working on or they may be given a short piece without a title and asked to design a title for it.
 - *Final Drafts:* After going through the various stages of writing including pre-writing, drafting and editing, students should produce a final draft that will be marked. Creating a final product is the best way to have students practice writing and employ it for some purpose.

Assessment

- *Peer Editing:* One form of assessment is to have the students critique each other's work. As this is a difficult skill to develop, a guiding worksheet may be helpful for the first few peer edit activities.
- *Essays:* One of the best ways to assess achievement and comprehension in a unit on non-fiction essay writing is to have students write an essay employing all the elements and techniques discussed during the course of the unit.
- *Jeopardy—Tournament of Essay Writing Champions:* As a final segment to the unit or as a review before an exam, a game of Jeopardy designed to test basic comprehension of essay writing essentials. It may also ask students to recall techniques employed in the non-fiction pieces read for class. The game should be constructed in a way that requires participation from all students in the class.

Lesson 1: Basic Sentence Structure and Variety

Lesson Title: Are all sentences created equal?

Resources:

- *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch
- Sentence variety overheads
- Overheads with portions of the text from *The Paper Bag Princess*
- Sentence combining worksheets

Teaching Strategies:¹

- Deceptively Simple Story
- Sentence Combining

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Evaluate the sentence variety of a simple text.
2. Combine simple sentences to create variety.

Introduction/Hook (5 minutes):

- Brainstorm a list of types of non-fiction writing (e.g. political speeches, advertising, newspaper articles, history texts, etc.)
- Explain that we will be focussing on essay writing, but that many of the techniques we will be learning can be applied to other types of non-fiction writing.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Read The Paper Bag Princess (10 minutes):* Read story then ask students if it is a complicated text. Is it an example of sophisticated writing? Ideally, they will say no because it's a children's story and, therefore, not complex or sophisticated.
2. *Explanation of sentence structure and variety (20 minutes):* Explain that sentence variety is essential to interesting and effective writing and that good writers consciously employ various sentence writing techniques to improve their writing. List and illustrate the four main ways to create sentence variety: length, kind, pattern and scheme. Use the sentence variety overheads.
3. *Revisit The Paper Bag Princess (20 minutes):* Using overheads with excerpts from the story, have students look at the sentence variety employed by Munsch. Ask them to reflect on their earlier statements.
4. *Sentence Combining (20 minutes):* Give students a worksheet that will give them an opportunity to practice creating sentences that have variety.

Closure (5 minutes):

- Restate the importance of sentence variety and reiterate the easiest ways to achieve it: length, kind, pattern and scheme.
- Assign homework, if necessary.

¹ For all teaching strategies, please see list of Teaching Options for more detailed information on how to employ them in a lesson.

Extension:

- *Sentence Recreation:* Students who finish the sentence combining activity early can take one sentence from Munsch's story and re-write it 5 or more different ways to help them practice writing with a mind to sentence variety.
- *Extension Assessment:* Examine all sentences to be sure that they are grammatically correct and that each one actually has a different structure.

Assessment:

- Collect sentence combining worksheets. Assess them for grammatical correctness of combined sentences and ability to use different techniques to create more complicated sentences.

Homework:

- If necessary, students may complete the sentence combining worksheet.

Lesson 2: Writing a Proper Paragraph

Lesson Title: Why do they call the paragraph the microcosm of an essay?

Resources:

- Overhead of Vladimir Nabokov's paragraph essay "The Exam Room"
- Overhead on paragraphs

Teaching Strategies:

- Paragraph Analysis
- Critical Reading
- Round Robin Writing
- Paragraph Writing

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Identify the basic elements of a paragraph.
2. Evaluate the use of RENNS in a paragraph.
3. Understand the importance of coherence and transitions in writing.

Introduction/Hook (30 minutes):

- Have the class form groups of 4. Explain how a Round Robin works. Have them begin writing on the topic of exams.
- Every 5 minutes have them exchange papers.
- Once everyone has written something on each paper, have students read their original papers. Some students should then be asked to share what they have with the class.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Mini-lecture (20 minutes):* Explain the point of the Round Robin: smooth, effective transitions between paragraphs are important and overall coherence and unity at both the paragraph and paper level is essential. Put up an overhead that explains how a paragraph is like a mini-essay: topic sentence=thesis statement, concluding sentence=conclusion, unifying idea=argument. On the same overhead, have an explanation of RENNS, a component of great paragraphs. RENNS stands for:
 - Reasons
 - Examples
 - Names
 - Numbers
 - Specific/sensory details
2. *Paragraph Analysis (15 minutes):* Put up an overhead of Nabokov's "The Exam Room" and have students evaluate as a paragraph and for its use of RENNS.
3. *Explain Homework Assignment (10 minutes):* Students will write a paragraph of _-1 page in length on the topic of privacy. They will be expected to have a topic sentence, a concluding sentence and a unifying idea. They will also be expected to use RENNS. Have students copy these instructions from the overhead. Students will also be asked to bring in a short article from a magazine or newspaper for next class. Students should be encouraged to bring in articles from a variety of sources: e.g. different sections of different

papers, magazines that target different age or interest groups, newspapers that target different regions, etc.

Closure (*5 minutes*):

- Review the basic elements of a paragraph with the class. Review what RENNS stands for.
- Assign homework.

Extension:

- *Analysis of Sentence Variety:* Students who finish early can analyze "The Exam Room" for its sentence variety.
- *Extension Assessment:* Students responses should demonstrate comprehension of the previous lesson on sentence variety. Students should be able to explain why one sentence varies in structure from another.

Assessment:

- Evaluate students' contributions to the discussion of "The Exam Room" for their ability to identify the components of a paragraph and their ability to point out the use of RENNS.
- When the paragraphs are handed in next class, they will be evaluated for their proper use and/or inclusion of the following elements:
 - A clear topic sentence
 - An effective concluding sentence
 - Overall paragraph unity
 - The use of RENNS to increase reader interest

Homework:

- Bring in a short article from a magazine or newspaper.
- Write a short paragraph on privacy.

Lesson 3: Identifying Audience and Purpose

Lesson Title: Why do we write and whom do we write for?

Resources:

- Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes*
- Copies of a few articles from magazines and newspapers in the event that some students do not bring anything in.
- Sheet of possible essay topics and

Teaching Strategies:

- Reading for Audience and Purpose
- Audience and Purpose Statements

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Write audience and purpose statements for a variety of articles.
2. Demonstrate their understanding of audience and purpose by identifying their own audience and purpose for the essay they will be writing during this unit.

Introduction/Hook (10 minutes):

- Read "Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf" from Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes*.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Explain audience and purpose (10 minutes):* Explain that being aware of whom we are writing for and why we are writing what we are writing are very important for success in writing. Ask the class who they think Dahl's audience is. Then ask why they think they wrote the poem in the first place.
2. *Reading For Audience and Purpose (20 minutes):* Have the students choose a partner. Have them exchange articles with each other and write audience and purpose statements for each article. They should switch back and see if they agree with their partner's statements. If they do not agree, they should collaborate and write one they can both agree on.
3. *Introduce Essay Assignment (25 minutes):* Pass out sheets with details of the essay assignment. The topics will be very general so that students will have some freedom to develop their own essay question. Tell students we will be working on the essay quite a bit in class. In fact, the only thing they will have to do for their essay for next class will be to think about what they want to write about.
4. *Audience and Purpose Statements (10 minutes):* Students will write an audience and purpose statement for their papers. These can be quite general, as students will only have a rough idea as to the topic of their essay. They will be asked to reconsider these statements and revise them as they begin to work on their essays in earnest.

Closure (5 minutes):

- To help illustrate the real world applications of an understanding of audience and purpose, I will end the class with my own statement of audience and purpose for this lesson.
- Assign homework.

Extension:

- Read another of Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes* and discuss his audience and purpose. Is it any different than the other poem we read?

Assessment:

- Students will hand in their articles along with the audience and purpose statements they created for them. They will be assessed for how accurately they identify the audience and purpose of the article.

Homework:

- Students will read "Reaction-Interaction" by Diane Kenyon for next class. The essay can be found in their non-fiction Anthology, *Viewpoints 11*, on pages 315-317.

Lesson 4: Introductions and Thesis Statements

Lesson Title: What do we need to get started?

Resources:

- Baking soda, vinegar and some containers to catch the mess.
- Handouts on making a thesis.
- "Reaction-Interaction" from *Viewpoints 11*
- Overheads on writing good introductions and creating a narrow topic for inquiry.
- Copies of "A Nice Place to Visit."

Teaching Strategies:

- Critical Reading
- Writing Inquiry Questions
- Thesis Statements
- Writing Introductions
- Pre-writing

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Identify the thesis statement in a piece of writing and evaluate the quality of a text's introduction.
2. Develop a narrow essay topic and/or write an inquiry question.
3. Draft a thesis statement.
4. Pre-write to generate ideas for their paper.

Introduction/Hook (10 minutes):

- Hold up baking soda and vinegar. Ask students what they think will happen if I mix them together in a cup. Students will contribute guesses. Hopefully a few of them will know that baking soda and vinegar chemically react when mixed together and produce foam.
- Test out their theory by mixing the two together.
- Ask if anyone knows the word used in science to describe the educated guess you make before conducting an experiment. Hopefully someone will know that it is a hypothesis.
- Connect hypothesis with its equivalent in writing: the thesis statement. The thesis is what you want your essay to prove. What you say as you write is like the experiment you conduct in science. Finally, your conclusion is where you decide if your "experiment" fulfilled your "hypothesis."

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Mini lecture (10 minutes):* Explain that a thesis statement is the most important part of an introduction, but that there are other elements to an introduction as well. Put up some tips on how to start a paper.
2. *Critical Reading (15 minutes):* Look at "Reaction-Interaction." What is its thesis statement? Is its introduction good? Does the introduction use any of the tips from the list on the overhead?
3. *Developing a Paper Topic (15 minutes):* Put up an overhead about writing a good, narrow, focussed topic—it should follow the 4 S's: single, specific, significant and supportable.

Handout a sheet with tips on writing a good thesis statement. Students should then take a few minutes to develop a narrowed topic for their essay. They should write this down on a piece of paper with their names on it and hand it in, so I know what they will be writing about.

4. *Pre-writing (20 minutes)*: Explain several options for pre-writing for an essay: webbing, brainstorming, free writing, drawing, note taking, etc. Students will have the rest of class time to pre-write and generate ideas for their paper.

Closure (10 minutes):

- Students will be writing an introduction and thesis statement for their papers for homework, so review possible essay openers with them.
- Assign homework.

Extension:

- Students who finish pre-writing early may begin to work on their thesis statements and introductions.

Assessment:

- During class, students will be evaluated on their ability to correctly identify the thesis of Kenyon's articles. The sufficiency of their criteria for assessing the quality of her introduction will also be evaluated.
- I will collect their written statement of their essay topics and assess them based on how broad or narrow they are. I will also see if they fall in line with the 4 S's.
- I will collect their draft introductions next class and evaluate them for the following: a focussed, narrow, supportable thesis and the use of at least one of the introduction techniques discussed in class.

Homework:

- Draft introduction
- Read "A Nice Place To Visit"

Lesson 5: Constructing an Argument

Lesson Title: How do we know where we're going?

Resources:

- Story on strips of paper for Putting it in Order.
- Copy of "A Nice Place To Visit"
- Overhead about order and types of essays
- Copies of "Edmonton Vs. Calgary"

Teaching Strategies:

- Putting it in Order
- Critical Reading
- Outlining

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Identify the main points of an essay
2. Understand the different types of non-fiction essays
3. Order their own supporting points

Introduction/Hook (15 minutes):

- Hand out strips of paper with descriptions of major events in a story on them to each student.
- Ask who thinks they have the first part of the story. They can come up and put it on the board. Continue in this way until all parts of the story are in proper order.
- Explain the importance of order for a paper.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Critical Reading (15 minutes):* Have students identify the main points of the argument in "A Nice Place To Visit." Ask them why they think the author put his points in that order.
2. *Mini-Lecture (20 minutes):* Explain that points can be ordered in many ways: climactically, chronologically, logically or randomly. The type of paper determines the most effective method. The 4 main types of essays are narrative, expository, argumentative and persuasive, and the difference between the three should be explained to students. Have students identify the type of order used in "A Nice Place to Visit."
3. *Model Outline Writing (10 minutes):* Explain that there are many ways to create an outline and I will demonstrate just one example. Demonstrate one form of outlining on overhead. Tell students they can use their prewriting exercise to help them identify their main points.
4. *Outlining (15 minutes):* Students can use the rest of class time to create an outline for their essay.

Closure (5 minutes):

- Make "real world" connection to outlining by showing students my lesson plan. Explain that it is an outline for a class. As my lesson plan helps me remember the important points of the lesson and the order in which I want to cover them, an outline can help them figure out their main points and the best order to put them in.

- Assign homework.

Extension:

- Students, who finish outlines quickly, can begin the draft of their essay.

Assessment:

- Students' ability to put points in a logical order will be assessed during the Putting It In Order activity and through the outlines they will hand in at the end of class.

Homework:

- Students who were unable to complete their outlines should complete them for homework and hand them in next class.
- Read "Edmonton vs. Calgary"

Lesson 6: Quotations and Citations

Lesson Title: How do we increase our credibility?

Resources:

- Overhead explaining incorporation of quotes and proper citations
- Quotation and citation worksheet

Teaching Strategies:

- Free writing
- Quote incorporation
- Writing A Draft

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Incorporate quotes into writing
2. Cite quotes and sources properly
3. Identify the appropriate quote to use to illustrate a point

Introduction/Hook (15 minutes):

- Write on the overhead: "The price of greatness is responsibility"—Winston Churchill
- Students will free write for ten minutes on this quote.
- Have 1 or 2 students volunteer to share what they wrote with the class.
- Discuss the activity saying that it illustrates the powerful effect of quotes.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Mini-lecture (20 minutes):* Pass out a handout on quotations and citations and use it to help explain how to incorporate quotes and cite them properly. Explain the citation of materials that are not quoted as well.
2. *Quote Incorporation Worksheet (20 minutes):* Students will complete a worksheet designed to help them practice incorporating and selecting quotes for a paper. It will also help them practice citing sources properly.
3. *Writing A Draft (20 minutes):* Students can begin drafting their essays after they hand in their worksheets.

Closure (5 minutes):

- End the class by quoting a famous good-bye speech to further illustrate the power of quotes: "Parting is such sweet sorrow / That I shall say good night till it be morrow."
- Assign homework

Extension:

- Anyone who finishes early can begin writing their draft sooner.

Assessment:

- Collect quotation/citation worksheet. Assess it using answer key.

Homework:

- Work on draft and finish reading "Edmonton vs. Calgary"

Lesson 7: Writing Conclusions

Lesson Title: How do we know if we got where we wanted to go?

Resources:

- Copy of The Doors' CD "The Doors"
- Copies of "Edmonton vs. Calgary" and "A Nice Place To Visit"
- Overhead with conclusion writing tips

Teaching Strategies:

- Critical Reading
- Compare and Contrast
- Writing Conclusions
- Writing A Draft

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Evaluate the progression of an argument from introduction to conclusion.
2. Compare the quality of arguments.
3. Write an effective conclusion.

Introduction/Hook (5 minutes):

- Play The Doors' "The End" to set the mood.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Mini-lecture (10 minutes):* Using overhead with conclusion tips, explain some of things to do to keep conclusions fresh and effective and some of the things to avoid.
2. *Critical Reading (20 minutes):* As a class, evaluate the quality of the conclusion in "Edmonton vs. Calgary" and contrast it with the conclusion to "A Nice Place to Visit." Compare the two essays to each other: What is the thesis? What are their main points? How do they order their points? How do they come to a conclusion? Does the conclusion connect to the thesis? On the whole, which essay is better written?
3. *Conclusion Writing (20 minutes):* Students should draft a conclusion considering the tips from the lecture.
4. *Finish Draft (20 minutes):* Students can finish their draft essay. They will be taking it home to make a typed copy for the peer edit next class.

Closure (5 minutes):

- Play the remainder of "The End" to illustrate how an introduction and conclusion should "shake hands."
- Assign homework.

Extension:

- Students, who finish early and are already finished their drafts, can write a short paragraph in the style of "Edmonton vs. Calgary" comparing two cities in BC.

Assessment:

- Assess students informally during class discussion based on their criteria for comparing and passing judgement on “Edmonton vs. Calgary” and “A Nice Place To Visit”

Homework:

- Two double-spaced, typed copies of draft
- Read “The Open Car” by Thomas King on pp. 335-342 in *Viewpoints 11*

Lesson 8: Editing, Proofreading and Revising

Lesson Title: How do we know what should stay and what should go?

Resources:

- Copy of William Zinsser's *On Writing Well*
- Peer editing worksheets

Teaching Strategies:

- Peer Editing
- Final Drafts

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Peer edit each other's papers.
2. Edit and revise their own papers.

Introduction/Hook (5 minutes):

- Read a selection from Zinsser's chapter on simplicity.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Mini-lecture (10 minutes):* Explain the difference between proofreading and editing.
2. *Peer edit (45 minutes):* In groups of 3, students should exchange papers. Using the peer editing sheets, each group member should peer edit the papers of the other two group members.
3. *Self-editing (15 minutes):* Time to make revisions of their drafts in consideration of the peer evaluations.

Closure (5 minutes):

- End class with a reminder that all writers make several drafts and that they should not be afraid to make serious changes even at this late stage.
- Assign homework

Extension:

- Students who finish the peer edit early will have more time to work on their revisions.

Assessment:

- Observe students during peer edit for tactful and respectful yet constructive criticism.
- Observe students for ability to accept criticism and use it to improve their work.

Homework:

- Final draft
- Read "The Open Car"

Lesson 9: Crafting Titles

Lesson Title: What makes us start reading?

Resources:

- Titles written on strips of paper and hung up around the room
- Overhead with short article or poem and list of suggested titles

Teaching Strategies:

- Title Assessment
- Writing A Title
- Final Drafts

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Write an effective title for their essay.

Introduction/Hook (15 minutes):

- Have several titles hanging up around the room on large strips of paper.
- Have students go around the room and read the titles. They can “vote” for articles they would actually like to read by putting a mark under the title.
- Go around the room and tally the marks. At popular titles, ask some students why they voted for it.
- Discuss the importance of a good title for encouraging the reader to start reading an article.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Pick A Title Activity (40 minutes):* Put a short piece of writing on the overhead. Read it aloud to students. Then show a list of 5 possible titles. The real title should not be on the list. In pairs, students should select the title they think is most appropriate for the text. Have each pair share the title they picked and why they chose that title. Then tell the students where the story came from; it's the dedication to *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck and doesn't actually have a title. Be sure to emphasize that this exercise proves that there are always many options for a title—even for an untitled piece.
2. *Mini-lecture (10 minutes):* Using an overhead, share some tips for title writing.
3. *Write A Title (10 minutes):* Students can write a title for their own essay.

Closure:

- Summarize the importance of a good title. Tell students they are not stuck with the one they created in class. After writing their final draft, they should re-evaluate its suitability.
- Assign homework.

Extension:

- If class time needs to be filled, begin reading “The Open Car” as a class as it is very important that everyone reads this essay.

Assessment:

- Evaluate the sufficiency of each pair's criteria for choosing a title during the pick a title activity.
- When the essays are handed in, pay careful attention to the suitability of the title.

Homework:

- Final draft
- Read "The Open Car"

Lesson 10: Review and Bending the Rules

Lesson Title: If we forget everything else, what should we remember? And once we know the rules, how do we know when we're ready to break them?

Resources:

- Jeopardy questions and overhead with dollar figures and categories.
- Copy of "The Open Car"
- Candy for prizes

Teaching Strategies:

- Critical Reading
- Compare and Contrast
- Essays
- Jeopardy—Tournament of Essay Writing Champions

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Recall basic essay writing skills and techniques and demonstrate their understanding of this information through active participation in the Jeopardy game.
2. Critically evaluate an unconventional piece of non-fiction looking for these elements.

Introduction/Hook (40 minutes):

- Play Jeopardy:
 - Divide the class into 3 teams and have them choose a team name.
 - Explain that each member of the team will have to participate. A person is "on the spot" for their team until they answer a question then the next person on the team steps up. They go in order, switching as often as necessary.
 - The team that answered the previous question correctly gets to choose the category of the next question.
 - To decide who gets to answer the question, the person representing each team will reach for a scarf once they think they know the answer. Whoever grabs the scarf first gets to answer.
 - Points will be tallied and the winners will receive candy.

Body of the Lesson:

1. *Discussion of "The Open Car" (25 minutes):* Look at the essay for basic essay elements: a thesis statement, an introduction, a conclusion, its main points, how those points are ordered, etc. Is this an unusual essay?

Closure (5 minutes):

- Explain to students that the fun of learning to write well is that then they can break the rules.
- Collect essays.

Extension:

- Final Jeopardy round. Have groups write a written response to the final question.

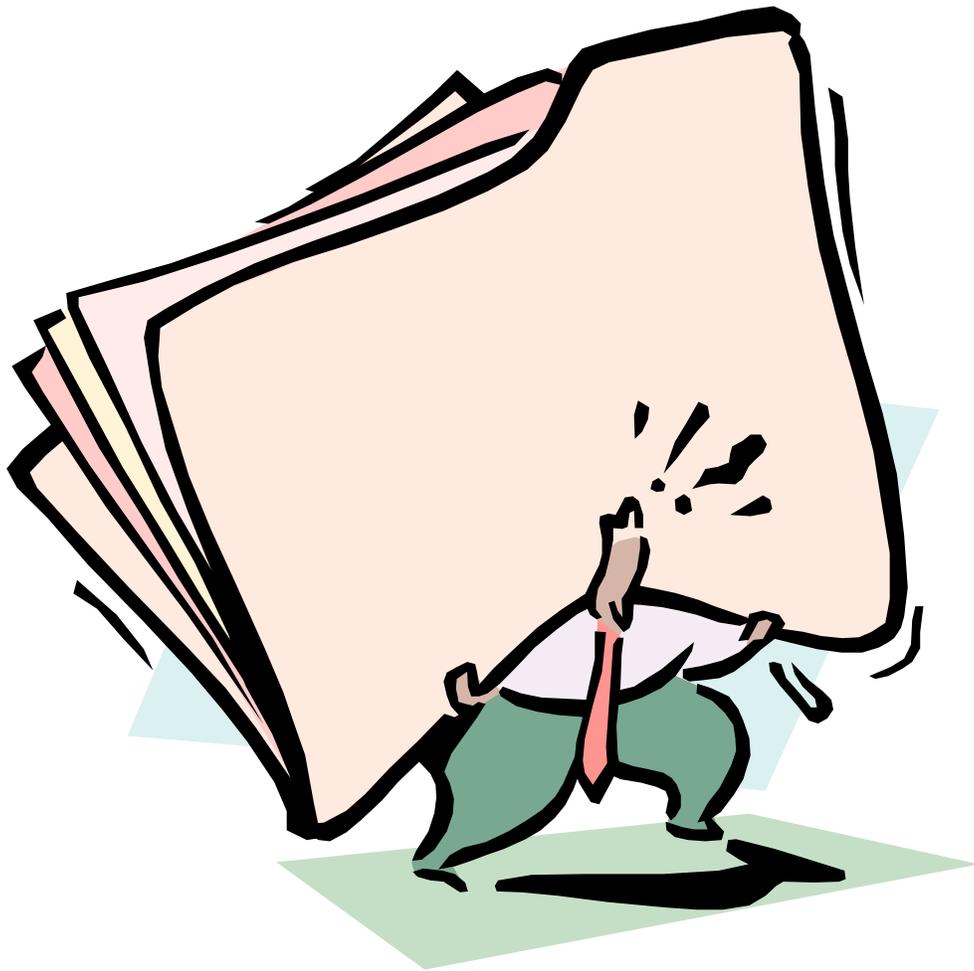
Assessment:

- Based on Jeopardy answers, students will be evaluated on how well they know the material covered in the unit.
- Responses to "The Open Car" will be evaluated for students' ability to identify the key components of an essay in an unusual piece of non-fiction.
- Essays will be marked using a rubric included in the Resources Appendix.

Homework:

- None unless my sponsor teacher has something that she would like them to do for their next class, as this is the last class I will teach.

Resources and Assignments



Annotated List of Resources

This list contains all the materials not reproduced and included in this appendix.

Joseph, Amanda and Wendy Mathieu. *Viewpoints 11*. Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001.

- The standard issue reader at Tupper.
- I have selected two essays from it to be studied in class: Diane Kenyon's "Reaction-Interaction" and Thomas King's "The Open Car."
- It contains short fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama. I found most of their selections rather dry and doubted that my English 11 classes would find them even more stimulating. I selected two essays that I felt might be somewhat engaging and sought the other essays for the unit elsewhere.

Munsch, Robert. *The Paper Bag Princess*. Toronto: Annick Press, 1980.

- A great modern take on the traditional princess and dragon fairytale.
- Makes a great hook, and it can be used for a lesson on sentence variety, a children's lit unit, a lesson on feminism in modern fairytale and more—a truly versatile book.

Dahl, Roald. "Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf." *Revolting Rhymes*. London: Puffin, 1982.

- Another funny little book that presents a modern and more mature take on the fairytale in naughty rhyme.
- Another great hook and a fun way to teach about audience and purpose although I am sure that it can be adapted for many types of lessons including humour writing, poetry, modern fairytales, etc.

The Doors. "The End." *The Doors*. 1967.

- A bit psychedelic for most of the students in my classes, I'm sure, but a fun way to set the mood for a lesson on writing conclusions. It might also be fun to point out the irony of a song called The End that goes on for 11.5 minutes.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well*. 6th ed. New York: Harper Perennial, 1994.

- My absolute favourite book on writing non-fiction if only because it is the only one I ever read cover to cover because it was the only one that didn't bore me to tears.
- His advice on keeping things simple and not being afraid to edit is invaluable to young writers who feel they must adopt an "academic" style and that they must never edit a piece of work because the first thing they wrote was inspiration and it must never be tampered with.

Excerpts from The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch

Elizabeth was a beautiful princess. She lived in a castle and had expensive princess clothes. She was going to marry a prince named Ronald.

Unfortunately, a dragon smashed her castle, burned all her clothes with his fiery breath, and carried off Prince Ronald.

Elizabeth decided to chase the dragon and get Ronald back. She looked everywhere for something to wear, but the only thing she could find that was not burnt was a paper bag. So she put on the paper bag and followed the dragon. He was easy to follow because he left a trail of burnt forests and horses' bones.

So the dragon jumped up and flew around the whole world in just twenty seconds. When he got back he was too tired to talk, and he lay down and went straight to sleep.

The dragon was so tired he didn't even move.

"Ronald," said Elizabeth, "your clothes are really pretty and your hair is very neat. You look like a real prince, but you are a bum." They didn't get married after all.

Writing Good Sentences

Strive for sentence variety. Sentences can differ in several ways:

1. Sentence Length

- Change the number of words.

2. Kinds of Sentences

- Grammatical: simple (1 independent clause), compound (2 independent clauses), complex (1 independent clause + 1 dependent clause), compound-complex (2 independent clauses + 1 dependent clause)
- Rhetorical: loose, periodic
- Functional: statement, question, command, exclamation

3. Sentence Patterns

- Vary sentence openers and other patterns of construction.

4. Schemes

- Deviations from ordinary sentence patterns or arrangements.

Sentence Openers

- Subject: e.g. John broke the window.
- Expletive/Exclamations: e.g. It is plain that . . . Alas, I have not seen him.
- Coordinating Conjunction: and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so
- Adverb word: e.g. first, thus, moreover, nevertheless, namely
- Conjunctive phrase: e.g. on the other hand, as a consequence
- Prepositional phrase: e.g. after the game, in the morning
- Verbal phrase: e.g. participial, gerundive or infinitive phrase
- Adjective phrase: e.g. Tired but happy, we . . .
- Absolute phrase: The ship having arrived safely, we . . .
- Adverb clause: e.g. When the ship arrived safely, we . . .
- Front-shift: inverted word order, e.g. Happy they were to be alive

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS WORKSHEET! Please write on a separate piece of paper.

Combine the following simple sentences into 1-2 more complex sentences to create interest. You may add or remove words as long as all the information in the original 4 sentences is not left out.

1. There was a car accident.
The accident took place on Friday night.
No one was injured.
The insurance company will cover the damages.

2. I had tickets to the game.
The Canucks were playing the Rangers.
It was the Stanley Cup finals.
I can't believe we lost.

3. Canada became a country in 1867.
The first four provinces were Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.
We learned about it in Social Studies class.
My teacher called it Confederation.

4. There was an interview in the paper with Michael Ondaatje.
He is a famous author.
He was born in Sri Lanka, but now he lives in Canada.
He wrote a book called *The English Patient*.

5. I like old movies.
Most old movies are in black and white.
My favourite movie is Casablanca.
I cry every time I watch it.

Read the following paragraph then re-write it so that it has more sentence variety.

Buying the right birthday present is difficult. I have many friends. Three of them were born on September 12. They are all having a party together this year. I have to buy a present for all of them. None of them like the same things. Ingrid likes dancing. She has taken ballet since she was six. Alex likes punk rock music. He even plays in a band. Siu Hong loves to read. His favourite books are mystery novels. I have to go to three different stores all over town to find them presents. I deserve a present after all that shopping.

THE EXAM ROOM—Vladimir Nabokov

For some reason my most vivid memories concern examinations. Big amphitheatre in Goldwin Smith. Exam from 8 a.m. to 10:30. About 150 students—unwashed, unshaven young males and reasonably well-groomed young females. A general sense of tedium and disaster. Half-past eight. Little coughs, the clearing of nervous throats, coming in clusters of sound, rustling of pages. Some of the martyrs plunged in meditation, their arms locked behind their heads. I meet a dull gaze directed at me, seeing in me with hope and hate the source of forbidden knowledge. Girl in glasses comes up to my desk to ask: “Professor Kafka, do you want us to say that . . . ? Or do you want us to answer only the first part of the question?” The great fraternity of C-minus, backbone of the nation, steadily scribbling on. A rustle arising simultaneously, the majority turning a page in their bluebooks, good teamwork. The shaking of a cramped wrist, the failing ink, the deodorant that breaks down. When I catch eyes directed at me, they are forthwith raised to the ceiling in pious meditation. Windowpanes getting misty. Boys peeling off sweaters. Girls chewing gum in rapid cadence. Ten minutes, five, three, time’s up.

Writing Excellent Paragraphs

Think of paragraphs as mini-essays:

- They need an introductory sentence just like an essay needs a thesis statement.
- They need a concluding sentence just like an essay needs a concluding paragraph
- They must have a unifying idea just like an essay needs a central argument.

In an essay, **PAY ATTENTION TO TRANSITIONS BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS.**

All great paragraphs make use of RENNS:

- **R**easons
- **E**xamples
- **N**ames
- **N**umbers
- **S**pecific/sensory details

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

PARAGRAPH ASSIGNMENT

- Write a paragraph of 1-2 page in length on the topic of privacy.
- You must include a clear topic sentence and an effective concluding sentence
- Your paragraph must have a unifying idea.
- Use RENNS to increase reader interest.
- Don't forget to DOUBLE SPACE and TYPE your paragraph.

ARTICLE ASSIGNMENT

- Bring in a short article from a magazine or newspaper for next class.
- We will be using these articles for an activity next class and variety is important. Try to find an article that other people are unlikely to bring in.
- Some suggestions:
 - Newspapers: Vancouver Sun, Globe and Mail, Province, New York Times, National Post, Wall Street Journal, Georgia Straight, Courier
 - Look at different sections of the newspaper as well: front page, sports, arts, business, local news, etc.
 - Magazines: Sports Illustrated, Seventeen, Cosmopolitan, Better Homes and Gardens, Canadian Living, Maxim, Rolling Stone

Essay Writing Assignment

Your major assignment for this unit will be an essay of **2-3 pages** in length. It must be **double-spaced**, and it must be **typed**. You will have plenty of class time to work on it.

Throughout the rest of this unit we will be learning about the basic elements of an essay, and you will put the lessons into practice by writing your own essay. As a result, **I will expect that every element we cover in class will be present in the final draft** of your essay. Just so you know what my expectations will be, I have included the marking sheet I will use to mark the essays on the back of this handout.

You may **create your own topic** for the essay. Below are some suggestions of where you might begin in developing your topic:

1. Write on a topic from *Lord of the Flies* that you found intriguing, but that you did not write on during our study of that novel.
2. Compare two articles from different newspapers on the same story.
3. Compare two essays that we have read or will read for this unit. (See me if you would like copies of the essays ahead of time).
4. Present both sides of a controversial issue that you feel passionately about.
5. Write a travel article about somewhere you have been; it can even be a place in Vancouver where you think other people should go.
6. Write an essay that gives “survival” advice to new students at Tupper.
7. Write an essay that will teach readers a new skill.
8. Write an autobiographical story that will teach reader an important lesson.
9. Compare and review two movies or two books or two CDs, etc.
10. Write on something else that you are interested in—just make sure you get my approval first.

Marking Sheet For Non-Fiction Essay Assignment

Name:

Topic:

Format (15 marks)

Includes a relevant, effective, creative title	/4
2-3 pages in length, typed and double-spaced	/2
Uses 2 or more quotes to support argument	/4
Correct grammar and spelling	/5

Argument (60 marks)

Appropriate for audience and purpose	/5
Clear, engaging introduction	/10
Narrow, supportable thesis	/10
Relevant, well-ordered main points	/15
Non-repetitive conclusion	/10
Coherent, unified overall argument	/10

Style (25 marks)

Uses a variety of sentence styles	/10
Unified paragraph with topic and concluding sentences	/10
Elegant, effective transitions between paragraphs	/5

TOTAL /100

Comments:

Fully Articulated Rubric For Non-Fiction Essay Assignment

FORMAT	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Poor
<i>Title</i>	Truly creative, engaging & effective (4)	Relevant, effective & somewhat engaging (3)	Has a relevant title, but it's not very engaging (2)	No title or it is boring or irrelevant (0-1)
<i>Length & Spacing</i>	2-3 pg, double-spaced (2)	2-3 pg, double-spaced (2)	A bit short, but double-spaced (1)	Too short and/or single-spaced (0)
<i>Quotes</i>	May have more than 2. Quotes further argument (4)	Has 2 well-selected quotes (3)	Only 1 quote or quotes aren't very relevant (2)	Quotes are absent, irrelevant or insufficient (0-1)
<i>Grammar & Spelling</i>	Flawless (5)	Only a few minor errors (4)	Acceptable level of errors, approx. 4-5 per page (2-3)	Errors are everywhere. (0-1)
ARGUMENT	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Poor
<i>Audience & Purpose</i>	Appropriate language & style for audience, achieves purpose (5)	Appropriate language & style for audience, achieves purpose (5)	Most elements appropriate for audience, mainly achieves purpose (3-4)	Inappropriate for audience, doesn't achieve purpose (0-2)
<i>Introduction</i>	Uses recommended techniques effectively, main points are clearly listed, artfully written (9-10)	Uses recommended techniques, main points are clear (6-8)	Uses recommended technique, but does so poorly. Main points are incomplete or unclear. (3-5)	Muddled, uses no techniques, may do something that was recommend they avoid (0-2)
<i>Thesis</i>	Meets the 4 S's, strongly and clearly stated (9-10)	Meets the 4 S's (6-8)	It's clear, but it may be too broad or too narrow (3-5)	Absent, unclear or inconsistent with rest of paper (0-2)
<i>Main Points</i>	Effectively ordered, provide relevant support for thesis (12-15)	Support argument, relatively well-ordered (9-11)	Support argument, but may be poorly ordered (5-8)	Poorly ordered, may be irrelevant, repetitive or unclear (0-4)
<i>Conclusion</i>	Reflects intro but doesn't repeat it. Effectively uses recommended techniques. Strong sense of closure. Clear that argument was successfully made. (9-10)	Uses techniques, doesn't repeat intro, sense of closure, clear what argument was made (6-8)	Doesn't repeat intro, gives sense of closure (3-5)	Repeats intro, no sense of closure, may start new argument (0-2)
<i>Coherence</i>	Unified, well-argued idea (9-10)	Clear main idea, no digression (6-8)	Clear main idea, 1 minor digression is possible (3-5)	Essay makes little sense, no clear main idea (0-2)
STYLE	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Poor
<i>Sentence variety</i>	Excellent variety, uses some schemes effectively, complex sentences are grammatical & clear (9-10)	Good variety, complex sentences are grammatical, no schemes used or used incorrectly (6-8)	Reasonable variety. Some complex sentences may be confusing or incorrect. No schemes used. (3-5)	Mainly simple sentences. Variety achieved with fragments and run-ons (0-2)
<i>Paragraphs</i>	Unified with topic & concluding sentences (9-10)	Most are unified with topic & concluding sentences (6-8)	May need more paragraph breaks, most have topic and concluding sentences (3-5)	Haphazard, lack unity, no topic or concluding sentences (0-2)
<i>Transitions</i>	Elegant and effective (5)	Effective but not elegant (4)	Inconsistent (2-3)	Absent (0-1)

Writing A Good Introduction

- Your introduction sets the tone for the rest of your essay.
- ***Your introduction must include a thesis statement.***
- In an academic English paper, the author and title of what you are writing about should be included in the introduction.
- Even scholarly writing needs to be interesting, so start with an interesting introduction.

Ways to Begin:

- Anecdote (short story with a humorous twist)
- Statistics
- Provocative question(s)
- Apparent paradox
- Quotation
- Analogy
- Definition
- Historical background information
- Narration
- Contrast
- Concession (recognition of other, usually contradictory, arguments)

Things to Avoid:

- Obvious statements (e.g. In this paper I will . . .)
- Apologies
- Generalizations
- Wandering

Designing an Essay Topic

- It is hard to write about something you are not interested in, so pick a topic that intrigues you.
- A broad topic that tries to cover too much is difficult to write about effectively, especially in a short paper.
- You can narrow your topic in many ways (by gender, time, place and/or kind)
- A good topic follows the 4 S's. It is:
 - S**ingle (focuses on one main idea)
 - S**pecific (narrow)
 - S**ignificant (it is interesting and hasn't been overdone)
 - S**upportable (there is evidence to back it up)

Once upon a time, a beautiful princess was born in a faraway kingdom.

When she grew up, her parents decided it was time for her to marry.

Many princes arrived at the palace and tried to get the princess to marry them.

She did not know whom to choose.

Her parents, the king and queen, decided to have a contest. Whoever won the contest could marry the princess.

There was a dragon that lived in the mountains that surrounded the kingdom.

Everyone was very afraid of the dragon.

It was decided that the first prince who killed the dragon would marry the princess.

To prove that he had killed the dragon, the winning prince would bring back one of its sharp fangs as a gift for the princess.

Many princes were unwilling to risk their lives in order to marry the princess, so they returned to their own castles.

Only the bravest princes attempted the quest.

One by one each prince went up the mountain never to return again.

One day, a handsome peasant boy was herding his sheep through the mountains.

The dragon smelled food and came out of his cave.

The dragon grabbed one of the boy's sheep and swallowed it whole.

But the sheep was quite plump and the dragon choked on it and died.

The boy was amazed that he had killed the fearsome dragon without even trying. He took one of its teeth as a souvenir.

When he returned to the village and told his story, the villagers urged him to go to the castle and claim the princess' hand in marriage.

The boy arrived went to the castle and offered the princess the dragon's tooth as a gift.

The king and queen were very upset. They didn't want their daughter marrying a peasant.

But the princess thought the young man was very handsome and he seemed kind.

She reminded her parents of the contest rules: she was to marry the first person to slay the dragon and bring her one of its fangs as a gift.

She thought the boy must have been very brave to slay the dragon and that his bravery should be rewarded.

At last, her parents consented to the marriage.

The princess and the peasant boy were married the very next day in a lavish ceremony.

They lived happily ever after.

Types of Papers

The type of essay you are writing will influence many things:

- Your purpose
- Your audience
- The way you organize your points
- The types of evidence you use

There are four main types of essays:

- 1. Narrative:** A narrative essay tells a story. In the case of non-fiction, this story is true and the author usually has a purpose for telling it. It is easy to confuse a narrative essay with a short story.
- 2. Expository:** An expository essay is centred on a single main idea, and the author discusses and builds on this idea with a blend of facts and opinion. The usual purpose of an expository piece is to persuade or to inform, but the purpose may vary.
- 3. Argumentative:** An argumentative essay is a form of the expository essay that attempts to convince or persuade its audience of the truth of its argument or thesis. It relies primarily on logical evidence and facts to construct and support its argument.
- 4. Persuasive:** A persuasive essay is very similar to an argumentative essay, but it relies more heavily on appealing to the readers' emotions to support its argument. A persuasive essay will also make use of logic and facts, but to a lesser degree than an argumentative essay.

Developing an Argument

There are several steps to building a strong argument:

1. Determine your argument or thesis
2. Refine your argument so that it is narrow and specific—something that is appropriate for the type of paper you have been assigned.
3. Decide on your main points—make sure they all relate to and support your argument.
4. Support your points with evidence.
 - Evidence must be accurate, reliable, recent, relevant and sufficient
 - Evidence must be verifiable (based on facts that can be tested, not just opinions)
 - Types of evidence:
 - i. statistics
 - ii. examples and experiences
 - iii. expert opinions
 - iv. personal observations
 - v. personal or scientific definitions
 - vi. precedence or consequence
 - vii. comparison
5. Avoid absolute claims
6. Make concessions to opposing views, but don't forget to refute them

Putting Your Essay In Order

- Your essay should always begin with your introduction and your introduction should always contain your thesis.
- The body of your paper should consist of your main points explained in paragraph form and supported with evidence and examples.
- Your essay should end with an effective conclusion that summarizes your argument.

There Are Four Ways to Order Your Points:

1. Climatic: order your points saving your strongest point for last.
2. Chronological: order your points in order of time, from first to last. This method works well for narrative and process analysis papers.
3. Logically linked: order your points so that they are connected. This technique is good for papers where one point must be explained before the next point can be understood.
4. Random: points can be put in any order, but it is only possible to do this if the main points are all of equal significance and are not logically linked.

A Handout on Using Quotations

- Readers should be able to move from your own words to the quotation without feeling a jolt.
- Use signal phrases to prepare readers for the quotation.
- To keep readers interested, vary your signal phrases.
 - e.g. Smith responds to these objections with the following analysis: " . . . "
 - " . . . , " writes Pierre Burton, " . . . "
 - " . . . , " claims author Mordecai Richler.
- When the signal phrase includes a verb, choose one that is appropriate in the context. Is your source arguing a point, making an observation, reporting a fact?
 - Words you might use:* admits, agrees, argues, asserts, believes, claims, compares, confirms, contends, declares, denies, emphasizes, insists, notes, observes, points out, reasons, refutes, rejects, reports, responds, suggests, thinks, writes
- It is not always necessary to quote full sentences from a source. You can also borrow a phrase and incorporate into your own sentence.

Using Ellipsis

- Ellipsis is three periods with a space between (. . .).
- Use ellipsis to indicate that you omitted words.
- When you want to omit a full sentence or more, use a period before the three ellipsis dots.
- Do not use an ellipsis mark at the beginning or end of the quotation. The only exception is when you have omitted words at the end of a final quoted sentence.
- **Do not use ellipsis to alter the meaning of the quotation.**

Using Brackets

- Brackets are square parentheses: []
- Use brackets when you want to insert words into a quotation that are not part of the original material. This technique is especially useful if you want to clarify or explain some information provided in the quotation.
 - e.g. "He [William Shakespeare] was not for an age, but for all time."
- Brackets can be used to indicate that you have changed one or two words within a quotation.
 - e.g. You are quoting an interview with a celebrity who is discussing his most recent film. When discussing his latest role he says, "It really took a lot out of me."
When using the quote in your article, you decide to change it for clarification: "[The role] really took a lot out of me."
- Brackets may also be used to keep a quotation grammatical within the context of the surrounding sentence.
 - e.g. The passage to be quoted reads: "Her novel was one of the first examples of Canadian Gothic fiction." You might incorporate this quote into a sentence as, "After reading the novel, it is easy to understand Woodrow's claim that it "[is] one of the first examples of Canadian Gothic fiction."
- **Never use brackets to alter the meaning of a quotation.**

Quotations and Punctuation

- Punctuation, like commas, question marks and periods, go inside the quotation marks.
- The numbers for your footnotes should go outside the quotation marks and after any other punctuation.
- If you are using parentheses for citations instead of footnotes, these should be placed outside the quotation marks, but before any other punctuation.

Indented Quotations

- Indent a quotation when it is three lines or longer.
- Indented quotations are set off from the text of your essay and **do not require quotation marks**.
- If the lead into the quotation is a complete sentence, use a colon.
Example: Othello captures Desdemona's very essence when he speaks of her miraculous love, which transcended their difference in age, colour, beauty and culture:
She loved me for the dangers I had passed
And I loved her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd. (I.iii.167-169)
- If the lead into the quotation is not a complete sentence, use a comma.
Example: The full meaning of this choice is expressed by Othello when he says of Desdemona,
Perdition catch my soul
But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again. (III.iii.90-92)

Incorporated Quotations

- Quotations may be incorporated into your text if they are two lines or shorter.
- Incorporated quotations are woven into your sentence, and **you need to use quotation marks**.
- If the lead into the quotation is a complete sentence, use a colon.
Example: Cassio is clearly confused about Iago's nature: "Good night, honest Iago" (II.iii.335).
- If the lead into the quotation is not a complete sentence, use a comma.
Example: We begin to understand the insignificance of reputation to Iago when he says, "Reputation is an idle and false imposition, oft go without merit and lost without deserving" (II.iii.267-69).
- If you use a quotation to express your own thoughts or ideas, no punctuation is necessary.
Example: What we see here is Iago's plan to put Othello "into a jealousy so strong / That judgement cannot cure" (II.i. 301-02).

Citations

- Whenever you quote, paraphrase or otherwise use information from a source that is not considered common knowledge, you must acknowledge it. This acknowledgement is called citation.
- There are many different ways to cite a source, but we will only be using one style.
- For English papers, writers usually use a form of citation that is called MLA style. This format provides information about the source in parentheses next to the quote, paraphrase or information taken from the source.

- An MLA citation usually includes the author's name and the page number where the information was taken from in the parentheses. E.g. (Chen 37)
- There should be no commas between the authors name and the page number.
- For very short articles, it is better to use the number of the paragraph rather than the page number. E.g. (Sanderson par. 7)
- When quoting poetry, you give the line or lines from the poem not the page number even if it is a very long epic. E.g. (Milton 89-94)
- When citing a piece of drama, include the act number, scene number and line numbers. It is only necessary to mention the author if you are discussing more than one play.
- If two or more of your sources are written by the same author, it is usually best to use the title of the text rather than the author's name in the citation. If the titles are very long, it is okay to shorten them as long as the reader will understand what text you are referring to. For example, if you were comparing the Harry Potter books, your citations for quotes from *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* might look like this: (*Sorcerer* 56) and (*Azkaban* 121). Or they might look like this: (HP1 56) and (HP3 121).
- When you are discussing more than one play or poem by the same author in an essay, this same method applies, but instead of page numbers use line numbers for poems and act, scene and line numbers for plays.
- All the texts you cite in a paper should be included in a list of works cited at the end of your paper. It should list the author, title, place of publication and date of publication. In the case of shorter works in an anthology, it should also include the page numbers where the piece can be found and the editors of the anthology. The standard format for a book, a poem, a play, an article and a short story follow.

Novel or Book:

Tan, Amy. *The Kitchen God's Wife*. New York: Ivy Books, 1991.

Poem:

Akiwenzie-Damm, Kateri. "stray bullets (oka re/vison)." *Native Poetry in Canada*. Eds. Jeannette C. Armstrong and Lally Grauer. Peterborough: Broadview, 1989. 321-322.

Play:

Shakespeare, William. *Othello*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956.

Article:

Laurence, Margaret. "Where the World Began." *Viewpoints 11*. Eds. Amanda Joseph and Wendy Mathieu. Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001. 326-332.

Short Story:

Robinson, Eden. "Queen of the North." *Traplins*. New York: Vintage, 1998.

These are just the basics. More information about citing other types of sources (e.g. CD-ROMS, websites, government publications, etc.) can be found on-line or in the MLA Handbook.

Worksheet on Quotations and Citations

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS WORKSHEET. Show your work on a separate sheet of paper.

Choose the best quote to support the following ideas:

1. The speaker in the poem is very sad and angry.²
 - a. “my touch is a history book”
 - b. “my heart is a stray bullet”
 - c. “everyone wants to believe”

2. Elizabeth, the paper bag princess, is not afraid to stand up for herself.³
 - a. “Unfortunately, a dragon smashed her castle, burned all her clothes with his fiery breath, and carried off Prince Ronald.”
 - b. “Elizabeth walked right over the dragon and opened the door to the cave.”
 - c. “‘Ronald’, said Elizabeth, ‘ your clothes are really pretty . . . You look like a real prince, but you are a bum.’”

3. The author thinks that Toronto is much cleaner than New York.⁴
 - a. “My coat pocket was bulging with candy wrappers from Toronto and . . . it took me two or three hours back in New York before it seemed natural again to toss them into the street.”
 - b. “The subway cars were . . . fully illuminated. So were the stations.”
 - c. “What was particularly distressing as the stay continued was the absence of shrieking police and fire sirens at 3 a.m.”

4. Nabokov expertly creates a sense of urgency in his description of an exam.⁵
 - a. “When I catch eyes directed at me, they are forthwith raised to the ceiling in pious meditation.”
 - b. “Ten minutes, five, three, time’s up.”
 - c. “A general sense of tedium and disaster.”

5. Bob Swift is confident that reluctant readers can become book lovers if they are allowed to read what interests them most—even if it is not a “classic.”⁶
 - a. “I had discovered ‘real literature’ by following the trail of popular fiction.”
 - b. “If you want kids to become omnivorous readers, let them read trash.”
 - c. “When we moved within walking distance of the public library a whole new world opened.”

² Quotes are taken from “stray bullets (oka re/vision),” a poem by Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm

³ Quotes are taken from *The Paper Bag Princess*, a children’s story by Robert Munsch

⁴ Quotes are taken from “A Nice Place to Visit,” a short non-fiction essay by Russell Baker

⁵ Quotes are taken from “The Exam Room,” a paragraph long mini-essay by Vladimir Nabokov

⁶ Quotes are taken from “On Reading Trash,” a short essay by Bob Swift.

Correct the mistakes made incorporating and/or citing the following quotations. There may be more than one mistake in each sentence. Rewrite the statements with their corrections on a separate sheet of paper.

1. The speaker is angered at the misuse of Native lands: "my world was taken / for a putting green" (Akiwenzie-Damm, 18-19)
2. In the opening lines of *The Paper Bag Princess*, it appears that Elizabeth is going to be a stereotypical fairytale princess, "Elizabeth was a beautiful princess. She lived in a castle and had expensive princess clothes. She was going to marry a prince name Ronald." (Robert Munsch 1)
3. The author thinks that Toronto's subway system is better than New York's subway system:
The subway cars were . . . fully illuminated. So were the stations.
(par. 12)
4. In "The Exam Room," Nabokov describes the atmosphere of an examination as "{a} general sense of tedium and disaster".
5. Bob Swift started out reading trash, but soon enough "[he] was whaling with Herman Melville, affixing scarlet letters with Hawthorne and descending into the maelstrom with Poe. In due course came Hemingway, Dos Passos, 'Hamlet,' 'The Odyssey,' 'The Illiad,' 'Crime and Punishment.' [He] had discovered 'real literature' by following the trail of popular fiction" (Swift par. 11-12).

Answer Key for Quotation/Citation Worksheet

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. b
5. b

The errors in each statement were:

1. comma between author's name and line numbers
2. colon not comma before quote, period should come after parentheses, author's first name unnecessary in an in-text citation
3. quote too short for block quotation, author's name missing from citation
4. wrong kind of brackets, needs citation
5. put comma after enough and turn quote into a block quotation

Writing A Conclusion

- A good conclusion will “shake hands” with the introduction. This means, that without simply re-stating the introduction, the conclusion will reflect what was said in the introduction and elaborate on it in light of the entire essay. One way to do this is to mimic the style of the introduction. For example, if you used a quote to start your paper, end with a quote.
- There is room for your personal opinions in the conclusion even in the most formal of essays.

Points to Remember:

- You can use the same techniques for the introduction for your conclusion.
- Reinforce your thesis, but don't re-state it.
- Discuss the effectiveness of the piece
- Point to a reaction to the piece
- Offer a prediction, a proposal, a warning or a call to action.

Things to Avoid:

1. Off-topic information
2. Apologies
3. Blunt mechanical statements (e.g. In conclusion . . .)
4. Qualifiers
5. Competing opinions
6. Clichés

Peer Editing for: _____

Editor: _____

1. Are there any frequent spelling or grammar mistakes in the paper that the author should watch out for?

2. Sentence variety:

Longest sentence: _____ words

Shortest sentence: _____ words

Are there a variety of sentence styles? Any comments about sentence quality?

3. Paragraphs (check all areas where they have done well):

___ unified? ___ good transitions? ___ use RENNS?

___ topic sentences? ___ concluding sentences?

Comments: _____

4. Is the thesis: ___ single? ___ specific? ___ significant? ___ supportable?

5. Comment on the introduction: _____

6. Comment on the conclusion: _____

7. How are the main points ordered?

___ climatically? ___ chronologically? ___ logically? ___ randomly?

Is this the best way to order them? _____

Are all of the main points related to the thesis? Do they support the argument?

Other comments? _____

8. Is this paper appropriate for its audience? ___yes ___ no

Comments: _____

9. Does this paper achieve its purpose? ___ yes ___no

Comments: _____

10. Is this paper coherent? Does it have a single argument that makes sense?

11. Would you make any major changes to this paper? If so, what would they be? _____

12. Overall comments on the paper:

You came upon me carving some kind of little figure out of wood and you said, “Why don’t you make something for me?”

I asked you what you wanted, and you said, “A box.”

“What for?”

“To put things in.”

“What things?”

“Whatever you have,” you said.

Well, here is your box. Nearly everything I have is in it, and it is not full. Pain and excitement are in it, and feeling good or bad and evil thoughts and good thoughts—the pleasure of design and some despair and the indescribable joy of creation.

And on top of these are all the gratitude and love I have for you. And still the box is not full.

WHAT IS THE TITLE FOR THIS STORY?

- The Box
- The Wood Carver
- A Gift From My Father
- Pandora’s Box of Memories
- A Life Yet Unfinished

Plasma Attack

How To Build A Toy Chest

Richmond Ponders Dress Code For Parents,
Teachers, Students

Do Chopsticks Raise the Risk of Arthritis?

BRRR...It's Old Time Hockey

The Big Move: Skateboarding, "Making It" and
California

Catch the Spirit! Fall Fashion That Moves With You.

Get Healthier Skin: 4 Tips From A Top Dermatologist

Flatten Your Abs With One New Move

Moms (and Kids) Behind Bars

Di's Butler Tells The Last Stunning Secrets

How to Write A Title

- A title is specific and a topic is general.
- A title tells what the paper is about (topic) and stimulates the reader's interest (why would they want to read about your topic?)
- Capitalize appropriately—don't type the whole thing in uppercase letters
- Don't underline your title.
- Don't put quotation marks around your title.

Options for a Title:

1. Find a phrase (preferably from within your paper)
2. Use Alliteration
3. A familiar phrase or a variation of it
4. A quote or a paraphrase of a familiar quote
5. A question
6. Humour or Wit
7. A rhyme
8. A pun
9. A provocative statement

JEOPARDY

1	2	3	4	5	6
\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400
\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600
\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800
\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000

<p style="text-align: center;">Category 1: Introductions (\$200)</p> <p>Q: What should every good introduction include?</p> <p>A: thesis statement</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 1: Introductions (\$800)</p> <p>Q: Name 3 techniques you can use to start a paper.</p> <p>A: Any 3 of the following: anecdote, statistics, provocative question, paradox, quotation, analogy, definition, historical background, narration, contrast, concession</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Category 1: Introductions (\$400)</p> <p>Q: "In this paper, I will . . ." is an example of what?</p> <p>A: an obvious statement that should be avoided in an introduction</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 1: Introductions (\$1000)</p> <p>Q: What two things should always be included in the introduction for an academic English paper?</p> <p>A: author and title</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Category 1: Introductions (\$600)</p> <p>Q: What are the 4 S's?</p> <p>A: Single, specific, significant and supportable</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 2: Paragraphs (\$200)</p> <p>Q: Complete this statement: a paragraph should always end with a . . .</p> <p>A: concluding sentence</p>

<p>Category 2: Paragraphs (\$400)</p> <p>Q: Complete this statement: a paragraph should always begin with a . . .</p> <p>A: topic sentence</p>	<p>Category 2: Paragraphs (\$1000)</p> <p>Q: What do we mean when we say that a paragraph needs to have unity?</p> <p>A: It should have one unifying idea. i.e. It should be about one thing.</p>
<p>Category 2: Paragraphs (\$600)</p> <p>Q: When ending one paragraph and starting another, it is important to pay attention to . . .</p> <p>A: transitions</p>	<p>Category 3: Arguments (\$200)</p> <p>Q: What is the basic structure for an essay?</p> <p>A: Introduction, Main Points, Conclusion</p>
<p>Category 2: Paragraphs (\$800)</p> <p>Q: What does RENNS stand for?</p> <p>A: reasons, examples, names, numbers, specific/sensory details</p>	<p>Category 3: Arguments (\$400)</p> <p>Q: List 2 ways that you can order your points.</p> <p>A: 2 of the following: chronologically, climatically, logically, randomly</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Category 3: Arguments (\$600)</p> <p>Q: List 3 types of evidence.</p> <p>A: 3 of the following: statistics, examples, experiences, expert opinions, personal observations, definitions, precedence or consequence, comparison</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 4: Quotations and Citations (\$200)</p> <p>Q: How long must a quotation be before you can block quote it?</p> <p>A: 3 lines or more</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Category 3: Arguments (\$800)</p> <p>Q: Describe the ideal relationship between the thesis and the main points of a paper.</p> <p>A: The main points support the thesis and don't repeat each other.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 4: Quotations and Citations (\$400)</p> <p>Q: What do we include in a citation if we are quoting from a novel?</p> <p>A: author's last name and the page number</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Category 3: Arguments (\$1000)</p> <p>Q: Complete this statement: An argument will be difficult to make if it is too . . .</p> <p>A: Broad or narrow</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 4: Quotations and Citations (\$600)</p> <p>Q: You should never use brackets or ellipsis to do what?</p> <p>A: Alter the meaning of a quotation.</p>

<p>Category 4: Quotations and Citations (\$800)</p> <p>Q: If your signal phrase before a quotation is a complete sentence, what kind of punctuation do you use before the quote begins?</p> <p>A: colon</p>	<p>Category 5: Potpourri (\$400)</p> <p>Q: Deciding why we write and who we're writing for is also called?</p> <p>A: Identifying audience and purpose</p>
<p>Category 4: Quotations and Citations (\$1000)</p> <p>Q: What do we call the citation format where we cite our sources in parentheses?</p> <p>A: MLA Style</p>	<p>Category 5: Potpourri (\$600)</p> <p>Q: How is proofreading different from editing?</p> <p>A: Proofreading checks for spelling and grammar errors and editing looks at the writing as a whole.</p>
<p>Category 5: Potpourri (\$200)</p> <p>Q: Give an example of an obvious statement that you should never make in a conclusion.</p> <p>A: Something like, "In conclusion..." or "As you can see..."</p>	<p>Category 5: Potpourri (\$800)</p> <p>Q: What advice would William Zinsser give to writers?</p> <p>A: Simplify! Simplify!</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Category 5: Potpourri (\$1000)</p> <p>Q: Name 2 of the 4 ways you can change your sentences to create more sentence variety.</p> <p>A: 2 of the following: length, kind, scheme, pattern</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 6: The Readings (\$600)</p> <p>Q: “A Nice Place To Visit” and “Edmonton vs. Calgary” are examples of what type of paper?</p> <p>A: acceptable answers include: compare and contrast, expository, persuasive</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Category 6: The Readings (\$200)</p> <p>Q: What two cities are being compared in “A Nice Place To Visit”?</p> <p>A: Toronto and New York</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 6: The Readings (\$800)</p> <p>Q: Give 2 examples of the evidence that Marken offers to prove that people care about Calgary more than Edmonton.</p> <p>A: Any 2 of the following: Stampede, more high rises, capital city, oil, football, Klondike Days, Chinook, Oilers and Gretsky, churches and mall</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Category 6: The Readings (\$400)</p> <p>Q: What is the thesis of “Reaction-Interaction”?</p> <p>A: Hearing people, not deaf people, are the ones who really have difficulty communicating.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 6: The Readings (\$1000)</p> <p>Q: “The Open Car” is an example of what type of essay?</p> <p>A: Narrative—but will also accept travel writing</p>

Final Jeopardy

Groups work together to give a good written answer to the following challenge:

In a coherent, unified paragraph tell me the three most valuable things you learned during this unit.

Result: everyone wins!!!!