STELLAR
Essay Writing:
STAAR® Techniques to Engage Learners in Literacy and Academic Rigor
English I–IV
STELLAR Essay Writing

STAAR® Techniques to Engage Learners in Literacy and Academic Rigor

English I–IV

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How to Use This Book

*STELLAR Essay Writing* contains four modes of writing that fall under the informational umbrella: expository, procedural, persuasive, and analytical. *STELLAR Essay Writing* supports three planning options for each mode, plus additional activities and games.

**Option One** encompasses maximal instruction of modes with prompts given when appropriate. The suggested time frame for a single mode and prompt, based on 45-minute instructional periods, is a total of 5 days for instruction, 2 days for writing, 2 days for learning opportunities, and 1 day for debrief and review. An overview of the planning steps for Option One along with a sample calendar immediately follows this foreword.

**Option Two** documents student improvement through baseline testing, targeted instruction, and retesting. The suggested time frame for a single mode and prompt, based on 45-minute instructional periods, is 2 days for baseline testing, 5 days for instruction and practice, 2 days for retesting, and 1 day for review and debrief. An overview of the planning steps for Option Two along with a sample calendar follows this foreword.

**Option Three** strictly consists of test preparation (e.g., practice in test-taking skills, gaining familiarity with format and vocabulary, understanding the expectations of a standardized assessment). The instructor may use the prompts by mode to prepare students for the STAAR EOC English I–II and English III College and Career Readiness Exam. The suggested time frame, based on 45-minute instructional periods, is to dedicate 1 day for review and debrief for every 1 day of assessment. A sample planning calendar follows this foreword.

**A Note to the Teacher:** Every *STELLAR Essay Writing* unit is designed to engage students’ interest by addressing subjects and content they will encounter in their everyday lives. All activities and prompts contained herein are suggestions. Please preview all selections and materials for applicability and appropriateness before using the resources in your classroom.
Introduction to Expository Writing

An expository essay explains, clarifies, and informs using factual support. Expository writing may contain several different text structures, including cause and effect, contrast and comparison, problem and solution, sequence, and description.

Like other types of essays, the expository essay must have clear and concise wording. It is acceptable to write the essay in second person, but third person is preferred. The method of development should be chosen based on its applicability to the topic. For example, one would not choose contrast and comparison if the essay were about the best way to budget money. However, problem and solution would be an acceptable text structure for an essay about budgeting money. Initially deciding upon the method of development will define your style and create a more cohesive essay.

An expository essay must have a clear, concise, strong thesis statement, and each paragraph will typically have a topic sentence. Although the thesis and topic sentences may be implied, their intended meaning must be clear.

Each paragraph should have the most important points emphasized and supported by factual data and examples and contain valid information. Expository essays are unsuccessful when they are subjective, contain irrelevant information, and are based on information that cannot be proven.

The best writing is brief and concise and limits each paragraph to a single topic that is a new idea, not repeated information. The essay should contain an introduction and conclusion, but each section does not necessarily have to be one paragraph in length. The message itself is more important than irrelevant development designed to fit into a formula.
# Prereading and Prewriting Strategies for Expository

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Task Directions</th>
<th>Suggested Time Allotment</th>
<th>Applications and Benefits</th>
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| Mapping/Clustering         | • Instruct students to write the topic in the middle of a sheet of paper.  
• Ask students to write down everything associated with the topic. Have the students write in a circular pattern around the topic.  
• Tell students to place a circle around each association and draw a line linking each circle and the topic.  
• After circling and linking each association, students will repeat the process (writing connections in a circular pattern) for each association to the previous association. | 10 minutes               | Applications  
• Share out group/partner and discuss to develop understanding of concepts.  
• Have students highlight what they believe to be key terms and important ideas and cross out everything with weak or no association.  
• Use when dealing with analytical and reflective skills. |

**Benefits**  
• Develops a comfort zone with the text.  
• Pinpoints difficult areas or weaknesses in comprehension.  
• Promotes analytical and reflective skills.
Analytical Writing (Literary)
Prompt #3

Think carefully about how Austen uses language to create external conflict.

Write an essay analyzing how Austen’s use of language contributes to plot structure.

Be sure to—
- clearly state your thesis
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- provide relevant and specific evidence from the text
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling
Interactive Reading and Writing Strategies for Analytical (Informational)

This section contains interactive reading and writing strategies for use during the reading and writing processes and activities to engage students in active critical, strategic, and creative thinking about analytical writing (informational).

Interactive strategies used during the reading and writing processes activate a deeper understanding of the ideas and concepts in an objective and diagnostic manner while students are involved in the cognitive processes. These strategies also give students experience at understanding how language is manipulated to create meaning; through this process, the students become more adept readers and writers. The interactive strategies also provide insecure learners with a more concrete approach to abstract ideas.

Using the same strategy for both reading and writing creates a stronger reading and writing connection, promotes greater understanding of the topic, and supports the application of critical thinking.

The three recommended interactive strategies for analytical (and adapted to informational) are Chunking, Charting, and Summarizing.

Note: Students using ethos, pathos, and logos as part of the analysis should include that information in all of the appropriate steps.
Humans and their pets have a very special bond with each other. To some people pets hold more value to them than their children. Humans and their pets are not too much different from one another. Humans are animals. We're just more advanced mentally. Humans can communicate by sounds, facial expressions and touch with their pets, which makes a unique bond. As humans we have needs and standards that need to be met and pets do too. There are a lot of companies and arrangements that have come up over the years that are meant to help save and shelter animals. Now there are even laws for the animals defense. Dogs are also known as Man's best friend and have proven themselves to be most loyal pet to a person. This all means that animals have come along and have earned them selves a special place in the hearts of people. Dogs are needed just as human beings are and any other living species. We all have roles and we all breathe the same air. For various reasons it is still hard for people to realize this. Hopefully overall thinking will change more and animals will be categorized with and treated like the rest of us.