*English Instructional Plan – Introducing Opinion Writing: Grades 1 and 2*

**Primary Strand: Writing 1.12, 2.10**

**Integrated Strand/s: Communication and Multimodal Literacies**

**Essential Understanding:**

All students should:

* understand that writers communicate ideas for a variety of purposes
* understand that writers plan, write, revise, and share their writing with others
* understand that writers use the writing process including planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing
* understand that written communication should be well-planned and clear to the reader.

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

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

* identify the intended audience and purpose for writing (e.g., letters, stories, journals, etc.)
* participate in teacher-directed brainstorming activities to generate ideas (1st grade)
* participate in shared writing projects
* use prewriting strategies, including, but not limited to: webbing, clustering, brainstorming, and semantic mapping, to organize ideas and information
* write to express an opinion with supporting reason(s)
* generate ideas and organize information before writing (2nd grade)
* write informative/explanatory pieces that introduce the topic, use facts or opinions, and provide a concluding statement (2nd grade)

**Primary SOLs:**

1.12f Write to express an opinion and give a reason.

2.10g Write to express an opinion and provide a reason for support.

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

**1.12 The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative, descriptive, and opinion.**

1. Identify audience and purpose.
2. Use prewriting activities to generate ideas.
3. Focus on one topic.
4. Organize writing to suit purpose.
5. Share writing with others.

**2.10 The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative, descriptive, opinion and expository**

1. Understand writing as a process.
2. Identify audience and purpose.
3. Use prewriting strategies to generate ideas before writing.
4. Use strategies for organization according to the type of writing.

**Academic Background/Language:**

Students love to naturally share their opinions; however, teachers will need to strategically build students’ vocabulary around the differences between opinions and facts. Students need to understand their opinion may be different than the opinions of others. In addition, students will need to learn to provide ideas that support their opinions.

Sentence Starters:

* My opinion is \_ because \_
* One idea that supports my opinion is \_
* One fact I learned was \_

## Materials

* Mentor texts (list included in reading connections)
* sentence strips
* chart paper, markers

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

(This lesson is intended to span over several days. The first steps are intended to introduce the concept of opinion writing, and the later steps are written to develop a writing project for writing an opinion piece).

1. Start by using movement to help students build an understanding of the definition of “opinion.” Have students move to one side of the room to express an opinion. For example, “Move to this side of the room if you like cats and to the other side of the room if you prefer dogs.” After students move to their sides of the room, have them turn and talk to a partner to explain why they like dogs or cats. “Now, move to this side of the room if you like pepperoni pizza better or move to the other side of the room if you like cheese pizza better.” Again, have them talk with a partner to explain why they like cheese or pepperoni better. Some other possible topics for moving to one side of the room are: hamburgers/cheeseburgers, soccer/baseball, summer/winter, cake/pie, Minecraft/Pokemon, Pete the Cat/The Cat in the Hat.
2. After several rounds of doing the moving opinion activity, explain to students that when they were sharing their feelings about topics, they were sharing their opinions. Explain that an opinion is a belief, judgment, or way of thinking about something.
3. Briefly discuss the difference between a fact and an opinion. (This is not a separate SOL, but will develop background knowledge.) Use a piece of chart paper, and divide it into a T chart with Fact and Opinion as headers. Write a fact about cats under the Fact heading - “Cats have fur.” Write an opinion about cats under the Opinion Heading - “I think that cats’ fur is very pretty.” Continue adding a few more facts and opinions and have the students read them with you as you write and read them. Facts - “Cats purr and meow.” “Cats lick their coats to keep them clean.” Opinions - “I think that cats are the softest pets.” “Cats are more fun than dogs.”
4. Remind students of the opinions they expressed in the moving activity. Model writing an opinion from the activity. “I think that cheese pizza tastes better than pepperoni pizza.” Distribute sentence strips to students and have them write one of their opinions from the lesson on the sentence strip using your model as a guide. Students should be encouraged to add a drawing to their strips if time permits.
5. Here are some opinion sentence starters that can be shared with students to help them begin to write their sentences: (I think \_, I feel \_, I know \_, I believe \_, In my opinion \_, The best thing about \_, Everyone should \_, \_is better than \_ because \_).
6. Allow students to share their sentences from their sentence strips. As they share, have them say, “This is my opinion.”
7. Use one of the suggested mentor texts to introduce the concept that when someone has an opinion, he/she needs to give reasons to support that opinion. After reading the text, create a chart with the students and write the opinion expressed by a character in the book, and then list the reasons that the character has that opinion.
8. Have the students choose an opinion that they feel strongly about so that they could write reasons to support it. Remind them of the mentor text that you chose and how the reasons were given in the text. Make a topic chart with the students for them to use to select their opinion. Some possible topics to add to the chart are: favorite food, favorite dessert, favorite book, favorite flavor of ice cream, favorite board game, etc. Topics for 2nd graders could be: homework/no homework, more technology/less technology, year round school/shorter school year, chores at home/no chores.
9. After students select their topics, select a topic and model the prewriting step of the writing process. Write lasagna in the center of chart paper and model brainstorming reasons you like it by using a web or jot list. Cheesy, yummy, great sauce, warms my belly. Have students do their prewriting/brainstorming after watching you model.
10. Use chart paper to create an anchor chart of drafting the opinion piece. Model turning the prewriting ideas into sentences. Write, “My favorite food is lasagna.” Reason 1: “I think lasagna is cheesy and yummy.” Reason 2: “Lasagna has great sauce.” Reason 3: “Lasagna warms up my belly.” Restate opinion: “Lasagna is my favorite food.” (For first graders, you may not want to include 3 reasons. It will depend how much writing experience they have had at this point.First graders do not have to include a concluding sentence.) Have students draft their piece after watching you model.
11. Help students edit their writing and encourage peer editing when possible.
12. Allow students to choose how they want to publish their opinion writing. Give them some examples like writing it as a letter, making a poster, doing a PowerPoint or Google slide presentation or writing it in paragraph form.

**Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)**

**Formative -** The sentence strips will be a formative assessment to determine if students understand what an opinion is.

**Summative -** Assess the final product that students do for their published opinion writing.

**Reading Connections:**

Suggested mentor texts for opinion writing:

* I Wanna Iguana by Karen Kaufman Orloff
* I Wanna a New Room by Karen Kaufman Orloff
* The Perfect Pet by Margie Palatini
* Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus by Mo Willems
* Click Clack Moo Cows that Type by Doreen Cronin
* Hey Little Ant by Phillip Hoose, Hannah Hoose
* Duck! Rabbit! by Amy Krouse Rosenthal

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

* Make an opinion writing center using the topic chart created in step 8.
* Continue to add topics to the opinion topic chart through the year as discussions arise.
* In content units, have students express opinions about science and social studies topics. For example, which plant tastes best? Which plant is prettiest? Which animal is the most/least helpful?

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Scribe for students who have difficulty getting their thoughts on paper.
* Differentiate the number of reasons that students are required to write.
* Use visuals of the topics to illustrate the choices in the activity in step one.