

The Immersion Excursion

Examples of Lessons and Ideas to Help
Students Travel through a Text Type

Unit #4 Grade 4
Opinion Writing - Literary Essay



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BACKGROUND SECTION

The purpose of these lessons is to provide a sense of possibilities for teachers. “Shop around” for ideas to share with students. Pick and choose lessons based on teacher background knowledge and students’ background knowledge and interests. These lessons serve as exemplars for how the study of Immersion might go. Teachers urged (really begged) me to craft lessons to guide newcomers on various ways to explore a text type and mentor texts. The intent is not to simplify the process into formulaic lessons. Instead, these represent samples of possible activities a teacher might include during an Immersion Phase. Immersion is inquiry-based – discussion should revolve around what students notice and want to discuss. Therefore, modify, adjust, delete, and add lessons based on the background knowledge and needs of your students. An On-Demand performance assessment is an excellent vehicle to determine what students know and need to learn.

*Good luck being a tour guide for your students as they explore various text types and books. The act of writing opens hearts and minds ---
Dr. Sandy Biondo*

Purpose of Immersion

The purpose of the Immersion Phase is to help students develop a thorough understanding of the text type they will be writing. Immersion will help students to create a vision of how their own texts may be written and possible items to include. The goal is to move students from *explorers* of the text type to *writers* of it. Through studying mentor texts, students will develop a greater understanding of:

- A. Definition and Purpose (What is xxx? Why do people read xxx? Why do people write xxx?)
- B. Characteristics (What makes an effective xxx?)
- C. How these texts tend to go?
 1. How does the beginning or introduction tend to go? What is included?
 2. How does the middle part or body tend to go? What is included?
 3. How does the ending or conclusion tend to go? What is included?

4. Author craftsmanship specific to that text type (e.g. narrative: character, plot, heart of the story, details as internal thinking, setting, character action, physical description, dialogue, etc.; information: text structures, text features such as captions, headings, bold face, etc.; details as numbers, names, examples, partner sentences, topic specific words, etc.; opinion – claim, reasons, supporting details as facts, quotes, micro-stories with a slant, interview information, surveys, etc.)

Webster’s dictionary defines a mentor as: “a close, trusted, and experienced counselor or guide” - which perfectly describes the relationship we want our students to have with mentor texts.

Reading Like a Reader, Reading Like a Writer

It is important that students have multiple experiences with a piece or book. Time should be devoted to them first *reading like a reader* – read, enjoy, and discuss. Then, pieces will be *reread* in part or whole through “writerly eyes.” Students will now *read like a writer*. Selections will be *reread* to notice, name, and discuss how and why an author structured things in a particular way or selected specific words. Students will come to learn that authors “intentionally” craft words and text in certain ways to share information and create different types of meaning. Ultimately, reading like a writer means to read with a sense of possibility – *What did this author do that I could try?* Subsequently, teachers want students to use mentor texts as resources for when they write.

Inquiry Approach Versus Architecture of a Mini-Lesson

Immersion lessons typically follow an inquiry approach; therefore, they are open-ended and idiosyncratic to the group. They will not follow the typical architecture of a mini-lesson (e.g. connection, teach, active engagement, link and share). Teachers may not have specific lessons for this phase, but instead have general areas of study (e.g. background - definition, purpose, characteristics, how texts tend to go, writing ideas, class shared draft, etc.). Teachers should follow the lead of their students -- notice, restate, negotiate what they say in order to bring meaning and understanding. This is a time for students to notice the characteristics and purposes of a text type. Teachers are assisting students in moving from → EXPLORERS of the text type to WRITERS of the text type.

Text Selection

Text selection should include published work (e.g. literature books, articles), student authored work, and teacher authored work. Texts should exemplify the various components that a well written text at that grade level would include. See resource packet per unit for criteria for mentor text selection and possible titles. Additionally, teachers may check out the following resources for possible mentor text: literature/trade book lists for that text type and grade level, websites that include student and teacher-authored work, selections from Reading and Writing Project from Teachers College (www.readingandwritingproject.com), professional resources and recommendations from noted researchers (e.g. Katie Wood Ray, Lucy Calkins, Ralph Fletcher, Tony Stead, etc.), collections from the MAISA website, your district or local intermediate school district, etc.

Tip: When planning, jot notes on what the text has to offer so it can be used as a “cheat sheet.” Affix these notes on the back of the text. Select different texts for different reasons. Variety is the key. Don’t select books/texts that all look and sound the same and have the same features.

Make a list of text that can be shared beyond Immersion sessions. Include these selections during shared reading or read alouds during the entire unit of study.

Where to Find More Information on Immersion

Prior to studying these lessons, it is highly recommended teachers read the supplemental resources on Atlas: [Immersion Phase: Creating a Vision for Writing, Part 1 – Background Information and Part 2 – Grade Level Appendices.](#)

A special thank you to Jennifer Creamer (Lamphere School District), Michelle Charron (Lamphere School District), Nancie Jahshan (Farmington School District) and Michelle Jacobs (Clarenceville School District) for helping with this packet.

Planning Tool for Selection of Mentor Text – Grade 4

See MAISA Unit Resource Packet for the following item: **Suggested Mentor Texts and Criteria - Literary Essay Text Selection**. Teachers should add or replace with student, teacher, and class shared pieces from the teacher’s or school’s collection.

Session #	Text Information	Sample in Packet (replace with resources from teacher collection)	Sample from Teacher’s Collection
1	Persuasive Essay – teacher demonstration portion	<i>“Kids Need Morning Snacks”</i>	
1	Persuasive Essay – partnership work portion (box it/mark it)	<i>Insert one from your class</i>	
2	Literary Essay #1	Name: <i>“Be Proud Of Who You Are”</i> Support: Reasons Evidence: quotations, examples	Name: Support: Evidence:
<p>For sessions 3 and 4, select a variety of essays that have the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. various support types: reasons, time when, way (introduced in 4th grade), One Character/Another Character (introduced in 5th grade), Beginning/End (introduced in 5th grade) B. various types of evidence: examples from text, micro-stories, quotations or citing text, lists with repetition (introduced in 4th grade), literary devices, (introduced in 5th grade), missing details (introduced in 5th grade) <p>Each of these items should be in one or more of the sample essays. Study your collection to be sure to have an even greater variety than what is included in this packet.</p>			
3 and 4	Literary Essay #2 Noticing Activity	Name: <i>“Taco Head”</i> Support: Times When Evidence: examples, quotes,	Name: Support: Evidence:

Session #	Text Information	Sample in Packet (replace with resources from teacher collection)	Sample from Teacher's Collection
3 and 4	Literary Essay #3 Noticing Activity	Name: " <i>Most Caring Person</i> " Support: Times When Evidence: examples, list with repetition, micro-story	Name: Support: Evidence:
4	Literary Essay #4 Noticing Activity	Name: " <i>Miss Marble</i> " Support: Ways Evidence: examples, quotations, citing text	Name: Support: Evidence:
4	Literary Essay #_____ Box It and Mark It Activity (class activity)	Name: Revisit an essay previously studied	
4	Literary Essay #5 Box It and Mark It Activity - partner activity	Name: " <i>Follow Your Dreams</i> " Support: Reasons Evidence: quotations, examples	Name: Support: Evidence:
5	Reading Selection for Literary Essay : _____	<i>Spaghetti</i> by Cynthia Rylant	

LESSON PLAN SECTION

Three Basic Goals of Immersion (simplifying a complex process)

Goal 1 – Develop Background Knowledge

Goal 2 – Generate Possible Writing Ideas

Goal 3 – Try It – Shared Class Writing – Begin a Class “Flash” Draft

SAMPLE WEEK OF IMMERSION LESSONS

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Day 1 | Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge
Revisit an Old Friend – Persuasive Essays |
| Day 2 | Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge
Compare and Contrast Literary Essays and Persuasive Essays |
| Day 3 | Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge
Charting Discoveries – Noticing Chart |
| Day 4 | Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge
Continue Charting Discoveries – Noticing Chart
Box It and Mark It Activity |
| Day 5 | Goal #3: Try It – Shared Class Writing – Begin a Class “Flash” Draft
Write a Flash Draft based on literature selection studied as a class. |

Please note: Goal #2 – Generate Possible Writing Ideas is done during Reading Workshop. See MAISA unit for further explanation.

IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

Day 1 - Revisit an Old Friend: Persuasive Essay

1. **Class Discussion - What do you recall about how persuasive essays tend to go? What do you remember about the introduction/lead, body, ending, author’s craftsmanship?**
 - A. **Make a list on your own**
 - B. **Share your list with a partner**
 - C. **Discuss as a whole class**

2. **Box It and Mark It – student or teacher persuasive essays**
 - A. **Teacher models Boxing and Marking Up a persuasive essay.**
Sample: “Kids Need Morning Snack”
 List persuasive essay plan to study: _____

 - B. **In partnerships, have students Box and Mark Up a persuasive essay.**
Sample: Insert one from your class
 List persuasive essay plan to study: _____

 - C. **Revisit Class Discussion - What do you recall about how persuasive essays tend to go? What do you remember about the introduction/lead, body, ending, author’s craftsmanship?**

Teacher Notes:

- **The Characteristics of Persuasive Essay chart from Unit #2 may be helpful in facilitating discussion.**
- **Replace sample essays in this packet with ones from your school – student written, teacher written or class shared essays**
- **See Box It and Mark It activity page – modify sheet to reflect what was studied in your class for Unit #2 Persuasive Essays**

IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge**Box It and Mark It Up Activity Sheet – Persuasive Essay**

1. **Box It: Lead, Body, Ending/Conclusion**
2. **Mark Up these items:**

Introduction/Lead

- A. Hook the reader - lead
- B. Claim that overviews the main idea of the essay (double underline)
- C. Reasons (circle each one separately) – optional

Body – do for each paragraph in the body

- A. Transition word or phrase
- B. Topic sentence of the paragraph that gives a reason (underline)
- C. Supporting information or evidence (e.g. facts, personal story or micro-story with a slant, survey and interviews, quotes – everyday people or experts, my own knowledge, etc.)
- D. Concluding statement (optional)

Ending /Conclusion

- A. Restatement of the claim (double underline)
- B. A final thought, action, question, etc.

This chart is from Unit #2 Persuasive Essay

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSUASIVE ESSAYS

A persuasive essay is one in which the writer shares his/her opinion with others to assist them in making an informed decision.

Noticings:

- Author gives opinion (strong feeling) about a topic
- Opinion is called a claim because it can be supported by reasons and evidence
- Author backs up opinion with reasons and evidence
- Facts are given a lot about opinion
- Structure/Organization – Beginning (introduction), middle (body) and ending (conclusion)
- Introduction – hooks reader. Here’s different ways - ... list
- Introduction – states claim and sometimes gives reasons
- Body – includes reasons and evidence to support those reasons
- Types of evidence:
 - Facts
 - Personal stories (micro-stories with a slant)
 - Surveys
 - Interview information
 - Quotes from experts
 - Quotes from everyday people
- Usually there are at least 2 reasons
- Conclusion – restates claim in a different way / urges reader to do something
- Conclusion – different types we noticed:
 - list
- Title - gives a sneak preview of the author’s opinion
- Sometimes the writer signaled a new reason with transition words
transition words we noticed:
 - list
- Paragraphs
- No pictures or only one
- Use of persuasive vocabulary – samples: it is imp, people should, this needs to be dealt with, best, deserves, necessary...
- Convincing tone
- Sources listed (sometimes)

And other aspects as noticed

IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

Day 2 - Compare and Contrast a Literary Essay and a Persuasive Essay

A. Show students a literary essay. Read and study.

Sample: "Be Proud of Who You Are" (literary essay #1)

list essay plan to study: _____

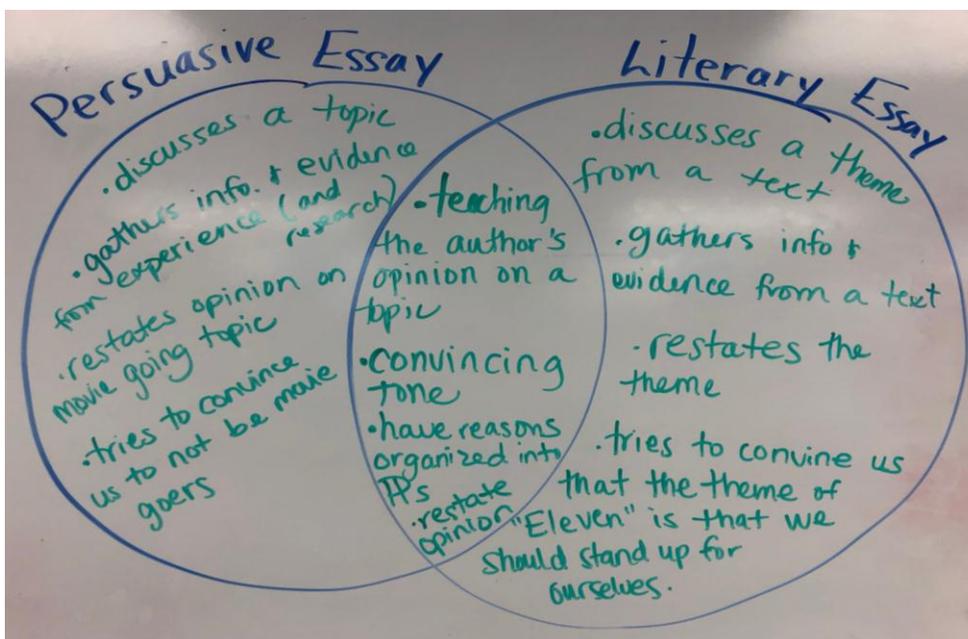
B. How is this literary essay the same or different from a persuasive essay?

<u>Persuasive Essay</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Literary Essay</u>
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Teacher Notes:

- The Characteristics of Literary Essay chart from Unit #4 may be helpful in facilitating discussion.
- Replace sample essays in this packet with ones from your school – student written, teacher written or class shared essays
- To compare and contrast, use a Venn diagram, 3 column chart, or other means to show how they are the same or different

Opinion Writing		
Persuasive	Both 	Literary
about a topic I care about or something I want to change	Purpose Share strong feelings, opinion	about a book or short story (something I have read)
	Introduction Hook reader Claim	Introduce book background/summary
3 reasons evidence: Survey interview	Transitions Body Reasons with evidence non-stay craft	2 reasons evidence: quotes
	Ending/ Conclusion Restate claim	



IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

Day 3 and 4 - Charting Discoveries – Noticing Chart

Sample - Read, Study and Discuss: Literary Essay #2 “Taco Head”

Sample - Read, Study and Discuss: Literary Essay #3 - “Most Caring Person”

Read, Study and Discuss: List essay - _____

Read, Study and Discuss: List essay - _____

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

1. Both are called literary essays. Why? Begin discussion on defining what a literary essay is.
2. Define and begin establishing the purpose for reading and writing literary essays.
Why do you think someone would read a text like this?
Why do you think someone would write a text like this?
3. Start discussing and charting *NOTICINGS* of literary essays (if there is time on Day 3).
 - A. See next few pages for ideas how to facilitate discussion of Noticings.
Remember it should be open-ended and student directed.
 - B. Teacher should select format for recording of information.*
Ways to Record Noticings:
 - Option A: Open-Ended Listing Chart
 - Option B-1: Noticing Chart with Columns
 - Option B-2: Noticing Chart with Advanced Columns
 - Option C: Noticing Chart with Visuals or Examples
 - Option D: Mark Up or Sticky Note Text

*See Immersion packet for more explanation and examples.

Teacher Notes:

- The Characteristics of Literary Essay chart from Unit #4 may be helpful in facilitating discussion. See sample at the end of this lesson
- Replace sample essays in this packet with ones from your school – student written, teacher written or class shared essays

Begin discussion on Day 3 of the following items (modify based on time available):

HOW LITERARY ESSAYS TENDS TO GO -- BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END

- Let's look for *patterns* of how literary essays tend to go. What do you notice tends to be included in the beginning or lead section? What is often included in the middle section or body? How do endings/conclusions tend to go?
- Not all literary essays will have the same things, so study several different literary essays to note possibilities for each component.

What Makes a Literary Essay?

(varies by grade level – see specific unit)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ○ Hook Reader | Beginning / introduction/lead |
| ○ State Claim | |
| ○ Other noticings - | |
| ○ Supports – types as reasons, etc. | Middle / body |
| ○ Provides evidence for supports | |
| ○ Concluding section/statements | |
| ○ Restate Claim | Ending |

Goal #1: Develop Background Knowledge

Day 4 Part 1 - Charting Discoveries – Noticing Chart Continued

1. Revisit definition and purpose.
2. Review how Literary Essays tends to go – introduction/lead, body and ending
3. Discuss – Notice, Name, and Why of lead/introduction, body, ending elements
4. *Sample - Read, Study and Discuss: Literary Essay #4 – “Miss Marble”*
 Read, Study and Discuss: List essay - _____
5. In partnerships, study the essay further and make a list of noticings.
 - A. Check if the new selection also has these same parts.
 - B. Look more closely at this essay (and any previous) and discuss additional noticings. Example: types of leads, types of endings, different ways the essays are organized (by supports), types of evidence, transitional words or phrases – how the essayist transitions from one support to the next, author’s craftsmanship, etc.
6. Discuss as a class.

Teacher Notes:

- Use Characteristics of Literary Essay chart in unit as a guide. See last page of this lesson for example.
- Also, use the modified version of Opinion teaching rubric and student checklist from Writing Pathways.

Sample Anchor chart - CHARACTERISTICS OF LITERARY ESSAYS – 4th Grade

A literary essay is one in which the writer shares his/her opinion with others on his/her interpretation of a literary piece of work.

Noticings:

- Author gives opinion about a text
- Opinion is often called the claim because it can be backed with reasons and evidence
- Author backs up claim with reasons and evidence
- Examples from the text are used to support the claim
- Structure/Organization – Beginning (introduction), middle (body) and ending (conclusion)
- Introduction – Starts with broad ideas and moves to state claim and sometimes give reasons
- Body – Includes reasons and evidence to support those reasons
- Types of evidence:
 - Micro-stories from text - angled story to make a point
 - Quotations from text – exact words of an author
 - Text examples - specific details from text in your own words
 - Lists/repetition
- Usually there are at least two or more reasons
- Conclusion – restates claim in a different way/ Connects to life /Leaves ideas to think about
- Writer signals a new reason with transition words that glue parts together
- Writer shift from reasons to giving evidence to make a point
- Paragraphs are used to organize the essay
- No pictures or only one
- Use of persuasive vocabulary – samples: It is important to see..., This story makes us think...
- Convincing tone
- Title of story or text included
- Character names and events

Please note: Teachers will spend several sessions reading and developing background knowledge of the text type under study. Students will add new learning to charts as the unit proceeds. All items will not be "discovered" or "noticed" during immersion. Use what they notice as a means of formative assessment. Teachers should not try and get students to notice everything that is listed on the sample charts in the units during immersion. Many of these sample charts are cumulative charts -- from Immersion as well as additional information students added as the unit progressed and they learned more. Periodically, revisit the chart/s throughout the unit and ask students if they would like to add something they've recently learned/discovered about that text type. Students may not give the category (e.g. structure, lead, ending, etc.) but the teacher can teach them the writing term for what they are describing. This helps students to notice the same characteristics across different text and text types, as well as builds writing discourse (academic vocabulary per Michigan Academic Standards).

Sample #2 from a classroom -**Literary Essay:**

A text that convinces the reader to think or feel a certain way about a book or story.

Purpose: To share your likes or dislikes and make a connection with a reader.

A Literary Essay has:

- An introduction with a hook and a claim statement (opinion statement)
- Three body paragraphs/reasons
- Each body paragraph is about one idea
- There is evidence like quotes, examples or stories
- Transition words at the beginning of the paragraph: In addition, Also, and Another
- Transition words before evidence: For example, Another example, One time, and For instance
- Wrap up at the end of a body paragraph: This shows that...or This proves...
- Conclusion that restates claim and tells the reader to take action or response
- The writer used a convincing tone by:
 - Asking questions- Do you realize...
 - Repeats words/phrases
 - Uses emotions
 - Using phrases like: You must...Why not...

IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

Day 4 Part 2: Box It and Mark It Up Activity – Literary Essay

Sample - Read, Study and Discuss: select an essay previously studied (class activity)

Sample - Read, Study and Discuss: Literary Essay #5 - "Follow Your Dreams" (partner activity)

Read, Study and Discuss: List essay - _____ (class activity)

Read, Study and Discuss: List essay - _____ (partner activity)

- Select a literary essay and as a class box it and mark it up.
- Provide students with a different literary essay and have them in partnerships box and mark it up.

1. Box It: Lead, Body, Ending/Conclusion

2. Mark Up these items:

Introduction/Lead

- A. Hook the reader – lead (try to name the type)
- B. Claim that overviews the main idea of the essay (double underline)
- C. Listing of Reasons (circle each one separately) - optional

Body* - the first of several paragraphs

*Do for each paragraph

- A. Transition word or phrase
- B. Topic sentence of the paragraph (underline)
- C. Supporting information or evidence (start making a list of types)
- D. Concluding statement (optional)

Ending /Conclusion

- A. Restatement of the claim (double underline)
- B. A final thought, comment, action, etc. (try to name the type)

Types of Evidence We Notice: (This may be a separate discussion/chart)

IMMERSION Goal #2 – Generate Writing Ideas

For literary essays, this will be done in tandem with the corresponding reading unit. Please see reading and writing units for specific lessons. See Writing Units - sessions 1 and 2.

IMMERSION Goal #3 –**Try It – Shared Class Writing – Begin a Class “Flash” Draft****Day 5 – Class Shared Essay on XXXXX****Background Information**

It is recommended that Shared Writing be included as part of a balanced literacy program. Shared Writing is defined as a process whereby the teacher acts as scribe for a group of children, with the emphasis being placed on the composing process and constructing a text that students can read and study later. It may take place during Immersion time and/or during a designated shared writing time. The piece that is co-constructed as a class will be revisited throughout the unit and revised. This piece will serve as a model. Therefore, it is not the intent to have this be a “polished” product, but rather a “rough” draft that has missing elements. Intentionally, don’t create a finished product. A ‘bare bones’ piece drafted quickly in a short period of time is just fine. Lucy Calkins often refers to this piece as a “flash” draft, meaning it was drafted quickly or in a “flash” to get a shared class piece started. Teachers scaffold students in writing the various parts.

Lucy Calkins advocates volume – having students write lots of drafts of whatever type of writing they are studying, even having students begin drafting during the Immersion Phase. During this phase, get students to write “flash” drafts – write quickly a draft knowing they can go back later and make them better. These early pieces help teachers to see where students are, thus enabling teachers to coach students along based on their needs. Students will be encouraged if not required to go back to earlier drafts and apply new learning. For example, after a teacher does a lesson on transitions, students would go back to earlier drafts and add (or revise) transition words and phrases.

Depending on the text type and form, a class shared flash draft may be completed in one setting or over the course of a few days. For longer text as an information piece, shared writing may occur over a period of days (e.g. day 1 – select topic and brainstorm subtopics, develop a table of contents, day 2 – introduction, day 3 – write 1st chapter, etc.) These parts may be done prior to the unit or in small groups once the unit has begun.

Class Shared Writing – Literary Essay

Teacher should choose a reading selection in which students are familiar with from their reading work. The following serves merely as an example. Modify to fit text under study and students' background knowledge and experience with literary essays. In other words, "bump up" to fit class needs. Please see Immersion Phase: Creating a Vision for Writing, Part 1 – Background Information for more information on Goal #3.

Example 1: Done in one setting with upper elementary students – Literary Essay

Goal is to draft a literary essay right away and through this activity begin to:

- A. Introduce the talk and language of literary essays
- B. Give prompts to scaffold each step

Literary Essay Activity based on *Spaghetti* by Cynthia Rylant

Part I: Read aloud story to the group – talk about it – read as a reader first

Part II: Jotting of ideas – Teacher guides students in jotting down some notes about these areas (replace based on reading work discussion areas). These jottings will be used for small group discussion.

1. Traits – List any traits that Gabriel embodied – Gabriel is _____.

Jot --- Example: lonely, searching for companionship

2. Change – Essays often show change of character throughout story.

How did Gabriel change?

Jot ---

3. Lessons Character Learned

What lessons did Gabriel learn by the end of the story?

Jot ---

4. Story Lesson or Story Theme – often connected to lessons learned are themes; Think in terms of problems in the story. Example: loneliness

What is story saying about _____? (Loneliness)

Jot ---

5. Author's Craft

How did this author write with craft?

What did the author do to convey meaning?

Jot ---

Part III: **Small Group Discussion** – discuss the above items with other classmates

Part IV: **Create a Class “Flash” Draft** (Teacher records on enlarged text.)

1. Have students jot down ideas about each of the areas in Part I.
2. Then select 1 area for the essay.

LEAD/INTRODUCTION – CLAIM (or opinion)
--

3. Example: trait Gabriel is lonely.
4. Say: *In the story, Spaghetti by Cynthia Rylant, the character Gabriel is lonely.*
5. Turn and talk to your partner and repeat exactly what I say:
In the story, Spaghetti by Cynthia Rylant, the character Gabriel is lonely.
6. Develop shared text together. Teacher writes the claim on enlarged text.

BODY – SUPPORT YOUR CLAIM/OPINION – GIVE REASONS
--

7. How was Gabriel lonely in the beginning of the story?

8. *"I heard you say he was lonely when... I heard you ..."*
9. Explain you have the introduction and now are working on the first body section – reason one.
10. *"One thing in the story that shows _____ is _____ is when _____."*
11. Turn and talk to your partner and repeat exactly what I say:
"One thing in the story that shows _____ is _____ is when _____."
12. How might we write that part? Develop shared text together.

ELABORATION OF REASONS

13. Now go back to the reason and elaborate on it.
14. Use prompts to guide thinking, such as: This is important because..., This is significant because..., etc.
15. Turn and talk to your partner and repeat exactly what I say:
"This is important because..."
16. Example: Sitting on step by himself is important because...
17. *How might we write that part?* Develop shared text together.

BODY - GIVE 2 nd REASON AND ELABORATE
--

18. Repeat with another reason: *"Another thing in the story that shows _____ is _____ is when _____."* Discuss next reason based on previous discussion.
19. Turn and talk to your partner and repeat exactly what I say:
"Another thing in the story that shows _____ is _____ is when _____."

20. *How might we write that part?* Develop shared text together.
21. Now go back to the reason and elaborate on it.
22. Use prompts to guide thinking, such as: This is important because..., This is significant because..., etc.
23. Turn and talk to your partner and repeat exactly what I say:
"This is significant because..."
24. Example: xxxxxx
25. *How might we write that part?* Develop shared text together.

ENDING PARAGRAPH

26. Briefly discuss purpose of an ending.
27. *"This shows that _____..."*
28. Develop shared text together.

Class “Flash” Draft sample

In the story, Spaghetti by Cynthia Rylant, the character Gabriel is lonely.

One thing in the story that shows _____ is _____ is when _____. This is important because...

Another thing in the story that shows _____ is _____ is when _____. This is significant because...

This shows that _____.

Note: In approximately 30-60 minutes, the class will develop a **“flash”** draft literary essay. This essay is not real sophisticated, but a nice canvas to teach into! After this activity, students will have written one literary essay (streamlined, but nonetheless an essay). Throughout the unit, the class/teacher may go back to this “flash” draft to expand and revise it.

APPENDIX OF SAMPLE MENTOR TEXTS

- **Please replace sample essays in this packet with ones from your school – student written, teacher written or class shared essays**

Persuasive Essay #1

Kids Need Morning Snacks

“Grrr” is the sound of hungry stomachs every morning at school. All students can think about is how hungry they are. This is why students absolutely must be allowed to have a morning snack. All students need a snack because four hours is too long to go without food, snacks fuel our brain for learning, and they can be healthy and quick.

First of all, kids need a morning snack because 8:00 am to 12:00 pm is too painfully long to go without food. Many kids don’t eat breakfast. I remember one time I woke up late and didn’t have time to eat my breakfast. By 9:30 I was starving, my stomach roared like a lion. Then at 10, I felt like I had needles stabbing my stomach. When it was 10:30, I got to the point where I felt dizzy and faint. If I had a morning snack, I could have had a pain free morning. According to kidshealth.org, “If the right foods are offered at the right times, snacks can play an important role in managing kids' hunger and boosting nutrition.” Students should be focused on learning, not their hunger pains.

Secondly, we need a morning snack because it is fuel for the brain. One time during writing I was so hungry I couldn’t think. I just sat there holding my pencil staring at a blank page in my notebook. I was totally zoned out. My brain was as blank as the page in front of me. According to the website www.livingstrong.com, “A snack at the right time between meals prevents major hunger pangs and gives your child an energy boost to keep them studying hard at school.” Many teachers in our building allow morning snacks. First grade teacher Mrs. Woodrow said, “I allow snacks each morning. I just don’t think their brains are at their best when they are hungry all morning.” If teachers cared about their student’s achievement then they must allow their students to have a morning snack.

I know what you might be thinking, kids bring unhealthy snacks and it takes too much time away from learning. After surveying the teachers at our school, we found that if the students and the teacher make a healthy snack list together then the kids do bring healthier brain food. Also, snacks are not going to interrupt the learning: it’s going to help it! Mrs. Woodrow has the students get their snacks during a break time when they are transitioning between subjects. She said that this does not disrupt the learning time. A morning snack can be quick and healthy.

In conclusion, we should have a morning snack because we are starving and our brains shut down. A healthy mid-morning snack will help us focus on learning, and not our growling stomachs! Start making that healthy snack list today!

Persuasive Essay #2 – Insert one of your class samples of a persuasive essay

Literary Essay #1

Be Proud Of Who You Are

By: Andrea

Everyone has differences. Sometimes those differences are the things that make you special. That's why you shouldn't be ashamed or embarrassed of yourself or who you are. In the story Dancing in the Wings by Debbie Allen, Sassy is a girl who begins to not feel confident about herself, but soon realizes that her long legs and big feet are her special gifts.

Early in the text, Sassy is proud of her legs and feet. She doesn't really care that she is different, so when her older brother Hughie teases her, she shot right back and was sassy. "At least I don't have that big forehead lookin' like a streetlamp," Sassy replied. Even at dance class when she was doing tendu at the bar, Miss Katherine walks down the line and trips on Sassy's long legs. Sassy didn't get embarrassed. Instead, she teased her teacher about her bad eyesight. This shows that she is confident and not the least bit embarrassed.

In the middle, Miss Katherine announces that Mr. DeBato will be coming to find young and talented dancers for the summer festival in Washington D.C. Sassy is excited. I think she is excited because she didn't think her legs and feet would get in the way. But as Sassy walks up to the sign-up sheet, Molly and Mona giggle. "Oh please, she'll never make it. They said talent, not a tyrannosaurus," says Mona. Right after Sassy hears this, she grabs her things and runs into the parking lot. This represents that Sassy starts to doubt herself because of her peers' negative words.

After Sassy sobs for a while, a familiar truck drives in. It's Uncle Redd. Sassy is not in the mood for his jokes but has a talk with him. Uncle Redd encourages Sassy by saying, "Listen gal, if I was as tall and pretty as you, I wouldn't need to wear red so people know it's me comin' and goin'. All you gotta do to make your mark on the world is to walk into a room." I agree with him. Sassy should be proud of herself because her differences are a gift.

After Sassy regains her confidence, she goes to the auditions the next day wearing a bright yellow leotard instead of black. She also shows-off her ballet moves and does better than the others. She does this to prove that she isn't ashamed of being herself again. At the end of class, Mr. DeBato calls Sassy over to him only to find out that she made it to the festival! "All you have to do to be noticed is to walk into a room. Dismissed," he says. I believe that Sassy should always be proud of her gifts, which are her legs and feet. Go Sassy!

At the end of the story, Sassy realizes that her differences are what make her special. Everyone has gifts, and you should be proud of them. They make you special, and that's why they matter. Don't think of your uniqueness as a disaster, but think of them as a gift.

Literary Essay #2 – See Atlas – literary essay teacher samples for a full page version

A Literary Essay
Based on the Short Story
"Taco Head" from The Tequila Worm By Viola Canales

In the short story, "Taco Head" by Viola Canales, a girl named Sofia wants to be like the other kids at school, but she is embarrassed because she is different. She likes who she is, but wants to fit in at school. Sofia learns an important lesson from Coach Clarke that above all, you need to believe in yourself.

One time Sofia learns to believe in herself is when Coach Clarke eats lunch with her in the cafeteria. For example, Sofia is very embarrassed and afraid to eat her taco lunch at school. She wants to eat school lunches or sandwiches on white bread. Kids at her school call Mexican Americans "beaners." When Sofia tries to hid her tacos, a girl notices her and starts yelling, "Taco Head, Taco Head!" Sofia wishes the ground would open up and swallow her. When Coach Clarke hears what is happening, she tells Sofia not to pay attention to them. She invites Sofia to eat lunch with her in the cafeteria. Coach Clarke shares her white bread sandwich, and Sofia realizes that her tacos taste better. In this way, Coach Clarke helps Sofia feel like she can believe in herself.

Another time Sofia learns to believe in herself is when Coach Clarke inspires Sofia to beat the bully with her brains. For example, Sofia already gets good grades at school, but she wants to study even harder. Coach Clarke arranges for Sofia to study in the library after lunch instead of going to the playground. Even though she wants to get back at the girl who teases her, Coach Clarke inspires Sofia to do it by using her brains instead. If she works hard and learns to be the best she can be, she will have the advantage. In this way, Sofia learns to believe in herself.

In conclusion, Sofia learns to believe in herself. Coach Clarke helps Sofia to realize that she can eat her lunch proudly and be the best student she can be, and she will be able to stand up for herself. Believing in yourself is important. In my life I want to be the kind of person who takes pride in who I am, who always reaches to do my best, and who believes in myself.

Literary Essay #3

The Most Caring Person

By Mrs. Cole's Class

In life, people want to be treated with respect and be cared for by their friends and family. Don't you want to surround yourself with people who are kind and caring? In the story "Slower Than the Rest," Leo is a character who is a slower learner in school but a very thoughtful person. Leo is a caring boy.

First, Leo shows he is caring when he rescues a turtle. One example of how Leo shows he cares in the story "Slower than the Rest" was when he rescues a turtle. His family is driving down the highway to church and Leo spots the turtle. He asks his father stop the car so he can get out and save the turtle from devastation. He didn't just sit there quietly and drive by the unexpected turtle who was in a dangerous situation. He could have just moved the turtle to the side of the road and then kept going. Another example of how Leo shows he cares is when he cares to take the turtle home. Leo cares to make a home for the turtle. Leo cares to spend time with the turtle. Leo cares to pick up the turtle. This shows that Leo cares for the turtle when he rescues it. Do you realize that not everyone would care enough to rescue an animal like Leo did? This shows that Leo is caring and he wants to save a turtle's life.

Also, Leo is caring when he takes care of the turtle's, happiness. For instance, as soon as Leo got home he found a cardboard box and put lettuce and radishes in the box. Then, he hugged and kissed the turtle to comfort it as if he was a best friend. Leo made sure Charlie felt loved and cared for. He didn't just put the turtle on the floor and let it wander around the house. You should show someone you care by keeping them safe. This shows that Leo is caring when he made a proper home for Charlie. If you have an animal, you must care for it and not just leave it lying around. Another example of how Leo took care of Charlie's happiness is when he would take Charlie out into the backyard and let him walk around and explore. This shows that Leo took care of Charlie's happiness.

Another way Leo shows he is caring is when he gives his report on forest fires. Leo cares because he knows what it is like to be alone, Leo cares because he knows what is like to be slow, and Leo cares because he knows every creature has potential. This is important because Leo can make connections to the animals who are slower and might get hurt in a forest fire. Leo cares to make sure everyone is safe.

In the story "Slower Than the Rest", Leo is a caring boy when he rescues a turtle, took care of the turtle, Charlie's happiness, and he did a report on forest fires. Leo stopped his family and demanded that they pull over to rescue the turtle. He was caring toward all living things. Caring people make the world a better and happier place. People should be more caring toward all living things no matter how big or small, just like Leo.

Literary Essay #4

Miss Marble

By : Johnny

Determination leads to success, and success leads to happiness. When Lupe thought of marbles she turned happy. In the story Marble Champ by Gary Soto there is a girl named Lupe who is determined to win a sport.

One way how Lupe is determined is because she exercises every day. "I've been practicing," Lupe said to her father. Lupe always exercises by doing her finger pushups until her thumbs get sore. Lupe also exercises by squeezing an eraser 100 times a day so her thumb gets stronger. Another way how Lupe showed that she exercised a lot was when she left her homework in her backpack just to exercise. When Lupe did that she surprised me because Lupe is a straight A student. That shows that Lupe is determined.

Another way how Lupe is determined is that she practices with other people. Lupe is always practicing for the championships. Lupe practices marbles by playing her brother and Alfonso, a neighborhood kid who is supposed to be a champion. "Man she's bad, she could beat the other girls for sure, I think," Alfonso said. Every day for Lupe was practice, practice, practice, squeeze, squeeze, squeeze. Lupe's father was so happy for her that he even rigged some lights in the backyard so Lupe could practice after dark. Sometimes when Lupe is tired she lies down and listens to her brother who is giving her tips on how to shoot.

In the end Lupe's determination helps her win the championships. At the championships Lupe beat her first opponent easily. Lupe invited the girl, named Rachel to stay with her. That shows that Lupe is determined to win and to be a great person. Lupe beat her next three opponents. Next thing she knew she was facing her last opponent, THE GIRL WITH THE BASEBALL CAP. They had started the match, a few minutes later something would happen that would change Lupe's life forever... "I did it," Lupe said under her breath. It finally happened, she had won a sport. Lupe had won because she was determined and she believed in herself. All of the things Lupe did helped her win the championships. Lupe knew that she could win. I think Lupe won because she is smart and she has strategies.

In the end, the author shows that if you try your best you can do it! When I read this book I realized that trying will lead you to a whole new path in life.

Literary Essay #5**Follow Your Dreams****A Literary Essay about Dancing in the Wings****By Mrs. Cole's Class**

It is important to have big dreams to follow across your life. However, just because you have big dreams doesn't mean it will be easy to achieve them. There may be times when you have to persevere and your dreams might seem far away or impossible. Sassy, in Dancing in the Wings, is a character who wants to achieve her dream of being a dancer on a big stage in a summer festival. Some people might think Dancing in the Wings is a story about a girl who wants to be a dancer but I believe it is a message about how people should never give up on achieving their dreams no matter how much they may struggle.

One way the story Dancing in the Wings, teaches us that people should never give up on their dreams is how Sassy gets embarrassed but she doesn't let it stop her from dancing. For example in the story the text says, "I couldn't hide the tears I felt welling up in my eyes, so I just grabbed my dance bag and ran into the parking lot." This proves that even though Sassy was embarrassed during dance class she continued to dance and pursue her dream of becoming a dancer. The story teaches us that we should never give up on our dreams even when we get embarrassed. Another example of this is when Sassy gets made fun of in dance class. She runs out of the dance class as quickly as possible. Yet, she still returns to dance class and ends up trying out at the audition. A lot of people would have just went home and skipped the audition. This shows Sassy didn't let getting embarrassed stop her from dancing.

Another way the story, Dancing in the Wings, teaches us that people should never give up on their dreams is how Sassy makes mistakes but she continues to dance. For instance, Sassy makes the mistake of wearing a yellow tutu, Sassy makes the mistake of holding her leg up too high, and Sassy makes the mistake of leaping in the air beyond the counts of the music. Even though Sassy made these mistakes she still stayed through the entire try out. This proves that Sassy is focused on making her dreams come true. Another example of this is Sassy makes many mistakes in dance class. The other students notice and sometimes even comment on her mistakes. Sassy did not just give up or let the other girls get to her. She continues to dance even though she made mistakes. This shows that even though Sassy makes mistakes she continues to dance.

The last way, the story, Dancing in the Wings, teaches us that people should never give up on their dreams is how Sassy is teased but she never stops dancing. Sassy felt so embarrassed during dance class. She went to bed that night dreaming of her big day on the real stage and wakes up the next morning excited to audition. Other student dancers might not have the courage to audition after being embarrassed. Even though Sassy is embarrassed about her size she keeps her dream alive by showing up for her audition. This shows that

Sassy is learning that keeping dreams alive might be hard but letting them die might be even harder. In the text Dancing in the Wings, Mona said, “Oh please, she’ll never make it. They said talent, not a tyrannosaurus.” This is evidence that Sassy gets teased but she never gives up on her dream of becoming a dancer.

Some people might think Dancing in the Wings is a story about a girl who wants to be a dancer, but we believe it is a message about how people should never give up on achieving their dreams no matter how much they may struggle.

