

NJSLA Research Simulation Task

Grade 4 Writing

Lesson 6: Writing Quality Body Paragraphs

Rationale

- ✚ To prepare for the NJSLA Research Simulation Task, students should be taught how to organize their reasons and evidence into effective body paragraphs. Understanding this process will prepare students to execute their ideas in clear and concise ways in their prose constructed responses.

Goal

- ✚ To write a clear and organized body paragraph

Task Foci

- ✚ **CCSS W.4.1:** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- ✚ **CCSS W.4.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- ✚ **CCSS W.4.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)
- ✚ **CCSS W.4.5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 4 here.)

Objectives

- ✚ Students will learn the components of a strong body paragraph.
- ✚ Students will write a body paragraph.

Materials

- ✚ Computers with word processing software (per student)
*If unavailable, exercise can be completed on paper.
- ✚ Body Paragraph Handout
- ✚ Texts from Lesson 3
- ✚ Student work from Lessons 3-5



Procedures

- ✚ In this lesson students will use their work from Lessons 3-5 to construct one body paragraph. Make sure you have the PCR prompt and make sure your students have their opening topic statements, reasons, textual support, and outlines.
- ✚ Hand out the Body Paragraph Handout. Discuss:
 - The best way to organize a body paragraph is to keep this general rule in mind: Move from general to specific.
 - Start with the general information: the topic sentence. This sentence (or two) will anchor the paragraph. Beginning with an articulated opening statement will help keep students focused on that topic as they write their supporting sentences.
 - Next, introduce the “quote sandwich.” **“Think of your audience as you write your paragraph. Say I write my topic sentence and then I drop in a quotation and don’t explain it before moving on to the next point. The reader will be very confused. To avoid this, I use what teachers like to call a ‘quote sandwich.’ I first introduce the quotation by providing relevant background information. Then I add the quotation, making sure that I include it into a sentence that is grammatically correct. Finally, I explain how this quotation supports the main idea of this paragraph.”**
 - Note: It’s not necessary to use only one quotation per body paragraph. However, beginner writers will benefit from learning to incorporate one competently before adding more in subsequent writing tasks.
 - The last sentence (or few) should explain how this paragraph supports the opening topic statement.
- ✚ Re-read the PCR prompt with the class. Then have them silently re-read their opening topic statements.
- ✚ Tell students: **“Remember! We are writing body paragraphs, so your opening topic statement will not be in your writing today. However, it is important to keep your opening topic in mind as you write your body paragraph. Everything you write in that paragraph today should support your opening topic by supporting the reasons.”**
- ✚ Next, ask students to turn to their reasons and support and pick the one they’d like to write a paragraph for. **“Does one of your reasons jump out at you? This is the one you want to use for this exercise. And follow this strategy when writing your essays. Often when I start with the supporting paragraph that interests me most, I find that it’s easier to write and can use that inspiration to press on to the next paragraph too.”**
- ✚ Now have students write their paragraphs. Give students X minutes to write their body paragraphs.
- ✚ When finished, have your students print their essays and hand them in.
- ✚ Collect student’s work. Return with feedback before the next lesson.

Assessment

- ✚ Students will demonstrate their understanding by writing well-developed and organized paragraphs that:
 - clearly state the topic sentence
 - introduce quotations/evidence
 - cite accurately
 - explain the evidence
 - conclude by explaining how the paragraph supports the opening topic statement

Extension Activities

-  Have students share their writing in pairs or small groups and discuss their writing process.
-  Practice. Have students use their reasons and support from Lesson 4 to write additional body paragraphs.

Body Paragraph

