

# College Writing

This lesson has been based on the section "College Writing" found in the booklet *The Next Level: What Colleges Expect from Your Writing*.

## Learning Goals

The student will:

- Read and comprehend the overview of college writing in Part 1 of *The Next Level*
- Employ and enhance note-taking practices
- Develop and reinforce inquiry skills
- Discover collegiate and professional writing requirements
- Develop a checklist of steps and strategies for writing an informative essay
- Review and practice process writing
- Write an informative essay

## Learning Activity

- Working individually, students should read and take notes covering Part 1: College Writing on pages 2-11. They should paraphrase most of the information using direct quotations sparingly and with purpose with proper documentation of page number in parentheses.
- To check that students have completed the note taking step successfully, the teacher may wish to give a quiz over the information allowing the students to use the notes they completed.
- Teachers should then instruct students to locate similar information from the newest edition of an MLA Handbook for correct formatting information. For example using the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Handbook, students will look up information on writing the thesis statement at 1.8.2, and the drafting process at 1.9.1-2.
- Introducing online writing labs would also be a good idea at this time (a list of online labs is printed at the back of *The Next Level* booklet).

## Process Writing Activity

- Students will develop informative essays from their notes. The teacher should define the audience as fellow students entering college and the purpose to inform the audience of the proper techniques for writing for college. (This should not become a persuasive essay.)
- Working individually, students:
  - ✓ Generate a list of ideas by brainstorming
  - ✓ Sort ideas into like categories to discover the main ideas and the connections between ideas
  - ✓ Draft a tentative thesis statement based on the information from note-taking exercise above, probable main topics, and the perspective and supporting commentaries discovered in brainstorming
  - ✓ Add to brainstorming ideas and categories as needed for developing the informative essay
  - ✓ Develop a brief but thorough organization graphic or outline to include—
    - ❖ The thesis statement
    - ❖ Topic sentence for each paragraph
    - ❖ Supporting sentences for each topic sentence
    - ❖ Words and phrases to indicate further details, evidence, or supportive commentary
  - ✓ Check with partner or group for understanding, ideas, and reactions and modify plan as needed
  - ✓ Follow the outline or organizer to draft the informative essay with an emphasis on active voice
- As a class, create a **checklist** of important informative writing steps to use in reviewing the essay.
- Students ask two other peers to review the essay using the checklist as a rubric.
  - ✓ Peer editors should be encouraged to be frank. Revision gives the writer the chance to rethink or re-envision the thesis, supporting evidence, organization, appropriateness of voice in engaging the defined audience, or success of purpose.
  - ✓ Peer editors make notes and corrections in color on the original draft or on post-it notes.
- Students write the second draft, focusing on peers' recommendations, voice, organization, topic sentences, transitions between paragraphs

- and ideas, evidence for points made, conventions of language, and sentence structure.
- In groups of 3-5, students participate in an editing activity such as clocking, so that each essay is examined and edited for voice, vivid images, organization, topic sentences, transitions between paragraphs and ideas, evidence for points made, conventions of language, and sentence structure.
  - Students write the final draft of the informative essay, integrating results of final peer edit and reviewing previously produced checklist.
  - Each student reviews the writing process and generates a list of important strategies for his or her own process writing.
  - Teacher can choose either to grade this first writing, or simply read and comment. The students should keep this first writing in their portfolios to re-visit at the end of the year to chart their progress as writers throughout their senior year.

TEKS Objectives: Writing: 1 B, C, E, F; 2 A-F, H; 3 A, D; 4 B, E; 5 A; 6 A, C  
Reading: 8 D-I; 13 A, B, D; 14 A, C E  
Listening: 15 D, E; 16 C, E, F