

<h1>Begin with a Plan of Attack</h1>				Student/Class Goal Students often claim that they just can't seem to get started on their writing.	
Outcome <i>(lesson objective)</i> Students will identify the components of an essay, compose a clear and coherent thesis statement, and develop a list of supporting details based on their research findings.				Time Frame 3-4 hours	
Standard <i>Convey Ideas in Writing</i>				NRS EFL 5-6	
Prewriting	Benchmarks	Drafting	Benchmarks	Editing and Revising	Benchmarks
Topic, purpose, & audience	5.1, 6.1	Organize writing		Reread & revise	
Writing for purpose	5.2, 6.2	Sentences/paragraphs		Proofread	
Writing for various tasks		Descriptive language		Feedback from others	
Generate ideas		Sentence structure		Checklists & rubrics	
Main idea/thesis	5.5, 6.5	Spelling		Publishing	Benchmarks
Research	5.6, 6.6	Punctuation		Technology	
Plagiarism		Capitalization		Publication	
Sources		Parts of speech			
Organize ideas					
Organizational pattern					
Materials Overhead projector or Emily machine, computers with Internet access Two sample essays and topics from <i>2002 GED Essay</i> . Steck-Vaughn, 63-74. <i>What is an Essay?</i> Handout <i>Essay Map</i> Handout <i>2002 GED Essay</i> . Contemporary, 164. <i>15 Sample Essay Topics</i> Handout <i>Sample Thesis Statements</i> Handout <i>Essay Organizer</i> Handout Sample Essay Topics from <i>Transitions Preparing for College Writing</i> . Steck-Vaughn, 50. Post its and <i>Skillswise - Writing: Planning Your Writing</i> Handout					
Learner Prior Knowledge Students have previously composed topic sentences and written paragraphs. Students have limited experience writing essays. Students have learned about plagiarism and Internet searching.					
Instructional Activities Step 1 - Begin by quickly reviewing the characteristics of a well-written paragraph (topic sentence, major supports, purpose, details, unity, coherence, audience, etc). Step 2 - Introduce the <u>essay</u> by sharing an example of an essay. Students will point out the <u>differences</u> between an essay and a paragraph (length, more paragraphs, more details, longer introduction and conclusion, etc.) Step 3 - Review with students the <u>similarities</u> in a paragraph and an essay (title, indentation, topic, topic sentence/thesis statement, details, unity, coherence, audience, purpose, context, conclusion, etc). Discuss briefly <i>What is an Essay?</i> handout that defines the parts of an essay. Step 4 - Refer to explanation on <i>What is an Essay?</i> Handout to explain the <u>topic</u> of an essay. Go on to explain that the <u>thesis statement</u> is a sentence that includes the topic and the <u>controlling idea</u> for the essay. Explain that the thesis statement is the essay's <u>purpose</u> . Review briefly the <u>structure</u> of an essay by looking at <i>Essay Map</i> handout and <i>2002 GED Essay</i> . Contemporary, 164. Cite several examples from <i>15 Sample Essay Topics</i> and <i>Sample Thesis Statements</i> handouts to illustrate how to turn a topic into a thesis statement and how each thesis statement has a topic and a controlling idea. Small groups of 2-4 students should practice selecting and underlining the topic and the controlling idea of thesis statements using same <i>Sample Thesis Statements</i> handout. Small groups will then share and discuss answers with the whole group.					

Teacher Note Remind students regularly of the similarities in paragraph writing and essay writing to make transition easier for them.

Step 5 - For more practice, students may work individually to create their own thesis statements, including a topic and a controlling idea, while instructor circulates to address any questions. Pairs of students should discuss their answers, and then the whole group can discuss.

Step 6 - Using *Sample Thesis Statements* handout, explain what makes a “good” thesis statement and how the details in an essay must support the thesis statement. Have students point out why some thesis statements are better than others on the worksheet. Have students break into small groups of 2-4 students to choose three that they prefer and list what could be included in an essay to support them.

Step 7 - Using *15 Sample Essay Topics* handout and/or sample Essay Topics from *2002 GED Essay*. Steck-Vaughn, 63-74, students create thesis statements by adding appropriate controlling ideas to listed essay topics. Students share statements and discuss with a partner.

Step 8 - Review the use of graphic organizers in the writing process. Discuss *Essay Organizer* handout and *Essay Map* handout as webbing methods for writing are reviewed.

Step 9 - Students may also practice use of graphic organizer with post-its experience. Using *Skillswise - Writing: Planning Your Writing* handout, assign a thesis statement and whole group will follow directions and work together on this activity to develop supports for an essay. All students must contribute 3-5 ideas and post on board.

Step 10 - Students practice this method with a peer on another instructor-assigned thesis statement. Whole group compare and discuss answers. Class discusses benefits of graphic organizers. This can be done as an additional post-its experience, if needed.

Step 11 - Students choose one of their created thesis statements from Step 7 to use for their first essay. Students pair with a partner to verify choice. Remind students that our class is the audience for their essay.

Step 12 - Since the essay will require research for details to use as supports for the thesis statement, students work in the computer lab searching for appropriate details. Students use post-its method to organize. Begin post-its process together before research begins.

Step 13 - After research is completed, students organize their post-its, putting them in order, discarding non-supportive ideas, and deleting duplicate ideas.

Assessment/Evidence *(based on outcome)*

Evidence of mastery will be seen in observation of student work. Additional practice can be assigned as needed.

Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation

This lesson has not yet been field tested.

Next Steps

Review the parts of the sample essay format. Instructor will model for the students, with their input, how to put the post-its (from step 9) together into an essay format. Teacher and students will write a draft together. Students will write a draft of their own using their thesis statement and post-its with research notes. *The outline format will be taught as a graphic organizer for the second essay.*

Technology Integration

Pre Writing-Planning <http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/words/writing/planningourwriting/>

Writing Prompts <http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/prompts.html>

Graphic Organizers <http://wwwweduplace.com/graphicorganizer>

Online Writing Lab at Purdue: <http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu>

Essay Writing Center: Thesis <http://essayinfo.com/basics/thesis.php>

Graphic Organizers: <http://readwritethink.org>

Get Organized: <http://www.essaywritinghelp.com/process.htm>

Purposeful/Transparent

Students often struggle beginning the writing process. This lesson looks closely at the prewriting stage and offers supports to begin the process, alleviating the writer's anxiety.

Contextual

Often writing the thesis statement is one of the hardest parts of writing an essay, examples and practice are provided for students to choose a topic and write a thesis with feedback from peers.

Building Expertise

Students have successfully created paragraphs and are now ready to begin writing essays.

What is An Essay?

The Essay Introduction

The introduction is the first paragraph of your essay. It introduces the essay topic to your reader and then combines the topic with a controlling idea to make a thesis statement for your essay. The introduction lets the reader know your purpose or plan for the essay.

For example:

Mel Gibson made his mark in cinema with an ability to show the dark side of a character's nature without losing his sense of humor. Robust, physical, and upbeat are some of the words that Roger Ebert used to describe Mel Gibson's Hamlet in a 1991 Chicago Sun-Times Review. Ebert went on to say, "I think it will surprise some viewers with its strength and appeal. " Believing this film to be made over too many times, this viewer was pleasantly surprised at the new face that Gibson's performance brought to Hamlet.

The Essay Body

The body is where you develop the topic that you introduced in your introduction. Start a new paragraph every time you discuss a new point. Make the body "flow" by introducing the next paragraph of your essay at the end of the previous one, using transitions. When you're satisfied that you have made your points, move on to the essay conclusion. If you are using outside sources, cite your sources.

The Essay Conclusion

Although it's often overlooked, the conclusion is an important part of your essay. It's the last paragraph of your essay and your last chance to drive home your point of view as well as an indicator of how well you've organized your thoughts. Generally the conclusion is a summary of your essay body and/or any closing thoughts or ideas.

Essay Writing Process <http://www.essaywritinghelp.com/process.htm>

What is An Essay? Handout

15 Sample Essay Topics

- 1. A true friend**
- 2. Effects of watching TV**
- 3. The importance of having a GED or high school diploma**
- 4. The benefits of regular exercise**
- 5. Many ways to save money on your food bill**
- 6. People still smoke**
- 7. Rock music's effect on young people**
- 8. Honesty**
- 9. Is life better in a big city or a small town?**
- 10. Winning the lottery**
- 11. A child-free lifestyle**
- 12. Improving your life**
- 13. Saturday morning cartoons**
- 14. Making better use of Cleveland's lakefront**
- 15. Professional athletes**

Sample Thesis Statements

Read each thesis statement below. Underline the topic with one line and the controlling idea with two lines. Improve thesis statements, when necessary, by editing.

1. People should be prohibited from smoking in public places.
2. Cell phones and iPods are similar, yet have different purposes.
3. Children should be required by law to wear a bike helmet.
4. The use of animals for medical research should be banned.
5. Money management can be easily taught to children in five easy steps.
6. A thorough home inspection can be done in ten easy steps.
7. Parents should give children a weekly allowance.
8. The most important quality in a friend is generosity.
9. Gay men and women should be allowed to serve in the armed forces.
10. The violence depicted on television and in video games has an effect on behavior.

Writing Prompts/Journal Topics <http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/prompts.html>

Sample Thesis Statements Handout

Name: _____

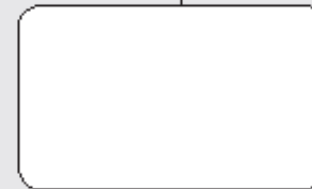
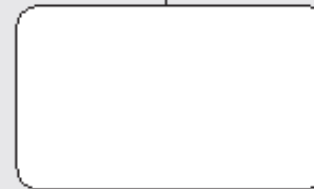
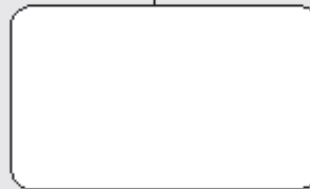
Date: _____

Essay Map

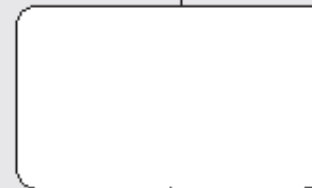
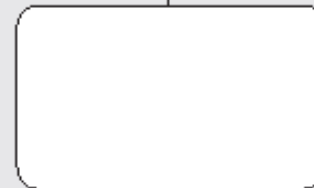
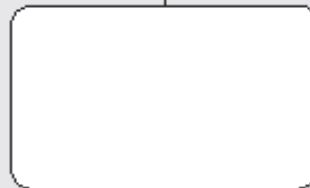
Introduction: Write one or two sentences that introduce your topic, including a brief description of the main ideas.



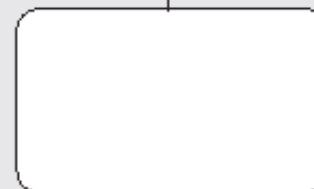
Main Ideas: List the main ideas about your topic that you will include in your essay. There can be important facts you'd like to describe, points you'd like to explain, or elements you'd like to define.



Supporting Details: Write at least three details for each main idea that can further describe, explain, or define it.



Conclusion: Write one or two sentences that will conclude your essay. These can summarize the main ideas, describe what is important about the topic, or talk about what the reader should take away from the essay.



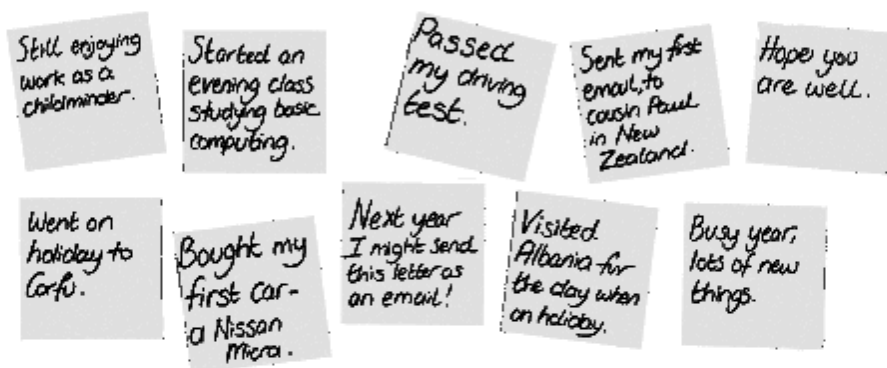


Writing: Planning your writing worksheet 4

i Sticky notes

If you jot down your ideas on sticky notes you can then move them around into the order you want.

At the end of December Kylie wrote a letter to all her friends and family about what she had been doing over the past year. First of all she put all the different points she wanted to cover in the letter onto sticky notes:



Then she rearranged them into the order she wanted for her letter:



i Why not try using sticky notes when planning your writing?

Essay Organizer

Name: _____

Date: _____

Main idea	
	Detail #1
	Detail #2
	Detail #3
Supporting paragraph #1	
	Detail #1
	Detail #2
	Detail #3
Supporting paragraph #2	
	Supporting Detail #1
	Supporting Detail #2
	Supporting Detail #3
Supporting paragraph #3	
	Supporting Detail #1
	Supporting Detail #2
	Supporting Detail #3
Concluding paragraph	
	Supporting Detail #1
	Supporting Detail #2
	Supporting Detail #3

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