Writing Research Papers

The Essential Tools

Teacher's Manual

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Free Downloads

See the blue insert at the front of this book for information on how to obtain the following free downloads:

Optional Exercises, Tests & Quizzes
Contains reprints of all optional exercises, tests, and quizzes from this Teacher's Manual

Sample Student Papers
Samples of research papers written by students for my and others' classes.

In addition, please see the free downloads that accompany the Student Book. Information on how to obtain these is located on the blue insert at the front of the Student Book.

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Course Overview

Materials Required

Computer Access

Many of the lessons will be enhanced with access to at least one computer in the class, an online connection, and a way to display the results, possibly a projector and a screen. If a projector is not available, smaller classes can gather around the teacher's screen. In a few classes, access to personal computers (or perhaps a computer lab) is desirable, but alternatives are always presented if this is not possible.

Other Materials

Besides basic materials (pencils, pens, paper, notebook), students and teachers will need the following:

Students

- Personal computer and Internet access
- 3-ring binders or file folders with 3 brads and side pockets in which to store research materials
- Index cards—10 of one color, 20-30 of a second color and 20-30 of a third color. Alternatively, use white index cards, and with a highlighter draw a different color border at the top of each card.
- Copies of the social networking articles for each student or directions on how to obtain them

Teachers

- Whiteboard or large chart paper on an easel
- Markers
- Paper clips
- A copy of the Student Book for reference. If you are teaching a single student, you can reference his; however, if you are teaching a class, you will need your own copy.

Schedule

Writing Research Papers is divided into three sections.

- Part One, Beginning Research Papers, discusses the essential writing tools for research papers—how to write them. It is an 11-12 week course.
- Part Two, Intermediate Research Papers, discusses the essential research tools—how to find and present ideas. It is a 9-week course.

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- Part Three, Advanced Research Papers, discusses advanced research tools—how to approach the really long paper. It is designed as a stand alone component, as a resource for future papers.

Teaching Strategy

Writing Research Papers relies on a four-step teaching strategy:

Preliminary Instruction—Each lesson begins with *instruction* in the student's book, which speaks directly to the student, that you might use in a variety of ways. First, you might present the material in the sections orally, and then ask your students to read it on their own, perhaps as homework. Second, you might read the sections along with your students, stopping for explanation and clarification as needed. Third, you might ask the students to read it on their own ahead of time, and then focus on specific areas. I've experienced success with all methods.

Modeling—After the initial instruction, *model* each lesson's concept for your student(s). Lead him through the assignment, allowing him to contribute where he can; however, don't be concerned if you are presenting most of the ideas. The idea behind the modeling step is to demonstrate the skills—how to write a thesis statement, for example. Lessons labeled "modeling" on the following pages are included to help you with this process. Additionally, the completed models are reprinted in Appendix A of the student text.

Practice with Help—Next, allow your students to *practice* the ideas you've introduced, giving help where needed. This could be in groups if you are teaching a class, with a sibling if the two are close in age, or with you. If you are the partner, you will need to exercise some restraint and allow your student to take the lead, providing help only where needed.

On Your Own—Unless students can perform the skills on their own, they haven't mastered them. The second set of exercises in each chapter, or in some cases work on the actual paper, is designed to be completed independently or as homework. Review students' work, and offer additional instruction as needed. Make sure your students understand each lesson—how to integrate quotations, for instance—but don't expect mastery. They will have ample time to practice as they write their research papers.

All of the lessons have been designed to facilitate the teacher who believes writing is not his or her strength. In fact, most of the parents of my writing students, as well as fellow classroom teachers, say their own writing skills have improved as they work alongside their students. In many of the lesson plans, I've included a short list of lesson-specific problems I encounter as I teach these lessons. For more information and discussion on this teaching strategy, see the section on Teaching Methods.

Too many times we evaluate our students prematurely before they have time to practice and internalize the concepts we teach them. Since this course introduces basic essay-writing concepts, I believe that students should have more time to practice them before being rated on their performance and that formal evaluation should not occur until near the end of this course.

Two ways of grading students are discussed in the Grading Methods section of these teacher pages: a Checklist Method and a Point System. If you like either, feel free to use them, but keep in mind that you are also entirely free to devise your own system that meets your personal course objectives. For more information on grading and evaluation, see Grading Methods.

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Scheduling

For a Homeschool Co-op

I have used several schedules to teach the content of this course. When I teach homeschoolers, my class meets one day a week for two hours, and I teach an entire unit during those two hours. Students separate into small groups and complete the practice exercises; then we regroup and I offer further instruction as necessary. I assign homework, which students submit to me by email two or three days before the next class meets. This gives me time to review and comment on their work and decide whether to re-teach or move on. A sample schedule for a weekly class follows.

For a Classroom

When I teach in the classroom, I teach these units along with some literature. That gives me time to review students' work and grade it as necessary before tackling the next lesson topic. Sometimes I devote an entire class period to a research paper lesson, especially while I am teaching skills. At other times, especially towards the end of each part when students are working on their own papers, I teach shorter lessons and intersperse them with my lessons on the literature. To develop a schedule for the classroom, use the sample weekly schedule, and teach each unit over the course of the week. For example, you might do the following:

Day 1: Review homework and address issues
Day 2: Model new lesson
Day 3: Practice with Help (group work)
Day 4: On Your Own, catch up, or re-teach as necessary

A teaching schedule for the beginning essay appears at the beginning of Part One, and for the intermediate essay at the beginning of Part Two.

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Teaching Methodology

The overview section briefly introduced the teaching methodology and methods *Writing Research Papers* uses. This section discusses them in more detail and offers practical suggestions on how to use the methods in your classes.

Mini-Lectures

When you begin teaching, you will invariably begin with a mini-lecture to introduce the new material. The main thing to focus on with mini-lectures is to keep them *mini*—no more than 20 minutes. Students frequently lose concentration after this time and "zone out." Even if they appear to be listening attentively, their minds might be miles away. In writing, students do need direct instruction, and lectures are the most efficient way to deliver it, but they also need immediate opportunities to put what they've learned into practice. Ideally, lectures should be interspersed with frequent modeling and practice sessions.

Reading—Before or After?

With respect to assigning reading from *Writing Research Papers*, you have a choice to make: Will you assign it before or after the teaching session? Either way has merit. If you assign the reading before, students should be familiar with the material before you model it. Your lectures could be shorter, and you could concentrate on troublesome areas rather than teaching the concepts from scratch.

On the other hand, if you always go over the material contained in *Writing Research Papers* at the beginning of each class, students will ask themselves why they should read ahead or why they should pay attention in class. They've already read and understood what you're teaching. In this case, it might be better to assign the reading after class, as review. This could also serve as extra reinforcement because students sometimes need to see information in a variety of forms over some period of time before they internalize it. Of course, you still might have an accountability issue.

You might try each method and see which works better for your students and situation.

Note-Taking

If you lecture, your students should be taking notes—always. The reason is not so much that what you are saying is important, although it is, but that the students are *engaged*. Research shows that even if students never look at their notes again, simply the act of taking them increases retention. Plus, for students who have difficulty maintaining focus, the ones who are easily distracted, taking notes helps keep their minds on the task at hand.

Note pages are included at the end of each chapter of the Student Book, right before the exercise pages. Because these include pre-printed headings, they will help

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students follow your mini-lecture's order. (If you skip a section, be sure to inform your students; otherwise they will get very confused!) Make sure students use these sheets. Force them if you have to. They should understand that note-taking is not optional.

You might meet resistance on two fronts. First, some students will say that note-taking is a "waste of time" because they already understand the material. In many cases, they are probably right. However, too many times I've seen students who relied on their memories and never devised a personal note-taking system fail miserably at higher educational levels. They never learned the skill. When they got to the point where they needed to use it, they couldn't. Second, some students will not know how to take notes. In that case, you need to teach them. How? By direct instruction ("Write that down.") or modeling (demonstrating how to take notes on an overhead transparency, whiteboard, or easel) or following a model (look up Cornell Notes, for example).

If students need incentives and accountability to take notes, you might give it to them in a couple of different forms. First, monitor your class. Students who aren't taking notes should be gently reminded to do so. Second, periodically collect notes, especially at the beginning of the course when you are teaching this skill/procedure. Look them over, briefly and address any difficulties. Grade them if that seems appropriate. Third, give periodic open-note quizzes where students can use their own notes but nothing else to answer quiz questions. Remember that you are building a skill (and a procedure). Once students have grasped it, you can back off on the accountability, or you might have to return to it briefly now and then just for reinforcement.

Modeling

Modeling is another word for demonstrating the steps involved in completing a particular skill. It's an extremely important part of teaching that overlaps your lectures. Yes, you want to *tell* your students about the skill ("The thesis statement gives form to a research paper's ideas and helps readers to follow your thoughts."), but you also want to *show* them how to do it ("These are the steps you take to write a thesis statement. First, . . .").

Think Aloud

Some students will quickly catch on to whatever you are teaching. They will intuitively grasp the concept. Most will not, however, especially in an area such as writing. They need step-by-step instruction. For them (and also for the intuitive learner who may not know *why* they know), you need to model your internal thinking, and one way to do this is by expressing your thoughts out loud.

For example, let's say you want to think of support for the idea that books are better than movies. You might think out loud and say something like this:

> Well let's see. I know that when I support an idea I need proof. And I've learned that I can draw on several different areas for that proof or evidence. [Note that you need to use academic words such as *support, proof,* or *evidence.*] These are [Write them on the board in a column as you say them.] examples, personal experience, statistics, research, observation, description, anecdote, and analogy.
>
> Well, I can't do any research right now because I don't have the tools [Cross off research.], so let me think about the others. [Pause and look like you're thinking.]
>
> Hmmm. I'm going to consider personal experience because that seems like the

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easiest for this situation. Have I ever seen a movie that I was really disappointed in, especially after reading the book? Yes! There was *Charly* with Cliff Robertson, which I saw after reading *Flowers for Algernon*. There was so much the movie left out! Plus, when it showed the technology center, those computers were so old they belonged in a museum. [Write "*Charly*—incomplete and antiquated" next to personal experience on the whiteboard.] I could compare *Charly* and *Flowers for Algernon* and use that as proof or evidence. [Use academic words again.]

I wonder if I can think of another example. Hmmm. [Pause.] After reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, we saw the movie with Gregory Peck. The students in my English class [or group] said there were some scenes they liked better in the movie than in the book, like when Atticus guarded Tom Robinson at the jail. [Write "TKAMB—jail scene" on the board.] But that might not work because it doesn't support my idea that books are better than movies. [Write some question marks after your note on the board—"???." Remember that it's important to demonstrate ideas that do and don't work out to teach students how to evaluate their own.]

You could continue, and if you were actually teaching this lesson, you would want to go through all the other areas, either thinking of proof that would work or saying something like, "I can't think of anything for this one right now," and drawing a dash next to it. But for purposes of how a think aloud works, we've done enough.

A couple of things are very important to do when you model. First, make sure you go through all of the skill steps in an orderly fashion, even if you think they seem obvious. You are building pathways in your students' brains, and if you make too big of a leap from one concept to the next, all of your effort will be lost. You must also write your thoughts down on an overhead, whiteboard, easel, or for a very small class, a piece of paper that everyone can see. This is extremely important because students will process what you tell/show them at different rates, and some students don't comprehend well what they hear orally. Seeing and hearing the concepts helps all students learn.

A couple of side notes: I have some perceptual motor difficulties, and it's very difficult for me to write on the whiteboard at the same time that I'm teaching or thinking. But I know students need this information in a visual form, so I've learned to compensate in two ways. Either I prepare my think aloud ahead of time (prewritten on an easel, PowerPoint slide, or overhead transparency) and then reveal a section at a time, or I ask a student to be my scribe and write my thoughts on the board. I explain to students why I do this, and that builds some camaraderie, especially with those who have academic difficulties. Plus it makes me seem more real rather than a know-it-all teacher. Second, I don't always have access to large whiteboards, overheads, LCD projectors, or other expensive equipment, and small whiteboards or easels don't always work, so I've found an inexpensive alternative: shower board from hardware stores. In the plumbing section, you will find very large boards (4' x 8') used to line shower stalls. You can write on these with a whiteboard marker, and although they won't last as long as the "real deal," they will do in a pinch. If you find it hard to get such a large board into your car, you can ask the store to cut it for you into two 2' x 8' or two 4' x 4' sections. They might charge for the cut.

Modeling Helps

Because it is difficult to come up with modeling ideas on the spot, I've provided some suggestions on how to model each lesson. Keep in mind that these are only suggestions, and you (or your

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students) can probably come up with more and better ideas. All of the models are reprinted in Appendix A of the Student Book; that way students can follow along, or if a student misses your class, he or she will have a way to catch up.

Segue to Practice

It's a good idea to overlap the modeling and practice steps and whenever possible to have your class think along with you. For example, in the above demonstration of the think aloud procedure, you might say something like, "I can't think of an analogy. Can any of you?" When students offer their own ideas, be sure to praise them. If it's an "off" example, gently correct and see if you can still use the idea. For example, "I'm not seeing how that's an analogy because I don't see the comparison between the two similar ideas, but that would make an excellent observation. Let's record it in that category. [Write it down.] It's a good one—thank you for sharing it." If you don't treat students' suggestions with respect, they won't offer them. And you want them to participate, to start thinking, and to be ready to do the next step with others.

Practice with Help

Have you ever been in the situation where you've listened to someone explain how to do something and understood, but when you went to do it on your own, you completely messed up? We all have. We can listen to explanations all day, but until we can perform the action on our own, we haven't learned. The Practice with Help step allows students to combine their brains with others' to practice the skill. You should move to this step once you feel students have understood your modeling in general, but before they have complete understanding.

Grouping Methods

There's been a lot written on how to group students and how to ensure that everyone participates. Should the groups be the same—all the same skill level (low, medium, and high groups), the same gender, the same interest? Or should they be diversified? Should students decide who to work with, should you, or should this be random? I've tried all of these methods, and use all of them from time to time, but the one I like the best is random, or at least seemingly random. (It's "seemingly" random because sometimes I make surreptitious choices that students are not aware of, like making sure that two students who tend to "goof off" aren't in the same group.) Students also like random groups because they never feel left out, and they get to work with people they wouldn't normally self-select.

If you would like to learn more about grouping methods, search for "Instructional Grouping Options" on the Internet. In the meantime, here are some ideas to get you started:

- Number off by the number of groups you want to end up with. For example, if you have fifteen students and you want three in each group, you will need five groups and should number off by five. You will also need to tell which group where to meet, or you will have the loudest ones shouting, "Fives are here!"
- If you have 20 students and want groups of four students, get a deck of cards, choose five sets of four cards, and pass them out randomly, or fan them out and have students pick a card. Group like numbers or face cards together. If you have an uneven number, you can do one of two things. First, insert the joker(s) as a wild card. The student who draws the joker gets to pick whichever group he or she wants

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to work with. Second, remove some of the cards so that some groups will have only three members instead of four. If you have four groups and only fourteen students, you might remove one king and one queen so that two groups only have three students in them.

- Find full-page pictures in magazines, either very strange pictures or beautiful ones. Make sure there is not too much advertising present if they are ads. Mount the pictures on construction paper, making sure you use the same color for all of the pictures, and then cut them into two, three, or four sections. I laminate mine because I use them a lot. Make sure you have the same number of cards as students, adjusting as necessary. If I'm off by one, I have an extra card with something really strange or noticeable on it. (For me it's a squirrel's eye—don't ask!) The student who draws that gets to pick his or her group. If I'm off by more, I remove sections from some pictures. To find their group, students need to match their part of the picture with the others.
- If I'm grouping by opinion, for example, asking students whether they agree or disagree with something, I use a technique called four corners. If students agree, they move to one corner. If they disagree, to another; if they qualify (agree under specific circumstances), to another; and if they have no clue, to the final. Then I look at the groups and make adjustments as needed. I might have three students in one corner, which is fine, but I might have ten in another, which is not.
- I don't know how to explain this final method. There is a mathematical way to group students so that over the course of some period of time, they will have participated in a group with all of the other members of the class. I can never figure out the formula, but I have a math friend who is good at that sort of thing, and I ask her. To make this work, each student has to have (and remember) a permanent number. You call out the numbers for each of the groups, and students move to them.

There are lots and lots of other methods, but you don't want to use too many because then you will have to spend more time explaining how to get the students into groups than they will have to work in them.

Monitoring

You want group time to be focused and productive. You want students to talk about the skill you are teaching, not about the latest movie, about some other class's homework, or about random comments concerning black holes. You also want everyone to participate, not just one or two students. How do you ensure that?

You make certain that students are on task by mingling with them. Walk around the room (or between the rooms), listen in on the conversations, and make yourself available. I usually listen to the group I have my back to. That seems less intimidating to the students, and I'm likely to hear more authentic conversation. I also make sure I slowly walk by each group with an "I'm available" attitude. It's interesting to me that so many students won't raise their hand to summon me to their group, but if I'm close by, they'll grab me and ask their question. Sometimes I can stand in one spot (on the side or in the back but never in "teacher-territory" at the front and center of the room) and listen to all the conversations. But I'm not that good at multiplexing, so I keep moving. You'll develop your own monitoring ideas.

Besides making sure students are on task and answering their questions, monitoring will help you determine when to pull the groups back together. Groups will work at different rates,

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and you want to train them to work quickly. Sometimes I'll ask the groups to show me by raised fingers how much more time they need. If one group says none, another two say one, and a fourth says five, I'll say, "You have one more minute. Please try to finish up by then." Then I'll go to the group that is finished, review their work, and perhaps ask them to give more attention to a specific area. Make sure your minute doesn't turn into two or five. Time yourself. Otherwise you are training your students to doubt you.

Reporting

Remember that the purpose of the group work is to practice a concept with help. That means *all* members should understand it, not just one or two. Frequently, I have groups that rely on one person, the perceived "brain." The "brain," who may not even need the practice, does all of the work, and the other members, who do, skate. To prevent this, you might incorporate some accountability methods:

- **Note-Taking**. Require all members of the group to take notes. All of the group exercises are contained in the Student Book. Require students to record their thoughts there. Alternatively, sometimes I ask for these on loose-leaf paper so that they can be turned in or in a "Group Work Journal," a spiral notebook that I provide and that can only be used for group work in my class. At the beginning of the school year, the office supply stores in my area have a sale on spiral notebooks—I've seen them for as little as five cents each. I buy as many as I can and pass them out to my students. (Even if the store has limits on the number of notebooks each customer can purchase, if you say you're a teacher, they might forgo the limit.) I ask students to begin each day's group work on a new page, label the skill (Thesis Generation, for example), and date it.

  As I'm walking around the room, I make sure that all of the students are writing in their books, and from time to time I collect them. Depending on the class and how much incentive they may need, I might also grade these for completion—A: extremely thorough and even more; B—thorough, well done; C—OK, minimum acceptable effort; D—lacking; F—very, very lacking or blank.
- **Sharing**. I also require the groups to be prepared to share their ideas with the class as a whole. This is a critical step and so helpful to students as they hear and discuss the ideas their friends have come up with. Because there are so many different ways to form a humorous introduction, for example, I will ask several groups to share their thoughts. Not only is this helpful in understanding the skill, it also builds camaraderie as we all laugh together. I don't usually have to do too much correction at the group stage, but if I do, I make sure to do it gently and lavish praise when I can.
- **Presenting**. Sometimes I ask students to come to the front of the class to present their group's ideas. When I do, there's always a mad scramble to determine who will be the sacrificial lamb, and usually it boils down to the same students. But this undermines my purpose that *everyone* in the group understands and is able to explain the group's findings. Here are some ways to randomly select the presenter, and I usually announce one of these methods just before the presentation. Choose the person
  - ◊ whose birthday is closest to (farthest from) today
  - ◊ who did/did not have rice (potatoes, vegetables, salad) for dinner last night

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- who has the most (fewest) computers (televisions, radios) in the home
- who has traveled the farthest away from home
- who has visited the most number of countries
- whose grandparents live with them
- who has the most (fewest) number of people living in their home
- who has never owned a dog (cat)
- your own creative ideas

Other ways to select the presenter are to keep a list and make sure that everyone has had a chance to present by the end of some period of time, to write students' names on Popsicle sticks and draw one from a container to choose one person, and then let him or her choose the next (My students call this popcorn.), or whatever. The only problem with keeping a list is that once a student has been "checked off," he or she might not be as engaged in future group work. To prevent this, you might call on a few students more than once, maybe those who aren't as fearful as others.

Speaking of fearful students, some really have a problem with talking in front of a group. It scares them witless. If you have a student like this, you might allow him or her to bring a friend for moral support. The two of them go to the front of the class, but only one talks. The other listens attentively and encourages. And by the way, you might have to teach *all* of your students how to listen attentively and encourage whoever is speaking. Try to avoid putting students in situations where they can't cope; otherwise, they will never learn to cope.

Not a Clue

At some point, you will model a skill, move students into groups, and then find out they are completely confused and off track. If this hasn't happened to you yet, it will. Even the very best of teachers will find themselves in this situation on occasion. What do you do? Stop the class, go back to the modeling, begin at the beginning, and review the steps. Your students realize they are confused, so ask them if they understand the step as you model. (A good way to do this is to ask for "thumbs": thumbs up for "I've got it"; thumbs down for "I'm still confused"; and thumbs sideways for "I'm still tentative.") Try to figure out where the disconnect occurred. It may be your teaching; it may be students' lack of attention; it may just be one of those days. When students think they are ready, resume the group work, monitor, and offer individual help where needed.

What Do Groups Do?

It's all well and good to put students into groups, but then what? What do the students *do* in their groups? You should always have a purpose for group work, and you should always be able to state it to your students: "Here's what I want you to do and why." For most of the chapters in *Writing Research Papers*, there are two sets of exercises; one to work on collaboratively in groups and another for independent, On Your Own practice.

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On Your Own

Of course the goal of your teaching is reaching the point where all of your students can perform all of the skills you teach entirely on their own. The steps we've talked about so far, mini-lecturing, modeling, and group practicing, will help students learn and will help them build those brain pathways, but the final objective is reaching the point where they can perform the skill independently. When they get home and none of their friends are around, can they still do it? The second set of exercises in each chapter or work on their actual papers provides the opportunity for independent practice, but you still need to check to see if each student "got it" or if more practice is needed. On the other hand, you don't want to get too bogged down in paperwork. Writing teachers, more than teachers of other subjects, seem to have so much paperwork to deal with already, how can they keep up and still meet the needs of their students? I have a couple of ideas.

Checking Homework

If you are teaching a class that meets once a week, you might ask students to email their homework to you a day or two before the class meets. This will give you a chance to look over what students have done well and what needs to be revisited. You might also select a few responses to share with the rest of the class and explain what is exemplary about them.

Alternatively, you might ask students to open their Student Books to the homework page, and on some kind of a master list, check off the ones that are complete. You might do this during a pop quiz to save class time. You might check off yes or no, or you might have three categories: done with good effort, done cursorily or skimpily, and not done. If students know you are going to check, they are more apt to find time to do the work during their busy schedules.

After checking to see that the homework is done, ask students to take out a different color pen or pencil. For example, if they did the homework in pencil, they might take out a pen; if a blue pen, they might take out a green one. Tell them that as you discuss the homework as a class, you expect them to add new thoughts and clarifications to their own assignment using the new color. Then read each question and call on a student to answer it. You might randomly choose students; choose the one closest to you, and then continue in a pattern; draw a Popsicle stick with a student's name on it from a container; or choose one student, and let him or her choose the next (popcorn). Instead of asking for just one answer to a question, especially when there are choices to be made, you might call for two or three. Discuss students' answers/ideas, be affirmative, and re-teach or clarify where necessary. Once you are sure students can perform the skill you've taught, but perhaps not perfectly, you are ready to move on to the next skill.

Reviewing

After students turn in their homework, you still aren't done practicing the skill. With writing, students practice each skill in each essay they write. Because of this, review is built in, and you won't have to make up review exercises. The more students write, the more they will practice their skills. And the more they practice their skills, the more proficient they will become.

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Grading Methods

Evaluation & Scoring Ideas

Evaluation is such a controversial issue with homeschool parents and classroom teachers, with opinions on both sides of the issue, from no grading at all to grading everything. I don't want to be dogmatic about this area, preferring to give you all the freedom you need to evaluate your own students, but I do want to offer some suggestions. Let's begin with some clarification on terminology.

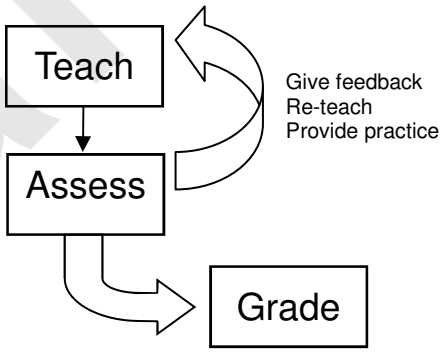
Evaluation Terminology

First, I want to draw a distinction between *assessment* and *grading*.

Assessment is what you do to ensure that students understood your teaching. It helps you decide when you need to re-teach or review and when to move on. Every lesson, without exception, should have some kind of assessment built into it. Further, assessment is a feedback tool. It is practice. It should not be recorded.

Grading follows assessment, sometimes by a day or two, sometimes by weeks or months. Once students have understood the skill and have had time to practice it, then they are ready to be formally evaluated. Some courses give only one opportunity for students to demonstrate their mastery of skills, such as a final exam or an Advanced Placement® test. More often though, students are given plenty of opportunity to demonstrate their mastery, like with end-of-unit tests.

Visually, the process looks like this:



Too often, I believe, we confuse *assessment* with *grading* and move to it too quickly. On the other hand, I also believe that students do need to be graded at the appropriate time. I don't believe in no grades at all because students need the accountability. They also need a realistic understanding of their skill levels.

Perhaps you've heard other grading terminology. If so, here is how I'm using the terms:

- Assessment—informal evaluation, formative assessment
- Grading—formal evaluation, summative assessment

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Evaluation & Scoring Ideas

Of course, all of this begs the question: How do you grade?

Writing Research Papers combines two methods, and grading sheets to keep track of them are in the free download, *Grading Sheets & Checklists*. Information regarding where to find this document is located on the blue page at the front of this book. Keep in mind that these two methods are only suggestions; you have every right to develop and use your own system. Just make sure your students understand what it is.

Checklists

The free download, *Grading Sheets & Checklists*, contains some combination checklists and scoring guides. To find the free downloads, see the blue page in the front of this teacher's manual.

Rubrics are also included on the grading sheets, since some exercises are evaluated on completion, while others on the quality of the product. I never award fewer than 50% credit for a student who attempts the work. I'll explain why in a minute.

Total the points for each of the four theses to arrive at the points for the exercise.

A course score sheet for each part, beginning and intermediate, also appears in the free e-Book, *Grading Sheets & Checklists*, to keep track of the total course points.

Quizzes and Accountability

In addition to the exercises and the actual essays, I also give periodic quizzes to encourage accountability. Ideas are included in the chapters that follow. Record quiz scores on the score sheets.

Determining the Grade

To calculate a student's grade, add up all the points they received, divide by the total, and multiply by 100. Then use either of these scales:

A = 90 - 100%; B = 80 - 89%; C = 70 - 79%; D = 60 - 69%

A+ = 97 - 100; A = 93 - 96; A- = 90 - 92%; B+ = 87 - 89%; B = 83 - 86%; B- = 80 - 82%
C+ = 77 - 79%; C = 73 - 76%; C- = 70 - 72%; D+ = 67 - 69%; D = 63 - 66%; D- = 60 - 62%

Late Work & The 50% F

I also subtract points for late work—always. Students lose one point for every day the assignment is late. If an assignment is more than five days late and the student completes it, he receives a 50 percent F (5 points). If he never does the assignment, he receives a 25 percent F (2.5 points). The reason for this has to do with math and determining an average score. If a student receives an A on one assignment and an F on another, that averages out to a C. Numerically, a 50 percent F and a 100 percent A averages out to a 75 percent C. If a student received a zero percent F, he would need to earn three A's just to offset it. I understand that life will interfere with students' performances of their responsibilities from time to time, and I will receive late assignments, so I

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allow students one "oops" per quarter. An "oops" requires a note from the student's parent or guardian, but I will accept any excuse. Beyond that, I find that if I give students a break just once, I'm in trouble (basically because I'm a pushover).

Providing Feedback

Feedback is so important to help your students learn what they are doing well and where they need to improve. I always write uplifting comments on students' papers. Additionally, sometimes I make an audiotape for students offering further instruction. Yes, it's time-consuming, and yes, I feel very awkward talking to myself, and yes, students aren't too thrilled about this at first. But after some initial reticence, I find students love it and look forward to hearing what Mrs. Myers has to say. I try to limit these tapes to 10-15 minutes, and I always, *always*, begin with positive feedback. Students need to know what they are doing right. On a tape, tone of voice and excitement over small things like "cool" verbs or nice flow or interesting ideas goes a long way. To keep students accountable and to make sure I'm meeting their needs, sometimes I ask them to write a one-paragraph response to my tape. It's worth 20 points—just enough to make sure students take it seriously—and students earn all 20 points if the paragraph is completed and turned in on time. Students must do three things in their response: 1) prove they listened to the tape by repeating something I said (and sometimes I include a special word: "Your word is 'stapler'"; 2) answer any questions I asked; and 3) give me feedback on my feedback: Did they understand my comments? Were they helpful? Do they have further questions? What else might I do as a teacher to help them with their writing? As an alternative to tapes, and because they take so much time to create, you might set up individual conferences with students.

More on Grading

If you would like more instruction on grading and evaluating, please check out my *Making the Grade* resource available from www.Cameron-Publishing.com. (Don't forget the hyphen.) Although originally designed to help homeschool parents grade and evaluate their own children, classroom teachers have also shared with me that it helped them understand their own grading process and philosophy. You might also be interested in the radio interview I did with Mike Smith on Home School Heartbeat on the same topic, available here: http://www.hslda.org/docs/hshb/82/hshbwk4.asp (or click on the link at the top of the *Making the Grade* page at www.cameron-publishing.com).

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Part One

Beginning Research Papers

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Weekly Schedule

Part One—Beginning Paper

Wk.	Ch.	Chapter/Lesson/Exercises	Homework
1	1	*This is an optional introductory lesson.* **Preparation**: Mixer games, if desired **Mini-Lecture**: Introduce the course and the difference between basic essays and research essays. Introduce speaker triangle. *No Modeling/Groups/On Your Own.*	Read Chapters 1 and 2.
2	2	**Preparation**: Copies of "Facebook and Bebo." If you will be skipping the optional lesson 3a, you will also need copies of "Clinical Report." **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Demonstrate how to approach the prompt. **Groups**: Exercise 1 **On Your Own**: Begin Exercise 2.	Finish Exercise 2. Read and annotate "Facebook and Bebo." *If you decide to skip the optional Lesson 3a on annotation, also assign:* Using the Annotation Checklist at the end of Chapter 3, complete Exercise 3. Read and annotate "Clinical Report."
--	3a *Optional Lesson*	*Note that this is an optional lesson designed for students who have difficulty with Exercise 2 and/or need refreshment or instruction in annotation.* **Preparation**: Optional: Copies of Exercise 2a from this Teacher's Manual. Copies of "Clinical Report." Students will also need the "Facebook and Bebo" article provided in Lesson 2. **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Review Exercise 2 as needed. If there was difficulty, complete the optional Exercise 2a. Teach annotating using the article in Exercise 3. **Groups**: Exercise 3 **On Your Own**: Annotate "Clinical Report."	Finish annotating "Facebook and Bebo" and "Clinical Report." Read Chapter 3.
3	3b	*Note that Ch. 3 spans two or three weeks.* **Preparation**: Copies of "Facebook and Bebo" article from Lesson 2. Also, copies of "More Sex Offenders" and "Does Facebook Replace…?" Students will also need note cards: 10 of one color, 20–30 each of two other colors. **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Show how to make note cards using "Facebook and Bebo." **Groups**: Exercise 4 **On Your Own**: Exercise 5 with "More Sex Offenders"	Finish Exercise 5 using "More Sex Offenders" and "Does Facebook Replace…?"

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Wk.	Ch.	Chapter/Lesson/Exercises	Homework
4	3c	**Preparation**: Copies of "Facebook and Bebo" and "Clinical Report" from Lesson 2. Also needed: "Social Networking Benefits Validated" and "Egypt's New Hero." **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Note Pages and Notebooks **Groups**: Create a note page with information from "Clinical Report." **On Your Own**: Exercise 6 using "Social Networking Benefits Validated"	Finish Exercise 6 using the articles "Social Networking Benefits Validated," and also complete the exercise using "Egypt's New Hero." Read Chapter 4.
5	4a	*Note that Ch. 4 spans two weeks.* **Preparation**: Copies of all the articles provided thus far as well as "'Flocking' Behavior" and "Bullycide." **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Paraphrasing and avoiding plagiarism **Groups**: Detect plagiarism using Exercise 7; practice paraphrasing using Exercise 8. **On Your Own**: Finish Exercise 8.	Read, annotate, and create note cards or pages for "'Flocking' Behavior" and "Bullycide." Finish note cards or pages for any articles not completed yet. Create Works Cited page.
6	4b	**Preparation**: Obtain computer access for demonstration (if possible). **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Demonstrate how to create a Works Cited page. **Groups**: Exercise 9: Create Works Cited page for "'Flocking' Behavior" and "Bullycide"; Exercise 10. **On Your Own**: (none)	Complete Exercise 9 for all the articles provided. Read Chapter 5.
7	5	**Preparation**: Copies of the Folder Check Quiz from this Teacher's Manual. Optional: Copies of Exercise 11a from this Teacher's Manual. **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Demonstrate how to integrate quotations. Review paragraph construction. **Groups**: Exercise 11 **On Your Own**: Optional Folder Check Quiz and Citation Quiz. Exercise 12	Finish Exercise 12. Use the Folder Check Quiz to finish article annotations and notes.
8	6	**Preparation**: None **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Present counterargument models and signal phrases. **Groups**: Exercise 13 **On Your Own**: Exercise 14	Finish Exercise 14.

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Wk.	Ch.	Chapter/Lesson/Exercises	Homework
9	7	**Preparation**: None **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Review thesis statements, sort note cards or pages, and introduce the "fill-in-the-blank" outline. **Groups**: Exercise 15 **On Your Own**: Exercise 16	Complete Exercise 16.
10	8	**Preparation**: Projector of some sort if available **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Model MLA formatting; how to write body, introduction, and conclusion paragraphs; how to create Works Cited page; and how to proofread. **Groups**: Group or individual work on the essay **On Your Own**: Work on essays.	Complete draft version of the paper.
11	9	**Preparation**: Ruled notebook paper and several paperclips. **Mini-Lecture and Modeling**: Model paragraph hooks and address any difficulties. **Groups**: Paragraph hooking **On Your Own**: Revise essays.	Complete final draft.

Additional Free Downloads

Please note that all optional exercises, tests, and quizzes are available in this Teacher's Manual and as free downloads. To access the downloads, please reference the blue instruction page at the beginning of this volume. **Additionally**, to help you evaluate the exercises, outlines, and research papers, grading sheets for each chapter are available as free downloads. To access them, please reference the blue instruction page at the beginning of the Student Book. Checklists that appear in the Student Book are also reproduced in this download for easy access.

For Beginning-Intermediate Students

If you feel your students have most of the skills taught in this section on Beginning Research Papers, but they are not quite ready for the Intermediate Research Papers section, you might conduct a quick review by asking students to write a short research paper. Instead of completing all of the above lessons, you might choose a very simple topic, and using the resources in this section, review only the skills students need, completing the appropriate exercises as needed.

For topic choices, consider those from the *Costco Connection* magazine available online at www.costcoconnection.com. Click on "Informed Debate" in the table of contents of each magazine. Each topic contains a list of three or so Web sites to consult for further information, as well as a summary of both the pro and con positions. I have had good success with the December 2011 topic: Is it OK to thank people by email?

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6 The Counterargument

Most of my students have difficulty with the idea of a counterargument. They are so focused on proving their own perspective that they don't see the need to acknowledge any other. In fact, sometimes they feel it would introduce a weakness to do so—that they could sound less persuasive. I tell them that every issue is complex, and by addressing the counterargument, they put their audience at ease and gain its confidence. Plus, they sound smart.

Lesson Approach

1. Materials Needed
   Note cards, note pages, source articles used for this prompt, all of which should be in the students' folders, and basic materials only

2. Objective
   To teach students how to address a potential objection that a person reading their essay may have. To build credibility when they support their arguments or claims

3. Mini-Lecture and Modeling
   Present counterargument models and signal phrases.

4. Practice with Help (Groups)
   Allow students to practice creating counterarguments in groups using Exercise13.

5. On Your Own
   Create a counterargument for their own essays, Exercise 14.

6. Homework
   Finish Exercise 14.

Mini-Lecture and Modeling

A good way for you to introduce the idea of a counterargument is to select a willing student and role play with him or her in front of the class. The student should play the role of a pro or con menu-labeler, and you take the other side. That is, the student should state a reason why he or she is pro (or con), and you should counter it. Note that the counter needs to address the specific argument raised by the student and not an unrelated one. For example, if a student raises the objection that providing calorie counts is a waste of time because people don't consider them anyway, you might counter with the fact that people tend to underestimate calorie counts (info from the Yale study) and if they had the information readily available, they might be surprised and reconsider their choices.

Explain to the class what a counterargument is, and then say you and the student are going to demonstrate one by role playing. You will take the place of the essay writer, and the student will represent the audience.

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Please recognize that thinking about a counterargument may be a new idea for some students. Discuss why it is necessary and how it functions. Demonstrate how counterarguments are created by using the models below, paying particular attention to the signal phrases. You might also direct students to the other possibilities for signal phrases for counterarguments in their student text and try substituting some of them in place of the ones I've chosen for the models. Be sure to insist on the parenthetical citation—the author's last name or the abbreviated title in quotation marks—when it is needed. Also review quotation integration and effective paraphrasing where necessary.

Models for Counterarguments

Reproduced in Appendix A of the Student Book

While some may worry that menu labeling will expand the influence of civil government in people's lives, they forget the fact that restaurant patrons always have the option to disregard the nutritional information. Bradley, in an article in the libertarian *Reason* magazine, warns that providing calorie counts is "paternalistic," and it will "force nutritional information on people who aren't necessarily looking for it." However, Bradley's fears are overblown. There is nothing dangerous about providing restaurant patrons with valuable information that they need to make nutritional decisions. If the government forced people to eat healthily, Bradley would have a point, but there is no force implied in menu labeling. No, Big Brother will be looking over a restaurant patron's shoulder and forcing him or her to make wise choices, so the concerns about a paternalistic civil government are completely without merit.

Note that citation information is included in the paragraph so that a separate citation (Bradley) is not necessary.

Reason magazine, the voice of libertarians, brings up an important concern about the effectiveness of menu labeling laws. "[W]e buy just six of our 21 weekly meals from restaurants" the magazine asserts, citing statistics from the National Restaurant Association. This means that "available nutritional information will be put in front of the average American for only about three of every 100 meals" (Bradley). However, this concern is overshadowed by the fact that people already have access to nutritional information for home-cooked foods because food suppliers are already required to note this information on labels for products consumers purchase from grocery stores. This means people already have a way to calculate the number of calories for meals they prepare at home. They cannot perform the same calculations on restaurant meals, which is why menu labeling is such a good idea.

As you model the above counterarguments, call specific attention to the counterargument phrases, underlining or highlighting them as necessary. Make sure students can identify both the objection that is being raised and how it is put to rest.

Practice with Help

Partners work well for this activity, and you might assign partners purposely or randomly, or ask students to work with the person they are sitting next to. You might approach this session in one of three ways. First, you might ask students to work on Exercise 13 on their own for a time, and then ask them to share and finish with a partner. Second, you might ask partners to pool ideas and complete the exercise together.

If partners have difficulty getting started, you might suggest that they role play like you did at the beginning of the class. One partner should represent the audience and raise an objection, and the other should represent the author and counter it. Remind the students that the counterargument has to answer the specific objection that the student raised. Walk around the room, and if students have difficulties, offer suggestions.

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When most have completed the exercise, ask students to share their responses. Depending on the size of your class, you might ask each set of partners to read their counterargument to the class or to larger groups of combined partners—groups of four or six. Make notes during the presentations, and afterwards do additional teaching or review as needed. Be careful not to refer to the actual group that made a mistake as this will cause them to be reluctant to share in the future.

On Your Own

For Exercise 14, students should create a counterargument for their own essays, social networking or your topic. Ask them to consider the list that they made on page 68 of their Student Book and select what they think will be the audience's biggest concern or objection to their position (thesis). Ask them to follow the suggested counterargument structure on page 73 of their Student Book to create their counterargument paragraph.

Lesson-Specific Issues

1. Students must cite their sources correctly, even if they paraphrase information from an article.

2. They must address the specific objection being raised. For example, if the objection is that social networking consumes too much time, they cannot counter that objection by talking about how social networking can further cyberbullying.

3. Don't be afraid to ask your students to redo their counterargument (and give them full credit for the redo if it is attached to the original). Note their issues, give personal attention as needed, and ask them to revise their thoughts. The vast majority of my students who are new to this concept need at least two (and sometimes three) tries to grasp it.

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One Class's Answers to Exercise 13

Counterargument

Directions: Look again at the two excerpts on pages 53 and 61 concerning menu labeling laws. Pick a position, and then write a counterargument paragraph. Be sure to use some of the counterargument signal phrases discussed in this chapter.

Example One

Position: Pro menu-labeling

> Some people say that menu labeling is unnecessary because people already know that the food they eat in some restaurants is high in calories. *Reason* magazine suggests that "[w]e aren't getting fatter because there aren't fat-count stickers on our Big Mac wrappers—as if any of us were mistaking a Big Mac or chili-and-cheese slathered fries for a healthy snack, anyway" (Bradley). However, this viewpoint is directly contradicted by the study conducted by the Yale Psychology Department, which states that "people tend to underestimate the caloric content of fast-food meals" (Roberto, Agnew, Brownell). Most people will understand that a Big Mac will contain more calories than what they might consume at home. But will they know that a Big Mac, large order of fries, and large milkshake will contain more than the suggested number of calories an adult should consume in an entire day? Rather than encourage people to continue to underestimate the nutritional information in their fast-food selections, restaurants should be required to post this information on menu boards or on stickers attached to the food wrappers.

Example Two

Position: Con menu-labeling

> Certainly it is true that menu labeling can provide information from which consumers could benefit. But as persuasive as the arguments sound, they also can put restaurants at great risks of lawsuits. As *Reason* magazine reports, "When McDonald's voluntarily agreed to post its nutritional information on the Web several years ago, it wasn't long at all before the nutrition fanatics at the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) attacked the company because a couple of McDonald's employees served covert CSPI reps overly large ice cream cones" (Bradley). Menu labeling can result in huge lawsuits from employees' unintentional mistakes. This could cause the price of food to rise for all patrons or even force restaurants out of business. Voluntary labels are fine, but mandating labels will result in lawsuits that will not benefit consumers.

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One Class's Answers to Exercise #14

Counterargument

Directions: Look back at page 68 of this chapter where you identified the most important objection you will need to address in your essay. Write a paragraph that addresses this counterargument.

Your position:

Social networking is good for society.

Counterargument paragraph:

It is true that sexual predators, those who have been convicted of sex crimes, can build false profiles on social networking sites to create relationships with and lure unsuspecting children. In fact, "MySpace . . . identified and removed 90,000 registered sex offenders from its social networking site" between 2008 and 2009 (Olivarez-Giles). This huge number would alarm any concerned parent. However, just because sex offenders have profiles does not mean they have committed crimes. The same article that warns about the huge number of sex offenders also admits that "[n]one of the registered sex offenders found on MySpace have been convicted for actions on the site" and "Facebook's statement said no sex offenders had been convicted of wrongdoing on its site either." Social networking sites have security measures in place to guard children, such as identifying problematic profiles, removing them, and turning the information over to the proper law enforcement agencies. These measures seem to be working since no one has been convicted of a crime. Although parents should always monitor their children's online activity, the fears about sex predators may be overblown.

Your position:

Social networking is bad for society.

Counterargument paragraph:

Certainly it is true that social networking can give people an easy way to connect with their friends. In fact in a *USA Today* article, Jeri Saper, a Twitter and Facebook user says that "'I'm more connected to people I hadn't had close ties with for a long time'" (Jayson). It is true that social networking is at least a superficial way to keep in occasional contact with a group of friends or acquaintances. On the other hand, it can adversely affect the relationships that people have with closer friends. In the same article, Saper also admits that social networking "'does not make me closer to the people I'm already close friends with'" (Jayson). People who spend more time online simply have less time to spend with people face-to-face. While maintaining contact with acquaintances has value, this should not come at the expense of sacrificing time with close friends, the ones we count on in everyday life.

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6 The Counterargument

Your position:

Social networking is good for society.

Counterargument paragraph:

Some people say that social networking is not good for people because cyberbullying is a big problem. Statistics report that "between 33 percent and 42 percent of kids say they've been attacked or humiliated online" ("Bullycide"). Additionally, these people say that it is much easier to hurt someone online than in person. However, potential bullying is just a small part of social networking and one that might be easily monitored by concerned parents. Monica Vila, who put together some recommendations for "digital-age parenting" suggests that parents even have their children's passwords so that they can keep track of who is corresponding with their children ("Social Network Benefits"). In today's society, it would be a shame if the fear of encountering a bully prevented children from using "'the main medium for kids keeping in touch'" according to Vila ("Social Network Benefits"). Plus, parents would have the opportunity to teach their children how to properly respond to inappropriate or humiliating online attacks, just like they teach them how to respond in real life.

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Part Two

Intermediate Research Papers

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Weekly Schedule

Part Two—Intermediate Paper

Wk.	Ch.	Lessons	Homework
12 or 1	10	**Preparation**: Access to a computer, LCD projector, and the Internet, if possible. Prepare list of topics for Exercise 20, if desired. **Mini-Lecture**: How to understand and develop a prompt **Groups**: Exercise 18 **On Your Own**: Exercise 19	Read Chapter 10. If you are not providing a prompt, have students complete Exercise 20 and propose 2 possible prompts.
13 or 2	11	**Preparation**: Arrange access to computer/Internet, if possible. Search the Internet for tutorials on how to capture search history using your Web browser. Optional copies of Exercise 22a from the Teacher's Manual **Mini-Lecture**: Set up history, bookmarking, and search criteria. After group practice on that, model Google search commands and understanding URLs, followed by groups. **Groups**: Exercise 21. Optional Exercise 22a **On Your Own**: Exercise 23	Read Chapter 11. Select one topic from the list determined in the last lesson and complete Exercise 23 on that one topic. Note: If you do not have Internet and computer access in class, have students bring copies of 5 Web pages they find in Exercise 23.
14 or 3	12	**Preparation**: Optional: Copies of Google Commands Quiz from the Teacher's Manual or another teacher-prepared quiz to ensure adequate research. Online access or copies of the Web pages listed on Exercise 24 for students to evaluate **Mini-Lecture**: Discuss bias and how to evaluate the credibility of Web sites using the Credible Web Site Checklist. **Groups**: Exercise 24 **On Your Own**: Exercise 25 using 5 of the Web sites collected in Exercise 23	Read Chapter 12. Complete Exercise 25. Continue research and note gathering. Ensure sources are credible.
15 or 4	13	**Preparation**: Plan to meet at a library for this lesson, if possible. You will also need a way to display Internet results and YouTube video. **Mini-Lecture**: Show the video described in the teacher text; demonstrate Google Books; plan to explore the library and its offerings. **Groups**: Exercises 26 and 27 **On Your Own**: Begin Exercise 28.	Read Chapter 13. If you were unable to conduct this class at a library, have your students complete Exercises 26–28 at the library of their choice. Determine the number of sources you will require for Exercise 29.

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Wk.	Ch.	Lessons	Homework
16 or 5	14	**Preparation**: Make copies of the two-page Modes Quiz for each student (to be given in this lesson or the next one). **Mini-Lecture**: Introduce the nine modes as described in the Student Book. **Groups**: Exercise 30. Exercise 31 is optional. **On Your Own**: Exercise 32. Administer Modes Quiz now or at the beginning of the next class. **Download**: Please note that there is a free download of graphic organizers to help students with this chapter. To access them, please see the blue sheet at the front of the Student Book.	Read Chapter 14. Finish research and note-taking. Additional Annotated Works Cited (Exercise 29), if desired.
17 or 6	15	Review Exercise 29. **Mini-Lecture**: Introduce students to their outlining options, and guide them through the formatting steps. **Groups**: None planned. Students can work on and share ideas for their outline with a partner, if desired. You could also schedule group conferences during this time, if desired. **On Your Own**: Create and fill in outline, Exercise 33. Complete as homework.	Read Chapter 15. Create and fill in outline, Exercise 33.
—	—	You may desire to have an entire class devoted to personal conferences with your students after reviewing their rough drafts. If so, have your students send you their rough drafts in advance of this class so that you can be prepared for the meeting. If the entire class is meeting, students can also use the time to write or conduct peer reviews.	Complete rough draft of paper according to your schedule.
18 or 7	16	**Preparation:** Address issues from drafts. **Mini-Lecture**: Discuss the various stylistic choices described in the student test and the risks of each. **Groups**: None. Students may do peer reviews of their work thus far while you conduct personal conferences. **On Your Own**: None. **Download**: Please note that there is a free download of sample student papers on various research topics available. To access them, please see the blue sheet at the front of this volume.	Read Chapter 16. Complete final paper, including style improvements.

Additional Free Downloads

Please note *that all optional exercises, tests, and quizzes are available in the Teacher's Manual and as free downloads. To access the downloads, please reference the blue instruction page at the beginning of this volume.* ***Additionally****, to help you evaluate the exercises, outlines, and research papers, grading sheets for each chapter are available as free downloads. To access them, please reference the blue instruction page at the beginning of this Teacher's Manual. Checklists that appear in the Student Book are also reproduced in this download for easy access.*

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10 The Prompt

By the time they start this chapter, students should have all the essential writing tools they need to write the research paper and should be equipped for the writing portion of an intermediate essay. Although they may *know* the skills, they may not be able to *use* them when appropriate. If you find that students need some refreshment, review appropriate strategies, or refer students to the applicable section in Part One.

In Part Two, students will write an intermediate essay of about five to seven pages in length but no more than ten. The exact length is up to you. They will also do all of their own research. You might allow students to determine their own topic, and this is ideal. However, if you think students will need some help coming up with their own sources, or if you still need to devote time to how to avoid plagiarism, you might give students a number of topics to choose from, perhaps four. This approach might allow students who choose the same topic to collaborate, if you think that would be helpful or appropriate.

Lesson Approach

4. Materials Needed
   Optional access to a computer, LCD projector, and the Internet

5. Objective
   To review and expand the steps involved in understanding the prompt and for students to come up with at least two preliminary topics or subjects about which they might want to write their intermediate research paper

6. Mini-Lecture and Modeling
   Model how to understand and develop a prompt.

4. Practice with Help (Groups)
   Practice understanding and developing prompts with Exercise 18.

5. On Your Own
   Independent practice with Exercise 19

6. Homework
   Complete Exercise 20. Develop two possible prompts to answer/address in the intermediate essay.

Mini-Lecture and Modeling

Walk students through the process of understanding and developing the prompt using the Student Book as necessary. Make sure students understand where to find definitions of key words; the difference between informative and persuasive topics; how to agree, disagree, and qualify; how to approach an options prompt; how to format questions; and how to approach open prompts. Call attention to the two checklists: Understanding a Prompt and Developing a Prompt.

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Practice with Help

Group students into threes or fours, and ask them to complete Exercise 18. To promote engagement, ask all students to record answers and ideas generated by the group. When the conversation begins to lag, rearrange the students into new groups of threes or fours, and allow them to continue brainstorming. If students have difficulty with the task and if you have access to a classroom computer and the Internet, you might call the class together, show the students how to do some preliminary research, and then let students work in their groups again. Another option is to change the topic to something students can connect with. This might be especially important if you have a group of girls who know nothing about professional athletes. Use your own ideas or select topics from the Suggested Topics below.

As time permits, ask groups to begin working on Exercise 20, developing one or more topics.

On Your Own

Ask students to complete Exercise 19 on their own. Use the topic provided or substitute one of your own. For example, if you are going to allow students to choose from between four different prompts for their intermediate essays, allow them to practice with those topics. Address issues as needed.

Homework

The objective of the homework is for students to come up with a preliminary topic or two on which to base their paper. Ask them to complete Exercise 20.

Suggested Topics

The first step in assigning a topic or parameters for a topic is to determine whether it should be informative or persuasive. Most of the following suggestions can be modified to work with either. The questions will apply to persuasive essays. I have seen successful essays written on the following topics:

- Terrorism: Your solution
- Google's motto is "Don't be evil." Are they?
- Stay-at-home versus working mothers
- Career choices
- The financial crisis: Who is at fault?
- Cosmetic surgery issues: Good or bad?
- Movie rating systems: Are they effective in curbing violence?
- Mandatory immunizations
- Competitive sports: Are they unhealthy?
- The American diet: Is America eating itself to death?
- Organ donation ethics: Should we allow people to sell their organs for transplants?
- Computer hacking: Is it dangerous to national security?
- Hate crime legislation
- Genetic engineering of our food supply
- Dangers of cellphones
- Eminent domain

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- Televised trials
- File sharing: Is it ethical?
- Stem cell research
- Political scandals: Does power corrupt?

Lots and lots more topic suggestions are only a click or two away on the Internet.

Lesson-Specific Issues

Choosing a topic will be a difficult task for most students, but it is crucial for the success of this paper. Part of what will make or break a potential topic is its breath or how many sub-topics students can write about. If the topic is too narrow, students won't have enough content for five to ten pages. Because students won't begin their research until the next chapter, they won't necessarily know if they can find the support they need. That's why I ask them to think about two potential topics—if one does not work out, perhaps the other one will.

The other potential issue is in choosing an overworked topic such as capital punishment, animal rights, or the seemingly all-time favorite of essay writing books, school uniforms. Try to avoid these topics for two reasons. First, since they have been so popular, many, many essays have been written on them, and many of these are available online for free. It is an easy task to cobble together a paper by taking parts from here and there and fusing them. If your student really has his or her heart set on writing on a common topic, you can mitigate some of these problems by insisting that all the sources be from the last year or two (more about that later), but it might be better to avoid them all together and choose a fresher topic. Second, since the topics are very common, most of the thinking has already been done and will be available online. Instead of thinking about issues themselves, students only need to read what others have written. Again, fresh is best.

The final potential issue is with value-based issues such as gay rights and abortion. These issues are very polarizing with strong feelings on both sides and not much middle ground. Since so much emotion surrounds these issues, they really aren't appropriate for students' first intermediate essay. Once they have more experience, students can give them a go, but in order to examine an issue in all its complexity and to find credible and authoritative sources (rather than emotional anecdotes and value-based opinions), you might put some subjects off limits and encourage students to select alternate areas to research and discuss.

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One Class's Answers to Exercise 18

Understanding the Prompt

Directions: In this exercise, you will consider the following topic: **Athletes as role models**. *Answer the following questions:*

1. Does the prompt call for an informative or persuasive response? Give reasons for your answer.

Informative:

Could give the history of how athletes are selected as role models (cereal box covers) and why/how they are chosen

Could discuss how some have lived up to people's expectations while others have not

Could select several athletes and compare and contrast their function as role models

Could trace the place of athletes in history—from Greek Olympians, to Roman gladiators, to the present

Persuasive

Could discuss whether or not athletes *should* be held out as role models

Could also qualify the topic to discuss when athletes might be good examples to emulate and when they would not

Could look at the role of the paparazzi or media in elevating or casting down athletes as examples to others

2. Does the prompt need to be turned into a question? If so, craft a tight question.

Informative:

How do advertisers select athletes to represent their products?

What athletes' private lives have disqualified them from gaining endorsements? (Nancy Kerrigan, Tiger Woods, Michael Phelps, Michael Vick)

How does the entertainment industry transform athletes into stars?

What is the history of athletes as role models beginning with the early Greeks?

Persuasive:

Should athletes be selected to represent admirable character traits to children and society?

Should athletes be held to a higher standard of ethical behavior than others?

If athletes say that they should not be used as role models, does that absolve them of the responsibility to live upright or exemplary lives?

In general, do sports models live lives worthy of emulating?

Is it fair to athletes to require them to live under close scrutiny?

Do athletes have duties to their fans beyond playing their sport diligently and skillfully?

Is it necessary for athletes to exhibit virtuous character qualities to excel at their sport?

Are athletes entitled to private lives away from media scrutiny?

3. What do you already know about the topic? Activate your schema.

Barry Bonds accused of steroid abuse. Also Lance Armstrong

Michael Phelps denied advertising endorsements from Kelloggs after a photo of him with a bong was published

Michael Vick dog-fighting scandal

Nancy Kerrigan—Silver medalist in 1994 Olympics. Lost most endorsement possibilities after she made snippy comments about the Ukrainian gold medal winner

Michael Jordan—all-around good guy and super successful. Nike contracts

Kristi Yamaguchi

Skills athletes need to succeed—discipline, stamina, perseverance, others

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4. Using multiple sources, look up all the important words in the prompt.

Athlete:

A person who is proficient in sports and other forms of physical exercise
Could be professional or amateur
Oftentimes promoted to stardom by media

Role Model:

A person to be looked up to by others as an example to be imitated
Someone children should imitate or compare themselves to
A person with virtuous behavior
A reference group that people compare themselves to

5. Reflect on your discoveries. What are some ways to answer the prompt? Possible thesis statements?

Informative

Athletes are wonderful role models, but only in their approach to their sport, not necessarily in their private lives.
Athletes were hailed as role models in Ancient Greece and Rome, fell out of favor during the Middle Ages, and have recently made a resurgence in the public eye.

Persuasive

Since no person is perfect, it is unreasonable to expect athletes to exhibit perfect and virtuous characteristics at every moment of every day.
If athletes desire endorsements, they should expect to come under close public scrutiny.
Although athletes should strive to be the best they can be in their individual sport, it is unreasonable to expect the same perfection in their own private lives.

Sample

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One Class's Answers to Exercise 19

Understanding the Prompt

Directions: In this exercise, you will consider the following topic: **The role of reality TV shows**. *Answer the following questions:*

1. Does the prompt call for an informative or persuasive response? Give reasons for your answer.

Informative:

Trace the history of reality shows—their effects

Research the reasons for their popularity, both for viewers and producers (less costly than dramas?)

Examine the various positions about whether reality shows are beneficial or detrimental to society, and allow readers to come to their own conclusions

Look at the consequences of reality TV shows

Persuasive

Persuade the audience that reality TV shows are beneficial or detrimental

Examine the adverse (or beneficial) effects of shows on the participants

Propose solutions to the problems raised by reality shows

2. Does the prompt need to be turned into a question? If so, craft a tight question.

Informative:

Do today's reality TV shows have a counterpart in history?

How did reality TV develop?

What changes need to be made to reality TV shows in order for them to benefit society? [or another target group such as children, participants, producers]

What effect have reality TV shows had on participants? How have their lives been changed for better or for worse?

How do reality TV shows affect viewers?

Why do reality TV shows attract viewers?

Persuasive:

Should television producers continue to create reality TV shows?

Is reality TV real?

Who does reality TV benefit?

Should people be willing to open their lives to the scrutiny of a TV camera?

3. What do you already know about the topic? Activate your schema.

Reality TV shows cost less to produce than sitcoms and dramas—no fancy sets or big-name actors

Big Brother, *Survivor*, *American Idol*, *Dancing with the Stars*, *The Biggest Loser*, *The Apprentice*, *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*

Game shows?

4. Using multiple sources, look up all the important words in the prompt.

Role:

The function assumed or part played by a person or thing in a particular situation

A role (sometimes spelled rôle as in French) or a social role is a set of connected behaviors, rights, and obligations as conceptualized by actors in a social situation. It is an expected behavior in a given individual social status and social position.

Identifies a function performed by an individual or organization

The relation one has with another node in a social network

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Reality:

The world or the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to idealistic notions

The quality of being lifelike or resembling an original

The state of the world as it really is rather than as people might want it to be; "businessmen have to face harsh realities"

The state of being actual or real; A real entity, event or other fact; The entirety of all that is real; An individual observer's own subjective perception of that which is real

TV Shows

A segment of content broadcast on television. It may be a single broadcast or part of a periodically recurring television series.

Television program: a broadcast

5. Reflect on your discoveries. What are some ways to answer the prompt? Possible thesis statements?

Informative

Reality TV shows are prevalent because they are inexpensive to produce.

For common people, reality television offers a way to achieve popularity or stardom.

Persuasive

There is nothing real about scripted reality TV shows.

Reality TV excites the voyeur in people.

Sample

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Notes About Exercise 20

Choosing a Topic

Directions: In this exercise, you will investigate a topic you might be interested in writing about. Answer as many of the following questions as apply, using the guidelines that your teacher provides:

For this exercise, you might supply a list of topics that students can choose from, or you might give them *carte blanche*. Award points for this exercise based on the students' effort and completeness. If it shows evidence of thinking, award full points.

If students have difficulty coming up with topics on their own, suggest some. Get your ideas from this section or an Internet search for one or more of the following terms:

- Research paper topics
- Controversial essay topics
- Popular culture essay topics
- Interesting essay topics

Warning: Several of these search terms will return Web sites that offer free and "for hire" essays and might be tempting to unaware students or those under time pressure. Personally, I have never found quality essays on these sites. You might discuss the issue of "free" essays and academic honesty with your students.

Sample

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Part Three

Advanced Research Papers

Sample

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17 Advanced Approaches

This chapter of *Writing Research Papers* differs from the chapters that precede it because it does not offer ideas on how to teach students specific skills. By this time, they should have already written several shorter research papers and internalized the skills they need to be successful. You might use this chapter as an introduction to an assignment you have given your students requiring that they produce fifteen or more pages. You might also make your students aware of the chapter and the sample paper so that they can consult it in future classes when they are called upon to write lengthy research papers. Two areas that might need further explanation are APA conventions and the structure of a long paper.

APA Conventions

Through previous writing assignments, students should have gained fluency in using the MLA citation system; however, when writing for certain departments or disciplines, they may be called on to use a different system, such as APA. The other two common systems are Turabian and Chicago Manual of Style—CMS. The two best resources to learn to use any of these other systems is NoodleTools.com, to create the reference page, and the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) to create the parenthetical citations. While I have given the students an introductory lesson on APA conventions and modeled them in the sample paper, the majority of students' questions will be answered by consulting these two resources.

Structure of a Long Paper

The other area to emphasize or discuss is how to go about writing such a long paper, especially its structure. The key to gathering enough material to meet an instructor's page requirement is to focus on topics, such as the ones I've listed in Chapter 17 of the Students Book. The more topics, the longer the paper. Next, these topics need to be combined with others to create sections. Each section is formatted as a mini essay, with a very brief introduction and conclusion, focusing on ideas and evidence. My sample paper on the Hawaiian missionaries comprises six sections, any one of which could be expanded to a four - or five-page essay. By encouraging students to think in smaller pieces or sections, they will find the challenge of writing a long research paper less daunting.

Advanced Resources

If students need resources to write advanced papers, the following are very comprehensive:

- *Rules for Writers* by Diana Hacker. All of Hacker's materials are wonderful—clear and comprehensive.

- *The Bedford Researcher* by Mike Palmquist. Extremely comprehensive with detailed instructions on the research process and how to document using MLA, APA, CMS (Chicago), and CSE (Council of Science Editors).

Sample

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