

From the Inside Out:

Teaching students how to write an opinion piece in non-linear chunks

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A note on this resource:

Many skills, particularly in sports and the arts are taught in non-consecutive chunks, which students must later assemble together in order to use them in a game or to create a work of art

E.g.

- Basketball skills – dribbling, passing, shooting, blocking, etc.
- Painting skills – brush strokes, colour theory, paint dilution, etc.
- Tennis skills – forehand, backhand, serving, footwork, etc.
- Photography skills – aperture, shutter speed, lens choice, composition, etc.
- Ballet skills – arm and feet positions (1st through 5th), plié, tendu, relevé, etc.
- Guitar playing skills – arpeggios, scales, finger picking, chords, strumming

Writing can be taught in the same fashion. The hardest part is learning how to create each component of an essay.

The easy part is actually assembling the components together (if they have been created in a clear, organized fashion), which can be done using fun visual/kinesthetic activities that can later be used to decorate the classroom.

This resource groups each type of writing skill together using step-by-step instructions and/or graphic organizers to help students avoid getting lost.

When the exercises are complete they can be cut out and then glued with labels for each part on a decorative background in the correct order, creating a solid outline. This outline can then be used to write the first draft of their essays, and to decorate the classroom.

Writing a Series of Paragraphs to teach a concept

Step 1 – State the concept you will be teaching

Step 2 – List each of your supporting arguments that support the truth and validity of the concept you are teaching in the boxes below:

Support #1	Support #2	Support #3

Step 3 – List details and other information that with clarity and depth to your Support:

(This will help readers better understand and feel comfortable believing what you are teaching them)

Details for Support #1	Details for Support #2	Details for Support #3

Step 4 Write a **topic sentence** for each of your Supports (introducing it)

Topic Sentence for Support #1

Topic Sentence for Support #2

Topic Sentence for Support #3

Step 5 Write a **concluding sentence** for each of your Supports (wrapping up the Support and connecting it to your opinion)

Concluding Sentence for Support #1

Concluding Sentence for Support #2

Concluding Sentence for Support #3

Step 6 Assemble the body of your opinion piece:

For each Support create a separate paragraph using the ideas you have written above

- Sentence # 1 – topic sentence
- Sentence #2, 3, and 4 (or more if needed)– details for your Support
- Sentence #5 – concluding sentence

Step 8 Writing the introduction

Now that you know what your essay is about, you can write the introduction and conclusion for your essay:

Introduction:

<p>1. Hook (choose one of the following). Make sure it's related to your topic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A shocking statement• A quote from literature• A quote from a famous person or source• A rhetorical question• A shocking statistic• A humorous musing• A philosophical musing• An analogy• A personal anecdote• A straightforward statement of what your essay topic is	
<p>2. Thesis (already developed above)</p>	
<p>3. Brief description of each of your Supports (based on what you have written above)</p>	

Step 8 Writing the Conclusion

Conclusion

<p>Summary statement: 1-2 sentences that restate the thesis in a new, fresh way to strengthen the essay's main idea</p>	
<p>The Clincher: wraps up all the ideas in the essay to make a lasting impression (<i>similar to the hook in the introduction</i>)</p>	

Step 9 – Putting it all together

Cut out each component using scissors. Create or cut out a label for each section. Glue each piece in order of how it will appear in your essay on a sheet of coloured/decorative paper or Bristol board.

Introduction

Hook

Thesis

Brief description of Supports

Body Paragraph #1

Topic sentence for Support #1

3 supporting details for Support #1

Concluding sentence for Support #1

Body Paragraph #2

Topic sentence for Support #2

3 supporting details for Support #2

Concluding sentence for Support #2

Body Paragraph #3

Topic sentence for Support #3

3 supporting details for Support #3

Concluding sentence for Support #3

Conclusion

Summary statement (restates the thesis in a fresh way)

Additional statement that ties it to the Supports

Clincher