



CommonCoreWritingPrep.com

A Taste of The Power of Three

Using our Middle School Sampler

Grades 6-8



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A TASTE OF “THE POWER OF THREE” – USING OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL SAMPLER

The techniques we introduce in this packet are fully developed our complete program “The Power of Three” for lower elementary, upper elementary, middle school, and high school students. We invite you to share this packet with your colleagues. We hope this taste will generate interest in learning more about the professional development and materials that we offer.

Basic Introduction (pages 1- 9)

- Includes Our Core Principles for all writing
- Encourages verbal repetition of key concepts -- refer to Writing Chants
- Introduces a color-coding system for the four major parts of speech
- Models Three Stages of Instruction (Whole Group, Small Group, and Independent Writing)

Developing Short Constructed Responses (pages 10-13)

- Introduces our practical three step process for short written responses
- Helps students respond to information found in pictures, charts, graphs, maps
- Promotes using explicit evidence and drawing conclusions, making predictions, developing Inferences

Building Effective Paragraphs (pages 14-23)

We have included the first stage of developing paragraphs based on major organizational patterns. In this stage students play a game that helps them arrange the sentences of a time order paragraph in a logical order.

PREPARING THE TIME ORDER GAME

There are two different options for preparing the Paragraph Games:

Option One

Duplicate each sentence on a colored sheet of paper. Make enough sets so that each group has a set to use. Follow the same color scheme in each set. We have provided color suggestions on each page. Deliberately arrange the sets that are distributed so that the sentences are out of order.

Option Two

Instead of using colored paper, duplicate each sentence on white paper but refer to our color suggestions on each paper to help students put the sentences in order.

Step 1: Playing the Game

- Allow students time to arrange the sentences in a logical order.
- Teacher takes time to use the game to talk about paragraph structure. (topic sentence, supporting details, transitions, conclusions)

Step 2: Creating a Rough Draft/ Copying the Paragraph

- Students copy the paragraph in the correct order on lined paper, in a notebook, or on a computer or tablet. Our packet includes a form to use.

Step 3: Editing with Partners

- Students exchange paragraphs with a partner and perform minor editing using the Editing Checklists.

Step 4: Recording the Final Draft

- Students use the corrections from their partners to record the final copy. This final copy can be used as a model for future writing.

This is a sample of Stage 1 for sequential (time order) paragraphs .based on playing our games. In Stage Two we offer strategies for developing paragraphs with a partner, and in Stage 3 we offer techniques for writing paragraphs independently. In our program we model processes for all the major organizational patterns: time order, order of importance, descriptive, space order, illustration, definition, classification, comparative, cause and effect, and persuasive.

MASTERING LONGER WRITING (PAGES 24-37)

Explicit strategies and procedures for crafting longer texts are in introduced in three phases in our programs. We have included our process for Sequential Writing in this packet.

Phase I – Introducing the Organizational Pattern

Understanding the Definition Page

- Defines the organizational pattern (sequential)
- Provides basic transitional phrases
- Recommends topics for all content areas

Extending the Word Bank

- Introduces precise nouns, powerful verbs, and descriptive adjectives and adverbs
- Presents transitional phrases that introduce and connect ideas within a text

Once students have been introduced to The Definition Page and to the Word Bank they can proceed to Using the Core Planner to help them convert information and research about a particular topic into a format that supports written expression.

Using the Core Planner -- a Five Step Process

- Introduces a Four Step Process that connects gathering information, note-taking, and research
- Supports written expression and organization

Step One (Establishing a Focus/Creating Topic Sentences)

- Helps students focus on as particular topic
- Offers preliminary suggestions for an introductory/topic sentence

Step Two (Organizing and Sequencing the Major Points)

- Provides a useful format for arranging information into three lists
- Follows a sequential order

Step Three (converting Major Points into Paragraphs and Sections)

- Instructs students to create title for the lists in step 2
- Reinforces use of transitional phrases
- Suggests integrating domain specific vocabulary and print and digital sources
- Helps writers focus on key details

Step Four (crafting Powerful Conclusions:

- Presents options for starting a conclusion
- Offers possibilities for ending sentences.

Step Five

- Offers a concrete plan for creating an organized rough draft

Phase II -- Assembling a Rough Draft with Style and Substance

Formal Style and Formatting Tips

Once students have completed Phase 1 they should feel very comfortable about writing a rough draft. We offer in Phase Two explicit steps for developing Creative Beginnings, Mighty Middles, and Effective Conclusions

Phase III – Polishing the Final Version: Revising and Editing Checklists

The focus of revising is the true substance for improving the quality of a text. We divide revision into three key areas:

- Organization
- Word Choice and Sentence Structure
- Using Resources

We focus editing on mechanics including:

- Punctuation
- Spelling
- Proper Usage

In this sampler we have included our Three Stage Process for Sequential Writing. Sequential Writing becomes the foundation for organization for all Informative/Explanatory and Argumentative Writing. In our complete program “The Power of Three” we offer this same process for every major organizational pattern.

Sequential Writing: The Foundation (included in this packet)

- Time Order Writings

Informative/Explanatory Writing

Group One: Basic Descriptive Patterns

- Descriptive Writings
- Space Order Writing
- Illustration Writing
- Definition Writing
- Classification Writing

Group Two: Relationship Writing

- Compare/Contrast Writing
- Cause/Effect Writing
- Problem/Solution Writing

Argumentative Writing

- Defending a Position/Opinion

The Next Step

Everything in this sampler is fully developed in our complete program *The Power of Three*. Our Middle School Program designed for Grades Six, Seven, and Eight includes:

Module One: Developing Short Constructed Response and Note-taking Techniques

Module Two: Building Effective Paragraphs

Module Three: Designing Compelling Informative and Argumentative Writing. (Mastering Longer Texts)

We hope you enjoy using the strategies we present in our sampler. We encourage you to visit our website www.CommonCoreWritingPrep.com to learn more about the professional development and materials we offer. We look forward to hearing from you.