

The “Write” Stuff: Strategies and Conventions for Essay Composition and Speechwriting

Grade Level: Sixth Grade

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Length of Unit: Four lessons

I. ABSTRACT

The focus of this sixth grade unit is essay composition while integrating content from the sixth grade Core Knowledge literature, history, and science sequence. Students will develop an understanding of the writing process while learning strategies and conventions involved in forms of essay composition. The lessons will address the organization and development persuasive essays, descriptive essays, and essays that explain a process. Essay development will also serve as an introduction to the formal “Speaking and Listening” portion of the Core Knowledge sequence. Writing topics will provide a means by which teachers can review and reinforce Core Knowledge content areas.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives (Jefferson County, CO Language Arts Content Standard: JCLAS).

1. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication (JCLAS 3,5)
2. Understand how to speak and listen for effective communication in a variety of contexts (JCLAS 4)
3. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing (JCLAS 8)

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. Produce a variety of types of writing – including persuasive essays, descriptive essays, and essays that explain a process (page 133)
2. Give a short speech to the class that is well-organized and well-supported (page 133)

C. Skill Objectives

1. Students will produce an effectively written persuasive essay. (JCLAS 3.3)
2. Students will produce an effectively written descriptive essay. (JCLAS 3.3)
3. Students will produce an effectively written essay that explains a process. (JCLAS 3.3)
4. Students will apply active listening skills for a variety of purposes. (JCLAS 4.1)
5. Students will use feedback to respond to and expand upon the spoken messages of others. (JCLAS 4.2)
6. Students will prepare effective oral messages, selecting and organizing content for purpose and audience. (JCLAS 4.4)
7. Students will present purposeful spoken messages coherently, fluently, and expressively with increasing confidence. (JCLAS 4.5)

8. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing. (JCLAS 5.2)
9. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly. (JCLAS 5.1)
10. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing. (JCLAS 5.2)
11. Students will examine and improve their writing. (JCLAS 8.1, 8.2)

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

A. For Teachers

1. Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. *Writers Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners*. Burlington, WI: Write Source Educational Publishing House, 1994. 0-939045-93-1 (soft cover).
2. *Writer's Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996. 0-13-828773-2

B. For Students

1. Students will have produced a variety of types of writing – with a coherent structure. (Grades 5)
2. Students will have acquired the skills necessary for competent spelling, and usage of a dictionary to check and correct words that present difficulty. (Grade 5)
3. Students will have the understanding of how to use a topic sentence, how to develop a paragraph with examples and details, as well as the mechanics of the writing process. (Grade 4)
4. Students will understand the idea that speeches are used to convey important thoughts. (Grade 5)

IV. RESOURCES

- A. *Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards*. Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6
- B. *Core Knowledge Sequence*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation, 1999. 1-890517-20-8
- C. Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. *Writers Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners*. Burlington, WI: Write Source Educational Publishing House, 1994. 0-939045-93-1 (soft cover)
- D. *Writer's Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996. 0-13-828773-2

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Persuasive Essays (two forty-five minute sessions)

A. Daily Objectives

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Persuasive essay development

3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will produce an effectively written persuasive essay.
 - b. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.
 - c. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - d. Students will examine and improve their writing.
- B. *Materials*
 1. Overhead projector
 2. Model Persuasive Essay – as an overhead transparency (Appendix A{1})
 3. Persuasive Essay Checklist – one per student (Appendix A{2})
 4. Persuasive Essay Guide – one per student (Appendix A{3})
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. Persuasive: causing to convince using reasoning
 2. Reasoning: discussing something logically, justifying an opinion
 3. Essay: short piece of writing that deals with one topic and expresses the author’s viewpoint on a subject
 4. Thesis: main idea
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Ask students what they do to convince their parents to let them stay up later or go out with their friends. Write down these methods on the board.
 2. Ask students if they are more likely to get their way if they argue with their parents or reason with their parents. Explain what “reasoning” entails. Students should respond that reasoning with their parents produces a more favorable outcome.
 3. Explain to students that that is the purpose of a persuasive essay: to try to convince people to accept your opinion or take action. Explain that persuasive writing can take the form of written advice, such as in a “Dear Abby” column, an advertisement, such as in newspapers or magazines, or simply a straightforward essay. Explain to students that they will be learning about the third form: persuasive essay.
 4. Ask students to brainstorm ideas that they feel strongly about. Understand that students may want to suggest the idea of abortion or evolution as a topic. You may want to make these topics “off-limits” from the onset of the brainstorming session. If students have difficulty generating ideas or topics, suggest gun control, school uniforms, age restrictions for movies, year-round schooling, Michael Jordan was the best man to ever play basketball, John Elway was the best quarterback ever, etc. These suggestions should prompt strong emotions from the students. Also explain that the topic doesn’t need to be so provoking, but can be as simple as the idea that dogs need to be taught how to behave. Students may not think that this is a very good topic. Explain that this topic is very important when a dog is barking while people are trying to sleep.
 5. Tell students that dog obedience will be the topic of the model essay that they will be dissecting. Also explain to students that they may pick a more controversial or weighty topic when they write their own persuasive essays.

6. Ask students for their opinions about dog obedience school. Write their opinions on the board.
7. Explain to students that the first thing that they need to do is to use an attention-getting introduction. Tell students that they can begin with a question, such as “Do you like it when dogs bark all night while you are trying to sleep?” Tell students that they can begin with an exaggeration, such as “Dogs without discipline bark all night.” Tell students that they can begin their essay with a short story, such as “Last night I was so tired. I curled up and was ready to go to sleep. I shut my eyes, and began to drift into dreamland when suddenly, I heard the ear-piercing barking of my next-door neighbor’s dog. It went on and on, becoming louder and louder. I felt like I was going to scream!” Tell students that they can also begin their essays with a startling fact, such as “Dogs will bark unless they are trained to do otherwise”.
8. Tell students that the main purpose of the introduction is to explain the issue and then state an opinion about the issue. Explain that the main idea, or opinion, is the thesis of the paper. Place the Model Persuasive Essay on the overhead. Have only the “Introduction” section showing. Read through it as a class. Point out where the writer explained the issue, and then point out the opinion of the writer.
9. Next, introduce the body as the main portion of the essay. Explain that the body should develop a strong argument for the position of the writer. Explain that each paragraph of the body of the paper should focus on a separate point of the main argument. Look at the “Selection from the Body” on the overhead transparency. Explain to students that the paragraph is only one of which should be contained in the body an essay. Read through it as a class. Point out the main point of the paragraph, and then point out the reasons that support the main point. Explain to students that it is a good idea to have three paragraphs in the body of the essay, each one focusing on a different piece of the topic or problem.
10. Introduce the conclusion of the essay as being the final section in which the writer restates the issue, his/her opinion, and again supports the opinion. Look at the “Conclusion” portion on the overhead transparency. Read through it as a class. Point out the position of the writer, and then look at the use of language. Tell students that power words such as “all” and “only” help to make the opinion seem as if it is the only correct opinion.
11. Ask students about their opinions about obedience school for dogs now. See if these opinions have changed from their opinions before the reading.
12. Pass out copies of the Persuasive Essay Checklist (Appendix A{2}). Evaluate the model persuasive essay as a class. Tell students that the checklist will help them to remember the components of a persuasive essay. Explain to students that they will use this checklist to evaluate and edit their essays before they turn in final copies.
13. Pass out copies of the Persuasive Essay Guide (Appendix A{3}). Go through the outline section by section, and explain to students that they will use this prewriting tool to help them develop their persuasive essays.

- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Have students submit persuasive essay topics for approval.
 2. Have students organize their facts and ideas using the Persuasive Essay Guide (Appendix A{3}). Check outlines for correct format before allowing students to begin their draft.
 3. Have students write a five paragraph persuasive essay.
 4. Have students evaluate and revise their writing using the Persuasive Essay Checklist (Appendix A{2}).
 5. Assess persuasive essays using the Persuasive Essay Grading Form (Appendix A{4}).
 6. See Suggested Core Knowledge Essay Topics for further essay topics (Appendix D).

Lesson Two: Descriptive Essays (two forty-five minute sessions)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Descriptive essay development
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - b. Students will produce an effectively written descriptive essay.
 - c. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.
 - d. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - e. Students will examine and improve their writing.
- B. *Materials*
1. Overhead projector
 2. Sample Descriptive Essay – as an overhead transparency (Appendix B{1})
 3. Descriptive Essay Checklist – one per student (Appendix B{2})
 4. Descriptive Essay Outline – one per student (Appendix B{3})
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Descriptive: explaining in detail
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Tell students that you are going to read them two different descriptions of the same item. Tell students that they are to determine which sounds the most appealing to them and why.
 2. Read the following to the students: “The cheeseburger felt as warm as melting butter in my hand. The bun was golden and as puffy as a cloud in the spring. As I pulled open the top bun, steam arose from the melted cheese and the aroma of spices filled my nostrils. The meat was plump and inviting, and lettuce and tomatoes towered atop the meat. Mustard and ketchup oozed from the cheeseburger as I returned the top bun and opened my mouth to take a bite.”

3. Tell students that this is the first description. Next, read the following second description to the students: “The cheeseburger felt warm, looked good, and smelled great. I opened my mouth to take a bite.” Ask students which description was better. Students should reply that the first description was better.
4. Next, ask students why the first description was better. Ideas should include that it allowed the listener to see, smell, feel, and almost taste the cheeseburger. Explain to students that that is the purpose of descriptive writing: to use language that will allow readers to see, hear, smell, taste, and feel what they are describing.
5. Tell students that descriptive essays usually describe a person, a place, a thing, or an idea. Explain that a descriptive essay should allow readers to feel as if they are right there with them.
6. Place the Sample Descriptive Paragraph (Appendix B{1}) on the overhead projector. Read through it as a class. Re-read through the paragraph, and pause at the end of each sentence to allow students to tell the words that they felt helped to enhance the description of Evan. Underline these words. After dissecting the paragraph, have students comment on the descriptions. Ask them if they were able to paint a mental picture of what Evan looks like. Ask students if Evan reminds them of someone that they know, or if they were reminded of someone that they had seen in a movie or magazine by Evan’s description. Explain to students that this paragraph served to describe a person, and that they will be partnering up to write a descriptive paragraph about another student in the class. Tell students that they are to be kind with their descriptions. Also tell students that they will not be including names in the descriptions, as they will be used as a trivia game to see how well students were able to describe each other. Tell them to place the subject’s name and writer’s name at the top of the paper for your reference. Tell student that they will have ten minutes to write their descriptive paragraphs.
7. After students are finished writing their paragraphs, collect them, and read them aloud one by one. Have students guess who the subjects of the paragraphs are. Have students comment on the use of language and descriptive words. Ask students if they can think of additional words to describe the subjects of the paragraphs.
8. Next, explain to students that they will be writing a descriptive essay. You may want to assign another essay that describes a person. You may want to have students describe a person that you are reading about in literature, history, or science. You may want to assign students the writing of an essay that describes a place that they are studying about in geography. Tell students that their essays need to contain four to five descriptive paragraphs.
9. Pass out the Descriptive Essay Outline (Appendix B{3}) to students. Tell students that they will be using this outline to organize their information before they begin to write their descriptive essays.
10. Pass out the Descriptive Essay Checklist (Appendix B{2}). Tell students that they will assess and revise their descriptive essays with the assistance of the checklist before they turn in their final copies.

- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Assign type of descriptive essay.
 2. Have students organize their ideas using the Descriptive Essay Information Guide (Appendix B{3}).
 3. Have students write four to five paragraph descriptive essays.
 4. Have students evaluate and revise their writing using the Descriptive Essay Checklist (Appendix B{2}).
 5. Assess descriptive essays using the Descriptive Essay Grading Form (Appendix B{4}).
 6. See Suggested Core Knowledge Essay Topics for further essay topics (Appendix D).

Lesson Three: Essays That Explain a Process (one forty-five minute session)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to evaluate and improve the quality of writing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Development of essays that explain a process
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will produce an effectively written essay that explains a process.
 - b. Students will apply spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage conventions correctly.
 - c. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - d. Students will examine and improve their writing.
- B. *Materials*
1. Overhead projector
 2. Tennis shoe with laces
 3. Sample Process Essay – as an overhead transparency (Appendix C{1})
 4. Process Essay Checklist – one per student (Appendix C{2})
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Process: the steps necessary to complete a task
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Place the tennis shoe in your hand. Show students the shoe. Explain that there is nothing particularly special about it. Place the shoe on a student's desk and untie the laces. Next, tie the laces using slow and deliberate motions. When finished, hold the shoe in the air. Next, ask students to raise their hands and tell when they learned to tie their shoes. Ask students who it was that taught them to tie their shoes.
 2. Untie the sample shoe, and have students take turns demonstrating the tying of the shoe. When five or six students have demonstrated tying the shoe, ask them if tying a shoe is a simple task. They should all reply that it is. Next, ask students if tying a shoe is a simple task for a person who has never tied his shoes before. Ask students the following question: If they

were to place a shoe in front of this person would he be able to tie it properly if no one had explained the procedure to him? Students should reply that this would be very unrealistic.

3. Explain to students that you need for them to explain to you the process by which a shoe is tied. Tell students that they need to list the procedure step-by-step for you, as if you have never tied your shoes before.
4. Start with the number one, and list as many steps as necessary for tying a shoe. When the students feel that all steps are listed, have a student read the directions while you follow them. Following the student's directions should reveal if they were easy to follow, or if a step was missed. Correct and add any necessary steps until the procedure is flawless.
5. Next, ask students if doing step five before step one would affect one's ability to follow the directions properly. The students should understand that mixing up the steps would confuse a person, and that the process may not be successfully completed.
6. Tell students that it is important to remember that when they are describing a process in writing, that they should imagine that they are explaining the process to someone who is unfamiliar to the procedure. Further explain that their descriptions and steps should be so clear that anyone would be able to follow them and have a successful outcome.
7. Tell students that it will be important to use transition words such as *first*, *next*, *after*, *then*, *last*, and *finally* when they explain their process so that the writing shows order and flows well.
8. Place Process Essay Sample on the overhead. Read through it as a class. Point out how the writer lists all necessary materials and presents the information in logical order. Ask the students if they feel that they could build a rain gauge based on the directions. Ask students if they would know the materials that they would need. They should reply that the process and materials are detailed enough that a person following the directions should be able to build a rain gauge.
9. Have students take the shoe-tying steps listed on the board and develop a short essay about how to tie a shoe. Leave the rain gauge essay up as a model to which the students can refer. Allow students 10-20 minutes to develop their short essays.
10. Have students evaluate their process essays with the Process Essay Checklist (Appendix C{2}).
11. Have students share their process essays with the class.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. Have students write two to three paragraph process essays.
2. Have students use the Process Essay Outline to help organize their steps (Appendix C{3}).
3. Have students evaluate and revise their writing using the Process Essay Checklist (Appendix C{2}).
4. Assess descriptive essays using the Process Essay Grading Form (Appendix C{4}).

Lesson Four: Speeches (two forty-five minute sessions)

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand how to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences while applying conventions of language for effective communication.
 - b. Understand how to speak and listen for effective communication in a variety of contexts.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Speechwriting using an essay as a guide
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will apply active listening skills for a variety of purposes.
 - b. Students will use feedback to respond to and expand upon the spoken messages of others.
 - c. Students will prepare effective oral messages, selecting and organizing content for purpose and audience.
 - d. Students will present purposeful spoken messages coherently, fluently, and expressively with increasing confidence.
 - e. Students will follow the conventions of form for clarity and for different purposes of writing.
 - f. Students will examine and improve their writing.

B. *Materials*

1. Overhead projector
2. Graded persuasive essay – one per student
3. Sample Persuasive Speech Outline– as an overhead transparency (Appendix E{1})
4. Persuasive Speech Outline – one per student (Appendix E{2})
5. Speech Critique Guide – one per student (Appendix E{3})

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Delivery: the presentation of a speech
2. Articulate: speaking clearly and slowly while using the proper punctuation of words
3. Critique: judge or evaluate

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Explain to students that they have learned about three different types of essays: persuasive, descriptive, and process. Explain to students that any of these essays could easily be used as the basis for a speech, but that persuasive and process essays may be easier to use. Further explain that a persuasive essay could translate into a very powerful speech, since it contains the feelings and emotions of the writer. Also explain that a process essay could be used as the basis for a speech, as the writer could explain and demonstrate the process as a way of presenting his/her speech. A descriptive essay could be a powerful tool for aiding in the development of a speech, but it is easier to use the other two essay types as the basis for a speech.
2. Tell students that when they present an essay as a speech that there are many things that they must keep in mind. The first is the delivery of the speech.

3. Explain to students that the delivery of the speech is the way they present the speech, and the quality of their articulation. Explain articulation as speaking clearly, slowly and loudly, while using standard pronunciation of words. Demonstrate proper articulation by reading a passage from a book that you have been reading to the class.
4. Next, explain to the class that a speech must also be well organized. This means that the person giving the speech must have prepared for the speech by practicing it several times. Stress to the students that giving a speech does not require that they memorize all of the material, but they must be extremely familiar with the information that they will be presenting. Tell students that they will be allowed to use note cards as little reminders of what they need to say. Explain to the students that the note cards will not contain the entire speech, but rather will contain main topics or facts that need to be shared during the speech. Stress that note cards help to make the person giving the speech feel more confident that he/she will not forget the order in which information needs to be delivered, or important facts and statistics.
5. Tell the students that it is also very important that their speeches be well supported. Tell the students that supporting evidence such as quotes, facts, and statistics help to make speeches seem more convincing. Explain to students that they don't necessarily need to memorize these facts, as they could be written on note cards or on a chart, graph, or other visual aid. Tell students that visual aids truly help with a presentation because they contain important information; while at the same time help to make their points more clear. Further explain that visual aids help to keep their audience interested.
6. Place the Sample Persuasive Speech Outline on the overhead projector (Appendix E{1}).
7. Present the Introduction portion of the speech outline as containing the main point, or purpose, of the speech. Explain that the rest of the speech should support the main idea presented. If presenting a persuasive speech, the main point would be the opinion of the presenter. An example, as such presented on the Sample Speech Outline, would be "School uniforms should be implemented at our school because they are necessary for the emotional well-being and productivity of students". If presenting a process speech, the main point would be the introduction of the process to be presented. An example would be "I will now explain and demonstrate the process of making Jell-O". However, explain to students that their first speeches will be persuasive, and will be taken from their persuasive essays. Further explain that the sample outline that you will be going over together will be that of a persuasive speech.
8. Tell students that following the introduction of their main idea should be the introduction of subtopics to be explained or described in the speech. These subtopics should relate directly to the topic and purpose of the speech. Tell students that the main idea and topics should be written on note cards so that the speech can be better organized.
9. Present the Subtopic portion of the Sample Persuasive Speech Outline to the students. Show how these ideas reinforce the main idea of the speech.

10. The Sample Persuasive Speech Outline shows school uniforms as being the topic of the speech. The main purpose of the speech is to persuade listeners to believe that “School uniforms should be implemented at our school because they are necessary for the emotional well-being and productivity of students.” It further introduces the following subtopics: “1)Uniforms help to reduce the pressure to spend a great deal of money on school clothes, 2)Uniforms help to reduce cliques, and 3)Uniforms help to keep kids focused on their work, rather than how they look.”
11. Next, explain to students that they should have a reinforcing fact, detail, or statistic for each subtopic, and that they should cite the source of the fact. Point out the Detail and Source portions of the Sample Persuasive Speech Outline. Tell students that the Sample Persuasive Speech Outline contains fictitious details and sources, but that their details should be researched and their sources should be real. Explain to the students that it is not necessary that they have many examples, but rather that they have a few solid and convincing examples.
12. Tell students that after they cover the details and sources for their speech, that it is necessary to restate their purpose for the speech in a powerful conclusion. Say that the conclusion could be a story relating to the topic or the most startling fact that reinforces their opinion. Tell them that the closing should leave the audience informed and thinking that the speaker’s opinion just might be right. Read through the conclusion portion of the Sample Persuasive Speech Outline.
13. Next, look over the Visual Aid portion of the Sample Persuasive Speech Outline. Tell students that they should write down what visual aid they will use when presenting their speeches when they fill out their outline. Tell them that this will help to keep them organized so that they will not forget to make a visual aid for the presentation of their speeches, as a visual aid will be required.
14. Next, explain to students that the information filled-in on the Sample Persuasive Speech Outline would simply be transferred to note cards and put in order in the following way: 1)Introduction of main point, 2)Introduction of subtopics, 3)Subtopic 1 followed by Detail 1 (source included), 4) Subtopic 2 followed by Detail 2 (source included), 5)Subtopic 3 followed by Detail 3 (source included), 6) Conclusion. Explain to students that they could have as many as twelve note cards, and that this is just a guide on how to organize the speech. Tell students that they will just refer to the note cards, and should not plan on reading straight from the cards for the duration of their speeches.
15. Tell students that they will need to give a two to three minute speech, and that they should practice their speeches many times to make sure that they are long enough, and they are confident with their material. Tell students that they should, at some point during their speeches, make reference to their visual aids. Tell students that this could take up as much as a minute of their speeches, so they should plan accordingly.
16. Next, tell students that they will be critiquing each other’s speeches while they are being given. Pass out copies of the Speech Critique Guide. (Appendix E{3}) Tell students that they will fill-out a critique for each

speech given, and that they will receive the critiques after the teacher has graded the speech. Tell students that they should refer to the Speech Critique Guide when they are putting together their speeches, as the teacher will grade the items on the guide as well.

17. Pass out the graded persuasive essays. Next, pass out copies of the Persuasive Speech Outline. (Appendix E{2}) Instruct students to use this outline to plan their speeches. Tell students that you need to see their Persuasive Speech Outlines before they begin to transfer information to note cards.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. Assign a persuasive speech to the students.
2. Have students fill-out the Persuasive Speech Outline (Appendix E{2}). Look this over to check for correct format before allowing students to begin their note cards.
3. Check student note cards before they begin to practice their speeches to make sure that they are not too long or detailed.
4. Have students present speeches and visual aids to the class.
5. Have students critique eachother's speeches using the Speech Critique Guide (Appendix E{3}).
6. Assess speeches using the Speech Grading Form (Appendix E{4}).

VI. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A(1): Model Persuasive Essay
- B. Appendix A(2): Persuasive Essay Self-Evaluation Checklist
- C. Appendix A(3): Persuasive Essay Guide
- D. Appendix A(4): Persuasive Essay Grading Form
- E. Appendix B(1): Sample Descriptive Paragraph
- F. Appendix B(2): Descriptive Essay Self-Evaluation Checklist
- G. Appendix B(3): Descriptive Essay Guide
- H. Appendix B(4): Descriptive Essay Grading Form
- I. Appendix C(1): Process Essay Sample
- J. Appendix C(2): Process Essay Self-Evaluation Checklist
- K. Appendix C(3): Process Essay Outline
- L. Appendix C(4): Process Essay
- M. Appendix D: Suggested Core Knowledge Persuasive and Descriptive Essay Topics
- N. Appendix E(1): Sample Speech Outline
- O. Appendix E(2): Persuasive Speech Outline
- P. Appendix E(3): Speech Critique Guide
- Q. Appendix E(4): Speech Grading Form

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Collections for Young Scholars Teacher Tool Cards. *Chicago and Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995. 0-8126-5453-6*
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**APPENDIX A(1)-THE WRITE STUFF
MODEL PERSUASIVE ESSAY**

Introduction

Some dogs are pests. They bark at your guests and jump up on your furniture. They chew your shoes, and they bother you when you're eating. Maybe these dogs were born this way, but that's unlikely. They probably became pests because their owners never trained them. Dogs need to be taught how to behave. They need to learn the family's rules, such as when it is okay to bark. A good obedience class can provide this education. Every pet dog should be required to attend such a class.

Selection from the Body

Most importantly, obedience school trains the owner as well as the animal. This is crucial, because the owner must know how to control the dog. Otherwise, the dog will forget its training. In a few months, it will be a pest again. Owners that learn with their pets are rewarded in several ways. Their families and pets are happier because everyone is following the same rules. And their guests feel more relaxed because they don't have to worry about getting dog hair all over their clothes.

Conclusion

All dog owners should take their dogs to obedience school. Although you may love your pesky pooch, you would lose your patience in time. Obedience school can train almost any dog to behave.

Taken from *Writer's Solution*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996.

**APPENDIX A(2)-THE WRITE STUFF
PERSUASIVE ESSAY SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST**

Yes	No	
_____	_____	I used complete sentences.
_____	_____	I created new paragraphs when I introduced new ideas.
_____	_____	I used commas, periods, and other punctuation marks correctly.
_____	_____	I used correct spelling throughout my essay.
_____	_____	My topic and position are clearly stated in my opening paragraph.
_____	_____	My position is supported with facts, examples, and reasons.
_____	_____	My paper doesn't include unnecessary or unrelated ideas.
_____	_____	My ideas are linked together with words like <i>therefore</i> , <i>because</i> , and <i>finally</i> . My ideas flow smoothly.
_____	_____	My closing is strong and restates my position.
_____	_____	My paper is convincing.

If you answered “no” to any of the above checklist items, you need to revise your essay. Do not complete your final draft until you are able to answer “yes” to all checklist items.

**APPENDIX A(3)-THE WRITE STUFF
PERSUASIVE ESSAY GUIDE**

Topic: _____

Position (for or against): _____

Position, including topic, written in sentence form: _____

I will use a _____ (Circle One) story startling fact question exaggeration
to open my essay.

Write your opening paragraph on the lines below.

List reasons for your opinion (these will be the topics for your body paragraphs):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List facts and examples that support your position. These will be the details that you use in paragraph development. List at least one fact or example for each reason listed above.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List where you obtained these facts and examples.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**APPENDIX A(4)-THE WRITE STUFF
PERSUASIVE ESSAY GRADING FORM**

Name: _____

Content:

1. Subject of paper clearly identified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. Position of writer is clearly identified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. Facts, examples, and reasons included	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. Ideas are linked throughout the piece	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. Position restated in a strong conclusion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Content: _____

Mechanics:

1. End marks and capital letters used correctly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. Other punctuation marks used correctly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. Writing utilizes complete sentences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. Variety of sentences are utilized in paragraph development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. Spelling is correct throughout piece	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mechanics: _____

Paper Total: _____/100

Teacher Comments: _____

**APPENDIX B(1)-THE WRITE STUFF
SAMPLE DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH**

You can tell a lot about Evan by looking at his face. The first thing you notice is his big brown eyes that always seem so shiny and alert. You wouldn't notice his pug nose except that it seems to be running all of the time. Like many little boys, he wipes it with his sleeve rather than a Kleenex. His mouth seems to have two basic positions. He smiles when he's got trouble on his mind, or he clenches his mouth shut when he doesn't want to do something, like eat his lunch. Evan's tongue, which he likes to stick out, is usually orange from his favorite fruit drink. Whenever someone tries to clean his mouth or chin, he squirms and turns away. Evan likes his face just the way it is.

Taken from Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. *Writers Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners*. Burlington, WI: Write Source Educational Publishing House, 1994. 0-939045-93-1 (softcover)

**APPENDIX B(2)-THE WRITE STUFF
DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST**

Yes	No	
_____	_____	I used complete sentences.
_____	_____	I created new paragraphs when I introduced new ideas.
_____	_____	I used commas, periods, and other punctuation marks correctly.
_____	_____	I used correct spelling throughout my essay.
_____	_____	My subject is clearly defined in my opening paragraph.
_____	_____	The topics for my body paragraphs are related to my subject.
_____	_____	My paper doesn't include unnecessary or unrelated ideas.
_____	_____	My ideas are linked together with words like <i>therefore</i> , <i>because</i> , and <i>finally</i> . My ideas flow smoothly.
_____	_____	I used words that will help my readers see, hear, smell, taste, and/or feel what I am describing .
_____	_____	I included details like what colors things are, how big things are, what things sound like, etc.

If you answered “no” to any of the above checklist items, you need to revise your essay. Do not complete your final draft until you are able to answer “yes” to all checklist items.

**APPENDIX B(3)-THE WRITE STUFF
DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY INFORMATION GUIDE**

SUBJECT OF ESSAY: _____

Fill-in descriptions that are related to your subject. Only two or three sensory details may apply to your subject. Fill-in everything that you can possibly think of.

Sight words associated with subject: _____

Smells associated with subject: _____

Texture or feel of subject: _____

Sounds associated with subject: _____

Tastes associated with subject: _____

Important facts about subject: _____

Using the information gathered above, construct a three to four paragraph essay that describes your subject. Upon completion of your essay, read it to a friend or parent and ask him/her what other information should be included to make the essay more descriptive. Also ask if the reading left him/her with any unanswered questions about the subject. Take comments under advisement, and make revisions where necessary. Also refer to the Descriptive Essay Checklist when you are editing and revising your essay before you turn in your final copy. Remember, proper punctuation, spelling, and handwriting will be graded as well.

**APPENDIX B(4)-THE WRITE STUFF
DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY GRADING FORM**

Name: _____

Content:

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Subject is clearly identified | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 2. Important details about the subject are included | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 3. Topics for body paragraphs related to subject | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 4. Descriptive words are used throughout piece | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 5. Writer effectively conveys purpose of writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Content: _____

Mechanics:

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. End marks and capital letters used correctly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 2. Other punctuation marks used correctly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 3. Writing utilizes complete sentences | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 4. Variety of sentences are utilized in paragraph development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 5. Spelling is correct throughout piece | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Mechanics: _____

Paper Total: _____/100

Teacher Comments: _____

**APPENDIX C(1)-THE WRITE STUFF
PROCESS ESSAY SAMPLE**

A Rain Gauge

Just how much RAIN has it RAINED?

Without a rain gauge, it's not easy to tell!

A brief, sudden thunderstorm that looks very fierce may actually result in very little rain accumulation.

To see how much rain has fallen, make a rain gauge. You will need: a funnel; a heavy, straight-sided bottle; a piece of masking tape; and a waterproof marker.

Stick 3 inches of masking tape on the side of the bottle, then mark off quarter inches using a waterproof marker.

Place the funnel inside the bottle; then measure how much water accumulates every time it rains.

**APPENDIX C(2)-THE WRITE STUFF
PROCESS ESSAY SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST**

Yes	No	
_____	_____	I used complete sentences.
_____	_____	I created new paragraphs when I introduced new ideas.
_____	_____	I used commas, periods, and other punctuation marks correctly.
_____	_____	I used correct spelling throughout my essay.
_____	_____	The purpose of my writing is stated in my opening paragraph.
_____	_____	I included reasons why the task that I am describing is important.
_____	_____	I listed all materials necessary to successfully complete the process.
_____	_____	The steps for my process are listed in order.
_____	_____	My steps are written in paragraph form, utilizing words such as <i>first</i> , <i>then</i> , <i>next</i> , <i>after</i> , and <i>before</i> .
_____	_____	A person unfamiliar with this task would be able to successfully accomplish it by following my directions.

If you answered “no” to any of the above checklist items, you need to revise your essay. Do not complete your final draft until you are able to answer “yes” to all checklist items.

**APPENDIX C(3)-THE WRITE STUFF
PROCESS ESSAY OUTLINE**

Process to be described: _____

Importance of process: _____

Materials needed to successfully complete process: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

List steps necessary to complete this process. Make sure they are listed in logical order and are very detailed. Remember, you are writing this process for someone who has never done it before.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

If necessary, write additional steps on back.

**APPENDIX C(4)-THE WRITE STUFF
PROCESS ESSAY GRADING FORM**

Name: _____

Content:

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Purpose of writing is clearly stated | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 2. Necessary materials are listed | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 3. Steps are written in order | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 4. Steps are easy to follow, and are correct | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 5. Order words are used, and writing flows well | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Content: _____

Mechanics:

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. End marks and capital letters used correctly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 2. Other punctuation marks used correctly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 3. Writing utilizes complete sentences | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 4. Variety of sentences are utilized in paragraph development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 5. Spelling is correct throughout piece | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Mechanics: _____

Paper Total: _____/100

Teacher Comments: _____

APPENDIX D-THE WRITE STUFF
SUGGESTED CORE KNOWLEDGE PERSUASIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY
TOPICS

Persuasive Essay Topics

1. Judaism and Christianity have the same basic beliefs.
2. Modern American democratic government is better than Athenian democracy.
3. Alexander the Great was the greatest conqueror of his time.
4. Attacks and invasions caused the fall of the Roman Empire.
5. The divine right of kings is an uneducated idea.
6. The French Revolution was caused by the poor ruling of Louis XVI.
7. The steam engine was the most important invention of the Industrial Revolution.
8. Simon Bolivar was the greatest of the Latin American liberators.
9. The idea of “nativism” is prejudiced.
10. Andrew Carnegie was the greatest of the American industrialists and capitalists.
11. Susan B. Anthony was the greatest woman’s rights activist of all time.
12. The earth’s landmass was all connected at one time.
13. Black holes contain the most powerful gravitational force of any known object.
14. Nuclear energy is the best source of energy for the future.
15. The global warming, if left unchecked, will eventually destroy the planet.
16. Isaac Newton was the greatest scientist of all time.

Descriptive Essay Topics

1. Describe the idea of a “covenant” between God and man.
2. Describe the geography of the Middle East.
3. Describe the Parthenon.
4. Describe Julius Caesar.
5. Describe Thomas Jefferson’s idea of “natural rights” in the Declaration of Independence.
6. Describe Marie Antoinette.
7. Describe Romanticism in the visual arts.
8. Describe working conditions in early mills and mine.
9. Describe the Andes Mountains.
10. Describe the Statue of Liberty.
11. Describe Booker T. Washington and his ideas.
12. Describe the eruption of a volcano.
13. Describe the Mariana Trench.
14. Describe plankton.
15. Describe a supernova.
16. Describe mechanical energy.
17. Describe the change in matter from solid to liquid to gas, as occurs with water.
18. Describe typhoid.

**APPENDIX E(1)-THE WRITE STUFF
SAMPLE SPEECH OUTLINE**

Name: Mrs. Welch

Subject of Speech: School Uniforms

Introduction (should include main idea of speech): School uniforms should be implemented at our school because they are necessary for the emotional well-being and productivity of students.

Subtopics: 1) Uniforms help reduce the pressure to spending a great deal of money on school clothes.

2) Uniforms help to reduce the presence of cliques

3) Uniforms help to keep kids focused on their work, rather than how they look.

Details: **Detail for Subtopic #1:** The average school uniform is more affordable than buying traditional school clothing. This helps to reduce the cost and anxiety attached to not having enough money to spend on new clothing every few months.

Source: Entertainment Weekly. July 2001 edition.

Detail for Subtopic #2: One out of three sixth grade girls feels that she needs to dress in a certain way in order to fit in with her friends.

Source: Survey taken of 30 sixth grade girls in our school.

Detail for Subtopic #3: Test scores comparing schools utilizing uniforms with that of schools not utilizing uniforms finds that uniformed children perform better on the Iowa Test.

Source: Education Today. August 2000.

Conclusion (should restate main idea): School uniforms help to take an unnecessary pressure out of going to school. Students feel as if they belong because they are all dressed the same and they don't have to worry about the peer pressure or cost related to buying traditional school clothing. They perform better in school because they don't have to worry about what they are wearing. Any wise person can see that school uniforms should be implemented at our school.

Visual Aid: Poster board with pictures of school uniforms and related statistics.

**APPENDIX E(2)-THE WRITE STUFF
PERSUASIVE SPEECH OULINE**

Name: _____

Subject of Speech: _____

Introduction (should include main idea of speech): _____

Subtopics: 1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Details: **Detail for Subtopic #1:** _____

Source: _____

Detail for Subtopic #2: _____

Source: _____

Detail for Subtopic #3: _____

Source: _____

Conclusion (should restate main idea): _____

Visual Aid: _____

**APPENDIX E(3)-THE WRITE STUFF
SPEECH CRITIQUE GUIDE**

Name of Speaker: _____

Name of Person Doing Critique: _____

	Needs Improvement	Good	Excellent
Speaker was easy to hear.	_____	_____	_____
Speaker spoke clearly.	_____	_____	_____
Speaker conveyed main idea.	_____	_____	_____
Speech contained details related to the main idea.	_____	_____	_____
Details were backed-up by sources.	_____	_____	_____
Conclusion restated main idea.	_____	_____	_____
Speech was convincing.	_____	_____	_____
Visual aid was used.	_____	_____	_____
Visual aid contained relevant information.	_____	_____	_____

One thing that I really liked about your speech was _____

**APPENDIX E(4)-THE WRITE STUFF
SPEECH GRADING FORM**

Name of Speaker: _____

Subject of Speech: _____

Speaker was easy to hear. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Speaker spoke clearly and used the proper pronunciation of words. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Speaker conveyed main idea in an effective way. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Speech contained details related to the main idea. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Details were backed-up by cited sources. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Conclusion restated main idea in a convincing manner. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Speech was convincing and easy to understand. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Speech was within required time frame and showed evidence of preparation. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Visual aid was used in an effective way. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Visual aid contained relevant information. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Speech Total: _____/100

Letter Grade: _____

Teacher Comments: _____