

## **Grade 6 – 8 Expository Writing Syllabus**

### **A History of Writing: Narration, Identity, and Voice**

From its first incarnations, the essay has welcomed experimentation, embraced technological change, and encouraged new styles of writing. In this course, we will explore different technologies for writing (from pens to typewriters); different essay forms (from the personal to the argumentative); and different strategies for getting words on paper (from brainstorming to drafting).

This course will run as a writing workshop. We will explore essential components of proper essay writing in class. You will be expected to apply these skills when writing essays in our afternoon sessions. Because writing is best when it is shared, you will work closely with your classmates during the drafting, revision, and editing processes. You will also meet with me for more individualized instruction.

In short, our goals in this course are:

1. to gain a better understanding of the history of writing
2. to refine writing skills
3. to grow as critical thinkers
4. to have fun!

### **Writing Assignments:**

Personal Essay

Argumentative Essay

Descriptive Essay

Mini Writing Exercises

### **WEEK 1**

#### **Monday**

The Writing Process

Reading: "The Art and Science of Handwriting" (Baron)

Afternoon Writing: Draft of Personal Essay

#### **Tuesday**

Thesis Statements and Topic Sentences

Reading: Excerpts from *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*

Afternoon Writing: Personal Essay Peer Review

#### **Wednesday**

Argument Construction and Evidence

Reading: "The Shifting Relationships between Speech and Writing" (Elbow, 135)

Afternoon Writing: Final Version of Personal Essay Due

#### **Thursday**

Introductions

Reading: "The Conversation" (Lesser, 233)

Afternoon Writing: Argumentative Essay Draft

**Friday**

Conclusions

Reading: "From Pencils to Pixels" (Barron, 35)

Afternoon Writing: Argumentative Essay Peer Review

**WEEK 2****Monday**

Effective Sentences

Reading: "My First Writing Machine" (Twain)

Afternoon Writing: Argumentative Essay Final Version Due

**Tuesday**

Voice

Reading: "Simplicity" Zinsser

Afternoon Writing: Descriptive Essay Draft

**Wednesday**

Revision

Afternoon Writing: Descriptive Essay Peer Review

**Thursday**

Presentation Skills

Reading: "Absolute Powerpoint" (Parker, 352)

Afternoon Writing: Descriptive Essay Final Version Due

**Friday**

Presentations and Celebration