

Writing Assignment Framework and Overview

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Introduction

“Be careful what you ask for. You might get it!” As this old adage suggests, our most fervent wish has the potential to boomerang, leaving us with some undesirable or unintended consequence. When it comes to the classroom and what we ask of our students, teachers always want the best and most desirable results, with a minimum of assignments and lessons that conclude with lackluster student work.

In the case of teachers who teach writing or teachers who use writing to learn, the challenge of designing the “ask for”—the invitation to write—is particularly daunting. The sheer number of decisions could daze the most fearless among us: What do I want my students to learn from this assignment? For whom are they writing and for what purpose? What do I think the final product should look like? What processes will help the students? How do I teach and communicate with the students about these matters?

These decisions sit at the center of the Writing Assignment Framework and Overview project. This project has its roots in a study begun for the Consortium for Chicago School Research (CCSR) in 1996. Led by Fred Newmann, then a professor at the University of Wisconsin, and supported by the Annenberg Network Challenge, the CCSR study examined teachers’ assignments and student work emerging from several Chicago public schools. The basis for this empirical study was Newmann’s concept of “authentic intellectual achievement.” For a writing assignment to be authentic, the task would ask students to (a) construct knowledge in contrast to simply reproducing knowledge; (b) elaborate their writing by making generalizations and supporting them with examples, details, or reasons; and (c) connect their work to issues and concerns that prevail beyond the school’s walls.

Research shows that teachers who give students assignments requiring authentic intellectual work see greater gains on standardized tests (Newmann, Bryk, and Nagaoka 2001). Such work is similar to the type of problem solving that adults face in their everyday lives and helps prepare students to be critical, analytical thinkers.

NWP’s commitment to investigating and disseminating the best available and classroom-tested information about writing assignments began in 1999 with the three-year [NWP/AED](#) study of “authentic intellectual work” and of the emphasis NWP teachers place on such work in their assignments. Currently, SRI International is using the authentic intellectual work framework as an integral component in examining the effects of local writing project sites’ professional development on teachers’ practices. The Writing Assignment Framework and Overview are the result of NWP’s third study, begun in 2010.

The goal of the Writing Assignment Framework and Overview project is to serve as a classroom and professional development tool—born of research and practice—that will help teachers create and refine challenging assignments for students. As always, we seek to support teachers with resources that will ultimately improve student writing performance.

Writing Assignment Framework and Overview

Purpose of the Framework and Overview

The Writing Assignment Framework and Overview represent the effort of National Writing Project teachers to create tools for themselves and their colleagues that might substantially strengthen their writing assignments. We know from our own experiences that teachers often spend hours designing writing tasks and even more hours reading what students have made of those tasks. We also know that there are no “surefire” assignments anywhere that will engage and produce the best thinking from every student. Our tool, then, is not a list of the ten best or the twenty worst writing tasks. Instead, it offers a lens to look at an assignment’s purpose, planning and preparation, expectations, and processes. You will notice right away that not all the items in the framework apply to each assignment. Rather, we designed the framework and also the overview to be inclusive, flexible, and adaptable so that teachers might use them in a variety of content areas and for multiple purposes. Because this tool has been created by teachers for teachers, it is important to say what it is NOT. It is not a checklist or an evaluation instrument. It is not mandatory, compulsory, or required. It is, however, a tool—born of research and practice—that respects teachers and their continuous efforts to give their students challenging writing assignments.

What do we mean by writing assignment?

A writing assignment encompasses any writing task a teacher asks of students that involves one or more of the following thought processes: analysis, evaluation, interpretation, narration, synthesis, reflection, clarification, summarization, creative expression, and application or demonstration of knowledge or learning.

Who are these tools for?

These tools are for anyone who invites students to write, and especially for those teachers who want to learn more about engaging and rigorous learning experiences for students. These teachers include:

- writing project teacher-consultants;
- experienced, novice, and preservice teachers;
- K–12, college, and graduate student teachers;
- English language arts and content area teachers and teachers of students with special needs (English learners, special education).

Where might you use the tools?

We envision these tools being used in a variety of contexts that could include but are not limited to: department meetings, professional development days, personal reflection/planning, personal portfolio, grade-level meetings, mentor-teacher meetings,

department files or notebooks, continuity meetings/seminars/workshops, summer institutes, professional learning communities.

How might you use the tools?

The Writing Assignment Framework and Overview may be used to guide teachers in developing assignments that help students demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, as required by the Common Core State Standards.

If you and your colleagues decide to examine writing samples together, consider collecting pieces written at various ability levels or in a variety of content areas. You might also aim for a wide range of assignments (writing to learn, quickwrites, journal entries, reflection, formal essays, digital compositions, and other projects that involve writing).

If you are using the Writing Assignment Overview as part of your personal planning and reflection, you may wish to add notes about resources, sources or citations, materials needed, standards addressed, or other information you would need to remember when revisiting an assignment.

If you are using these tools as part of your department or school professional planning, consider creating a safe environment first. One way might be to introduce the overview using writing samples not connected to anyone in the room. Your community may want to do several rounds, using a discussion protocol, before asking teachers to bring in their own students' writing. Once you have used the assignment overview a few times with your own students' work, consider introducing the assignment framework.

As you begin to familiarize yourself and your colleagues with the Writing Assignment Framework, consider focusing on one area of the framework at a time or examining the top level questions first. You may also want to read some of the professional articles that provide the theoretical background and underpinnings (see Recommended Resources.)

When using the framework and overview beyond the immediate school community, be sure to think about permission slips and/or redacting student names.

Work Cited

Newmann, Fred, Anthony Bryk and Jenny Nagaoka. 2001. *Authentic Intellectual Work and Standardized Tests: Conflict or Coexistence?* Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago.

Tools for Planning and Reflection

The following section contains the Writing Assignment Framework and Overview documents. These documents can be used as part of a professional development program as outlined in the Professional Development Template or as tools for assignment planning and reflection.



Writing Assignment Overview

The Writing Assignment Overview is a tool for reflecting on a writing assignment, either by an individual teacher or by a group of teachers. Please make it your own by adding notes and other items for discussion and reflection.

Assignment Title: _____ **Date:** _____

Grade level: _____

Subject area: _____

Description of students in my class:

Assignment Purpose

What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

Planning and Preparation

1. Length of assignment:

- Completed in a single class period
- Completed within one week
- Completed in _____ weeks

2. Who created this assignment?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop/professional development | <input type="checkbox"/> On-line resource |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher guide/resource book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District writing program | <input type="checkbox"/> Test prep materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Developed it myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text book | |

3. Is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan such as a unit study, district, state or professional standards? If so, how?

4. If you plan to reflect on your assignment with other colleagues, please describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught the assignment.



Product Expectations

1. Criteria for evaluation (if relevant):

- Audience feedback (e.g., another class, administrators, etc.)
- Checklists
- Rubric
- Self scoring
- Other student scoring
- Teacher scoring

2. What do you expect the product to show about student learning?

3. How did you communicate product expectations? If you are sharing this assignment with colleagues, please provide explanations or examples.

Process

1. If student planning was necessary for this assignment, please number in the order the activities occurred:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming (as a class) | <input type="checkbox"/> Diagramming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming (in small groups) | <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming (individually) | <input type="checkbox"/> Free-writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> Information gathering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration among students | <input type="checkbox"/> Note-taking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conferencing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creating a web | <input type="checkbox"/> Outlining |

2. Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?

- No
- Yes

3. Other notes:



Writing Assignment Framework

Assignment Purpose: What are the instructional goals or reasons for this assignment? What are students expected to know, learn, or be able to do? Some things to consider:

- How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?
- How is the assignment connected to district, state, or professional standards?
- How are the purpose and audience of the assignment communicated to students?
- How does the assignment address a purpose and/or an audience beyond the classroom?

Planning and Preparation: How does the teacher plan for the assignment and prepare students to do it? Some things to consider:

- What theories, concepts, and/or bodies of knowledge does the planning of the assignment draw on?
- What choices can students make to allow for ownership and authority?
- What skills, experiences, and processes need to be taught and reinforced so that students can produce the product?
- Has the teacher written to the assignment or explored the effectiveness of the assignment in other ways?
- How is the assignment communicated from teacher to students (e.g., orally, in writing, other)?
- How is the assignment made comprehensible to all students, including accounting for the complexity of language?
- How is time for the assignment allotted? If relevant, time for prewriting? In-class writing? Continued drafting? Responding?

Product expectations: How does the assignment communicate expected levels of performance? Are there models of what will make a successful product? Some things to consider:

- How and by whom are the criteria for evaluation developed, how are they communicated, and how clearly are they stated?
- How are the teaching and learning goals evaluated?
- Who is involved in assessing the product?
- When the scope of the assignment is large, what products are expected along the way (e.g., outlines, think pieces, journal entries, drafts)?
- How does the assignment allow for differentiation (e.g., English learners, special education, gifted and talented, other)?
- How does the assignment encourage students to go beyond restating, to analyze, synthesize?
- How does the assignment invite students to write for purposes and/or audiences beyond the classroom?

Process: How does the assignment provide opportunities for the writer to engage in a writing or learning process? Some things to consider:

- How is the assignment, including its purpose, explained and discussed?
- How are students supported with relevant knowledge bases, resources, materials, prior knowledge, and other scaffolds to build content?
- How does the process provide opportunities and support for students' decisions about structure and content?
- What opportunities exist for review, feedback, and revision?
- How does the assignment include opportunities for reflection?

Professional Development Template

The following Professional Development Template provides a sample facilitator's agenda for a one-day session of professional development. The template can be used as is, or refined to better suit specific professional development needs.

Writing Assignment Professional Development Session (1 Day)

Rebecca Kaminski, Kim Patterson & Roel Vivit

Handouts and Materials

- ❖ “Standards for Authentic Achievement and Pedagogy.” G. Wehlage, F. Newmann, & W. Secada (Handout #1)
- ❖ 4 As Protocol (Handout #2)
- ❖ NWP Writing Assignment Framework cut into sections (Handout #3)
- ❖ NWP Writing Assignment Framework (Handout #4)
- ❖ Teacher Assignment Packets (coversheet with attachments and student work samples); prior to PD session, the facilitator should select from the possible assignment packets those packets that are a best fit for his/her group.
- ❖ Chart paper, markers

Notes about Writing Assessment Professional Development Session

- ❖ Prior to the session, the facilitator should, if possible, email teachers asking them to bring with them a writing assignment and 2–3 student samples resulting from the assignment. An assignment may include: lesson plan or outline, writing prompt, materials and/or resources used during the assignment, handouts, etc.
- ❖ If possible, arrange seating in groups of 4–5 at tables.
- ❖ If the professional development is of a shorter duration, the facilitator may choose to use a jigsaw activity for reading “Standards for Authentic Achievement and Pedagogy” used in *Setting Conceptual Foundation* portion.
- ❖ With the 4 As protocol process used in *Setting Conceptual Foundation* portion, facilitator may choose to do multiple rounds of sharing if time permits.

Introductions (5 minutes)

Framing the Day (10 minutes)

Possible pre-reading/quickwrite topics:

- ❖ *What do you think about prior to developing a writing assignment?*
- ❖ *There has been much discussion about the need for more academic rigor in schools. How do you define academic rigor? How do you know if your students are being appropriately challenged in school?*

Ask teachers to write independently to one of the topics above (5 minutes)

After writing, ask teachers to turn to the person sitting next to them and pair-share (5 minutes)

Setting Conceptual Foundation (45 minutes)

Distribute copies of Wehlage, Newmann, & Secada, Ch. 1. Give teachers 15 minutes to read the article (may watch participants and modify time accordingly). Invite teachers to highlight and/or make notes in the margins as they read.

After reading, distribute 4 *As* protocol handout. Ask teachers to complete the protocol in response to the reading. (10 minutes)

Ask teachers to share their responses to the protocol in small groups/table groups. Before large group sharing, ask each small group to decide upon one item from each square to share with large group.

After small group sharing, each group shares out their item for each square. Probably best to go in rounds, e.g., each group sharing from agree box, then each group sharing from ask box, and so on.

As each small group shares, facilitator charts according to the 4 categories on the 4 *As* protocol. (20 minutes)

Group Construction of an Assignment Framework (25 minutes)

After thinking about effective and authentic tasks for students in our classroom, let's focus on writing assignments. Ask teachers to write independently (5 minutes) about what they think are the characteristics of effective writing assignments.

After individual writing, ask participants to call out from their writing. On a chart labeled "Characteristics of Effective Writing Assignments," facilitator charts as participants call out from their writing about the characteristics of an effective writing assignment. (10 minutes)

In small groups, ask them to sort the characteristics into 3 or 4 categories. Ask one person from each small group to call out their categories. Facilitator charts on clean piece of chart paper as participants call out their categories. (10 minutes)

NOTE: A good time to give group a brief background of the Writing Assignment Framework.

Deconstructing the NWP Writing Assignment Framework (30 minutes)

Distribute to each small group one section of the Writing Assignment Framework (Purpose – Planning and Preparation – Product Expectations – Process; no one sees the entire framework at this point). Ask each person to examine the section of the framework they have in front of them. They may want to highlight anything that stands out. (5 minutes)

Ask participants in small groups to discuss connections they see between the framework they just examined and the one we created as a whole group (characteristics of effective writing assignments chart and categories chart). (5 minutes)

Distribute entire Writing Assignment Framework. (Explain or remind teachers about origins of framework.)

Ask each small group to report out from the section of the framework they examined—what they noticed and how the NWP framework compares to the framework the group created. (20 minutes)

Analyzing the NWP Writing Assignment Framework Using Case Studies (2 hours)

Whole group analyzes one case study (50 minutes)

Distribute one assignment packet to the entire group (facilitator should choose the assignment packet that is the best fit for his/her group based on grade level, content area, etc).

Teachers should still be grouped with the original table group in which they examined one section of the framework. Ask teachers to examine the assignment packet in relation to the section of the framework they have worked with (Purpose – Planning and Preparation – Product Expectations – Process). Possible guiding questions to pose are:

- 1. What do you notice about the assignment (from coversheet and/or attachments) in relation to the framework?*
- 2. What are the strengths of the assignment (from coversheet and/or attachments) in relation to the framework?*
- 3. What do you notice by examining the student work in relation to the framework?*
- 4. How might the assignment be improved in relation to the framework?*

Small group discusses assignment packet. Each small group reports out what they noticed about the assignment in relation to their section of the framework.

Small groups analyze different case studies (50 minutes)

Distribute another assignment packet.

Note: If PD is small, everyone may look at the same assignment packet, but if PD is large, may distribute different packets to each small group. Facilitator may want to regroup teachers for examining assignment packets into grade level and/or content area groups and then distribute assignment packets that best suit each small group's makeup.

Repeat process from above with new assignment packet, however, teachers are using the entire framework as they examine the packet instead of just looking through one lens.

Small groups report out.

Teacher Self-reflection Using the Writing Assignment Framework (50 minutes)

Ask teachers to take out the assignment and resulting student work they brought with them.

One option, if teachers do not bring an assignment or if teachers are preservice, give them 5–10 minutes to write about an assignment in as much detail as possible.

Ask teachers to repeat process from above using the framework to examine their own assignment.

Give teachers time to make revisions to their assignment if needed.

Report out in small groups.
Then report out to whole group.

Conclusion (20 minutes)

Reflection

Ask participants to respond to reflection questions (may use all or some of the ones below, or devise your own). (10 minutes)

Possible questions for reflection:

- 1. What questions might have emerged for you about your teaching and your students' learning, and what next steps might you be considering?*
- 2. Now that you've examined multiple writing assignments from other teachers and your own, in relation to the NWP Writing Assignment Framework, how would you describe an effective writing assignment?*
- 3. What changes are you considering for your classroom and/or for developing writing assignments after today's session?*

Volunteers share out from their reflections. (10 minutes)

Dismiss.

The 4 As Protocol: Read the text and take notes, focusing on the following questions

What do you *agree* with in the text?

What questions would you like to *ask*?

How does this *apply* to your work with students?
(What you have done/currently do)

What *aspirations* do you have that relate to the text? (What would you like to do)

Sample Assignments and Related Student Work

The following sample assignments and related student work detail ways in which student assignments communicate with the Writing Assignment Framework and Overview tools. Each assignment and student sample set is preceded by an overview detailing ways to engage with the material while using the framework and overview.

It should be noted that the following assignments were collected during a pilot phase and because of this, each assignment has a TASW-F cover sheet. This cover sheet has been succeeded by the Writing Assignment Overview and will no longer be used.

Student writing samples and teacher assignments have been acquired and used in this document with written permission.



Assignment Title: Post Office Letter Writing

Example of: Kindergarten, Writing Exploration

Contents: Cover sheet (includes assignment), three student samples

Exemplifies: Carefully crafted assignment and processes for emerging readers/writers. Includes planning, student collaboration, and clear expectations. Assignment offers an authentic audience, materials for real world application, and cross-disciplinary connections with students practicing both writing and math skills.

Further items for discussion:

- (1) What items in the teacher's assignment stand out for you? In what ways does the assignment relate to the framework? How does the student work reflect her instructional goals? Her expectations for the product?
- (2) The teacher notes improvements she wishes to make for next year as well as difficulties her students had when they tackled the assignment. She also observes that the students wrote more than usual. What next steps or assignment would you imagine for the classroom that would capitalize on the students' newfound fluency and address some of their developmental needs?

Student writing samples and teacher assignments have been acquired with written permission.

TASW-F Assignment Coversheet**A. Information about the class**

1. **Grade level:** Kindergarten
2. **Subject area:** Writing (letter writing during centers)
3. **Any special descriptors of the students:**

 is fluent in both Spanish and English. Currently, his writing skills are above average in our classroom.

 is a native English speaker. She feels very comfortable using her best guessed spelling. She is on level with her kindergarten writing.

 is a native English speaker. She currently sees a speech therapist and has some struggle with her confidence in writing.

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** Post Office Center Letter Writing
2. **Length of assignment:** 30-40 minutes

Mark (X) one only:

- Completed in a single class period
- Completed within one week
- Required more than one week to complete

3. Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.**4. When was this assignment completed?**

- 1st Grading Period
- 2nd Grading Period
- 3rd Grading Period
- 4th Grading Period

5. Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:

- workshop/professional development
- colleague
- district writing program
- developed it myself
- text book
- on-line resource
- teacher guide/resource book
- test prep materials
- other (please specify):

6. Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?

- No
- Yes; if "Yes", please answer A or B:
- A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
- B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

7. Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:

- brainstorming (as a class)
- outlining
- creating a web
- class discussion
- diagramming
- brainstorming on their own
- brainstorming (in small groups)
- information gathering
- free-writing
- note-taking
- other (please specify): As a large group, we created sample letters, a list of question words (who, what, where, when, why, how) and made a sample of how to address an envelope.

No planning was necessary for this assignment.

8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

- Students used computers
 Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment
 Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)
 Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?
 (i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) _____

Students worked independently if they felt comfortable, or in groups if they needed help from a friend. The amount of time for pairs or small groups was determined by the students' confidence and ability. The assignment was completed 100% in class.

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

Students alternate between centers throughout the week. The students visit one center each day for about 30-40 minutes. During this week's centers, students were given the opportunity to go to the post office. They have been going to the post office for 3 weeks and are aware of the rules expected:

- 1) You must alternate between being a postal worker and a customer in order to give everyone a chance to do both writing and math.
- 2) If you are a customer you must "purchase" the items (paper, stamps, envelopes, etc) with the pretend money before using it.
- 3) When ever you write, you must check three stars before asking a friend or a teacher for help.

*Aa (correct uppercase and lowercase letters)

* ____ (space between words)

*.!? (punctuation that matches the right voice)

- 4) Envelopes must be addressed correctly and stamped or they will not make it to the right person.
- 5) Materials are to be shared and taken care of.
- 6) You must finish one piece of mail before starting a new one.

This Week's Assignment: Write one letter to a friend in the classroom that uses at least two telling sentences and one question sentence.

Before the students separate to go to their centers, they are reminded of the expectations and can ask any questions to clarify what they are supposed to do.

Materials in Post Office: pretend money, cash register, telephone, writing folders, wordbooks, envelopes, paper stamp printout and glue sticks, letter paper, greeting cards, post cards, mailbox, small table and chair, marker, crayons, fancy pencil, boxes and bubble wrap, oversized samples of an envelope, letter, and postcard.

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

- Students should write one letter to a classmate.
- Students should include at least two telling sentences and one question sentence.
- All sight words should be spelled correctly, using the word wall if necessary.
- Unknown words should be searched for in resources (writing folder or wordbook)
- Students should use their best guessed spelling words to sound out words that they do not know and are not included in their writing folder or workbook dictionary
- There should be an uppercase letter at the beginning of each sentence
- Students should have adequate spacing between sentences

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- There should be punctuation at the end of each sentence.

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

In our classroom, writing is the most difficult task for our students. They are intimidated by writing unknown words. They often feel that words need to be spelled correctly and that their best guessed spelling is wrong. When my students write mail to one another, they seem to lose this fear. They are not concerned about writing correctly for teacher approval. Instead, they are highly motivated to do their best in order to be able to communicate with their friends. The students are given the same requirements in their letter writing that they are expected to complete in journal pages, free writing, worksheets, etc. However, they seem to be able to complete the task easier. Another important thing that letter writing does is open up communication between students. Students realize that questions must be answered and connect writing to conversations spoken out loud. Students spend more time thinking about how to make connections with one another in their letters. Students also begin to understand that writing has many purposes. Different print has different functions.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

Was there a rubric for assessing this work?

Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?

Did students score their own work?

Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?

Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

The students mailed their letters to another classmate.

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

My struggling readers and writers (8 students) found it difficult to phrase questions. They were more likely to ask questions that begin with "Do you like..." instead of using the "wh" words. Given examples by teachers or classmates they were more able to change their questions. However, their questions were usually not created independently. This group of students also had trouble using their best guessed spelling words that were more than one syllable which were not found in their wordbook. They often required assistance from a teacher. The teachers would slowly sound out the words, as the students wrote the sounds that they heard.

Another thing that was difficult for kindergarten students to understand is when one sentence ends and another one begins. In order to help them figure this out, we encourage them to read their letters out loud. They must stop reading once they get to punctuation. They then have to think about whether the sentence made sense, was too long, or missing some words. Hearing their words out loud also makes it easier for them to realize what kind of punctuation they need to use: period for regular voice, exclamation point for excited voice, and a question mark for question asking voice.

2. Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.

I was surprised by how much some of the students actually wrote. Students who normally write the minimum amount in their journals (2 or 3 sentences depending on the student's ability) went ahead and pushed themselves to write more. It was nice to see those students willing to challenge themselves and take extra time to complete a task.

I was also surprised to see which friends the students chose to write their letters to. Students who do not normally seek each other out for conversation or during play time were really taking the time to get to know one another through writing. It seems that writing helped build some friendships between friends who enjoyed mail and were eager to write to each other for a response.

3. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

-I think next time I would require students to use a "Wh" word for their written question. We can brainstorm for more possibilities as a class, and we can remind students to look at the question word picture clues that are hanging in the classroom.

-Next time I will also have students randomly pick a person's name from the popsicle sticks in class so that everyone gets at least one letter a week.

3/23/11

Dear _____

You are so kind.

I like how you

(write)

rite. You are the

best friend ever.

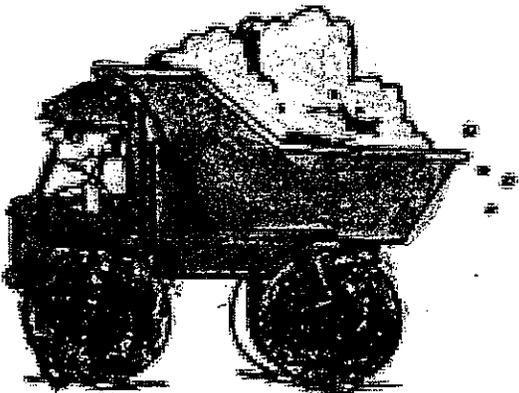
Do you have a dog?

do you want to come

my house? I like your

(chair)

chair.



from,

Room
115

Room
115

copy of envelope

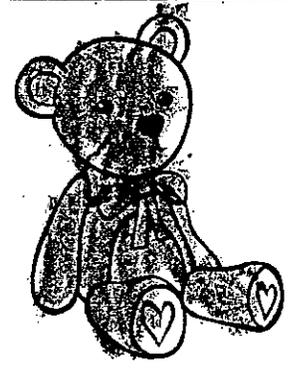
Teddy Bears USA 37



3/23/11

Dec. _____

I like you!



You play with

me. ^{"Do"} you

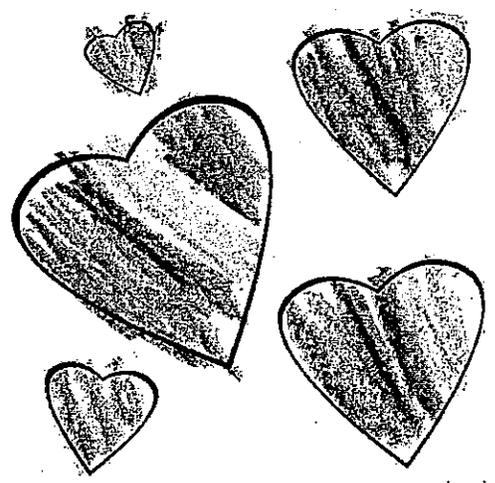
^(want) want to have

a ^(sleep) sleep ^(over) over?

I like to play ^(with)

with A. I

like to play with you.



from _____

Room 115

2

Room 115

copy of is envelope



3/24/11

Dear _____

You are ^(cute) Kyoot.

I like your ^(writing) writing.

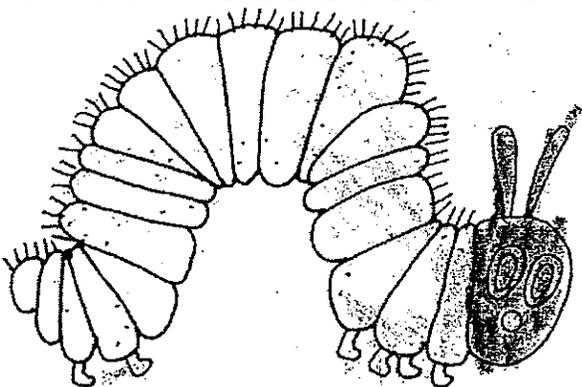
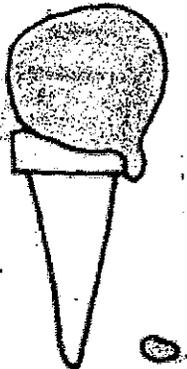


Do you ^(want) like cats?



Do you ^(recess) want to play with me at recess? We are

good friends.

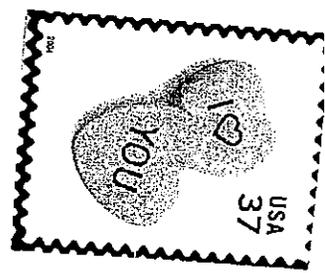


Love

Room
115

Room
115

copy of is envelope



Assignment Title: Day in the Life of a Bee

Example of: Primary, Urban

Contents: Cover sheet (includes assignment) and two student samples.

Exemplifies: Clear purpose, real audience, and student engagement. Series of steps to build content knowledge (mentor text, field trip, freewriting, and class discussions/conferencing). Students go beyond restating knowledge to reframe understandings in a fresh way.

Further items for discussion:

- (1) Teacher is rethinking how to make product expectations clearer. What ideas do we have for her?
- (2) What ideas do we have for all of us as we tackle the tricky task of making our expectations clearer to students? (Refer to framework.)
- (3) The Writing Assignment Framework asks this question: *How does the assignment allow for differentiation (e.g., English learners, special education, gifted and talented, other)?* In what ways does this assignment allow for the variations in grade level?
- (4) This assignment asks students to demonstrate their knowledge about bees. When students write for the purpose of understanding or demonstrating content knowledge, what kinds of assignments/processes support their thinking? In what ways do tasks like quickwrites and learning logs build knowledge?

TASW-F Assignment Coversheet

A. Information about the class

1. **Grade level:** 1st and 2nd grade

2. **Subject area:** Writing and Science

3. **Any special descriptors of the students:**

My classroom is a multiage classroom. 1st and 2nd graders are in the same room, doing the same assignments. However, expectations do differ for each grade. Therefore, students receive conferencing and small group instruction based on their needs, Common Core standards, and the grade level expectations determined by the grade level team and school curriculum director.

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** Day in the Life of a Bee

2. **Length of assignment:** _____

Mark (X) one only:

- Completed in a single class period
- Completed within one week
- Required more than one week to complete

3. **Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.**

4. **When was this assignment completed?**

- 1st Grading Period
- 2nd Grading Period (Of 3 total grading periods- Trimesters)
- 3rd Grading Period
- 4th Grading Period

5. **Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- workshop/professional development
- colleague
- district writing program
- developed it myself
- text book
- on-line resource
- teacher guide/resource book
- test prep materials
- other (please specify):

6. **Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?**

- No
- Yes; **If "Yes", please answer A or B:**
 - A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
 - B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

7. **Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment)? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- brainstorming (as a class)
- outlining
- creating a web
- class discussion
- diagramming
- brainstorming on their own
- brainstorming (in small groups)
- information gathering
- free-writing
- note-taking
- other (please specify):
- No planning was necessary for this assignment.

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8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

- Students used computers
- Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment
- Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)
- Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?
(i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) All

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

"You (Students) will write a story as if they were a bee. You will pretend you are a bee. You will use all of the knowledge gained about bees through our study to produce a story with REAL facts. You will also want to make this story exciting for your readers. This story will be published as part of an anthology and presented to our parents at the end of the unit." (Summarized)

As a class we read many books from the perspective of an animal. They used Diary of a Worm as a model and created their own version, prior to this assignment. Students also participated in an in-depth study of bees through field work to the Nature Conservatory as well as discussions with Beekeeping experts. This was not only an opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability to write from a perspective but also for students to apply their knowledge of bees.

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

- Demonstrate some science knowledge through creative writing.
- Focused and organized story.
- A story with a beginning, middle, and end.
- Include a problem and solution.
- Demonstrate an understanding of conventions (expectations of the grade level).
- Write from the point of view, using the voice of another.
- Create neat work that shows evidence of effort.

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

First grade: Students are working to develop longer, more focused pieces of writing with a beginning, middle and end. Students are also working on expressing their new knowledge through written word. Students are also working on develop stronger understanding of conventions such as ending marks and capitalization rules.

Second Grade: Students are working to write more in-depth and developed plot in fictional stories. Students are also working to develop characters based on what they say and do and what others say about them. Students are also working on develop stronger understanding of conventions such as quotation marks and commas.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

- Was there a rubric for assessing this work?

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- Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?
- Did students score their own work?
- Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?
- Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

Yes.

Many of the students who are reading below grade level expectations had a difficult time developing a story. The perspective aspect of the assignment took a lot of support for some students. Many of these students received one on one support through the stages of the writing process.

2. Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.

No

3. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

I would develop a rubric and checklist with students during the brainstorming or drafting stage. My expectations were not as clear as they should have been. In the future if students create a checklist of what makes "good writing" for this assignment, they will be able to better revise and improve their writing independently!

my name is Gorco
I'm a Field Bee. I
get important things
first, I get water.
second, I get beegive.
Third, I get nectar.
fourth, I get pollen. I'm
yellow and black and
I smell good. one day
I was spotted by a
person it tried to kill
me. I flyed as fast
as I can I went to the
hive and told the
guards to sting the
person and the guards
stung the person right
in the arm. I heard
it scream and yell! and
we haggout.

by [redacted]

1st grade

My name is Gabriela I'm a house bee and a wax making bee.
I am 3 years old. I clean and smell with my antennas.
I have small black big eyes are called complex
eyes and my little dotted dots are called simple eyes.
I have a pink and blue pocket dots on my thorax. When the
wax is coming out of my abdomen it hurts. I'm
playing with my sisters so that the wax can come
out smoother. Oh no the Queen caught us talking
to each other. What if she tells me to come in her's
Office and she fires me. Oh what am I going
to do. I said "mother I was just telling my sister
to wake up and smell the coffee so she won't get
caught by you so she won't need to get up and feed
the larvae bee milk, bee bread. Please don't fire me

"What did you say?"

"Fire me!"

"Wish I would!" said mother.

So off I went working as a House bee/wax making
bee.

BY:

2/16

2nd Grade

Assignment Title: A time when you have been blamed for something you didn't do

Example of: Fourth grade, Rural (100% free lunch)

Contents: Cover sheet (includes assignment), and three student samples

Exemplifies: Teaching students to develop ideas in a narrative piece after reading a novel centered on a similar topic. Students have a choice of incident, a designated audience, a collaborative process to support their first draft and revisions, and product expectations (state rubric).

Further items for discussion:

- (1) Teacher notes that she would spend more time conferencing, an ambitious goal! If we were to conference with each of these students, what might we suggest to them as next steps, given the assignment and its goals?
- (2) This assignment provides students with opportunities to tap into relevant knowledge bases, resources, and prior knowledge to build content (their own experience and the book they are currently reading). This is in addition to processes the teacher uses to build to the final product. Are there other processes or resources that we might use to help students who, in the teacher's words, have difficulty creating a cohesive, orderly piece and have trouble with sentence structure and word choice?
- (3) What would we assign next to these students and how might the framework help us?

TASW-F Assignment Coversheet

A. Information about the class

1. **Grade level:** 4th grade

2. **Subject area:** All

3. **Any special descriptors of the students:**

The students are from a rural area. The school is 100% free/reduced lunch. It is on the Mississippi Department of Education's Needs Improvement list due to poor test scores.

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** A Time You Have Been Blamed For Something You Didn't Do

2. **Length of assignment:** A paragraph or more

Mark (X) one only:

Completed in a single class period

Completed within one week

Required more than one week to complete

3. **Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.**

Yes. It was a novel unit on The Whipping Boy.

4. **When was this assignment completed?**

1st Grading Period

2nd Grading Period

3rd Grading Period

4th Grading Period

5. **Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

workshop/professional development

colleague

district writing program

developed it myself

text book

on-line resource

teacher guide/resource book

test prep materials

other (please specify):

6. **Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?**

No

Yes; **If "Yes", please answer A or B:**

A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

7. **Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

brainstorming (as a class)

outlining

creating a web

class discussion

diagramming

brainstorming on their own

brainstorming (in small groups)

information gathering

free-writing

note-taking

other (please specify):

No planning was necessary for this assignment.

8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

Students used computers

small amount of time Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment

Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)

almost all the time Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?

(i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) _____

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

Students will write a narrative piece focusing on development and word choice.

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

The writing assignment is part of a 4 week novel unit on The Whipping Boy.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

Used state rubric (which is used to score 4th grade writing assessment)

Was there a rubric for assessing this work?

Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?

Did students score their own work?

Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?

Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

Creating a cohesive, orderly piece is difficult for many students. They have trouble with sentence structure and word choice.

2. Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.

No.

3. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

Spend more time conferencing!

Plan:

TSW discuss and breakdown their writing prompt (we have been reading *The Whipping Boy*. At this point we have read the first 3 chapters). Here is the prompt:

Think about a time when you took the blame for something that you did not do. You might think about who was with you, where you were, and what happened. Write one or more paragraphs for an interested adult about a time that you took the blame for something. Before you begin writing, think about the event as it happened and the details that will help the reader see the event clearly. Tell about the event using strong verbs and specific details of that the reader feels as if he or she is watching the event exactly as it happened.

TTW ask the students what mode of writing this is and why (narrative...tells a story, sequence, recounts an experience). TSW participate in a sharing circle. (Throughout entire activity teacher is participating and modeling). They will have a few minutes to think about a time they have been blamed for something. TSW form a circle and go around 1 time describing their thoughts to their peers. The teacher will then point out that the students will go around the circle twice more. She will point out that the students may have connections to other students' stories and that is okay. TTW give the students time to choose a specific time and discuss with the students what is "Writeable." TSW choose one and illustrate a picture to help them explain a moment in time. Before they begin writing, the students will spend a few minutes looking at a rubric (from Mississippi Department of Education website) focusing on word choice. The students will use a highlighter to find important words in the rubric and discuss the difference between each score. When complete, the students will begin their rough draft. They will conference with the teacher during this time. After rough drafts are complete, the teacher will pick a student to participate in a fish bowl activity. This will demonstrate how to listen to each other and help each other revise and edit rough drafts. After the fish bowl students will partner up, read out loud to their partner, discuss, critique (nicely) and be given time to make suggested corrections. TTW then put her writing up on the board (this writing includes poor word choice) and have students help her revise word choice to include lively nouns and vivid verbs. TSW use a highlighter to find at least three boring word choices. The class will work together to make their writing more exciting. After more peer and teacher conferencing TSW be ready to begin final draft.

My cousin and I were playing outside with

a ball. J hit me and I hit him back.

After that he went to tell on me for

~~doing~~. Then I got in trouble. When

my mom got off of work I was

in big trouble. Then we had to

say sorry to each other. But when

I got home I was very ~~sad~~. Then

← I went back over his house

later that day. But when he saw

our car he ran to it. But we played

together all that day. But look he hit

me again so I ran and the house

to tell on him. Then he start c'y

Getting mad.

18 1-20-10

One night we were playing on the wii. Then my sister hit the fan string. Afterward I had dunk on the wii. She had said she quit. We had went in the living room and watch television. Then we was getting ready to eat. We had ate chicken and mashed potatoes. Also my sister and I played Uno. We had played with my remote controlled cars. Then we went to bed.

When my sister hit the fan string she blamed it on me. Then it had hit the window in crack it. After that my mom had came in there and said who did that. My sister had said I had did it. I had got a whooping. I had to go to bed.

It all started when _____ was 5 years old. She had been crying for minutes because ^{she} did not have a ball. Then my mother _____ was trying to cheer her up but nothing worked.

"Go get her a stupid little ball," I said.

As we scooted in to the car her frown turned

upside down. Then we arrived ~~at~~ my favorite

store, Wal-Mart. The gang started walking

towards the door. Next thing you know, she took off

like a flash of light. Then everybody in the store

was looking at us. I was so embarrassed. As we quickly

walked towards the toy aisle. Then we turned our

backs for just a second. She was gone. Then

we were searching all over the store. Guess

were we found her, bouncing the ball up

and down the sides laughing like she getting

excited to death. Then we went to

register to check out. As we chattered home

was busy glazing at her ball.

It was the crack of dawn when we arrived

at home. Then everybody got in the tub

and got ready for bed. We hopped into

bed, everybody except . She was

playing with her rainbow colored ball.

Everybody was asleep except for

Then my mother quickly hopped her into
bed

as she went foot of sleep, not really.



Assignment Title: Science Symposium Research Project

Example of: Middle School (7th & 8th grade), Suburban, Writing Across the Curriculum

Contents: Cover sheet, assignment/rubric, and two writing samples

Exemplifies: The culminating section of an extended research project that reflects how “real-world” scientists construct and share knowledge. Assignment demonstrates strong, personalized voice of teacher scaffolding students through the process of explaining data and drawing conclusions following the norms of science research. Student work also demonstrates conceptual understanding that results are not “right” or “wrong” but are data that support or do not support a given hypothesis. Students’ research topics are relevant to real-world problems and a real-world audience.

Further items for discussion:

- (1) Look at page one of the “Writing Your Discussion” assignment sheet. The teacher spells out four purposes to be included in the student products. How do these purposes actually show up in the student samples? Does articulating a set of expectations (both in assignment and rubric) seem to help students with their final product?

- (2) How is the assignment made understandable to all students? (Refer to the framework)

Student writing samples and teacher assignments have been acquired with written permission.

TASW-F Assignment Coversheet

A. Information about the class

1. **Grade level:** _____ 7th and 8th _____
2. **Subject area:** _____ Science _____
3. **Any special descriptors of the students:**

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** _____ Discussion section of the scientific paper about independent research projects
2. **Length of assignment:** _____ 4 paragraphs _____

Mark (X) one only:

- Completed in a single class period
 Completed within one week
 Required more than one week to complete

3. Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.

Formal science papers have 4 big sections. This is the last section and the one that draws the conclusion.

4. When was this assignment completed?

- 1st Grading Period
 2nd Grading Period
 3rd Grading Period (out of three, we have trimesters)
 4th Grading Period

5. Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:

- workshop/professional development
 colleague
 district writing program
 developed it myself
 text book
 on-line resource
 teacher guide/resource book
 test prep materials
 other (please specify):

6. Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?

- No
 Yes; *If "Yes", please answer A or B:*
 A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
 B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
 ---The examples submitted have been peer edited. The students have not yet revised them with my editing.

7. Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:

- brainstorming (as a class)
 outlining
 creating a web
 class discussion
 diagramming
 brainstorming on their own
 brainstorming (in small groups)
 information gathering
 free-writing
 note-taking --what does this mean? (on things they read? On what I said? Annotating?)
 other (please specify):
 No planning was necessary for this assignment.

8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

Students used computers

Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment

Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)

Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?

(i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) _____

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

*These materials will be attached. The handbook I wrote to support this assignment can be viewed as an e-copy at

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

Acting in the role of a science researcher, students need to relate their data to their hypothesis, explain the science behind their findings, draw implications from the work, and make recommendations for future studies.

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

Students work on projects from December until May when they present their work to parents and the school community at a poster sessions, Science Symposium. One of the features of this writing is that it is intended for an audience so every part of the paper needs to be polished.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

Was there a rubric for assessing this work?

Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?

Did students score their own work?

Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?

Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

Seventh graders, who were doing this for the first time, struggled the most with implications and future studies. Eighth graders struggled the most with being too superficial.

2. Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.

I guess I am somewhat surprised when students don't refer to the assignment guidelines closely. The second surprise is that some students are not willing to do more research to understand the science. Both of these end up addressed by the students to the best of their ability in subsequent drafts.

3. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

I seem to go in waves of letting students start drafts in class vs. just as homework. This year they did not write in class, it was just homework, and that may have led some students into more superficial treatment than if they had started in class.

Writing Your Discussion

This is it...your last major section. Here is where you explain everything to your audience. How do you explain your data and draw a scientific conclusion?

The spotlight starts on you, but moves to the rest of the world and the future

Just as your introduction was a funnel that started wide and ended narrowly, with the purpose of your study, the discussion section is also a funnel—only going from the narrow (your data), to broad (the rest of the world and the future).

You have four purposes in the discussion section:

1. Clearly link the trends you pointed out in your results section, to the purpose or hypothesis in your introduction.
2. Explain the science behind why you got the trends in data you described in the Results section.
3. Draw a conclusion about what this means for the rest of the world (and humanity if appropriate).
4. Suggest areas for future study based on your findings.

Where do I begin?

Begin by thinking, not writing. Most students have a mystery about the trend their data showed. The mystery is what you want to explain. Identify your mystery and make it the theme that runs through the discussion section.

When you start to write, you can assume that your audience has read the results section. You do not need to repeat every statement you wrote in that section.

Because most of your data are in well designed tables and figures, one way to start is by explaining why the data look as they do in those tables and figures. Write as many paragraphs as you need to explain why you got the results that you did.

Here are some examples of topic sentences that might begin paragraphs in a discussion section:

The plants in the _____ treatment grew higher *because* they received more _____.

Or

My study shows that temperature has a big effect on _____ *because* I saw _____.

Notice that these sentences have built in “memory refreshers” for the readers because words in the sentence refer directly to the treatments and the trends in the data.

Relate your discussion back to your hypothesis or purpose

Each paragraph that explains your data will connect to your hypothesis in some way. Either your data support your hypothesis or they do not. You will state this explicitly. If your study had a purpose you must reach a conclusion about what the data mean for the purpose. This is the start of using both your data and your understanding of it to draw a conclusion.

Sometimes data are not all what you predicted. You will not write that your hypothesis was wrong. If your data do not support your hypothesis, then state, "My data did not support my hypothesis." This does not mean that you did not practice good science. We learn as much from data that are not as predicted as we do from data that are as predicted. Isaac Asimov wrote that the most exciting words in science were not "Eureka!" but, "That's funny." This is the reaction of a mind that is curious and about to look into the observation further. This is how new discoveries are made.

That part about the rest of the world (and humanity if appropriate) might have you worried

Remember that right from the beginning you were relating your work to the rest of the world. This is why your study was relevant and interesting. Of course you did not consider the world as a whole, but focused on some important issue. This was how you started your introduction, and now you must draw a conclusion or two that relates your data to that part of the world.

Sometimes students do not know why they got the results they did. Perhaps the data were surprising. In this case, you have to learn more! Your data are not wrong-- you followed a procedure and got results! If the data do not seem compatible with your expectations, you still have to explain them. You are in the best position to do this-- the data are yours!

Spotlight on the future

If you were going to turn this work into a bigger study, or if you were going to turn this work over to another student to pursue in more depth, what would the follow up studies be? This is your legacy-- an ability to take what you learned and think about the future. How can what you learned become the basis for more work? Make predictions or hypotheses about what the data of a follow up study would mean.

Remember

Do not use the word "PROVE" anywhere in your paper.
Appropriate substitutions include "shows" and "demonstrates," or "supports."

10

Discussion Rubric				
Category	4	3	2	1
<i>Discussion</i>	All four purposes are met. The results are explained in a way that relates to science and the purpose or hypothesis of the study. The conclusions are related to the rest of the world. Strong suggestions are made for future research.	Although a conclusion is drawn, it is not well explained in terms of science. The conclusions are weakly related to the rest of the world. Suggestions for further research are not feasible or not related to the study.	Conclusions are not supported by the data. Conclusions are not related to the rest of the world. No suggestions for future research are made.	No conclusion was apparent OR important details were overlooked.

HNWP.

L. Grasseffa

(12)

Discussion

My original prediction was that the best days for solar energy production are days that are cool, but sunny (SunRun Homes). This project shows that it is true, because there more energy was produced on those days. My results showed that there were no negative effects for cooler days, but actually a few positive ones. I saw what I predicted, that solar panels create some heat as they are collecting the solar rays. Having the extra heat from warmer days decreases their functionality (Marshall, 2010) because on warmer days less energy was produced than on days with much lower temperatures. I also saw that on cloudy days (Santa), and foggy days (Green Brilliance, 2008), was approximately a 20%-30% energy production decrease.

When people get solar panels, they want to know how to collect the most energy. If people know that weather can affect the amount of solar energy produced, they can make a better decision about solar panels. This will prevent people from purchasing a system, when they live in an area that will take years for their panels to fully pay them back.

16

Some future studies may include testing how different types of weather affect the amount of solar energy production. Another may be testing how days with a temperature above 75 degrees affect the amount of solar energy produced. A third future study would be how cloud cover effects solar energy production. Another future study would be the differences between winter and summer. Another would be testing how the angle of the solar panels and the direction affected the amount of solar energy produced. There is a lot to learn about solar energy, and studies about it are only just starting to be proposed. Knowing more about the variables that effect the solar energy production will help everyone who wants to use solar panels to help them collect the most energy possible.

Discussion

The effects of bush bean plants when watered with gray water.

The plants watered with gray water did not grow as high as the plants watered with filtered water because gray water can hold things that plants cannot break down that easily. Gray water comes from bathtubs, showers, bathroom and laundry room sinks, and washing machines (Scholz, 2011). These places can hold such things as hair, grease, and other biological containments (University of Illinois, 2011). For larger areas, the ground can decompose this material, but since there was not that much soil where the plants were located, the soil could not decompose these materials, so it stunted the plants watered with gray waters growth (University of Illinois, 2011). If I rotated every other watering from gray water to filtered water, then possibly the plants would have grown as tall, or taller than the plants watered with just filtered. My hypothesis was not supported because the plants watered with gray water did not grow higher than the other plants. Another reason why the plants watered with gray water grew shorter is because I kept the gray water out for too long. Everyday I should have changed the gray water, because if I did, then other bacteria could not grow in it.

Grease stunts plants growth because it slows down the process of plants getting the nutrients (RefDoc, 2011). There must have been grease in the gray water, because the gray water plants started off much lower than the control plants, because the nutrients did not reach the plant in time. If there were no grease in the gray water, the gray water plants would have grown faster without something stunting the growth. There was possible

ammonium in the water, which speeds up the growth of plants (ISHS, 2011). Ammonium can act as a fertilizer and it improves the quality of the plants.

If gray water did maximize the growth of plants, then people out in the world can use it for their vegetable gardens if they needed to. Some countries have many droughts and do not have extra water to spare, so they can always use gray water to water their plants.

This will not only be helpful to the environment, but it was also help families who need water (University of Illinois). It will also save money, and will be useful in many ways (Pearl, 2009). My test shows that gray water will not speed up the growth, but plants did not die because of this, so it means that it is safe to water plants with gray water if necessary.

If I were to expand this test, I would test specific chemicals and put them in the water to see what speeds up the growth, or see what stunts it. Then people could test their gray water to see what chemicals they have and then they could see if they could use their gray water. I believe that the hypothesis for this test would be that chemicals like ammonium, and other chemicals used in fertilizer and soap would speed up the growth of the plants.

Things like grease and oil would stunt the growth, how it did in my test. Another test would be to see if after watering an edible plant with gray water, if that plant is still edible and chemical free afterwards. My hypothesis would be that there still would be chemicals in the plants, but it would matter if the chemicals were hazardous or not.

Assignment Title: Facebook Poets

Example of: High School, Digital, AP, Character Exploration

Contents: Cover sheet, two-page assignment and rubric sheet, and four pages of student samples

Exemplifies: Effective use of digital tools to engage students in literary analysis. Displays evidence of students analyzing and synthesizing the poet's persona for later explication. Teacher reflection to make work accessible to lower-level students as future improvement.

Further items for discussion:

- (1) In the assignment cover sheet under C1 (Purposes of Assignment), the teacher has listed both her personal goals for the assignment. In addition, she communicates her goals through the rubric included with the written assignment. How do these purposes actually show up in the student samples? How does articulating a set of expectations (both in assignment and rubric) seem to help students with their final product?
- (2) How does this assignment allow students to tap into relevant knowledge bases, resources, and prior knowledge? (See Writing Assignment Framework.)
- (3) In her reflection, the teacher focuses on how she might make the assignment more accessible to “lower level” students. In addition to the teacher’s own ideas, what might we recommend to her?



TASW-F Assignment Coversheet

A. Information about the class

1. **Grade level:** _____ 12th grade _____
2. **Subject area:** _____ English _____
3. **Any special descriptors of the students:**
Gifted/AP Literature

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** _____ Poets on Facebook _____
2. **Length of assignment:** _____ 4 weeks _____

Mark (X) one only:

- Completed in a single class period
 Completed within one week
 Required more than one week to complete

3. Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.

4. When was this assignment completed?

- 1st Grading Period
 2nd Grading Period
 3rd Grading Period
 4th Grading Period

5. Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:

- workshop/professional development
 colleague
 district writing program
 developed it myself
 text book
 on-line resource
 teacher guide/resource book
 test prep materials
 other (please specify):

6. Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?

- No
 Yes; **If "Yes", please answer A or B:**
A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

7. Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:

- brainstorming (as a class)
 outlining
 creating a web
 class discussion
 diagramming
 brainstorming on their own
 brainstorming (in small groups)
 information gathering
 free-writing
 note-taking
 other (please specify):
 No planning was necessary for this assignment.

8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

- Students used computers
 Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment
 Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)
 Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?

(i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) _____

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

* handout is attached.

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

- Students will learn about a single poet in-depth, while also being exposed to the lives and works of other poets through the Facebook venue.
- Students will design and carry out the project by selecting an author, constructing inquiry questions, accessing resources, evaluating credibility, and organizing information.
- Students will use a variety of print and electronic reference materials.
- Students will use context clues to determine the meaning of technical terms and other unfamiliar words.
- Students will use vocabulary appropriate for the particular audience or purpose.
- Students will use grammatical conventions of written Standard American English
- Students will use direct quotations, paraphrasing, or summaries to incorporate into written works the information gathered from a variety of research sources.
- Students will use a standardized system of documentation (including a list of sources with full publication information and the use of in-text citations) to properly credit the work of others.
- Students will select appropriate photo and video elements to support written works

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

During the semester-long poetry unit following the Facebook project, students take turns leading in-depth class discussions on poems of their choice. The Facebook project prepares them for discussion and analysis by expanding their background knowledge.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

- Was there a rubric for assessing this work? (attached)
 Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?
 Did students score their own work?
 Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?
 Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

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Some students found it difficult to maintain the language of the poet; occasionally, they slipped into modern English or slang.

2. *Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.*

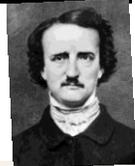
Students were more enthusiastic and creative than I thought they might be. The range of topics was impressive – and thoughtful communication took place between students (masked as poets) who do not normally associate with one another in class.

3. *What, if anything, would you do differently next time?*

Next year, to make the research process easier for lower-level students, I will provide a list of suggested sources. I will also require students to make a booklet using www.simplebooklet.com compiling all of the poems, essays, and multimedia they used in their project, and providing a list of sources for biographical information on the last page. (Simple Booklet is a very easy-to-use online book-making tool that allows users to incorporate text, audio, video, webpages, and files – as well as tweak color, borders, background pattern, shadows, etc). A booklet created at the start of the project can serve as a source of inspiration for status updates and, when the month is over, function as a scrapbook. Students will then embed or post a link to their completed booklet as their last Facebook® status update, affording me easy access to the source of quoted material.

Poets on facebook

Michelle Williams



Choose a poet whose works appeal to you thematically or stylistically, and assume his or her “identity” via Facebook. You may use ANY aspect of Facebook to convey information about the time period in which the poet lived, events in his/her life, the poet’s lifestyle and disposition, his/her writing style, and common themes and/or subject matter in the poet’s work. Creativity is a must! Please see the rubric for specific requirements and guidelines.

As a class, we will form a community, bringing together poets from a number of historical periods. Poets will befriend and respectfully communicate with one another – but this doesn’t mean they will have meaningless, boring conversations or avoid argument. The community should be witty, lively, insightful, informative, and fun.

Logistics:

- Open a new gmail account. If you know you will never check this new account, consider automatically forwarding your messages to an account you use on a regular basis.
- Create a Facebook profile (not a “celebrity page”) for your poet. If you cannot sign up because the poet’s name is rejected –the most famous ones probably will be— consider blending your name with the poet’s name: Emmy Dickinson; Edgar Allan Cook. Or purposefully misspell the poet’s name: William Shakespearer. Check first. These measures may not be necessary.
- Pages must be PRIVATE, viewable ONLY to friends
- Entire class plus teacher must become “friends.” Search for my teacher profile by email: (Removed) Look for my clipart profile “photo” of a teacher at the chalkboard.

Suggested authors:

A.E. Housman
Adrienne Rich
Alexander Pope
Alfred, Lord Tennyson
Andrew Marvell
Anne Bradstreet
Anne Sexton
Ben Jonson
Billy Collins
Carl Sandburg
Cathy Song
Claude McKay
Derek Walcott
Dorothy Parker
Dylan Thomas
e. e. cummings
Edgar Allan Poe
Edward Kamau Brathwaite
Edwin Arlington Robinson
Elizabeth Bishop
Emily Dickinson
Garrett Hongo

Gary Soto
Geoffrey Chaucer
George Gordon, Lord Byron
George Herbert
Gerard Manley Hopkins
Gwendolyn Brooks
H.D. (Hilda Doolittle)
John Donne
John Keats
John Milton
Joy Harjo
Langston Hughes
Leslie Marmon Silko
Lorna Dee Cervantes
Lucille Clifton
Margaret Atwood
Marianne Moore
Maya Angelou
Ogden Nash
Paul Laurence Dunbar
Percy Bysshe Shelley
Philip Larkin

Richard Lovelace
Richard Wilbur
Rita Dove
Robert Browning
Robert Frost
Robert Herrick
Robert Lowell
Samuel Taylor Coleridge
Seamus Heaney
Sylvia Plath
T. S. Eliot
Theodore Roethke
W. H. Auden
Wallace Stevens
Walt Whitman
William Blake
William Butler Yeats
William Carlos Williams
William Shakespeare
William Wordsworth

You don't understand anything until you learn it more than one way.
~Marvin Minsky



Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.

~Oliver Wendell Holmes

Poets on facebook

RUBRIC

	Minimal 10 pts.	Satisfactory 15 pts.	Excellent 20 pts.
Participation in online community	THREE of each weekly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • status updates • comments/ wall posts • likes 	FOUR of each weekly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • status updates • comments/ wall posts • likes 	FIVE of each weekly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • status updates • comments/ wall posts • likes
Evidence of biographical research	Profile reveals pertinent biographical information about author	Profile and status updates reveal biographical information about author	Profile, status updates, and comments/ wall posts reveal biographical information about author
Incorporation of poet's language	Profile and status updates contain words of the poet, but posts contain numerous uncharacteristic grammar and/or spelling errors.	Poet's words are incorporated into profile, status updates, and comments/wall posts, with a handful of minor spelling and/or grammar errors.	Poet's language and style are evident throughout the project. Posts are completely (or nearly) error-free.
Completeness of Facebook profile	Profile photo, About Me and fewer than 6 additional entries (photos, videos, links, flair, etc.)	Profile photo, About Me and 6-8 additional entries (photos, videos, links, flair, etc.)	Profile photo, About Me and at least 10 additional entries (photos, videos, links, flair, etc.)
Sources* (for poems, videos, and biographical information)	No list of sources.	Complete list of sources; incorrect formatting.	Complete list of sources in MLA format

* Sources should be submitted via email in an attached Word document.

SCHEDULE

Week of October 25th	Research life and works of author and create profile. Befriend other poets and teacher. ☺ IMPORTANT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan status updates and brainstorm possible topics of conversation. • Consider: What do you have in common with other poets (life events, style of poetry, usual subject matter, etc.)? What subjects might be points of contention?
Week of November 1st	Begin posting
Week of November 8th	Continue posting
Week of November 15th	Last week of posting All posts must be submitted by midnight on Monday, November 22 nd

STUDENT SAMPLES

Topics of conversation ranged from *nature*:



Wallace Frost Sometimes I stare out at nature and just admire the beauty of my surroundings. Sometimes I stare out at nature and just sigh at the destruction man has brought as a gift to their so called "mother."
November 9 at 8:15pm · Like · Comment

Edward Estlin Cummings likes this.



William Wordy Wordsworth "Tho' nothing can bring back the hour of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower, we will grieve not, rather find, strength in what remains behind."
November 9 at 8:21pm · Like · 1 person



Ogden Nash I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree.
Indeed, unless the billboards fall
I'll never see a tree at all.
November 9 at 10:00pm · Like



Wystan Auden We are our own greatest enemy.
November 10 at 8:08pm · Like · 1 person

... to women's issues...



Anne Bradstreet I am busy studying. Yes, I am a well educated woman in my time. I am tutored in history, literature, and several languages.
November 8 at 8:37pm · Like · Comment

Emmily Dickinson likes this.



Emmily Dickinson My father won't let me read all that I want. Do you propose any strategy or little device that shall avail him to my sensibilities?
November 8 at 8:52pm · Like



Anne Bradstreet Tell him it increases your vocabulary, focus, memory, and discipline and that these shall be greatly useful in life.
November 9 at 5:53pm · Like



Emmily Dickinson Oh, but I don't have an occupation or a family. Such is my plight. I wish you the best-- Learn for me!
November 15 at 6:41pm · Like

... to religion...



Anne Bradstreet My hungry Soul he fill'd with Good;
He in his Bottle put my tears,
My smarting wounds washt in his blood,
And banisht thence my Doubts and fears.
November 9 at 6:41pm · Like · Comment



William Wordsworth "Not in entire forgetfulness, And not in utter nakedness, But trailing clouds of glory do we come From God, who is our home."

November 10 at 10:33pm · Like · Comment

to adversity...



Anne Bradstreet If we had no Winter, the spring would not be so pleasant;
If we did not sometimes taste the adversity,
prosperity would not be so welcome.

November 21 at 9:08pm · Like · Comment



Richard Lovelace Indeed, a cell's stark walls make the fields of home so much more colorful.

November 21 at 10:37pm · Like



Marianne Moore it to often takes a dark situation to appreciate what is always before us

November 21 at 11:13pm · Like · 1 person

to love...



Gwendolyn Brooks "When you love a man, he becomes more than a body. His physical limbs expand, and his outline recedes, vanishes. He is rich and sweet and right. He is part of the world, the atmosphere, the blue sky and the blue water."

November 4 at 5:38pm · Like · Comment

Cathy Song and Gwendolyn Brooks like this.



Sylvia Plath And then he cheats on you.

November 4 at 5:44pm · Like



Gwendolyn Brooks my man dont.

November 4 at 5:47pm · Like



Sylvia Plath Does he write you poetry? Didn't think so.

November 4 at 5:48pm · Like



Gwendolyn Brooks my man actually did.

November 4 at 5:53pm · Like



Hilda Doolittle I feel this way about my other half, Annie. I've been with her since my divorce from Richard.

November 4 at 9:16pm · Like



Richard Lovelace I am not fooled! My wife did not even look to the sky to find me before remarrying. And I wasn't even dead! Or even in prison, that time. Just shot through a bit.

November 5 at 10:57pm · Like

to the nature of a poet...

 **Edward Estlin Cummings** if a poet is anybody, he is somebody to whom things made matter very little - somebody who is obsessed by Making.
November 7 at 4:31pm · Like · Comment

Marianne Moore likes this.

 **Robert Lowell** Or refining.
November 7 at 5:17pm · Like

 **Marianne Moore** or is pleasing to others because he is overwhelmingly honest
November 7 at 9:55pm · Like

 **Robert Lowell** Or displeasing to others.
November 8 at 5:16pm · Like

to poetic style.

 **Emily Dickinson** Have you ever noted the similarities between your poem "she being Brand" and my poem "Wild Nights!?" I have noticed your disdain of convention and it is so inspiring-- perhaps I shall experiment with capitalization-- or punctuation? Perhaps more-- dashes.
November 15 at 6:46pm · Like · Comment · See Friendship

Edward Estlin Cummings likes this.

 **Edward Estlin Cummings** with tHe disregard

-of
conventions;

the woRld has become a better
plaCe)

November 16 at 12:07am · Like · 1 person

They complimented each other...

 **Gwendolyn Brooks** I absolutely adore your poem, "Phenomenal Woman".
November 10 at 6:59pm · Like · Comment · See Friendship

Maya Angelou likes this.

 **Maya Angelou** Thank you so much, I appreciate it!
November 11 at 7:05pm · Like

They jabbed at each other...



Billy Collins The trouble with poetry is that encourages the writing of more poetry.
November 7 at 9:09pm via Android · Like · Comment

Ogden Nash, Walty Whitman and Robert Browning like this.



William Wordy Wordsworth "poetry is the breath and finer spirit of knowledge"
November 8 at 6:15pm · Like



Ogden Nash As well as being the receptical of one's pointless, spontaneous, and overflowing emotions. That means you William.
November 9 at 9:46pm · Like

And sometimes they taught each other.



Robert Lowell Sorry about your house.
November 4 at 8:48pm · Like · Comment · See Friendship

JLangston Hughes likes this.



Anne Bradstreet what about my house?
November 4 at 9:02pm · Like



Robert Lowell <http://classiclit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/abrads-treet/bl-abradstreet-upontheburning.htm>
November 4 at 9:08pm · Like



JLangston Hughes Its alright, dear Anne. We all get caught in flames.
November 4 at 9:14pm · Like



Anne Bradstreet Ah yes that house. My poor family home in North Andover burned down in July of 1666. My health was failing at the time.
November 8 at 7:03pm · Like

Assignment Title: Independent Reading Wikis

Example of: High School, Digital, Reading Response

Contents: Cover sheet, one-page assignment sheet, four student samples

Exemplifies: How a regular reading response ties to the teacher’s long-term instructional goals and student engagement. The assignment encourages students to go beyond restating to analysis and synthesis. The assignment illustrates how giving students choice and authority can inspire elaborated communication, conceptual understanding and connections beyond school. These materials also exemplify teacher reflection on the assignment and student results.

Further items for discussion:

- (1) The assignment sought to teach students how to use citations effectively and to set their own reading goals. What evidence do we see in the students’ writing that these goals have been met?
- (2) This particular wiki assignment enlarges an authentic audience and allows students to monitor their own growth. How does the use of digital tools help the teacher and her students meet their learning goals? How does the assignment address a purpose and/or an audience beyond the classroom? (See the Writing Assignment Framework.)
- (3) The teacher has used cover sheet (now reframed as assignment overview) to list the books she used (so she will remember them) and to remind herself of specific changes she would make to improve this assignment for the next go-around. How does this example help you think about ways to use the Writing Assignment Framework and Overview to support reflection?

TASW-F Assignment Coversheet

A. Information about the class

1. **Grade level:** _____ 9th Grade _____
2. **Subject area:** _____ English/Language Arts _____

3. **Any special descriptors of the students:**

Diverse group of urban learners, ethnically diverse, includes Special Education Resource students and English Language Learners in a small school by design (less than 500 students), in a setting that encourages arts (music, visual, movement) and science (not that much sciences, though.) There are approximately 31 students in each class—that's a lot of 9th grade energy.

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** _____ Independent Reading Letters _____
2. **Length of assignment:** _____ Monthly, year long _____

Mark (X) one only:

- Completed in a single class period
- Completed within one week
- Required more than one week to complete

3. **Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.**

It was part of an ongoing assignment, providing students multiple opportunities to improve their craft in writing this assignment. I've attached copy of the Independent Reading requirement for my class. Independent reading is about 50% of the year's assignments.

4. **When was this assignment completed?**

- 1st Grading Period
- 2nd Grading Period
- 3rd Grading Period
- 4th Grading Period (students do this all year, but the samples included are from 4th marking period)

5. **Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- workshop/professional development
- colleague
- district writing program
- developed it myself
- text book
- on-line resource
- teacher guide/resource book
- test prep materials
- other (please specify):

Informed by the following texts:

Gallagher, Kelly. *Readicide*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers 2009.

Keene, Ellin Oliver, Zimmerman, Susan. *Mosaic of Thought*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1997.

Atwell, Nancie. *In the Middle*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1987.

Schoenback, Ruth, Greenleaf, Cynthia, Cziko, Christine, and Hurtwitz, Lori. *Reading for Understanding*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Henry, Jeanne. *If Not Now*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Boynton/Cook Publisher, 1995.

Graham, Steve and Hebert, Michael. *Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading*. Carnegie Corporation of New York: Alliance for Excellent Education, 2010.

6. **Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?**

- No
- Yes; **If "Yes", please answer A or B:**
- A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
- B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

7. **Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- brainstorming (as a class)
 - outlining
 - creating a web
 - class discussion
 - diagramming
 - brainstorming on their own
 - brainstorming (in small groups)
 - information gathering
 - free-writing
 - note-taking
 - other (please specify):
- Students were allowed to use their texts, their reading logs, and the internet.
- No planning was necessary for this assignment.

8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

- Students used computers
- Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment
- Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)
- Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?
(i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) 1 hour/week

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

Independent reading is established at the beginning of the year, with the expectation that students will read a minimum of 250 pages each month. At the end of each month, an Independent Reading Letter is assigned, so throughout the year, students write 8 letters of this type about a different book they are reading. I have attached a copy of the Independent Reading assignment my students received at the start of the year.

Towards the end of the first semester, in November, students moved from a typed or handwritten IR letter to one that was posted on the wiki I created for the class.

Directions for the IR letter were in hardcopy in my room, and were also posted on the wiki for the students to access from any computer. I've attached a copy of the hardcopy available in my room.

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

My primary instructional goal is to create interested independent readers who could read, write, and respond to a variety of texts. I wanted them to be able to:

- Select appropriate books for themselves;
- Read 250 pages every month;
- Write a monthly letter about their books;
- Summarize them succinctly;
- Find, cite, and explain quotes from their text;
- Discuss characters in the text;
- Write recommendations for or against the books they read;
- Reflect on their own reading process and
- Set reading goals for themselves

Student wrote in their logs daily, but I wanted them to be able to write about what they were reading in a more formal way.

I had three main aims in establishing the wiki as the vehicle for IR letters:

1. To reduce the paper load I carried around and had to maintain as files in my classroom.
2. To create an authentic audience for the letters other than the teacher.
3. To create a community of readers and writers that could be found from any computer

Soon after the project moved to the wiki, the fourth goal became to provide all my students with experience using technology to communicate with others by establishing an email address, learning to use word processing software, learning to navigate a wiki, and learning to respond to each other's writing electronically.

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

We balance independent reading with whole class readings of texts. Few of my students describe themselves as "Readers," so my aim in freshman year is to provide ample opportunities for students to become avid readers, to develop strategies for reading, to write daily about the texts they read, and to continue to develop their vocabulary through reading.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

Was there a rubric for assessing this work?

Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?

Did students score their own work?

Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?

Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

One of the most difficult things for students was reflecting on the growth and setting realistic goals. I accept responsibility for not giving them adequate modeling. I modeled for students what letters should look like, how citations from the text could be embedded into character or plot descriptions, how to summarize succinctly, how to correctly punctuate their letters, but I didn't devote enough time to how to go about setting realistic goals and monitoring their own progress.

2. Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.

After about three months on the wiki, students began writing their letters well before the due dates. They seemed to take pleasure in being the first to post and get feedback from their peers. Discussion about books seemed to flare up in a few places on the wiki. I saw students reading books others had recommended (part of the requirement of each letter, a recommendation or not) and nice intensity during reading.

This was my first time using a wiki for an independent reading and I was delighted in how many of my students adapted to it. There were a few, particularly those who attended class sporadically, who didn't post regularly. There were probably about a half a dozen who only posted 2-3 letters, but I may have had one student in each class who never posted anything on the wiki. I was surprised at how easily they adopted the wiki; in fact they taught me some things about using a wiki that I didn't know.

3. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

Start with the wiki from the beginning of the year. In fact, I started using it for other writing assignments as I neared the end of second semester.

More instruction on correctness of punctuation and format from the beginning.

Model more explicitly what realistic goals and reflection should look like in the IR letters.



Sign up for computer lab at the start of the year. We were at times hampered by not being able to go to the computer lab at school regularly, but I would say at least 80% of my students had access to computers at home. Computers were available to students every day at lunch in the library and every day after school in our tutor program, but not many students seemed to avail themselves to these opportunities.

Survey students about their reading habits at the beginning of the year and again at the end of the year.

In general, I think this assignment can better use the technology so next year I'm thinking of ways that I can connect other teachers and other assignments to the wiki and perhaps create a broader audience for the writing. Maybe we can link to Good Reads or to our school newspaper, which is also digital.

This is my first year at this school and my first year back in the classroom after five years working in a supporting role for teachers, so it has been an adjustment.

Dear reader,

This month i finished *The Freedom Writers* by Erin Gruwell and The Freedom Writers. This wonderful book is filled with 271 eye opening diary entries from both Ms. Gruwell and the Writers. Ms. Gruwell started her first day at Wilson High school in Long Beach. She imagined herself being a teacher to honor students, but was soon mistaken when a group of racist, bad minded student walked in. she got the students nobody wanted. Class goes on, but she finds a note with a racial cartoon of a student. that was the final straw. Ms. Gruwell taught about the holocaust and anne frank. They soon realized that that their lives were much like Anne Frank and a girl name Zlata. They went through a eye opening, life changing experience. After seeing how many of their friends died because of gang violence and racism, the Writers promised themselves to do everything they can to stop it. since then, Ms. Gruwell and the Freedom Writers are known around the world for their diary entries.

My favorite entry was Diary 24. This writer went through a lot of suffering and heartbreak. he was a houseless sophomore and wore the same clothes from the year before. He and his mom lived in a house that wasn't theirs. "The morning of the eviction a hard knock on the door woke me. The sheriff was here to do his job."52. they stayed at a friends house at avoid staying on the streets longer. when he got to school he read this entry to everybody. I liked him because it takes a lot of courage and nerve to go to school and talk about all this. it also hard for someone to do a thing like this because he could be made fun of. " I walked in the room and I feel as though all my problems in my life are not important any more. i am home"54. this was my favorite quote. it show how someone found best friends. they feel so close that they forget about all problems in life.

This book is very different from the books I've read because im the type of person who usually reads horror novels. I stayed to one topic, but when i picked up this book from the house and started reading it I became attached to what the book had to say. i learned more about gang violence and racism. i would highly recommend this book to a friend because it deal with a lot of things kids deal with on a regular basis. its also written by people my age so a friend would be able to understand the book. during this past month I've become a faster reader. Im guessing it was because this book was very interesting to me. i wanted to read more and more of it everyday. i also became a more focused reader. when its quiet and peaceful i could read a lot and focus better. This month my goal is to read more books like this one. now i see that i really love this book and reading more books like this would expand the topics i read and like.

adela2010:

IR Letter For March

Dear
reader,

03/24/11

This month I read a book called The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins. It has 374 pages total and its about a girl named Katniss, she lived in post apocalyptic world called Panem, that used to be North America. Panem is controlled by a capital with 13 districts surrounding it. There was a rebellion and the capital destroyed one of the 13 districts and as a result the capital holds the Hunger Games every year. Katniss younger sister named Prim gets picked to be in the Hunger Games. Katniss volunteers to take her sister's place and then she find herself in the Hunger Games. The Hunger Games are televised games that use two kids from each district between the age of 12 and 16 years old to fight in a arena until only one is still alive (the winner). Her father dies in a mine explosion. Her mother was very depressed after her husband died and couldn't provide for the family.

The character that I liked the most is Katniss because she sacrifice herself for her sister, also because she is smart, she illegally hunts outside of the disctrict 12. The quote I liked is "No, when the time come, I'm sure I'll kill just like everybody else, I can't go down without a fight. Only I keep wishing I could think of a way to show the Capitol they don't own me. That I'm more than just a piece in their Games." (142) This quote was said by character Peeta Mellark before the Hunger Games started to Katniss Everdeen. This quote means that the character will kill other tributes in the Games if he has to, but he wants to show the Capitol that they can't make her do everything they want her to do.

This book compares to the books called Farm Team, The Privelege of Youth, The Chronicles of Narnia: the Lion, the Witc, and the Wardrobe, The Chronicles of Narnia and the Voyage of the Dawn Treader, and finally the Hoopster because the plot grabbed my attention fairly quickly. I would recommend this book to others because this is a inspiring book just like the ones i read before. I noticed that I could read faster and that I could write even more and that I could finish a book in just four to five days if I concentrate on the book I am reading. I am surprise that I finally read at home more and that i pay attention to the book even more.

I am finally not struggling with anything at all. My goals for next month are to read at least two books that have 374 or more and finish them so I could choose which one to write about on my next IR Letter. Maybe I could talk about both books on my next IR letter. I hope I dont get lazy on April if not I won't be able to accomplish my goals.

Sincerely,

Dear, Reader

The book i read is called Dennie the author of the book is Judy blumie. There is 149 pages in the book, The book is about a girl name Dennie whos mother, doesn't want her good looks to be wasted, her mom is pushing her toward modeling. When she tries out for the cheerleading team doesn't make it. Deenie's gym teacher notices her posture and refers her to an orthopedist who diagnoses her with scoliosis. Both Deenie and her mother are horrified. Deenie decides an operation to "fix it" is the lesser of two evils when the alternative is to wear a brace for four years, but the doctor assures her the brace is the appropriate treatment. I recommend this for anyone what i notice about my self is that when i read i imagine what is happening in the book in my head.

adela2010:

z IR letta 4 FEB<3

3~03~11

Dear Reader,

This month i read a book called Normal Girl who is by an author named Molly Jong-Fast . This book has only 195 page and is told by Miranda Woke a girl who is only 19 years old and is a Vallium, cocaine, morphine, Demerol, Percocet, crack, Klonopin and heroin addict! Her parents are famous socialites so she was brought up with fame and money so her drugs and alcohol are never in short supply. Miranda thinks she's killed her boyfriend Jeff because of a air bubble that was caught in a needle when he was ' shootin' up ' but it really wasn't all her fault so she's clubbin' , shootin' up, getting wasted, and passing out in every bathroom stall with needles stuck in her arms just to relieve the pain. Miranda is in such a horrible condition that after all the times she's got wasted this last time her mom actually steps in the picture and Miranda gets sent to a rehab in Minnesota. She stays there for 10 weeks and when she gets out she realizes what more she could do with her life and she notices how horrible her druggie friends are and she never wants to become that again!

One character that i really like is Miranda Woke's ex boyfriend Brett. He was the one who was there to help Miranda the last time she was found extremely wasted. Brett actually really loves Miranda even when she was so high and wasted he was always there to help her too. It sucks for him though how awful Miranda treats him. Brett isn't one of the good looking guys, a bit heavy, doesn't get paid very good being a waiter and all but he has such a good heart.

This is one of the quotes from the book that i liked: "For the first time in my life i get it. I'm a drug addict... I close my eyes and the realization comes to me, not because I want it to, just because it does. I'm going to die if I drink or use drugs again. I'm going to end up in a pine box next to Jeff, as dead as he is."(pg.147) This quote was perfect for the end of this chapter because the next chapter Miranda talks about how much she's getting use to rehab and how she love being sober. I just feel that after Miranda had this thought in her head , she never turned to drugs or alcohol because she realized the danger she but herself into.

This book doesn't compare to the books i usually read. I never read books about serious drug problems teenagers have or anything like this. I'm glad i changed the books i read a little bit so i can be able to tell what kind of books i trully enjoy reading. I would recommend this book to a friend especially because the main character was only a teenager like me and my friends. Also there's new drugs every day that high schoolers try and they don't realize what they're doing to theirselves but this book makes you see the out come of drugs and the concequences.

What I'm noticing about myself as a reader is that i like variety of books. I'm glad a chose a different genre because I enjoy reading about different things. I am still struggling with just reading every day. I just always forget to read or I don't read enough. Next month my goal is to finish two books in one month. On the usual i can only finish one book in a month so we'll see.

Sincerely ,

Assignment Title: Personal narrative/autobiographical essay

Example of: High School, English Learner (EL), Small City

Contents: Cover sheet, assignment sheet, rubric, two student samples

Exemplifies: Accomplished EL writing in which students have choice of autobiographical incident. Evidence of process and product expectations, although rubric is generic rather than specific to narrative writing. Evidence that students already knew or encountered instruction about dialogue, good openings, and personal reflection.

Further items for discussion:

- (1) Sample One: While the writing is somewhat confusing, it is directed to an audience as it attempts to explain and evaluate the way education works in China. The writing builds tension, includes reflection, dialogue, and well-chosen phrases (“the day of reckoning was coming” and “the sun came out and shone on me”).
- (2) Sample Two: A well-developed narrative that is set up effectively with introduction of conflict. Writing includes metaphor, dialogue, and ample reflection. Writing takes the audience into account with careful and thorough building of tension.
- (3) Because these are accomplished pieces of writing, the dilemma is where to go next with these students. What next steps and next assignments would build from here? How might the framework inform these decisions?

TASW-F Assignment Coversheet

A. Information about the class

1. **Grade level:** _____ 9th _____
2. **Subject area:** _____ English Language Development _____
3. **Any special descriptors of the students:** _____

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** _____ Personal Narrative _____
2. **Length of assignment:** _____

Mark (X) one only:

- Completed in a single class period
 Completed within one week
 Required more than one week to complete

3. **Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.**
 No.

4. **When was this assignment completed?**

- 1st Grading Period
 2nd Grading Period
 3rd Grading Period
 4th Grading Period

5. **Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- workshop/professional development
 colleague
 district writing program
 developed it myself
 text book
 on-line resource
 teacher guide/resource book
 test prep materials
 other (please specify): _____

6. **Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?**

- No
 Yes; **if "Yes", please answer A or B:**
 A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
 B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

7. **Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- brainstorming (as a class)
 outlining
 creating a web
 class discussion
 diagramming
 brainstorming on their own
 brainstorming (in small groups)
 information gathering
 free-writing
 note-taking
 other (please specify): _____
 No planning was necessary for this assignment.

8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

Students used computers

Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment

Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)

Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?

(i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) 3/4

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

Students to write a personal narrative. See assignment sheet- page 4.

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

Writing plan- from paragraph to paper.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

Was there a rubric for assessing this work?

Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?

Did students score their own work?

Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?

Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

The hardest part for students was coming up with a good story to tell.

2. Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.

They were eager to tell their stories.

3. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

More grammar prep.

The Personal Narrative (or Autobiographical Essay)

YOUR TASK: To choose a significant event from your life and write a narrative essay of approximately 500 words.

The main purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to write about a personal experience in order to get to know and understand yourself better. During the process, you will learn ways to articulate personal experience to inform and entertain others.

Narrative provides human interest, sparks our curiosity, and draws us close to the storyteller. In addition, narratives can create a sense of shared history, linking people together. They can provide entertainment as most people enjoy a thrilling movie or an intriguing book. Narratives can also provide psychological healing; reading or listening to the narrative of someone who faced a life crisis similar to one you are experiencing can help you through the crisis, as well as help the writer deal with the crisis. They can also provide insight – narratives can help you discover values, explore options, and examine motives.

For this essay you will need to write about one specific experience that changed how you acted, thought, or felt. Use your experience as a springboard for reflection. Your purpose is not to merely tell an interesting story but to show your readers the importance and influence the experience has had on you.

Characteristics of a narrative:

- *Narratives make a point*
- *Narratives convey action and details*
- *Narratives present a conflict and create tension*
 - *Narratives sequence events*
 - *Narratives use dialogue*
- *Narratives are told from a point of view*

Your essay should include:

- *Characters:* In the personal essay, your main character is yourself, so try to give your readers a sense of who you are through your voice, actions, level of awareness, and description. The characters in a good story are believable and interesting; they come alive for the readers.
- *Voice:* Language reveals who you are; choose your words to reflect your theme as well as yourself.
- *Actions:* Readers learn something about the kind of person you are through your actions.
- *Dialogue:* Show, don't tell. Include vivid and meaningful dialogue between you and other or with yourself! (No, you're not crazy.)
- *Insight:* One of the best ways to reveal who you are is to show yourself becoming aware of something, gaining a new way of seeing the world, a new insight. While

4

such awareness can occur for apparently unexplainable reasons, it most often happens when you encounter new ideas or have experiences that change you in some way.

- *Telling Details:* Describe yourself and other participants in your story in such a way that the details and facts help tell your story. A telling detail or fact is one that advances your characterization of someone without your having to render an obvious opinion.
- *Setting:* Experiences happen in some place at some time, and good essays describe these setting. To describe a believable physical setting, you need to re-create on paper the sights, sounds, smells, and physical sensations that allow readers to experience it for themselves. In addition to telling the details that support your plot and/or character development, try to include evocative details, colorful details of setting and characters. The telling details of a setting can reveal something essential about your essay without your explaining them. After all, you can let your reader to do a little work.

Sequence of Events: In every narrative, events are ordered in some way. While you cannot alter the events that happened in your experience, as a writer, you need to decide which events to portray and in what order to present them. Remember, sequencing of events need not be chronological.

Writing Rubric for ELD Placement

Category	Ready for Mainstream (5) M	Early Advanced ELD (4) L4	Intermediate ELD (3) L3	Early Intermediate ELD (2) N2	Beginning ELD (1) N1	New to English (0) N1
<p>CONTENT</p> <p>Does student answer the question? How thoughtful are their answers? Is there support for answers & connections to the text?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Has a clear thesis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses thesis to guide writing.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas are thoughtful.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas are supported through analyzing details and examples from the text.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Thesis guides writing.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Includes details, examples or evidence, and explanation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Thesis addresses prompt</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Thesis is supported with several examples</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Examples are not fully analyzed</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> May have a topic sentence or a guiding idea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not include enough support.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> May not address prompt with any ideas</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas are confusing and/or not developed.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Writes in primary language.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Response includes few recognizable English words.</p>
<p>ORGANIZATION</p> <p>Are there paragraphs? Is there an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion? Are paragraphs connected to one another?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Essay has multiple paragraphs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Has a clear introduction, body & conclusion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas in paragraphs fluidly connect to each other.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Essay has multiple paragraphs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Has introduction, body & conclusion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas in paragraphs connect to each other.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> May have multiple paragraphs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Each paragraph has a topic sentence or guiding principle</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses one or two paragraphs as needed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Paragraphs may not focus on one guiding principle</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas do not connect to each other</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is no organizing principle</p>	
<p>SENTENCE VARIETY & GRAMMAR</p> <p>Does student use a variety of sentence types? Is grammar correct?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variety of sentence types</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Use of grammar allows for expression of complex ideas</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Few sentences are grammatically incorrect</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variety of sentence types</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Correct verb tense is used most of the time</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A few sentences are grammatically incorrect</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses some compound and complex sentences</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Use correct verb tense most of the time</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Some sentences are grammatically incorrect</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consistently uses simple past, present and future tenses</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sentences have a subject and verb</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> May have a few complex sentences</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Many sentences are not grammatically correct</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not use complete sentences</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Most sentences are grammatically incorrect</p>	
<p>MECHANICS & FORMAT</p> <p>Is there correct spelling, punctuation & capitalization? Does student use proper formatting?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Consistently uses correct spelling, punctuation and capitalization</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Correctly cites titles and uses quotation marks</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Usually uses correct spelling, punctuation and capitalization</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct paragraph formatting</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Spelling does not interfere with meaning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Consistently uses capitalization and end of sentence punctuation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Indents paragraphs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Consistently spells sight words correctly</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Often uses capitalization and end-of-sentence punctuation correctly</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect spelling, punctuation, and capitalization</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not use proper formatting.</p>	
<p>VOCABULARY</p> <p>Does use of precise vocabulary express student's ideas? Are there phrasal verb/idiomatic expression?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates varied word choice</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Consistently uses academic language</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes uses precise language and academic vocabulary</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses more varied vocabulary</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses some idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Uses basic English vocabulary</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Lacks basic English vocabulary</p>	

Please!

Did you ever have a time like this? It could determine your life in just a moment. You couldn't control it, you have to listen to God.

To many people in my hometown, "No.1 middle school" is an untouchable school. There is an only way for those non genius students to get in the school, it's randomly selected. Everyone has a chance to register for it. If you have good luck, then here we go!

To those people who go to a private school definitely are not interested in it. Whether it is a question of either teachers or equipment, private school is obviously weighed better than public school. Especially China, a lot of babies are born everyday, a lot of children go to school everyday. Unlike private school, there are about 60 students in a class in public school. How could the teachers care of 60 kids well everyday? Even robots can't!

Men's thoughts are always very traditional in China. They seldom trust the new world. I didn't know why they feel it's the best. Even now, still.

"Aaron! Have you signed up yet?" my dad interrogated seriously.

"Do I really have to do it?" I persuaded.

"Trust me, it's good for you."

"I don't think so" I whispered.

I know if I was selected, probably, I would stay in China and continue to have the "Spoon-fed education". "Spoon-fed education" is a kind of education that teaches you everything whether it's useful or not. That's terrible! Unlike public school, we use the way that the world thinks it's good to learn. But I don't have a choice. The only thing I could do was to pray!

The day of reckoning was coming. We were all sitting in front of the TV. The names showed up one by one. I was holding my hands tightly. I was staying out of the world. I thought a lot about my future at that moment. What would happen if my name showed up? Can I still live under the "Spoon-feeding education"? After asking these questions to myself, my head was a blank mind. On other hands, my dad couldn't wait to see my name announced. He was the only one who wanted to see my name. Non of our family member supported him.

Finally, the sun came out and shone on me. I haven't been selected. Suddenly, I felt the world was so attractive. I couldn't wait to accept the world. I couldn't wait to see how the amazing world it is.

Actually, my dad knows what is good for me all the time, but I don't know why he sometimes does something wrong even he knows it. After that incident, I realized that I have to treasure what I have now. Even I lose it next second I will still rejoice that I used to have it.

April Fool's Day

Have you ever done something bad and stupid that you wish you could go back and fix it? Well it all happened on Wednesday, April 1st 2009. It was April fools day. I woke up at 7:00 am in the morning. I went to eat breakfast, got dressed up and went to school. It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining, birds were singing. About 10-15 minutes, my mom dropped me off at school. As soon I got out of the car, I ran towards my class. I was so excited to prank and tell jokes to my friends and teachers.

The day went by fast. When I realized and looked at the clock it was already 6th period. There was I in the class laughing, and acting stupid. I think I was so high with excitement, I didn't realize that I told my teacher Mrs. K a bad joke. At that moment I realized that I did the worst mistake ever: to say that I had pepper spray in my backpack. After that joke I saw that my teacher dynamically changed, her face.

"Mrs. what's wrong with you?" I asked.

"I am just tired" she replied.

Since I knew my teacher from head to toe, I knew that something was wrong. After all this awkwardness, the class turned to a different mood. The classroom was deadly silent, just like in the cemetery. The weather turned out to be windy at that day after the incident. It was really scary; just because of a stupid joke. That could have gotten me expelled from school or arrested. During the deadly silence, the bell rang, so everyone just ran out of the class. I could tell that they were running from a monster or

something. My mind was puzzled, I didn't have anything to say or think .The time went so fast after the incident, expect for the last period, where everything happened.

So the class has begun. We all started the class work. About 10 or 15 minutes of class, there was a knock on the door. So everyone just went dead silent. When the teacher opened the door, there was the principal and the counselor right in the doorway . For some reason I thought that they were looking at me. Suddenly when I turned back to do my class work.

"T , can you please come with us, and bring your stuff with you?" the principal asked.

I just went crazy; of course I didn't show it. It was in my mind. I felt the last of my saliva going down my throat. Additionally, I started to sweat like a chicken running from its prey.

For the first time ever, I got taken out to go to the principal's office which that place everyone was afraid of. I first imagined that place, with dark walls, no windows. When I got there and I just stepped my first foot into her room, I wished I had magic powers, to get rapidly out of there.

The other problem was that not only the principal was there, but a "**POLICE OFFICER**" He was staring at me with his sharply intent eyes.

"I did not know why I was there, I don't remember if I got in trouble??" I thought to myself.

Suddenly while I was standing in front of a typical judge and a cop because they were sitting in the desk while I was sitting on a chair in front of them. My legs were just shaking like an earthquake. I just felt like I was being judged for no reason.

“Do you know, why are you here?” the principal asked.

“No... Should I?” I coldly replied.

“Yes, because we think that you have something illegal that you brought to school according to your teachers.” She responded back.

“Well... I guess you guys are wrong, because I don’t have anything illegal!” I instantly replied.

After I replied, the principal and the police officer looked at me suspiciously.

“May I see your backpack?” the police officer politely asked.

“Sure,” I responded.

After the police officer had thrown my whole stuff that was in my back pack in the ground, he wanted to pat me down. At that moment I realized that things were getting serious. So I let him to pat me down, to look if I had a pepper spray in my backpack, which is what I told my teacher.

“Your teacher called us, reporting that you had a weapon on your backpack. Do you realize how serious is that? You can get arrested for that. Now you tell me if you were joking about it?” She angrily said to me.

At that moment my heart just stopped. I could tell that there was no blood circulating in my body.

“Yes, I do know what that could cause me, I am really sorry!” I apologetically responded.

They explained the terms that if I did that again, with serious stuff, I would not be forbidden. After telling me the terms, they let me go. The first thing that I did was to

apologize to my teacher. When I got inside of her class, my tears just flowed. The classroom was being washed with my tears. I couldn't stop crying.

When I left my teacher's classroom, I just realized that was Wednesday; that is, it was a minimum day. On minimum days I used to take the bus. Unfortunately since I got in trouble at that day, I missed the bus.

I started to walk to the bus stop. While I was walking, I was crying at the same time. The streets didn't have a single human. It was windy. It looked like an old country town, where no one lives. I felt so lonely. When I got to the bus stop, I felt like trash, left out in the street. My face was all messed up, my eyes were deadly red I was all sweaty because I had PE in that day. When the bus arrived, I was really afraid that the bus driver wouldn't let me in because of the way I was any one would think that I was psycho. Thank goodness the bus wasn't full. So I sat down facing the floor. I didn't want anyone to see my face, or that I was crying. It was really hard to hide that from others.

The bus arrived at the bus stop near my house. I got out of the bus and walked the rest of it towards my house. Finally after 5 or 10 minutes, I arrived at my house before my mom or my stepfather, which would be so embarrassing if I got home crying. As soon I got inside my house, I went right away to the bathroom. I took a long shower I think it was about 1 hour of shower. I just sat down in the bathtub and stood there under the hot water crying like a baby. After I finished my shower, I went to take a nap.

After that day, I learned that I would never do such a serious thing, such as telling jokes, or telling stupid lies. All that just causes you trouble. Honestly I did learned what is to be in front of a police officer, interrogating you almost all day. Trust me it is no fun at all. Also if you are a person that tells a lot of stupid jokes, or a person that lies too

much, it will be hard to get people to believe in you. I will never play or tell jokes on April fool's Day. What a Day!!!

By

Assignment Title: Compare/contrast essay: comparing viewpoints

Example of: High school, ELD (English Language Development), Digital, Writing Process

Contents: Cover sheet, assignment sheet, examples of student work

Exemplifies: A process that contributes to meeting the instructional goals. Examples of teacher reflection on student work. Assignment that allows for differentiation, teaches academic language, and accounts for the complexity of language in the instructions. Multiple opportunities for student review, feedback and revision.

Further items for discussion:

- (1) After analyzing the assignment and resulting student work, the teacher noted students had difficulty in comparing viewpoints with a limited point of reference. To build on this kind of assignment at a future time, the teacher will provide more background reading material related to the topics. Refer to the framework: *How are students supported with relevant knowledge bases, resources, materials, prior knowledge, and other scaffolds to build content?* What kinds of other background resources and processes might students need to gather enough content for their writing?
- (2) One writing sample demonstrates a student's growing comfort with academic language, as well as a developing understanding of the complexity of a compare/contrast relationship. What assignment(s) might effectively follow this one?

TASW-F Assignment Coversheet

A. Information about the class

1. **Grade level:** 9-12
2. **Subject area:** ELD (English Language Development)
3. **Any special descriptors of the students:**
 The students in this class have recently been transitioned to mainstream English from ELD.

B. Background information about the assignment

1. **Title of assignment:** Compare/Contrast Essay: Comparing Viewpoints
2. **Length of assignment:** 4-5 paragraphs

Mark (X) one only:

- Completed in a single class period
- Completed within one week
- Required more than one week to complete

3. **Was this assignment part of a larger unit? Please explain.**

Yes, it was part of a unit on compare/contrast writing. This was the class's 2nd compare/contrast essay assignment.

4. **When was this assignment completed?**

- 1st Grading Period
- 2nd Grading Period
- 3rd Grading Period
- 4th Grading Period

5. **Who created this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- workshop/professional development
- colleague
- district writing program
- developed it myself
- text book
- on-line resource
- teacher guide/resource book
- test prep materials
- other (please specify):

6. **Did the assignment involve students creating more than one draft of the written work (e.g., multiple revisions)?**

- No
- Yes; if "Yes", please answer A or B:
- A. A single preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.
- B. More than one preliminary draft plus final work product was assigned.

7. **Did students do planning activities (such as illustrations, class discussions or outlining) as part of this assignment? Mark (X) for all that apply:**

- brainstorming (as a class)
- outlining
- creating a web
- class discussion
- diagramming
- brainstorming on their own
- brainstorming (in small groups)
- information gathering
- free-writing
- note-taking
- other (please specify): venn diagram
- No planning was necessary for this assignment.

8. Please check all of the processes and supports students used to compose work for this assignment.

- Students used computers (essays were posted and revised on a wiki)
 Students worked in pairs or small groups for any part of the assignment
 Students had to find and use additional materials (outside of those provided by you)
 Students had in class to work on / write this assignment

If Yes, what proportion of the total time?
(i.e. 1/2, 1/3, etc.) _____

9. To allow readers a better understanding of the assignment, please provide any important verbal or printed instructions which were given to students. Please feel free to describe or attach information about how you introduced and taught this assignment.

*see attached packet

C. Purposes of the assignment

1. What are the instructional goals for the assignment?

- SWBAT compare and contrast different viewpoints in writing
- SWBAT organize information in essay format
- SWBAT write a formal essay

2. How is the assignment embedded in a larger instructional plan?

The larger unit was on comparing and contrasting and it involved an oral presentation based on research as well as an essay comparing and contrasting the subjects of the oral presentation. This essay assignment was developed to push students from the concrete to the more abstract when comparing and contrasting and to reinforce their ability to write an essay more independently.

D. Product expectations

1. What criteria did you use to make a judgment about the quality of the student work? Please attach all available grading criteria, rubrics, etc. Mark (X) for all that apply:

- Was there a rubric for assessing this work?
 Were students aware of the scoring system (i.e. the rubric criteria) you used for this assignment?
 Did students score their own work?
 Was this assignment connected to any state or national assessment or standards?
 Did students share or display their work for an audience (i.e. another class, administrators, etc.)?

E. Written reflection on the assignment

1. Were any parts of the assignment difficult for many of your students? Please elaborate.

Many students had difficulty comparing viewpoints after reading one article and needed to do further research. They also had difficulty comparing views which was more abstract than comparing physical items.

2. Were there any surprises in the way students completed the assignment? Please explain your answer.

Not really.



3. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

Provide more resources, especially reading material to boost students' knowledge of particular topics.

Welcome to Your New Wiki!

Getting Started

- Click on the edit button above to put your own content on this page.
- To invite new members, click on **Manage Wiki** and **Invite People**.
- To change your wiki's colors or theme, click on **Manage Wiki** and **Look and Feel**.
- To set who can view and edit your wiki, click on **Manage Wiki** and **Permissions**.

Need Help?

- Click on the help link above to learn more about how to use your wiki.

Assignment #1: Compare/Contrast Essay

Post your compare/contrast essay on this site so that others in the class can read it and edit if they are asked to do so. Follow the example below.

Name: Tracey Freyre

Date Posted: 2/13/11

American Football: An American Tradition or a Danger to Kids?

(MODEL A)

Years ago, my younger brother came home and announced excitedly that he was planning to try out for the middle school football team. After looking at one another with worried expressions, my parents took a united stand and told him that he would not be allowed to try out. For millions of kids, sports like boxing and American football are long standing traditions that promise glory and excitement. However, what many young people don't realize is that American football is an extremely dangerous sport that can cause irreversible damage. If you are a parent of a child who is either currently playing football or who expresses interest in playing, it is imperative that you are aware of both the risks as well as the benefits that accompany the sport of American football.

Millions of people will argue that playing football offers various physical advantages. It is true that playing football will improve one's strength, agility, balance, speed, and endurance. Children who play football often grow up to be athletic adults compared to those who do not have any experience playing football or any other sport. **However**, when a young person signs up to play football, they aren't told how football may very well cause permanent brain damage. Researchers recently discovered a protein called tau in the brains of 12 former NFL, college, and high school football players. This protein is connected with a debilitating disease called CTE, which causes memory loss, paranoia, and depression during middle age.

(<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1957046,00.html#ixzz1DtxgZXDf>) This protein is directly connected to head trauma, which football players experience almost on a daily basis. Many football players repeatedly experience concussions or other forms of head trauma, some of which are discovered and others which

are not. As a result of these injuries, football players could unknowingly be headed towards serious health problems later in life. **Whereas** football offers some health benefits, the health risks that it brings far outweigh the benefits.

There is evidence that people who play football are less likely to experience depression. This is probably due to the adrenaline rush that football players experience. This adrenaline rush keeps a player's mood up. **On the other hand**, football is not the only sport that can provide an adrenaline rush. In fact, most sports offer the same level of adrenaline rush that football provides. For example, sports like soccer, tennis, swimming, track and field, and baseball are all extremely competitive and offer an athlete multiple opportunities to experience an adrenaline rush "high." It isn't necessary to play a contact sport in order to feel this rush.

Diehard football fans, coaches, players, and former players would argue that football teaches important life lessons like open communication. Because football is a team sport, it requires a lot of communication between team players in order for them to have a better chance at winning. **Even though** football could very well improve one's ability to communicate openly, it has also been shown to increase a person's level of aggression. "Contact sport athletes may be more aggressive off the field than no contact sports athletes because their actions on the field have a cumulative effect. Furthermore, aggression is often rewarded in contact sport, increasing its frequency on the field and making it more likely in other situations" (Zillman, Johnson, & Day, 1974). Unfortunately, young kids especially learn aggressive behavior quickly. It is possible that young kids who start to play American football learn that aggressive physical behaviour is acceptable and even encouraged by fans. However, handling life situations such as disappointments and frustrations with physical aggression is inappropriate and dangerous.

While American football can offer kids a number of benefits, its dangers far outweigh the benefits that it offers. Football improves physical fitness in the short term, helps reduce the risk of depression by offering frequent "adrenaline rushes," and teaches individuals the importance of communication. However, it also increases one's chance of suffering from debilitating disease later in life and can lead to inappropriate aggression in younger kids who are still learning the difference between appropriate aggression on the playing field and inappropriate aggression in real life situations. Although my little brother was furious at my parents for weeks after they prohibited him from trying out for the team, he quickly found his place on the soccer field and went on to become a pretty good player. Looking back, I'm glad my parents held firm to their position, and I think that deep down, my brother is too.

Sources Cited

Gregory, Sean. "The Problem with Football: How to Make It Safer." Time Magazine 2010. 1/28/10. <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1957046,00.html#ixzz1DtxgZXDf>

Patrice Lemieux, Stuart J. McKelvie and Dale Stout. "Self-reported Hostile Aggression in Contact Athletes, No Contact Athletes and Non-athletes." The Online Journal of Sport Psychology. <http://www.athleticinsight.com/Vol4Iss3/SelfReportedAggression.htm>

Writing Rubric

Category	Advanced Writing (10 points)	Good Writing At Standard (8-9 points)	Comprehensible Writing (7-6 points)	Writing needs much development Far Below Standard (5 points)
<p>CONTENT (3) <i>Does student answer the question?</i> <i>How thoughtful are their answers?</i> <i>Is there support for answers & connections to the text?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has an insightful and thesis -Ideas are insightful -Claims are substantiated and explained in a way that supports thesis and topic sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has a clear thesis -Includes details, examples or evidence, and analysis -Moving towards original analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has a thesis that addresses the prompt -Begins to include details, examples or evidence, and explanation -Developing analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -May have a thesis -Writing may not address the prompt -Ideas are confusing and/or not developed -Examples need more explanation
<p>ORGANIZATION (X3) <i>Are there paragraphs?</i> <i>Is there an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion?</i> <i>Are paragraphs connected to one another?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has a clear introduction, multiple body paragraphs, and a conclusion. -Ideas in paragraphs fluidly connect to each other. -There are logical transitions between paragraphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Relies less on scaffolding -Effectively organizes paragraphs to support thesis -Introduction and conclusion are thoughtful and focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Essay has multiple paragraphs with topic sentences -May still need scaffolding to organize thoughts -Intro and conclusions are somewhat simplistic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ideas do not connect to each other -Paragraphs are not clearly organized and may be difficult to follow -Introduction and/or conclusion is missing.
<p>SENTENCE VARIETY & GRAMMAR (X2) <i>Does student use a variety of sentence types?</i> <i>Is grammar correct?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses a variety of sentence types correctly -Use of grammar allows for expression of complex ideas -Few sentences are grammatically incorrect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses a variety of sentence types -Correct verb tense is usually used -Some sentences are still grammatically incorrect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Usually uses compound & complex sentences -Correct verb tense is used often -Fewer sentences are grammatically incorrect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sentences have a subject and verb -Correct verb tenses used some of the time -Many sentences are grammatically incorrect -Beginning to use simple past, present and future tenses correctly
<p>MECHANICS & FORMAT (X1) <i>Is there correct spelling, punctuation & capitalization?</i> <i>Does student use proper formatting?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses correct spelling and capitalization -Correctly cites titles and uses quotation marks -Consistently employs proper usage of commas, semi colons, quotation marks and capitalization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consistently uses correct spelling and capitalization -Often employs proper usage of commas, semi colons, quotation marks and capitalization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Usually uses correct spelling, and capitalization -Attempts to utilize quotation marks, commas, semi-colons, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes uses correct spelling, punctuation and capitalization -Sometimes uses correct capitalization & end-of-sentence punctuation -Does not use proper formatting.
<p>VOCABULARY (X1) <i>Does use of precise vocabulary express student's ideas? Are there phrasal verbs/idiomatic expression?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Demonstrates varied word choice -Consistently uses academic language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Often uses precise diction and academic vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sometimes uses precise diction and academic vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses simplistic vocabulary

Can electric cars make a go of it?

Will car companies sell electric cars in the future? Many people think that electric cars make less pollution because they don't use fuel. Others would disagree because they have to charge the car for a long time..

PH Many people like the electric car because it doesn't use gas. But a thing that people hate is that they have to charge the car for while. They would love an electric car because it only uses energy.

PH One thing that people that don't have a job that doesn't gives them a good profit is that the plug costs \$40,000. One thing that people love it is because it travels 15 to 100 miles. The bad thing is that every 100 miles you must charge the car.

One good thing is that it causes less pollution in the world. But one bad thing is that the electric car is limited for traveling. One good thing is that you can charge it at home or you can charge it at work.

Conc. In my opinion I think that the electric car wouldn't make a go for it at all because it doesn't travel for long. People need cars that don't cause pollution but that they can travel for a long distance too. I think that companies should make cars that can do all of this.

Growing Up Digital

Many people in high school use their phones while they're in class. Students don't see how difficult its going to be if they don't concentrate while they are in class and using their phones. The purpose of this essay is to describe the positive aspects and negative aspects of growing up digital. *Good thesis!*

You might want to include other digital devices like iPads because your argument focuses on digital devices, not just phones

The positive aspects of growing up with digital age are more things get done faster. Students get their homework done faster. However, they don't learn anything their just listening to what the internet says or what they watch in you tube . Instead of doing their projects or reading books on their own they use the internet to get information from there and get a good grade.

so does technology make things faster?

Is this a positive aspect? Your information should support your topic sentence!

Another example of positive aspects of growing up digital are www.ndvt.com/article/technology/growin-up-digitaliwired-for-distractions67640 . "With powerful new cell phones , the interactive experience can go everywhere. Between classes at Woodside or at lunch , when use of personal devices is permitted , students gather in clusters sometimes chatting face to face , sometimes half-involved while texting." technology is more advanced we have cell phones that have internet on it and they are much smaller they are easier to be carried around that's why many

Incomplete sentence

? Citation comes at the end of the sentence

run-on explain how this is beneficial!

teenagers like this new centaur. Back then there wasn't any cell phones or computers like my parents told me they don't have any of the stuff we have now.

didn't

more specific word:

when?

were't

The negative aspects of growing up with digital age are so many that its hard to explain because many students get addicted to their phones, ipods , computer, and facebook. The bad things about all this are damage of brain and we cant focus while we are doing school work. Many teenagers spend their time texting or in the computer instead of doing their homework. In the some way their parents need their children to communicate with them so they give them phones but what parents don't see is that their children get distracted while they are doing school work. Doctors say that its good to use technology but at the same time bad because we are not using our brain as we are supposed to be using it. We don't sleep the hours that we have to sleep because we are in our phones or in facebook.

cite? where did you get it?

explain!

good!

Students in many schools say that while there are doing homework they have to stop doing it because they got a text from their friends and they stop doing homework to respond to them and they forget to do their homework and they end up Failing their homework for not completing it. We have to decide what we want to do if we want to do well in school. Text or continue with homework witch one is more important for you?

excellent!

I think that ^{who?} growing up in digital age is good but at the same time bad because you are destroying your brain and life. Because they are copying from the internet they are not using their knowledge they aren't learning anything they are just copying other people work. What many parents should try to do is tell their kids not to spend many hours using their phones or computers . Tell them to read a book in front of them and ask them what the book is about so they can know if they are learning or not . How can we help teenager focus on school if they have a cell phone ?

Source cited

Matt Richtel , New York times , Updated November 21 , 2010 12:47 IST www.ndvt.com/article/technology/growin-up-digitaliwired-for-distractions67640

You definitely present both sides of the argument. Well done!
Remember that if your topic sentence focuses on the positive aspects of growing up digital, that paragraph should talk about the positives. Excellent P focused on the negatives! When you include a quote to make a point, explain how the quote proves your point.

Ms. Franze

Recommended Resources

As detailed in the introduction, the following recommendations represent two of the foundational articles that guided the conception and creation of the Writing Assignment Framework and Overview. We selected these readings as ones that are particularly useful in professional development.

Wehlage, Gary G., Fred M. Newmann, and Walter G. Secada. 1996. "Standards for Authentic Achievement and Pedagogy." Chap. 1 in *Authentic Achievement: Restructuring Schools for Intellectual Quality*, edited by Fred Newmann and Associates. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

White, Edward M. 2007. "Writing Assignments and Essay Topics." Chap. 1 in *Assigning, Responding, Evaluating: A Writing Teacher's Guide*. Boston/New York: Bedford/St. Martins.