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# Introduction

*The Write Stuff* is a series designed to help students build strong foundational skills in writing. To master the skills needed to write effectively, students benefit from guided instruction, analysis of writing models, and writing for a variety of audiences. The books in this series guide both teachers and students through the process of writing as it relates to three specific writing formats.

This book provides writing samples for students to study, as well as opportunities for students to write their own pieces. Students receive feedback on their writing in a variety of ways. They participate in peer reviews, complete self-evaluations, receive evaluations from the teacher, and compare differences in these assessments of their writing.

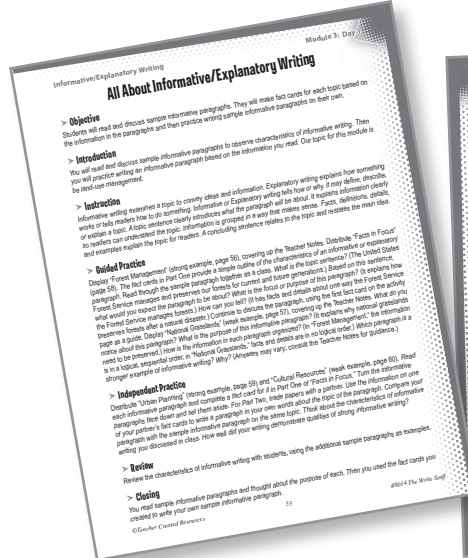
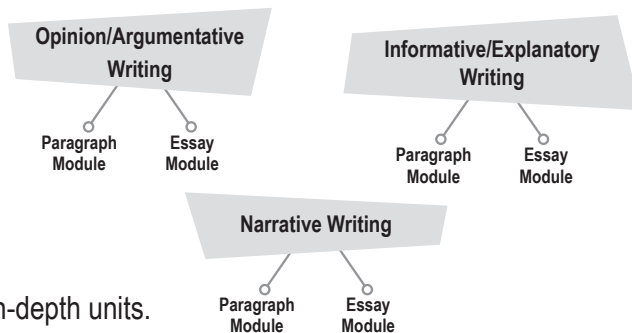
## About This Book

**Sections:** The book is divided into three main sections, one for each type of writing students need to learn for college and career readiness: Opinion/Argumentative Writing, Informative/Explanatory Writing, and Narrative Writing.

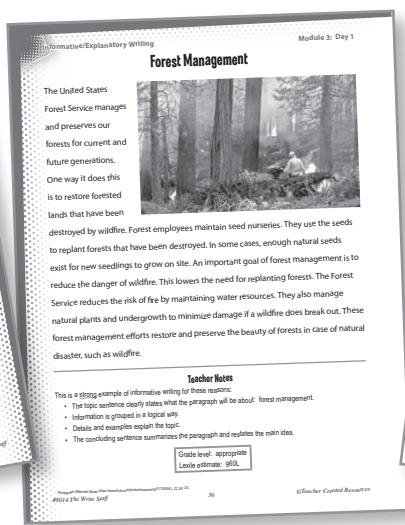
**Themed Modules:** Each section has two modules, or in-depth units.

**First Module:** This module presents a series of step-by-step lessons to introduce students to and teach the characteristics of that type of writing. Students read and discuss strong and weak examples of the type of writing in focus. Reading passages fall within the fifth-grade reading range based on Lexile estimates (830L–1010L) for this grade level. Students then model what they learned to write a piece in that specific genre, from opening sentence to conclusion.

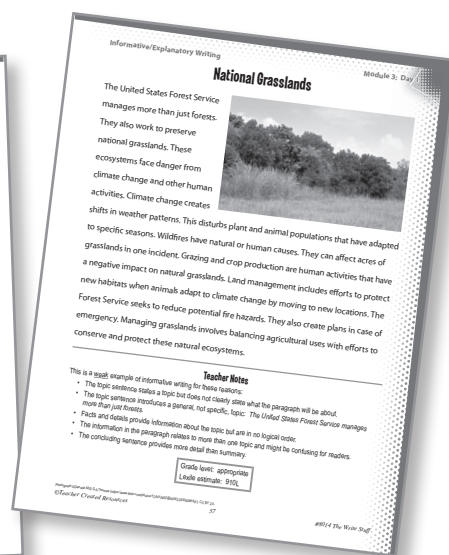
### THREE SECTIONS



Lesson Plan



Strong Writing Sample



Weak Writing Sample

**Second Module:** This module provides additional experiences in which students learn about and practice writing a longer piece, or essay, in the focus genre. Each module suggests a topic for student writing. Additional related writing topics are listed at the back of the book on pages 155–156.

**Note:** Modules 1, 3, and 5 require 10 days or class periods to complete, while Modules 2, 4, and 6 require seven days.

A chart on pages 157–160 lists the Common Core State Standards addressed in each lesson.

# How to Use This Book

Each module includes writing samples written below, at, and above grade level as indicated. Lessons suggest how to incorporate the writing samples, although you may use them in other ways for additional practice. For example, conduct a shared-writing activity in which students work together as a class to mimic a sample paragraph about the same or a different topic. Alternatively, have students work with a partner to strengthen an example of a weak paragraph. Students may also work independently to practice writing paragraphs using one or more strong examples as a model.

Each lesson begins with a scripted lesson plan. The script for the teacher is presented in italicized font. These lesson plans inform teachers about what to expect students to learn and be able to do. They enable teachers to make the best use of the time they have available for teaching writing in an already busy school day. The lessons include strategies that effectively help students learn to write.

Within each module, student activities build on one another. Answers to activities are provided on the lesson plan. Students focus on a single topic throughout the module as they work toward a finished product. You may wish to have students keep their activity pages in a folder for reference as they complete each lesson. Alternatively, you may refer to the related topics on pages 155–156 to give students additional writing experiences during lesson activities.

Guided Practice provides opportunities for students to work together as a whole class, in small groups, or with partners to focus on a particular aspect of the writing type in focus. Independent Practice offers additional activities for students to apply new skills as they write one or more parts of the work in progress.

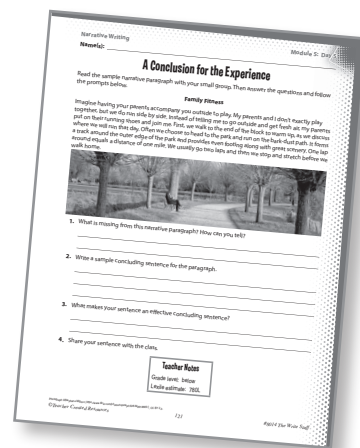
Each module has one lesson in which students participate in a peer-review activity. Encourage students to offer positive feedback as well as constructive criticism that will motivate their classmates to improve their writing.

Students complete a self-evaluation activity during each module and then later compare the scores they assigned their own writing with scores they receive on a teacher evaluation. Rubrics provide objective statements about writing that help students analyze and reflect on their work with the goal of creating written selections that are more effective and engaging for readers.

Some activities ask students to research their topics. Refer to the following topic overview chart to plan and provide appropriate research resources.

## ➤ Topics Overview

Opinion/Argumentative	Module 1	Good Stories
Opinion/Argumentative	Module 2	Personalities and the Classroom Environment
Informative/Explanatory	Module 3	Land-Use Management
Informative/Explanatory	Module 4	Space Travel
Narrative	Module 5	Physical Fitness
Narrative	Module 6	Good Days and Bad Days



# All About Informative/Explanatory Writing

## ➤ Objective

Students will read and discuss sample informative paragraphs. They will make fact cards for each topic based on the information in the paragraphs and then practice writing sample informative paragraphs on their own.

## ➤ Introduction

*You will read and discuss sample informative paragraphs to observe characteristics of informative writing. Then you will practice writing an informative paragraph based on the information you read. Our topic for this module is land-use management.*

## ➤ Instruction

*Informative writing examines a topic to convey ideas and information. Explanatory writing explains how something works or tells readers how to do something. Informative or Explanatory writing tells how or why. It may define, describe, or explain a topic. A topic sentence clearly introduces what the paragraph will be about. It explains information clearly so readers can understand the topic. Information is grouped in a way that makes sense. Facts, definitions, details, and examples explain the topic for readers. A concluding sentence relates to the topic and restates the main idea.*

## ➤ Guided Practice

Display “Forest Management” (strong example, page 56), covering up the Teacher Notes. Distribute “Facts in Focus” (page 58). *The fact cards in Part One provide a simple outline of the characteristics of an informative or explanatory paragraph. Read through the sample paragraph together as a class. What is the topic sentence? (The United States Forest Service manages and preserves our forests for current and future generations.) Based on this sentence, what would you expect the paragraph to be about? What is the focus or purpose of this paragraph? (It explains how the Forest Service manages forests.) How can you tell? (It has facts and details about one way the Forest Service preserves forests after a natural disaster.) Continue to discuss the paragraph, using the first fact card on the activity page as a guide. Display “National Grasslands” (weak example, page 57), covering up the Teacher Notes. What do you notice about this paragraph? What is the purpose of this informative paragraph? (It explains why national grasslands need to be preserved.) How is the information in each paragraph organized? (In “Forest Management,” the information is in a logical, sequential order; in “National Grasslands,” facts and details are in no logical order.) Which paragraph is a stronger example of informative writing? Why? (Answers may vary; consult the Teacher Notes for guidance.)*

## ➤ Independent Practice

Distribute “Urban Planning” (strong example, page 59) and “Cultural Resources” (weak example, page 60). *Read each informative paragraph and complete a fact card for it in Part One of “Facts in Focus.” Turn the informative paragraphs face down and set them aside. For Part Two, trade papers with a partner. Use the information on one of your partner’s fact cards to write a paragraph in your own words about the topic of the paragraph. Compare your paragraph with the sample informative paragraph on the same topic. Think about the characteristics of informative writing you discussed in class. How well did your writing demonstrate qualities of strong informative writing?*

## ➤ Review

Review the characteristics of informative writing with students, using the additional sample paragraphs as examples.

## ➤ Closing

*You read sample informative paragraphs and thought about the purpose of each. Then you used the fact cards you created to write your own sample informative paragraph.*



# Forest Management

The United States Forest Service manages and preserves our forests for current and future generations. One way it does this is to restore forested lands that have been



destroyed by wildfire. Forest employees maintain seed nurseries. They use the seeds to replant forests that have been destroyed. In some cases, enough natural seeds exist for new seedlings to grow on site. An important goal of forest management is to reduce the danger of wildfire. This lowers the need for replanting forests. The Forest Service reduces the risk of fire by maintaining water resources. They also manage natural plants and undergrowth to minimize damage if a wildfire does break out. These forest management efforts restore and preserve the beauty of forests in case of natural disaster, such as wildfire.

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## Teacher Notes

This is a strong example of informative writing for these reasons:

- The topic sentence clearly states what the paragraph will be about: forest management.
- Information is grouped in a logical way.
- Details and examples explain the topic.
- The concluding sentence summarizes the paragraph and restates the main idea.

Grade level: appropriate

Lexile estimate: 960L

# National Grasslands

The United States Forest Service manages more than just forests. They also work to preserve national grasslands. These ecosystems face danger from climate change and other human activities. Climate change creates



shifts in weather patterns. This disturbs plant and animal populations that have adapted to specific seasons. Wildfires have natural or human causes. They can affect acres of grasslands in one incident. Grazing and crop production are human activities that have a negative impact on natural grasslands. Land management includes efforts to protect new habitats when animals adapt to climate change by moving to new locations. The Forest Service seeks to reduce potential fire hazards. They also create plans in case of emergency. Managing grasslands involves balancing agricultural uses with efforts to conserve and protect these natural ecosystems.

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## Teacher Notes

This is a weak example of informative writing for these reasons:

- The topic sentence states a topic but does not clearly state what the paragraph will be about.
- The topic sentence introduces a general, not specific, topic: *The United States Forest Service manages more than just forests.*
- Facts and details provide information about the topic but are in no logical order.
- The information in the paragraph relates to more than one topic and might be confusing for readers.
- The concluding sentence provides more detail than summary.

Grade level: appropriate

Lexile estimate: 910L

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Facts in Focus

### ➤ Part One

Complete one fact card for each sample informative paragraph.

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type or purpose of informative writing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Facts, details, examples:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type or purpose of informative writing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Facts, details, examples:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type or purpose of informative writing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Facts, details, examples:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type or purpose of informative writing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Facts, details, examples:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### ➤ Part Two

1. Trade papers with a partner.
2. Use the information on one of your partner's fact cards to write an informative paragraph about that topic on a separate piece of paper.
3. Compare your paragraph with the sample informative paragraph on the same topic.
4. Think about the characteristics of informative writing you discussed in class. How well did your writing demonstrate qualities of strong informative writing? Write your response on a separate piece of paper.