*English Instructional Plan – Expository Writing for Grades 4 and 5*

**Primary Strand: Writing**

**Integrated Strand/s: Communication and Multimodal Literacies, Reading, Research**

**Essential Understanding:**

All students should:

•understand that writers use the writing process, including planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing (Grades 4 and 5)

•understand the domains of writing include composing, written expression, and usage/mechanics (Grades 4 and 5)

•understand voice shows an author’s personality, awareness of audience, and passion for the topic, adding liveliness and energy to writing. (Grade 5)

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

To be successful with this standard, students are expected to:

* recognize different forms of writing have different patterns of organization (Grade 4 and 5)
	+ descriptive/expository
		- clearly introduce a topic and organize information in paragraphs
		- use facts, definitions, opinions, quotations, details, or other examples and information to develop the topic
		- use specific vocabulary to inform and explain the topic; and provide a conclusion related to the topic

**Primary SOL:**

4.7e) Recognize different forms of writing have different patterns of organization.

 f) Organize writing to convey a central idea.

 g) Write a clear topic sentence focusing on the main idea.

 i) Elaborate writing by including details to support the purpose.

5.7d) Introduce and develop a topic, incorporating evidence and supporting details.

 e) Organize information to convey a central idea.

 f) Recognize different forms of writing have different patterns of organization, including story

 structure for narrative writing.

 g) Write a clear topic sentence focusing on the main idea.

 j) Use precise and descriptive vocabulary to create tone and voice.

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

4.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.

4.9 The student will demonstrate comprehension of information resources to create a research product.

5.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.

5.9 The student will find, evaluate, and select appropriate resources to create a research product.

**Academic Background/Language:**

The teacher will introduce the terms needed to write expository pieces of writing (topic sentence, main idea/central idea and exploring text features). Main/ Central idea is the point that the author wants you to remember the most or the main important point of the passage. Details include the facts or evidence to support the main idea.

Sentence Starters:

* The main topic is \_
* The central idea is\_
* It is important to understand \_
* One key detail to support the main idea is \_

## Materials

* One informational picture book with a focus on going beneath the surface. Consider books such as *Down, Down, Down* (Jenkins) or *The Street Beneath My Feet* (Guillain and Zommer)
* Chart Paper and Marker or Interactive White Board
* Animal Photograph (animal that lives below ground or below the ocean surface)

## Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?

1. The teacher shows a photograph or video of an animal that lives below ground or below the ocean surface and asks, “What questions do you have as you look at this image/video? What do you wonder?” Turn to a partner and share your thoughts. Teacher explains, “Sometimes we need to seek resources such as books and websites to help us learn more about a topic. With these research materials, authors provide text features to help us such as definitions, captions, diagrams, or expert opinions.”
2. The teacher states, “We read expository books to find out lots of important information. Today for our writing mini-lesson, we are going to explore a book about living beneath the surface and we will explore and describe our important findings about the layers of the earth or the ocean floor. We will discover new facts as we delve or go deep beneath the surface.
3. Conduct an interactive read aloud of a title such as *Down, Down, Down* by Steve Jenkins. Teacher can revisit this book from earlier language arts instruction and spotlight a few key pages or introduce the text as a new read aloud (depending on time available for the mini-lesson). During the read aloud, the teacher can ask questions such as, “What do you notice other than the main print that can help us uncover new information? How do you know these facts are true or real? Can you make a connection to other scientific texts we have studied?”
4. Place students in cooperative groups. Each group is provided a page of the text to explore. As students finish early, they will explore the other text features present (definitions, diagrams, expert opinions).
5. On a chart, create 2 columns. Column one will be titled, “Describe Objects Found Beneath the Surface” and column two is “More Questions to Research.” Students form collaborative groups and do a gallery walk where they work in teams to record responses from the page of text that the group explored.
6. Teacher picks a page to model writing for students using a mentor text. The teacher will show students how to determine the main idea and supporting details for this portion of the text. The teacher then asks students to turn to a partner and identify related research questions to explore about going beneath the surface. The teacher models how to take this question and develop a paragraph. Begin by demonstrating how to create a strong introductory sentence or hook. The Main/Central idea is the point that the author wants you to remember the most or the most important point of the paragraph. What main topic keeps coming up in the text? Other discoveries are supporting details and should stay on the topic of the paragraph. Model eliminating supporting details that do not fit or do not belong.
7. Next, students select one question to explore further. At independent writing time, students will write paragraphs demonstrating something living beneath the surface including a sentence with a main idea and supporting details which stay on the topic. The teacher states, “Off you go to your writing space to give this type of expository writing a try.”
8. The teacher circulates during independent writing time and conferences with writers. The teacher will ask questions such as, “How is it going? “What is going well in your writing? Why?” What text features will you try using? Do all of your supporting ideas fit in the piece you are developing?
9. At the conclusion of independent writing, the teacher gains the students attention for a sharing time. Students turn to a partner and discuss what new writing technique they tried out from today’s lesson. The teacher reminds students of the importance of utilizing non-fiction text features to get more information about a text and how to use the main idea and supporting details when writing expository pieces.

**Assessment (Formative)**

* Teacher observes student interactions and responses to questions during the lesson, group work, and conferences. Teacher collects and records anecdotal notes.
* If this piece of writing is developed further across additional lessons, the teacher may wish to use a teacher or student developed writing rubric to assess content.

**Reading** **Connections:**

* Making connections to other expository texts that have been read.
* Focus on comprehension strategies such as asking text questions, summarizing, or determining main idea and supporting details.
* Examining mentor texts and highlighting text features, topic sentences, details, and more will help students explore author’s craft. Students should be encouraged to examine their own writing in comparison for reflection and goal setting.

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* Students continue to additional paragraphs focused on what is found below the surface.
* Students research a new habitat and use books and websites to seek new information.
* Add a third section to the charts titled “Things we found out” and model recording responses. Students record responses.
* Make a booklet which contains facts, questions, and answers on a particular habitat.
* Start with a global question and use this lesson as the start of a project-based learning experience.
* Follow up with a mini-lesson on how to write an effective conclusion after elaborating a piece of writing. Add a conclusion sentence to the paragraph already created.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Students are provided a partially completed graphic organizer to get them started.
* Students work with partners or in teams to create the piece of writing.
* Teacher creates more sample paragraphs with students to further model the process prior to independent writing time.
* Anchor chart is created with students to build understanding of a main idea and topic sentence.

*Note: The following pages are intended for classroom use for students as a visual aid to learning.*

Sample photograph for opening activity:



*Figure 1 Image from: https:// www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/burrow/ Photo Credit: Edward Mattis, MyShot*

Burrowing owls use ready-made or found burrows, such as a burrow abandoned by prairie dogs.