

WEST VIRGINIA EDITION



FREE WRITING LESSONS

TO START THE YEAR

Top Score Writing

A large, stylized yellow pencil is oriented horizontally at the bottom of the page. The pencil has a black eraser at the right end and a black lead tip at the left end. The words "GRADE 3" are written in large, bold, black, sans-serif capital letters across the yellow body of the pencil. The eraser is divided into a light blue section and a pink section.

GRADE 3

Free Week of Writing Lessons

We're excited to share a full week of FREE writing lessons designed specifically for the beginning of the school year! These lessons come straight from Section I of the Top Score Writing curriculum and focus on teaching the foundations and basic structure of an essay.

While state testing is text based, we encourage teachers to start the year with non-text-based writing to help students build a strong understanding of essay structure and the parts of each paragraph. This approach, taught over the first 4 to 5 weeks of school, makes the transition into text-based writing much smoother and more successful for students.

Here's what you'll find in these free lessons:

- ✓ Step-by-step lessons with explicit instruction
- ✓ Student activities to reinforce skills
- ✓ Built in progress monitoring tools
- ✓ A full table of contents to preview all lessons and topics in the full curriculum

Plus, don't forget! Our digital platform includes:

- ✓ PowerPoints for every lesson
- ✓ Teacher led videos
- ✓ A complete grammar unit

We are so thankful for everything you do each and every day and we are here to support you every step of the way. We hope you enjoy these lessons and that they help set you and your students up for a successful year of writing!
You've got this and we've got you!



SECTION 1

Expository Writing **(Non-Text-Based)**

WRITING: LESSON 1

Today the students will learn about different types of writing.

1. Explain there are four types of essays students will learn how to write this year: non-text-based expository, text-based informative/expository, text-based opinion/argumentative, and narrative.

Note to Teachers:

Non-text-based expository and text-based expository writing are very similar. Text-based expository writing requires the writer to support their thoughts and ideas with evidence from the text. Non-text-based expository writing does not use text at all, and the writer simply explains with their own thoughts/ideas. The keywords and essay structure for both genres are exactly the same. To keep things from getting confusing, refer to Section 1 as non-text-based expository writing and Section 2 as text-based informative/expository writing. Once you reach Section 2, explain to students that the text-based informative/expository essay is very similar to the non-text-based expository essay; it is just written after reading source texts and using information from the texts as their support.

2. Review each type of essay with students. Make an anchor chart of these types of essays:

Informative/Expository – is when you explain or inform about a topic.

Example – You may be asked to write an essay to inform your reader about the human body.

Narrative – is when you tell a story.

Example – You may be asked to write a story about a time you found something special.

Opinion/Argumentative – is when you write how you feel or what you think about a topic or text.

Example – You may be asked to give your opinion about whether students should wear uniforms.

3. Explain to students that a writing prompt tells them what type of essay to write and what their essay should be about.
4. Explain that there are keywords in prompts that help them identify what type of essay they are being asked to write.

The keywords for informative/expository are **explain, inform, and teach**.

The keywords for narrative are **story** and **tell**.

The keywords for opinion/argumentative are **opinion, think, feel, and argue**.

***Please make an anchor chart of these keywords.*

5. Write the following prompt on the board.

Many children love to play video games. Imagine that you were playing a video game and were magically sucked into the game. Now tell a story about what you did when you were sucked into the video game.

6. Read the prompt aloud and identify the keyword. Circle the keyword and discuss what type of essay the prompt is asking you to write.

Type of prompt = narrative

Keywords = “tell” and “story”

7. Write this prompt on the board.

Everyone has a favorite animal. Think about your favorite animal. Now explain why this animal is your favorite.

8. Ask students to identify the keyword in this prompt. They should identify “explain.” Tell them that the keyword is usually in the last sentence of a prompt. Since “explain” is the keyword, what type of essay is this? They should respond with “expository.”
9. Do the same activity with the following prompts.

Families love to go on vacation. Think of a time when you went on vacation. Write a story about your trip and all the fun things you did. (Answer: narrative)

Write your opinion about whether students should be allowed to chew gum in class. (Answer: opinion/argumentative)

Most people have a pet. Think of your pet. Now explain why this pet is such a great companion. (Answer: informative/expository)

10. Hand out the “Guided Practice” activity. Have students work on this at their seats while you walk around and monitor. Have them underline the keyword first and then identify what kind of essay it is. After 10 minutes, go over the answers together.
11. Hand out the “Partner Practice” activity. Have students pair up with a partner and complete this activity together. After 10 minutes, review their answers.
12. Ask students if they understand how to identify the keywords and decide which type of essay they will be writing. Go over examples orally. Once you think they have a good understanding, give them the “Skill Check.”
13. Collect, grade, and record the results of the skill check on the Section 1 Non-Text-Based Expository Skill Tracker found in the Assessment Resources.

Guided Practice

Name: _____

*Read each prompt and underline the keyword. Write **N** if it is a narrative prompt, **I/E** if it is an informative/expository prompt, or **O/A** if it is an opinion/argumentative prompt.*

- _____ 1. There are many famous athletes that children look up to. Write a story about a time when a famous athlete came to visit you at your house.
- _____ 2. There are many summer days that families spend on the beach. Before you write, think about a time you went to the beach with your family. Now write a story about that time you went to the beach with your family.
- _____ 3. Many children spend a lot of their time watching TV. In your opinion, what is the best TV show?
- _____ 4. Sometimes when you watch movies, you can relate to certain characters. Before you begin to write, think about a movie character that you can relate to the most. Now explain why you are similar to him/her.
- _____ 5. A zoo is full of animals that should naturally be living in the wild. Think about what zoos offer to animals. Write to inform your reader about how zoos can help wild animals.
- _____ 6. There are many chores you can do to help around the house. Think about a chore that you do to help out. Now write an expository essay about why doing this chore is so helpful to your family.
- _____ 7. Many young boys and girls go to bed late. Do you think third graders should have a bedtime?
- _____ 8. Kids enjoy collecting special items. Think of an item that you enjoy collecting. Explain why you collect this item.
- _____ 9. There are many great books to read. Imagine that one day you changed into a character from a book that you were reading. Now write a story about your day living as a character from that book.
- _____ 10. Cars make our lives easier and allow us to go places quickly. Imagine that one day you designed a car for children to drive. Now write a story about how you designed it and how children can drive it.

Partner Practice

Name: _____

*Read each prompt and underline the keyword. Write **N** if it is a narrative prompt, **I/E** if it is an informative/expository prompt, or **O/A** if it is an opinion/argumentative prompt.*

- _____ 1. Birthdays are times when memories are made. Think of one birthday you celebrated that was more special than the others. Write a story about your time celebrating this birthday.
- _____ 2. Many children walk home from school. Imagine that you found a mysterious treasure map on your way home from school. Now tell what happened when you followed the map.
- _____ 3. Everyone has a favorite celebrity. Think about your favorite celebrity. Now explain why this celebrity is your favorite.
- _____ 4. Schools are considering getting rid of all junk food in the cafeteria and replacing it with healthy snacks. Do you feel schools should only be allowed to sell healthy food options in the cafeteria?
- _____ 5. Playing a team sport is a lot of hard work. Imagine that you played in a championship tournament. Write a story about the day your team won the championship.
- _____ 6. Many school districts are considering getting rid of recess time. Argue whether schools should stop giving students recess.
- _____ 7. The Amazon rainforest is a fascinating place to learn about. Think about what you have learned about the Amazon rainforest. Write an expository essay about the Amazon rainforest.

Skill Check

Name: _____

*Read each prompt and underline the keyword. Write **N** if it is a narrative prompt, **I/E** if it is an informative/expository prompt, or **O/A** if it is an opinion/argumentative prompt.*

- _____ 1. Most people have a place they go to when they want to get away and have some peace and quiet. Before you begin writing, think about your favorite quiet place. Explain why this one place is your favorite.
- _____ 2. We all love games. Write a story about a time you played a fun game with your friends.
- _____ 3. A good book can spark your imagination and get you excited. Think about a good book you have read. Write to tell your own version of this same story.
- _____ 4. Write an expository essay about the sport of soccer.
- _____ 5. Being away from friends and family can be difficult. Think about different ways you can keep in touch with those far away. Write to share your opinion on the best way to keep in touch with relatives and friends living far away.
- _____ 6. Recycling is important to our community. Write to explain the various ways people can recycle.
- _____ 7. Sometimes children go on field trips at school. Think about the many types of field trips you have just read about. Write to share your opinion about which field trip is the most important for students to go on.
- _____ 8. Children have the entire summer off to play and have fun. Before you write, think about one activity you enjoy during the summer. Now explain why you enjoy this activity.
- _____ 9. People dream of discovering gold. Imagine that one day you were digging in your garden and found a treasure box. Now tell a story about what happened when you opened it up.
- _____ 10. After reading about taking care of pets, write to share your opinion of whether taking care of a pet is hard work.

WRITING: LESSON 2

Today the students will take a pre-test on non-text-based expository writing.

1. Explain to students that they will be writing a non-text-based expository essay.
2. They should spend 5 minutes planning and 55 minutes writing.
3. Hand out the “Pre-Test.”
4. Allow them to start writing.
5. After 5 minutes, tell them planning time is over and they should start writing.
6. When they have 10 minutes left, give them a 10-minute warning.
7. After 60 minutes, have them put their pencils down.
8. Collect and grade using the Section 1 Non-Text-Based Expository Rubric located in the Assessment Resources.
9. Record scores on the Section 1 Non-Text-Based Expository Skill Tracker.

Pre-Test

Name: _____

***Before you begin to write, think about your favorite subject in school.
Now explain why you like this one subject so much.***

I _____

R1 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R2 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R3 _____

a. _____

b. _____

C _____

[illegible]

[illegible]

SECTION 1

NON-TEXT-BASED EXPOSITORY

RUBRIC

Score Point	Purpose, Organization and Structure	Support and Elaboration	Language and Conventions
4 Exemplary	• 5 clearly indented paragraphs • 3-sentence introduction (hook, 3 reasons, closing) • 3-sentence conclusion (summary, 3 reasons, thought/feeling) • Complete topic sentences in each middle paragraph (transition, central idea, reason) • Essay consistently focused on the central idea	• Each middle paragraph has A/B subtopics • 3 A • 3 B • Support sentences are specific details or examples	• Consistent command of English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling • Errors do not affect meaning and there are no patterns of errors
3 Proficient	• Clear organizational structure but may not indent each paragraph • 2-sentence introduction (hook, 3 reasons) • 2-sentence conclusion (3 reasons, summary OR thought/feeling) • Topic sentences present but may be only partially complete • Essay mostly focused on the central idea	• Most middle paragraphs have A/B subtopics • 2 A • 2 B • Support sentences are mostly specific details or examples but may be general at times	• Grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are mostly correct • Errors do not affect meaning in a significant way, there may be a pattern of errors of one type
2 Approaching Proficiency	• Inconsistent organizational structure • Introduction and conclusion present but repetitive, simplistic, ineffective, or brief (one sentence) • Topic sentences attempted but ineffective or confusing • Essay insufficiently focused on the central idea	• Middle paragraphs do not have A/B subtopics • 2-3 sentences of support per paragraph • Support mostly general or vague (“fluff”)	• Vocabulary and word choice are mostly imprecise and basic • Inconsistent use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling • Multiple distracting grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors
1 In Need of Development	• No organizational structure • Introduction and conclusion missing, unrelated to the central idea, or confusing • Topic sentences missing or unrelated to paragraphs • Central idea absent, demonstrating a lack of awareness of the task	• Support absent or lacking; middle paragraphs are too brief • Support unrelated or confusing	• Vocabulary and word choice vague, unclear, or confusing • A great deal of a variety of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors that often obscure meaning

*To receive a score in all categories, the response must be in English, of a sufficient length, and address the prompt.

SECTION 1

NON-TEXT-BASED EXPOSITORY INFORMAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Date: _____

[illegible]

WRITING: LESSON 3

Today the students will learn how to plan for an expository essay.

1. Explain to students that before writing an essay, they have to plan for it. Their planning is like a road map. Once they have written a plan, they just follow it, and it makes writing a whole lot easier. Today they will be learning how to plan for a non-text-based expository essay.
2. Ask students to recall what the keywords for a non-text-based expository prompt are.
(Explain/Inform)
3. To plan for an expository essay, we use an IRC outline.
I stands for introduction.
R stands for reasons.
C stands for conclusion.
4. The IRC planning outline maps out our five paragraphs.
5. Draw an IRC outline on the board.

I _____
R1 _____
R2 _____
R3 _____
C _____

6. Let's do an example. Write this prompt on the board next to the IRC outline.

***Everyone has a favorite sport. Think about your favorite sport.
Now explain why this is your favorite sport.***

7. Ask students, "What is the first thing we do?" (***underline the keyword***)
8. Then we do what? (***decide what type of prompt it is***)
9. Once they have identified the prompt as an expository essay, explain to them that they need to pick their favorite sport and then list three reasons why they like that sport.
10. Today we will write about soccer as a class.
11. Write "soccer" on the I and C lines.
12. Now tell students to come up with three reasons why they like soccer.

13. We will write these reasons on the R1, R2, and R3 lines.
14. As students are coming up with reasons, explain to them that we only want to write one or two words on the lines so we don't waste too much time planning. We need all the time we can get to write our essay. So instead of writing "you can make goals," we will just write "goals."
15. Fill in the lines with their three reasons why they like soccer.
16. Remind students that these must be good reasons. We want to keep the reader interested in order to receive a good score, so make sure to pick good reasons to write about.

(Example reasons: goals, passing, and team)

17. Do another example with students.

***Everyone has a favorite holiday. Think about your favorite holiday.
Now explain why this holiday is your favorite.***

18. Have students come up with a holiday and then three reasons why they like that holiday.
(Ex. Christmas: 1. presents 2. food 3. family)
19. Then hand out the "Partner Practice" activity to students. Tell them to choose a partner and work on this together. Write this prompt on the board:

***Everyone has a favorite device. Think about your favorite device that you play with.
Now explain why this device is your favorite.***

20. Tell students they will have 10 minutes to plan for this prompt.
21. Walk around the classroom and make sure they are doing the following three things:
 1. Writing their favorite device on the I and C lines
 2. Writing three reasons why they like that device
 3. Writing good reasons

Example plan:

I cell phone
R1 texting
R2 apps
R3 internet
C cell phone

22. After reviewing their plans, pass out the “Independent Practice” assignment.

Example plan:

I dog

R1 companion

R2 activities

R3 cute

C dog

23. Make note of any students who struggled with today’s assignments.

Partner Practice

Name: _____

I _____

R1 _____

R2 _____

R3 _____

C _____

Independent Practice

Name: _____

Directions: Plan for the following prompt.

***Everyone has a favorite animal. Think about your favorite animal.
Now explain why this animal is your favorite.***

I _____

R1 _____

R2 _____

R3 _____

C _____

WRITING: LESSON 4

*Today the students will practice planning for more expository prompts.
They will continue to fill out the IRC outline but will add A and B subtopics.*

1. On the board/document camera, draw an IRC outline.
2. Explain that they will now be adding A and B subtopics next to R1, R2, and R3.
3. These A and B subtopics will help them to write longer paragraphs.
4. Write the A and B subtopics on the IRC outline.

I _____

R1 _____ a _____

b _____

R2 _____ a _____

b _____

R3 _____ a _____

b _____

C _____

5. Now let's do an example with our favorite place to go.
6. For today's lesson, we will use water park.
7. Our reasons will be R1. slides R2. wave pool R3. lazy river
8. Fill in the IRC outline with water park and the three reasons.
9. Now explain how the A and B subtopics work. We have slides as our first reason. Now we have to come up with two things we like about slides. We will fill this in our A and B next to slides.
10. Let's think...we want to explain the slides to the readers. So, let's think of two *details* about the slides or two *examples* of slides that we want to explain to the reader. You can go down the *tube slides*, and you can go down slides with a partner on *inner tubes*. For A, we will write "tube slides," and for B, we will write "inner tubes." These are two examples of slides.
11. Let's do the same for wave pool and lazy river.
12. Here are some examples to use:
Wave pool: big, fun waves to catch and surf lessons (A. big waves B. surf lessons)
Lazy river: relaxing and going under fountains (A. relaxation B. fountains)

The finished outline should look like this:

I water park

R1 slides a. tube slides b. inner tubes

R2 wave pool a. big waves b. surf lessons

R3 lazy river a. relaxation b. fountains

C water park

13. Hand out the “Guided Practice” worksheet.
14. Complete this activity with students.
15. Remind students to pick three good reasons and then two details or examples about each for their A and B subtopics.

Example:

I Beauty and the Beast

R1 characters a. Belle b. The Beast

R2 action a. castle b. love story

R3 music a. soundtrack b. theme song

C Beauty and the Beast

16. Pass out the “Independent Practice” worksheet.

Example:

I football

R1 the game a. tackles b. touchdowns

R2 teams a. Patriots b. Steelers

R3 Super Bowl a. parties b. half-time show

C football

17. Once they have completed this assignment, review examples and non-examples. Help students to understand why the non-examples are incorrect and revise them as necessary.

Guided Practice

Name: _____

Directions: Plan for the following prompt.

***Everyone has a favorite movie. Think about your favorite movie.
Now explain why this movie is your favorite.***

I _____

R1 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R2 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R3 _____

a. _____

b. _____

C _____

Independent Practice

Name: _____

Directions: Plan for the following prompt.

***We all have a favorite sport. Think about your favorite sport.
Now explain why this sport is your favorite.***

I _____

R1 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R2 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R3 _____

a. _____

b. _____

C _____

WRITING: LESSON 5

Today the students will continue to work on expository planning.
We want to make sure they fully understand planning before we start writing.

- 1. Review planning for a non-text-based expository essay.
- 2. Draw the IRC outline with A and B subtopics and review that they are details or examples of each reason.
- 3. Tell the students they are going to be planning for four different prompts.
- 4. Complete the favorite person “Modeling” activity with students.
- 5. Make sure the 3 reasons are big reasons and the A and B subtopics are details or examples of the reasons.
- 6. Hand out the “Planning Practice” worksheets.
- 7. Have students work on these prompts and plan for them.
- 8. Once completed, review the planning sheets.
- 9. Share examples and non-examples under the document camera.
- 10. Pass out the “Skill Check.” Have students complete it independently.
- 11. Collect, grade, and record the results on the Section 1 Non-Text-Based Expository Skill Tracker.
- 12. Here are some great planning examples. Please note that these are only examples. There are countless appropriate plans students can make in response to these prompts.

Favorite person:

Mom	R1. cleans	a. bedroom	b. laundry
	R2. cooks	a. dinner	b. packs lunch
	R3. homework	a. reading	b. math

Favorite book:

Charlotte’s Web	R1. characters	a. Wilbur	b. Charlotte
	R2. action	a. pet pig	b. writing in web
	R3. theme	a. friendship	b. life/death

Favorite holiday:

Christmas	R1. presents	a. gifts	b. stocking
	R2. feast	a. lots of food	b. desserts
	R3. family	a. Grandma’s house	b. church

Favorite toy:

Scooter

R1. transportation

R2. tricks

R3. skate park

a. school

a. jumps

a. ramps

b. friend's house

b. turns

b. friends

Modeling

Name: _____

***Everyone has a favorite person. Think about your favorite person.
Now explain why this person is your favorite.***

I _____

R1 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R2 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R3 _____

a. _____

b. _____

C _____

Planning Practice

Name: _____

***Everyone has a favorite book. Think about your favorite book.
Now explain why this book is your favorite.***

I _____

R1 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R2 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R3 _____

a. _____

b. _____

C _____

Planning Practice

Name: _____

***Everyone has a favorite holiday. Think about your favorite holiday.
Now explain why this holiday is your favorite.***

I _____

R1 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R2 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R3 _____

a. _____

b. _____

C _____

Skill Check

Name: _____

***Everyone has a favorite toy. Think about your favorite toy.
Now explain why this toy is your favorite.***

I _____

R1 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R2 _____

a. _____

b. _____

R3 _____

a. _____

b. _____

C _____



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ITC Outline

Use to plan for an
informative/expository essay

I central idea

T1 topic 1 **a.** detail or example

b. detail or example

T2 topic 2 **a.** detail or example

b. detail or example

T3 topic 3 **a.** detail or example

b. detail or example

C central idea

Top Score Writing

Introduction Paragraph

I Disney World

R1 rides a. roller coaster

b. teacups

R2 food a. hot dogs

b. pizza

R3 games a. basketball
b. balloon dart

C Disney World

Where is your favorite place to go?

My favorite place is Disney World because of the rides, food, and games. Disney World is an amazing place.

Key

Hook

Central idea/3 topics

Closing statement



Topic Sentence

The first sentence in a middle paragraph

First, dogs are my favorite animal
because they are very cute. Some dogs
have big, bulgy eyes. Other dogs have
curly tails.

Central idea



First, dogs are my favorite animal because
they are very cute.



Transition



Reason



Middle Paragraph

First, I like basketball because you can shoot the ball. One way to shoot is by making a 3-pointer. You have to make sure you stand behind the white 3-point line. Then shoot it with a lot of force so it will make it into the basket. You can also make a shot by dunking. First you have to run fast across the court. Then jump as high as you can and push it through the net.

I basketball

R1 shoot a. 3-pointer
 b. dunk

R2 dribble a. court
 b. legs

R3 win a. championship
 b. trophy

C basketball

Key
Topic sentence
3A
3B



Conclusion Paragraph

In conclusion, alligators are very interesting to learn about. Alligators are remarkable because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. I think everyone should learn more about alligators so they can understand this mysterious creature.

I alligators
T1 species
T2 type of reptile
T3 habitats
C alligators

Key
Summary
Restate central idea/3
topics
Thought or feeling



Transitions

Use within paragraphs to help organize and connect ideas in writing

To show order:

first
second
third
next
last
finally

To add more ideas:

also
and
in addition
another

To explain why:

because
so
since
for example

To compare:

alike
similar
unlike
different
but





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