

SESSION 1: Introduction to Literary Essay Structure

Learning Objective: Students will be able to identify the components of a strong literary essay.	
Assessment: Listen to partner talk during the Ac Read flash drafts ---> (could create an if/then, teach thin slicing for SG's or tutor work)	
Academic Standards:	CASEL Standards:

Getting Ready: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare to display an enlarged model essay for the class (smartboard, chart paper, or on your screen if teaching virtually)• Compile a list of your class' ideas about the class text (possible essay claims)	You will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A model essay• A
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CONNECTION

Guide students through an inquiry using a model literary essay.

- Display a model literary essay written on the class text:

In the book "Neighbors," by Tana Reiff, the main character Ramón is determined. He is determined when he refuses to fight in the war in El Salvador, when he builds a new life in the U.S., and when he supports and protects other immigrant families.

In the beginning of the book, Ramón is determined when he refuses to pick a side and fight in the El Salvador civil war. For example, in chapter 3, Guerilla troops come to Ramón's village and try to force him to fight with them, but Ramón tells them "I don't want to be on one side or the other." This shows how he is determined not to pick a side and fight, even when he is threatened.

In the middle of the book, Ramón is determined when he builds a new life in the U.S. For example, Ramón learns a new language (English), and starts a new job at a restaurant. He even opens his own restaurant! Ramón's ability to build a life in a brand new country shows how determined he is.

At the end of the book, Ramón is determined when he supports and protects other immigrant families. For example, he gives Cristina and Carlos, new immigrants to the U.S., a place to stay and helps them get settled. Ramón even goes to Washington to tell his family's immigration story to the U.S. government because he is determined to protect other immigrant families from deportation and separation. These examples show how determined Ramón is to help and protect others.

Ramón is a determined person, and his determination creates a safe and peaceful life for himself,

his family, and other immigrants in the U.S. Determination pays off in life.

- Tell students that this essay was written by a former student of yours who worked quite hard on it over the course of this unit. Explain that it is an example of a strong essay, and you will all work together to consider what makes it “good.” Encourage students to think back on anything they already know or remember about essay writing, either from their on-demand writing assessment or from previous learning experiences.
- Ask students to consider the following (perhaps jotting in their notebooks) as you read the essay aloud:
 - “What do you notice about this essay? What “pieces” or “parts” does it have?”
 - *Sample responses: The title/author of the book, a “big idea” or opinion, evidence (students may say “reasons” or “examples” instead and this is okay) that supports the writer’s opinion, sentences that explain why the evidence is important, a conclusion that states the opinion again, different paragraphs.*
- Ask students to briefly turn and talk to their writing partner, sharing what they noticed. If students begin to discuss the book itself, rather than the structure of the model essay, reroute them to notice the “parts” of the essay they see. You might offer a sentence starter such as “The essay includes…” or model this work by noticing that the essay starts by stating the title and author of the book.
- Facilitate a whole group share out of what students noticed. As students identify components of the essay (ie: an opinion, reasons/examples, etc.), label each part. If you are teaching virtually, you might annotate using a document camera or add a comment to a google doc or slide. If you are teaching face to face, you might write on post-it notes and stick them to an enlarged copy of the essay.

Teaching Tip: Leave the labeled model essay displayed where students can reference it easily throughout the unit. This might be a visible location in your classroom (if teaching in-person) or a digital resource folder (if teaching virtually).

CONCEPTS

Name the teaching point

- “Today I want to teach you that strong essays about literature—or “literary essays”— have a special structure (a way they go). To write a strong literary essay, writers say the name of the book or story, state a clear opinion about it, and give reasons/examples (evidence) from the text.”

Teaching Tip: Students come from varied academic backgrounds, and may have been away from school settings for many years. Don’t assume prior knowledge of specific academic terminology; be mindful of what language is and is not yet accessible. When introducing academic concepts/terminology, choose

language that is clear and comprehensible (ie: “essays about stories”), while subtly introducing the academic vocabulary they are working to acquire (ie: “literary essays”).

- Reveal the new bend I Anchor Chart, which lists the most critical three components at this stage:

To Write a Strong Literary Essay, Writers...

- Name the text (story/book) they are writing about
- State a clear opinion
- Give evidence (reasons/examples) from the story

Guide students through the process of flash drafting an entire literary essay.

- Tell students that today, they will go through the process of “flash drafting” (writing intensely, start to finish) an entire essay using one of your class’ ideas about “Neighbors.” Assure students you will be supporting them the entire time, and that they will have time to prepare and practice together.
- Remind students that they have already generated many strong ideas about “Neighbors.” Display and review a list of ideas (these may be pulled from whole class conversations, individual students’ notebooks, or partner conversations depending on your class structure). Ideas about “Neighbors” may include:

Ramón is determined
Ramón is a hard worker
Ramón is giving
Ramón is a good husband, father, and friend
Kindness has a domino effect in the world
Ramón stands up for what he believes in
It’s important to welcome *all* people in a country

- Allow the class a minute or two (keep this quick) to select the idea they want to write about.

Teaching Tip: At this stage, students’ opinions will likely be about a main character’s personality traits or relationships with other characters—that’s okay! Students will practice generating other kinds of opinions about a text in the following session. Today, select an idea that the class seems in agreement on and excited to write about, not necessarily the most complex/advanced idea. In fact, simpler ideas work better for today.

- Write the class’ chosen idea (opinion) somewhere visible for students to refer back to.
- Tell students that they are now ready to gather evidence (reasons/examples) from the book that could support this opinion. You might briefly point back to the “pieces” students labeled on the model essay or the second bullet on the anchor chart. Have students work in partnerships for several minutes to gather possible evidence.

Teaching Tip: As students work in partnerships, you might: encourage them to open up their books and notebooks to find possible evidence, remind them to find 2-3 pieces of evidence, or coach in with sentence starters that use “when” and “because” (ie: “Ramón is determined when...” and “Ramon is determined because...”) to guide students’ thinking.

- After several minutes, reconvene students to practice their essays aloud. Remind students that essay writers start by saying the name/title of the book they are writing about, and clearly stating their opinion (briefly point back to the first and second bullet points on the anchor chart).
- Ask a volunteer to say aloud how their essay could start.
 - *Sample response: “In the book “Neighbors,” the character Ramón is determined.”*
- Remind students that, next, essay writers want to support their opinion with evidence—reasons or examples—from the book. Start them off by saying “In the beginning of the book, Ramón is determined when...” or “In the beginning of the book, Ramón is determined because...” Then, prompt students to “write aloud” with their partner (if teaching virtually, you might have students turn off their microphones to speak, then type the sentence(s) they decide upon into the chat box).
 - *Sample response: “At the beginning of the book, Ramón is determined when he refuses to join the guerilla troops” or “At the beginning of the book, Ramón is determined because he won’t pick a side or fight in the war.”*
- Repeat this process for the next two pieces of evidence, providing sentence starters such as “In the middle of the book, Ramón is determined when...” and “At the end of the book, Ramón is determined because...”

Teaching Tip: You might briefly let a student or two share their ideas with the whole group as inspiration, but don’t let the momentum slow or restructure this such that only a select few are contributing to a class product. It’s critical that this activity engages all students in meaningful essay writing practice.

CONCRETE PRACTICE

Students flash draft their essays (on paper now) independently

Mid-Practice Teach:

CONCLUSION

Share how this process felt, a sentence you are proud of, something SEL and celebrating their writing volume :)

HW: Finish draft if not finished.

Pre-Read “Thank You, Ma’am”

SESSION 2: Writers Pursue Multiple Lines of Thinking about a Text

Learning Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will generate multiple ideas about a text• Students will generate a variety of kinds of ideas about a text	
Assessment: GO, flash draft 2	
Academic Standards:	CASEL:

Getting Ready: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-read “Thank You, Ma’am” by Langston Hughes.• Prepare for read aloud and Active Engagement.	You will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copies of the “Generating Multiple Ideas About a Text” Graphic Organizer (1 per student); if teaching virtually, paste it into students’ digital notebooks.
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CONNECTION

Facilitate an initial discussion on students’ ideas/thoughts about “Thank You, Ma’am.”

- Ask a volunteer to start the book talk by sharing a connection, question, part of the story that stood out, or a big idea about the story/characters. Encourage students to refer back to the notes they made in their writing notebooks. You might also display the homework thinking prompts:
 - What connections (to your own life, to the world, or to another story) are you making?
 - What questions do you have about this story?
 - What ideas are you growing about the characters?
 - Which lines or parts of the story stand out to you for any reason?

Teaching Tip: As added support, you might display the “Ways to add on to a discussion” sentence starters:

<u>Ways we can add on to a discussion:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I agree with you because...”• “I thought about this differently (disagree) because...”
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- "Can you further explain what you mean by that?"
- "Where/what in the book makes you think that?"
- "That idea connects to..."
- "This idea makes me think about..."
- "This makes me wonder..."

CONCEPTS

Something about how they all came with different ideas about thank You, Ma'am, are already naturally growing multiple ideas. And, we worked together in discussion to grow even more ideas/refine our ideas...here are some more ways to structure that thinking (the things they might look for/categories)

Teaching Point: "Today I want to teach you that writers often come up with more than one idea about a text. For example, in addition to character traits, writers might consider characters' relationships, characters' changes, or lessons characters learn. Then, they choose a strong idea to draft."

Active Engagement:

Read "Thank you, M'am" aloud, ask students to listen with an ear towards growing ideas in multiple categories. Pause video and jot ideas anytime you want. Display the categories on screen as I read.

Read Aloud Plan for "Thank You, Ma'am"

Pg. ... "quote...."	Model growing different kinds of ideas throughout reading....

Teaching Tip: Providing the opportunity to read a text multiple times—especially in different ways (independent/silent vs. in class/read aloud)—greatly supports comprehension and meaning-making for emergent readers and language learners alike.

CONCRETE PRACTICE

Come up with multiple ideas about either "Thank you, M'am" (student can add more ideas to what we came up with as a class, probably the more scaffolded version) or "Neighbors." Complete your own GO.

Mid-Practice Tip:

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CONCLUSION

Tell your writing partner which idea you are most excited about and would like to choose to draft. Encourage students to choose a different kind of idea (ie: character changes if they've only been writing about traits).

SESSION 3: Writers Test the Strength of Their Ideas Through Debating Them with Others

SESSION 4: Gathering Strong Evidence

SESSION 5: Raising the Level of Our Essays by Saying More

Something to teachers about how students may elaborate with just more related facts/examples, and that's okay. Some may move towards analysis (explain why a piece of evidence matters—support their opinion) and that's okay too. That kind of analysis will be taught in the next lesson so it's not necessary to guide them towards it specifically, here, but it's fine if they naturally do some of that.

Learning Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will elaborate within their essays, adding on to their reasons/examples with further information.• Students will practice using summary and quotations as a form of textual evidence.	
Academic Standards:	CASEL:

Getting Ready: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prep for your modeling (reword this obvi)	You will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
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CONNECTION

Guide students through the process of elaboration using an engaging image.

Look at the photo, describe in detail. When you think you're done, say more.

CONCEPTS

State the teaching point.

“Writers, today I want to teach you that one way that essayists raise the level of their essays is to say more about each reason/example. You can do this by including summaries or exact lines from the story to better explain each reason/example.”

Model how a writer elaborates by including summaries and exact lines from the story.

Explain initial idea (show as outline to reiterate last lesson):

Show first essay draft.

In the book “Neighbors,” by Tana Reiff, the character Ramón changes from needing help from others to helping others in need.

In the beginning of the book, Ramón is in danger and must make the journey to the United States, where he needs help to build a new life.

In the middle of the book, Ramón has built a stable life in the U.S. and begins helping new immigrants become settled.

At the end of the book, Ramón and Pilar go to Washington to help protect other immigrant families from deportation and separation.

All of these examples show how Ramón changes from needing help from others to helping others in need!

Model adding summaries and exact lines to SAY MORE about each reason/example.

Model adding to the first paragraph yourself.

Second paragraph, students turn and talk: what could be added? What are some specific events we could summarize or exact lines (quotes) from the book that show how Ramón helps new immigrants in the U.S.?

-shared writing, add what they say, but some possibilities are below in blue as a guide.

In the book “Neighbors,” by Tana Reiff, the character Ramón changes from needing help from others to helping others in need.

In the beginning of the book, Ramón is in danger and must make the journey to the United States, where he needs help to build a new life. **First, the nuns help him. “Come with us,” said one of the**

nuns, we will take you to a safe place.” Then, Sarah and Barney Fuller help Ramón by giving him a place to stay, feeding him, and helping him find a job.

In the middle of the book, Ramón has built a stable life in the U.S. and begins helping new immigrants become settled. He helps Cristina and Carlos, immigrants from El Salvador, by giving them a home and jobs at their Pupusa restaurant. When Cristina and Carlos’ children arrive in the U.S., Ramón and Pilar take them in, too. Ramón also helps new immigrants by raising his nephew’s daughter, Gabriela. “We will find her...we will bring her to Maryland. We will take care of her. We will love her until you are together again.”

At the end of the book, Ramón and Pilar help protect other immigrant families from deportation and separation. They travel all the way to Washington to tell their story and explain to the U.S. government how important TPS is for families like theirs. ““With all our hearts we want to stay safe. We can do that only here’.”

All of these examples show how Ramón changes from needing help from others to helping others in need!

CONCRETE PRACTICE

CONCLUSION

Session ??: Checklists

CONNECTION

Name the teaching point.