

Teacher Notes

This six week unit was designed to meet all of the Common Core opinion writing standards. By the end of this unit, all students should take at least one piece of writing through the entire writing process and formally publish that piece of writing. I've added a variety of writing craft and organization lessons within this unit. There are many other important writing craft lessons that are introduced in my other writing units. You certainly do not have to follow these lessons in the exact order that they are written and may want to spend multiple days on one lesson or rearrange some of the mini lessons. No one knows your students' instructional needs better than you! However, the early lessons were designed to help build students' writing stamina by having extended mini lessons and shorter independent writing time.

The mini lessons were designed to be an approximately 10-15 minute lesson that intentionally teaches a particular writing craft or skill. I've included a script of what I might say to my students when I was teaching the mini lesson, as well as additional teaching notes. I often use a picture book as a mentor text within the mini lesson.

You can follow each mini lesson with additional guided practice, but that is completely optional. I personally like to give my students that additional assistance before having them try those strategies independently. The guided practice can also be complete in guided writing groups for students who need the extra practice. In a few of the lessons, I have included multiple forms of the guided practice, so you can choose the form that best fits the needs of your students.

Independent writing time should take up the majority of time in the writing workshop. I allow my students to move around in the writing process as needed, rather than trying to require them to follow the writing process in a linear manner. After students have three completed first drafts, I have students select one of the opinion papers to take through the entire writing process to be published and shared at an author's tea.

***It's completely up to you to decide if, and how much, research your students need to conduct for their persuasive writing. Since I included research in the informational writing unit, I did not include it again in this opinion unit. If you wish to add it, you can just squeeze those lessons in wherever they best fit for you!

Almost all research on writing workshop strongly recommends that students should select their own topics and be allowed to work at their own pace. I completely agree with that philosophy, and the majority of the time I do have my students choose their own topics and work through the writing process at their own pace. However, this unit is many of my students' first experience with informational writing, so I do approach informational writing a little different than I approach narrative writing. I limit my students' topics to items that students can write about with limited research. I don't feel that my students are ready to take on an entire research project at this point in the year. Instead, I have them choose a topic they may already know a little about. For instance, if we've already studied habitats in science, I'll have my students choose an animal that we've already learned about. I also help my students select topics that aren't too broad or too narrow to write about. I also do a lot of extra modeling for my students, because I feel they need this extra scaffolding.

There is also a grammar tie-in for each lesson. I like to focus on one grammar skill each week, and spend a few minutes each day focusing on that skill. I prefer to set aside a few minutes before and after our traditional writing workshop time to focus on these grammar skills. Beginning on week two, these grammar skills are partially taught through mentor sentences that can be displayed for students to identify what is right or wrong about the sentence. These are not "fix all" sentences with a variety of errors. Instead, each sentence will reflect the grammar concept of the week. A collection of mentor sentences are included on pages 67-91 and are labeled to correlate with each lesson. Have students analyze these sentences and discuss what is right or wrong with the sentences and why. Be sure to use the formal language of the standards and relay that you expect to see these rules applied in student writing.

At the end of the unit, I've included a rubric to formally assess student writing. I do not give a grade using the rubric until the end of the unit, because I want to be sure I have taught each element the student will be graded on before I formally assess. However, it is very important to informally assess student writing throughout the unit.

The last day of the unit is an author's celebration. This celebration will be a chance for students to showcase their work to others. Students will create invitations to send home to their parents or other family members, other teachers or administrators. This will be your students' opportunity to show off all of their hard work. I've included this celebration on the last day (day 30) of the unit, but the timing of this celebration will depend on your classroom needs.

Suggested Mentor Texts

Opinion Writing

Titles Suggested in Mini Lessons

- Animals Nobody Loves Seymore Simon
- Click Clack Moo by Doreen Cronin
- Dear Mr. Blueberry by Simon James
- Earrings by Judith Viorst
- Hey, Little Ant by Phillip Hoose
- I Wanna an Iguana by Karen Orloff
- LaRue for Mayor by Mark Teague
- My Brother Dan's Delicious by Steven Layne
- Should There Be Zoos by Tony Snead
- Thank You Sarah, The Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving by Laurie Anderson
- The Great Kapok Tree by Lynne Cherry
- The Perfect Pet by Margie Palatini
- The Salamander Room by Anne Mazer
- Williams Doll by Charlotte Zolotow

Unit at a Glance

Week 1	Day 1 What is Opinion writing?	Day 2 Looking at Different Formats	Day 3 Writing Advertisements	Day 4 Analyzing Book Reviews	Day 5 Writing Book Reviews
Week 2	6 Generating Topics	7 Writing a Friendly Letter	8 Point of View	9 Thinking About Audience	10 Creating a Pro/Con List
Week 3	11 Using a Graphic Organizer	12 Writing an Introduction	13 Organizing Paragraphs	14 Fact vs. Opinion	15 Writing a Conclusion
Week 4	16 Adding Examples	17 Adding Anecdotes	18 Adding Statistics	19 Counter Arguments	20 Using Precise Words
Week 5	21 Removing Unnecessary Words	22 Adding Transition Words	23 Sentence Variety	24 Revision Checklist	25 Consistent Verb Tense
Week 6	26 Punctuation Takes a Vacation	27 Editing Checklist	28 Publishing Your Writing	29 Prepare to Share	30 Sharing Day

Day 2: Looking at Different Formats

Materials:

- Formats of Opinion Writing recording sheet
- Completed Opinion Writing Scavenger Hunt recording sheets

Standard:

Text Types and Purposes 1
Production and Distribution of Writing 4

Mini Lesson: In the previous lesson, students began to explore different types of opinion writing. Today, students will identify different forms of opinion writing and determine the purpose of each of the forms.

Yesterday, everyone found examples of opinion writing. Were all of the opinion pieces the same or were they different? Give students the opportunity to discuss some of the different types of opinion writing they discovered. Guide the discussion into pointing out four types of opinion writing: advertisements,

DETAILED LESSON PLANS

book product reviews, editorials (opinion pieces), and opinion essays. Help them explore that opinion writing can take many different forms and that the purpose of writing will determine which form is appropriate for the piece.

I want everyone to look at yesterday's scavenger hunt. Today, you are going to work together to determine the type of opinion for each of the examples you found. Be sure to refer to the original text if you need help remembering the basis of the text.

Independent Writing: Have students work in small groups to determine which category their examples of opinion writing belong in on the paper. Students should record their answers on the Forms of Opinion Writing recording sheet.

Sharing: Since students have not had the opportunity to spend much time writing, allow two or three students to share their responses on the Forms of Persuasive Writing recording sheet.

Optional Handout/Printable:

The image shows a recording sheet titled "Forms of Opinion Writing RECORDING SHEET". At the top right, there is a "Date" field. The main body of the sheet is a large rectangle divided into four quadrants by a central box. The quadrants are labeled: "Advertisement" (top-left), "Editorial/Opinion" (bottom-left), "Book Product Review" (bottom-right), and "Opinion Essay" (top-right). The central box is labeled "Form". The entire sheet is enclosed in a decorative border.

Grammar Tie-in: Adverbs

- Mentor Sentence 2

Share with students that many adverbs tell how. For example, think about how many different ways you can walk.

Name _____

Date _____

Forms of Opinion Writing

RECORDING SHEET

Advertisements

Reviews

PRINTABLES

Other

Editorials/Letters

Essays/Books

Day 12: Writing an Introduction

Materials:

- Writing Introductions practice sheet

Standard:

Text Types and Purposes I

Production and Distribution of Writing 4

Mini Lesson: As students begin to write their persuasive essays, they need to learn to begin their essays with an introductory paragraph. The format for a persuasive introduction is very similar to an informational introduction, so this may be somewhat of a review for students. I've combined writing leads and topic sentences into one lesson rather than breaking it into two days. If you feel that your students will need significant practice, you can split the lesson into two days.

Just like in informational writing, you should begin your persuasive essays with an introductory paragraph. The first sentence of your introduction must be a lead sentence that will grab your readers' attention. There are three basic ways to write a lead sentence in persuasive writing: ask a question, try writing a description, or to give an interesting fact. After your lead, you should then write your topic sentence. This is when you state your position on a subject in a clear and precise way. Pass out the practice sheet, graph, calculator and discuss the top section with students. Have them write the different lead for the topic of 'Why is P.E. important?' Give students the opportunity to write an introductory paragraph on the two topics on the recording sheet. Ask students to share what they've written and guide them into making changes as necessary.

GRAMMAR TIE IN FOR EACH LESSON

Independent Writing: Once students feel comfortable writing their own introductions, they can begin writing the first paragraph to the persuasive essay. If students are comfortable with the format, they can continue writing the next paragraphs of their persuasive essays.

Sharing: Allow a few students to share their introduction paragraphs. Have the class make constructive comments and ask questions about the introductions. Allow students to ask their classmates for advice in how to improve their writing.

Optional Handout/Printable:

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Writing Introductions

WHY IS P.E. IMPORTANT?

Leads	Topic Sentences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question: What is something that could make children healthier and perform better in the classroom?• Description: Explain that your school has a gym and that you should go to it every day. Ask students how often they go outside and playing.• Interesting fact: It helps to develop your brain and spend less than one hour to learn to read and only spend one hour to learn to read and only spend one hour to learn to read.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on single topic: One reason I am happy.• Reveal your opinion on the subject: It is important that children participate in PE, even when they feel tired or healthy and do not have the classroom.

What is one basic sentence for each of the leads given?
Should children play sports every day?

What is one basic sentence for each of the topic sentences?
Should schools require PE every day to make it fun?

Grammar Tie-in: Pronouns

- Mentor Sentence 12

Share with students that some pronouns are personal pronouns. Personal pronouns are used differently depending on what part of the sentence the pronoun is in.

Subject Pronouns: I, you, he, she, it, we, they and who.

Name _____

Date _____

Writing Introductions

WHY IS P.E. IMPORTANT?

Leads

- Question-What is something that could make children healthier and perform better in the classroom?
- Description-Imagine that you're sitting at your desk and can barely sit still. All you can think about is going outside for a break.
- Interesting fact-Hard to believe that some children spend less than one hour a week involved in any physical activity.

Topic Sentence

- Focus on a single topic
- Gives specific information
- Reveals your opinion on the subject

It is important that all children participate in P.E. because it helps them be healthy and active in the classroom.

VARIETY OF GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Write a lead and topic sentence for each of the topics below.

Should children play team sports?

Should schools eliminate field trips to save money?

Mentor Sentence 1

He ran quickly after the baseball.

MENTOR SENTENCES

Mentor Sentence 2

The little baby slept
soundly in his crib.

Thank YOU!

I hope that you and your students enjoy this opinion writing unit! If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email me at ashleigh_60@hotmail.com. I'll try and respond asap. If you like this product, you may want to check out some of the other items in my [TpT store](#), where I have many other math units, work station ideas, and more! You can also visit my blog for lots of ideas and free printables.



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