Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA1) Characteristics of an Informative Article

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Teaching Point(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students will identify the organizational structure of an Informative Article.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students will draft a Short Write entry as a brainstorming strategy.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>W.5.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
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<th>Materials:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Writing notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mentor Text: Zap! Pow! A History of the Comics Journeys Unit 4, T36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organization Chart: model and student copies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Short Write sample: teacher model</td>
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<tr>
<th>Connection:</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Today we begin studying a type of informative writing called an Informative Article. You will choose a topic you know a lot about and then write an article to inform your audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s exciting to begin writing in a different genre and there are so many interesting topics to consider. Before you write an Informative Article, we will study the structure of this type of informative or nonfiction writing. This will help you understand what to include when you write your informative piece.”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Teach (modeling)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Remember writers, an Informative Article is a brief piece of writing with the purpose of explaining some interesting or unusual information. The writer relates facts with specific details and/or examples using information s/he knows well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class reading of Mentor Text:</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Today let’s read together an example of an informative article in your reading anthology. Please open your text to ‘Zap! Pow! A History of the Comics’. As we read ask yourself, ‘How is this article different than a narrative?’</td>
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<tr>
<th>Active Engagement (guided practice)</th>
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<tr>
<td>After reading, students partner share and discuss what they notice about this writing genre. “Now partners, share what features or characteristics you have noticed about an informative article.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student responses:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Purpose</strong> is to inform or explain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Introduction</strong> includes a clear focus statement or thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Body</strong> links to the thesis with supporting ideas and details/facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Conclusion</strong> brings the article to a close</td>
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Students return to the large group. Teacher elicits input from students and then guides a whole class discussion on the structure of the Informative Article. “As writers, let’s examine how the author uses a Simple Informative Structure to build or organize this article.”
Introduce the template-display on data projector.

- **Topic:** “What is the topic of this article?”
- **The Introduction:** “The Introduction paragraph tells the thesis or main idea. In this article the thesis is. . .”
- **The Body:** “The next paragraphs provide facts with supporting details that elaborate on the thesis.” Continue shared discussion -- 2nd paragraph, 3rd paragraph)
- **Conclusion:** “Writers, think back to the strategies we learned in our personal narratives. What strategy has the author used to bring this writing to a close or conclusion? How could the author have made the closing stronger?”

**Link to Independent Practice:**
“Understanding the organizational structure is key to a well-written Informative Article. The structure tells what parts to include in writing the draft. As we get ready to write our articles, I want you to brainstorm a list of at least 10 things you know a lot about. This could be things you do at school, at home, sports you play—anything that you are an expert at.”

**Closure:**
“Share with your table your list of 10. If you hear something on someone else’s list, feel free to add it to your own. When you have finished sharing, circle 3 from your list that you are most interested in writing about.”

**Notes:**

**Resources and References**
Lesson adapted from Tressa Bauer “Writing as an Expert”
ORGANIZATION
Simple Informative Structure

TOPIC:

Introduction (includes the thesis statement)

Topic:
Supporting Details:

Topic:
Supporting Details:

Topic:
Supporting Details:

Conclusion:
Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA2) Creating an Expert List and Generating Ideas

Writing Teaching Point(s):
- Students will brainstorm ideas and create an ‘expert’ topic focus.
- Students will generate facts and supporting details.

Standard(s):
W.5.2.d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
W.5.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Materials:
- Writing notebook
- Chart: ‘Expert Topic Ideas’
- Teacher model of ‘expert topic’ and generating facts and supporting details.

Connection:
“In our last session we learned that an informative article introduces a main idea or topic, then provides facts and elaborates with supporting details. In order to write an informative article, the author needs to be an ‘expert’ or know a lot about the topic.

We all have knowledge we can share with an audience. Today you will further explore topics or ideas for an informative article.”

Teach (model)
Students review ‘Idea Bank’ in writing notebooks.
“Let’s begin by reviewing the list of expert topics you created yesterday. Is there a topic that excites or interests you? Do you have interesting information to share with an audience?

As you plan for an informative article you need to think hard about an ‘expert’ topic.”

Model for students on data projector or chart, creating a list of categories and ideas.
“Remember, the purpose of an informative article is to explain or teach the reader something that is important to me. So, what am I very, very interested in?

Places I Know Well:
Is there a familiar or cozy place I want to write about? Maybe my grandma’s kitchen, a neighborhood park, or a favorite restaurant?

Things I’ve Learned: Is there something I’ve learned that required persistence and determination? Or maybe an activity that has been especially rewarding? Maybe earning extra money, caring for a pet, planting a vegetable garden or babysitting.
Treasured Objects: I ask myself, is there something I’ve collected or saved that has special meaning? Maybe I could explain or teach an audience about a bike or skateboard? Or perhaps a diary or journal?

Special or Famous People: Is there someone in my family who has a special story? A Grandparent, brother or sister? Or have I read or studied someone famous that has left a lasting impression? George Washington, Marion Anderson, etc.

Animals: I don’t own a pet, but maybe there is an animal I’ve observed in my own backyard or neighborhood? Hummingbirds or raccoons? It might be an animal that has long been a fascination? Maybe an animal I’ve read a lot about like sharks or lizards?

Activities I Like: Is there an activity or interest I am passionate about? Maybe dance or hiking? Cooking or skateboarding?

Active Engagement
Add ideas to the list until there are several suggestions in each category. Once a list is built ask students to create their own ‘Expert’ topic list.

“Now it’s your turn. Create your own ‘expert’ listing. You should have several ideas, so remember to include ideas from several categories. You can copy ideas from our class chart but be sure to add some of your own” (Teacher monitors and assists students. Add some of the student ideas on class chart).

Teach (model)
Teacher models choosing an ‘expert’ topic.
“Look at all these good ideas! Writers, once you have several ideas, pick one or two topics that you are especially excited about. Consider your audience. What topic might your reader find interesting too?

Let me show you what I mean. I’m thinking . . . What do I know very well? What could I teach someone else? Hmm. . . I know some interesting information about Cooking. I know that many people learn to cook by following family recipes and then learn new techniques from cookbooks or online sites like Food Network. I know that there are many cooking shows that will teach you to cook and bake. Some of the shows are even competitions. I think I want to write about Cooking, so I am going to write Cooking in the middle of my page.”

Teacher models elaborating or stretching ideas with details.
“Now to make sure I have enough information to share with a reader, I’ll quickly write ideas---words and phrases---that relate to my topic. (Example)
**Link to Independent Practice:**
“Carefully reread your ‘expert’ list and pick a topic. Make a list of phrases and words that you would use when writing about this topic.” (Note: you may want to require students to brainstorm several expert topics to help them choose the best.)

**Closure:**
Ask students to share their topic, words and phrases with the class. Try to get a variety of examples.
“Tomorrow we will be working in small groups / partners to determine if each writer has enough information for an article and we will begin organizing our ideas.”

**Notes:**

**Resources and References**
Lesson adapted from Tressa Bauer “Writing as an Expert”
Portland Public Schools
Expert Topic: **Cooking**

**Brainstorm Facts and Details (What I Know)**

Cooking tools are important

Cookbooks

Recipes—family secrets and new

Ingredients

Attention to detail

Sharing food

Measurement matters

Fresh v frozen foods

Plating food

Some consider cooking and baking very different

Taste-testing

Rachel Ray, Fannie Farmer, Emeril Lagasse, Guy Fieri
Expert Topic: __________________________

Brainstorm Facts and Details (What I Know)
Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA3)
Sorting Words/Phrases and Creating Main Ideas

Writing Teaching Point(s):
- Students will ‘sort’ related words and phrases to create main ideas.
- Students will confirm sufficient information to write an informative article.
- Students will compose a Short Write entry.

Standard(s):
W.5.2.a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Materials:
- Writing notebook and completed assignment from Lesson 2
- Teacher model: sample brainstorm
- Colored pencils or highlighters

Connection:
“Each of you has created an ‘expert’ list and brainstormed some key phrases for at least one of your topics. Today you will group or sort your thoughts and decide if you have enough information to write an article that informs an audience.”

Teach (model)
“Authors write about what they know. If the writer doesn’t have enough information s/he has to do research. In this article I want you to write about something you already know very well, so that we can focus on the writing rather than the research process. One way writers decide if they have enough information is to ‘sort’ ideas into groups.”

Teacher models sorting like ideas and supporting details.
“Yesterday I shared with you words and phrases about cooking. I must be certain I have enough information to write a good article about this topic.

First, I’ll begin to sort these words and phrases. I’ll start by looking for an idea the words have in common. I see that there are many phrases that relate to recipes. I’m going to underline all these words in red.

Can anyone identify another idea group in this listing? I’ll underline this new grouping in a different color.” Continue categorizing: cooks, food, cooking v baking.

Oops, I don’t have enough information (cooking v baking) in this category to make a good paragraph. So I’ll either brainstorm more information, combine the idea with another grouping, or decide to eliminate this fact from my article.”
Active Engagement
“Now it is time for you to review your supporting ideas. Reread the words/phrases you have listed and look for something they have in common. Underline ideas that go together with one color. Make sure each category supports the main topic.” Teacher monitors to be sure students understand the process.

Partner Share
“I see that most of you have a great start on your ‘sorting’. Share the categories you have found with your partner. Tell how the ideas in the categories are similar or ‘fit together’.”

Link to Independent Practice:
“Continue sorting your words and phrases. (Remind students to use a new color for each group.) Be sure you have enough information in a category. Are there any categories you can combine? Do you have some new ideas to add? You will want to have at least 3 categories with a variety of information. Remember if you don’t have enough information you need to either add more details or try a new topic.”

Closure:
Ask a few students to share one of their categories and supporting details. Then tell why the category is important and supports the main idea or thesis.

“In our next session you will use these gathered facts to further plan the writing.”

Notes:

Resources and References
Portland Public Schools
Lesson adapted from Tressa Bauer “Writing as an Expert”
Expert Topic: Cooking

Brainstorm Facts and Details (What I Know)

Cooking tools are important
Cookbooks—Fannie Farmer,
Recipes—family secrets and new
Favorites and Awfuls
Ingredients
Attention to detail
Sharing food
Measurement matters
Fresh v frozen foods
Plating food
Some consider cooking and baking very different
Specialty Items
Taste-testing
Rachel Ray, Emeril Lagasse, Guy Fieri, Gerry Garvin
Staples
**Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA4)**

**Creating an Organized Plan**

**Writing Teaching Point(s):**
- Students will create a plan for a non-fiction draft

**Standard(s):**
W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Materials:**
- Template: Simple Informative Structure, previous lesson
- Sample organizer or ‘flow chart’
- Expert topic and idea list - teacher and student work from previous lesson
- Writing notebooks

**Connection:**
“You’ve worked very hard selecting a topic and brainstorming information for your article. Today you will learn how to use the organizational structure of an informative article to organize or plan your writing.”

**Teach (modeling):**

Display and review Simple Informative Structure.

“Writers, let’s take a moment to review the organizational structure of an informative article. Remember, an informative article begins with an introduction and ends with a conclusion. The middle section, or body of the article, contains at least three sections or parts that explain or give information to the reader.

In some nonfiction text, the parts are organized for a particular reason. The author decides which order will make the information most clear or understandable for the reader.”

Teacher models organizing ideas in a plan or ‘flow chart’ (see sample following lesson).

“Let me show you what I mean. Take a look at this organizer I’ve made for an article about backyard vegetable gardens. You can see that I have drawn a series of boxes. In the first box, I wrote ‘intro’ and a word/phrase stating my purpose for the article.

Then, in the next series of boxes, I wrote the names of the sections. Each section, or box, tells the order in planting a vegetable garden. I put them in order because it tells the necessary sequence of steps for growing a vegetable garden.

In the final box I wrote ‘conclusion’ since I will write an ending to close my article.”
### Active Engagement (guided practice):

Students create an organizer for an informative article. Teacher guides students using the ‘flow chart’ template.

"Let’s talk about how to plan and organize your article.

- **Draw a series of five boxes down your paper, like my model or sample.**

- **We know the first box is the introduction, so write a word or short phrase to note the topic and purpose.**
  
  “Watch me as I refer to my Expert list and Ideas page. Hmm... I want to explain some interesting information about cooking. So I write ‘cooking is for everyone’ in the introduction.

- **What about the body? What do you want the reader to know?**
  
  When I review my Expert list I see that there are three groupings: recipes, ingredients and final results. These are the three topic ideas, and I like the order or sequencing. I will write these words next to the boxes in my flow chart.

- **Look back at your brainstorming sheet and the underlined groupings. What are they?**

- **Is there a way (and is it necessary?) to order these sections so it makes the information more logical and clear?**

- **With a word/phrase note the main idea of the first section.**"

### Link to Independent Practice:

“You’ve got a good start with your organizer. I’d like you to finish the rest of it for yourself. From now on, you can make a simple organizational plan when you write an informative piece. Remember to think about how to order the sections so that the information will make sense to the reader.”

### Closure:

Partner Share – Explain the organizational plan for the informative article with a partner.

### Notes:

### Resources and References

Lesson adapted from [Strategic Writing Conferences](#) by Carl Anderson
Creating An Organized Plan

1. Draw a series of five boxes down the paper.

2. The first box is the Introduction. Write a word or phrase to note the topic and purpose.

3. In each of the three Body sections with a word or phrase write the main idea.

4. The final box will be the Conclusion.
**Topic:** Growing A Backyard Vegetable Garden

**Intro**

Gardening is interesting and easy

**Section 1**

Planning the garden

**Section 2**

Preparing the soil and planting

**Section 3**

Nurturing-water and weed/feed

**Conclusion**

Result--- delicious and healthy Vegetables
Topic: Cooking

Intro

Cooking is for everyone

Section 1

Recipes

Section 2

Ingredients

Section 3

Finished Results

Conclusion

Sharing with all
**Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA5) Writing Topic and Detail Sentences**

**Writing Teaching Point(s):**
- Students will learn topic sentence/detail sentence structure.
- Students will begin drafting an informative paragraph with a topic sentence and supporting details.

**Standard(s):**
W.5.2.a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
W.5.2.b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

**Materials:**
- Writing notebooks
- Brainstorm Ideas and Details list and Organizer or ‘Flow Chart’ (Lessons 3 and 4)
- Teacher models and student work

**Connection:**
“Our Writing Workshop has been very busy! You have worked hard to carefully prepare for writing an informative article. You are ready with an organized plan for the body of the article. And for each section or paragraph you have briefly noted a main idea and supporting details.

*Today you will begin to turn these notes into a well-written paragraph.*”

**Teach (modeling):**
Teacher reviews topic and detail sentences using mentor text.
“A writer has two jobs to consider when writing a paragraph. First, we let the reader know what the paragraph is about with a **topic sentence**. Then we write **detail sentences**. These detail sentences help the reader better understand the topic or main idea. Let’s look at our text Zap! Pow! The topic sentence is about comics being popular for more than 100 years.”
Crafting A Topic Sentence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Topic Sentence</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comic’s history</td>
<td>“They have been popular for more than 100 years.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zap! Pow! A History of Comics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipes</td>
<td>“A great recipe is the key ingredient for a mouth-watering meal.”</td>
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</table>

“As a reader, I am thinking and questioning. I want to know more. Then, in the next sentences we get the details. We learn that comics use pictures and words to tell stories and new episodes happen each day.

Writers of nonfiction often use topic sentence/detail sentences structure. They use it because it gives the reader a clear idea of what the paragraph is about, and then gives the interesting and informative details.”

Using the ‘Ideas and Details’ list and ‘Organizer or Flow Chart’ the teacher models writing a topic sentence and then detail sentences.

“I will show you how you can use the topic sentence/detail sentences structure to write a paragraph in the body of your article.

First, what is the big idea for section #1?

I reread the notes and organizer I have prepared. The first section or paragraph is about recipes, its appearance. Hmm. . . I could write ‘Recipes are the steps we follow to cook a meal or dish.’ But that is a boring way to begin. . . I want the reader to know that recipes are the foundation to good food. I want them to want to read more.

So here, on my organizer, I’ll write, ‘A great recipe is the key ingredient for a mouth-watering meal.’
This topic sentence tells the readers what the paragraph is about, and the words ‘good cooking and food’ grabs their interest.”

Active Engagement (guided practice):
“Now, I want to help you think about how to write your topic sentences. Review your notes and organizer. What word/phrase did you use to identify the main idea? So, what is the first section about? Think about how you might express that idea in an interesting sentence. Now write that sentence on your organizer in section 1.”

Partner Share: Turn and share your sentence with a partner. Elicit topic sentences from students, discuss and record samples on the anchor chart.

Link to Independent Practice:
“Now, I’d like you to write this first section or paragraph of the article.
- Which detail do you feel is most important for the reader to know?
- How can you write about that detail?
- Continue adding detail sentences to complete the section or paragraph.”

Closure:
“Remember, when writers write sections of an informative article, they often use the strategy of beginning with the topic sentence and then write a series of supporting detail sentences.

Tomorrow you will continue writing the body paragraphs of the informative article.”

Notes:

Resources and References
Portland Public Schools
Lesson adapted from Strategic Writing Conferences, by Carl Anderson
### Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA6) Drafting the Body

**Writing Teaching Point(s):**
- Students will review the characteristics of good writing.
- Students will review the topic/detail sentence structure.
- Students will complete a first draft of the body paragraphs.

**Standard(s):**
- W.5.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Materials:**
- Chart: ‘Good Writers’ (characteristics of good writing)
- Anchor Chart: ‘Crafting Topic Sentences’
- Writing notebooks- Draft-Body of the Informative Article
- Brainstorm Ideas and Details list and Organizer or ‘Flow Chart’ (Lessons 3 and 4)

**Connection:**
"You are off to a great start on your article, and I’m impressed with your good thinking. Today you will finish writing the draft of the ‘body’ paragraphs, moving from one section or topic to the next.”

**Teach (modeling):**
"The purpose of an informative article is to inform the reader. How do writers make sure that what interests them becomes interesting reading for their audience? One important way to learn to write well is by reading the writing of other authors.

*Let’s reread* Zap! Pow! *We’re reading like writers. So as we read, we are studying the writing carefully. Ask yourself,*
- What you are enjoying about the writing?
- What is the author doing in the writing?
- Why is this a good writing strategy?

Read aloud mentor text. This text shows the sequence of comic books and uses specific language and proper nouns to support explanations. Elicit from students that careful use of language—precise nouns and vivid verbs—help us better visualize and understand the writing.

"Remember the ‘Good Writers’ chart? We noted that ‘stretching ideas to create images’ and vivid verbs are two characteristics of good writing. Today, as you compose the body of your article-- the three explaining paragraphs--try to include these craft strategies.”
Active Engagement (guided practice):
Review the two tasks in writing an informative paragraph. See Chart.

“Remember, when writing each new paragraph, first, we let the reader know what the paragraph is about with a **topic sentence**. Then we write **detail sentences**. These detail sentences help the reader understand the topic or main idea.

Now that you know today’s task, I want everyone to spend one minute quietly thinking about the next parts of your article.”

Think-Pair Share: “Partners, talk through the rest of your article with a partner.”

**Link to Independent Practice:**
“Writers, stay focused on your piece and get as far as you can. Our goal is to complete the draft of the body of our articles.

We are going to take the remaining time for writing. So if you think you are done you can:

- Reread to make sure the writing makes sense
- Stretch a sentence to add vivid details
- Add precise verbs”

**Closure:**
Students read drafts to a partner.

**Notes:**

**Resources and References**
Portland Public Schools
## Sample- Good Writers Chart

**Good Writers. . .**

### PREWRITING:
**Writers**
- Keep lists of possible writing topics.
- Use drawing as a pre-writing strategy.
- Compose a Short Write to brainstorm ideas.

### DRAFTING:
**Writers**
- Use strong leads.
- Write strong endings.
- Write with stamina.

### WRITING CRAFT:
**Writers**
- Develop or stretch ideas to create vivid images.
- Use precise verbs.
- Include dialogue.

### WRITING CONVENTIONS:
**Writers**
- Punctuate sentences correctly.
- Punctuate dialogue correctly.
**Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA7)**

**Vary Sentence Length and Structure**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Writing Teaching Point(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Students will learn to craft sentences that begin with an adverb clause.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Students will learn strategies to vary the length and structure of their sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standard(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L.5.3.a Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for reader/listener interest, and style.</td>
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<th>Materials:</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Mentor text: chart listing the mentor sentences (see list following lesson)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Anchor Chart: ‘Openers that tell how, when or where’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Writing notebooks</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Informative article draft</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Connection:**

“I am learning so much information by reading your articles. That’s because you are including many supporting facts and details.

I am thinking that you are ready for a ‘writer’s secret’. Today, I will teach you a craft strategy that writers often use to make their writing dazzle the reader.”

**Teach (modeling):**

Purposeful and varied sentence beginnings add flow and fluency to the writing.

“When sentences have the same pattern and structure they sound repetitive and boring to the reader. So writers use many strategies to vary the length and structure of their sentences.

Here’s a ‘secret’ strategy many authors use to expand a sentence. I call the strategy, ‘An opener that tells us how, when or where.’

Display page from text or the sentence sample and read aloud.

“Let me show you what I mean with a sentence from an informative article, ‘Big, Big Gulps’, about snakes:

‘When the snake swallows its dinner, its mouth can stretch wide open.’

● I notice that the author begins the sentence with the word ‘when’.
● I like this writing because it expands the sentence by telling two actions.
● This sentence helps me create a clear picture of the snake’s amazing jaw. I visualize the snake swallowing and its mouth stretched wide.
● The author used a comma. I hear or feel the pause when I read the sentence. The ‘Opener’ phrase is separated from the sentence with a comma.
Active Engagement (guided practice):

“Now we’ll study the next sentence(s) together.

- What do you notice?
- What do you like?
- Do you see how the author used a comma? (When using an adverb as a sentence opener, we are almost guaranteed to have a comma in the sentence. Mostly, these ‘openers’ are phrases, not complete sentences.)

‘Try-It’ with a Short Write:

“Rain is something we Portlanders have experienced often and know well. So, I’d like you to compose three sentences about Portland’s rain. Each sentence should begin with one of the ‘Openers’ (when, as, or because) that we’ve studied and discussed today.”

Teacher models Opener sentence on anchor chart.

- When the rain pours in steady sheets, our sewers overflow into the river.
- As the rain splattered on the windowpanes, I felt a damp chill run up my spine.
- Because the rain was a steady downpour, our soccer game was cancelled.

After completing this ‘Try It’ exercise have students share their sentences. Again note the use and necessity of the comma. Add students’ samples to anchor chart.

Link to Independent Practice:

“Writers vary the length and structure of their sentences. Now in this final segment of today’s Writing Workshop, I would like you to reread the ‘body’ paragraphs of your informative article.

- Have you included a variety of sentence structures and lengths?
- Might including a ‘sentence opener’ make your writing more fluent and clear for the reader?”

Closure:

Student volunteers share a variety of sentences they have changed and explain why they are stronger.

Notes:

Resources and References

Ideas for lesson adapted from Mechanically Inclined, by Jeff Anderson.
Sentence Openers

*When* the snake swallows its dinner, its mouth can stretch wide open.

*As* the snake works its food down its throat, it pushes its windpipe out of its mouth.

*Because* snakes eat such big meals, they don’t need to eat every day.

*After* feasting on a pig or chicken, these huge snakes can go for more than a year without any other food.

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<th>Adverb Openers</th>
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<td><em>When the rain</em></td>
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<td><strong>As</strong> the rain splattered on the windowpanes,</td>
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<td>Examples of sentences beginning with</td>
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<td><em>As the rain</em></td>
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<td><strong>Because</strong> the rain was a steady downpour,</td>
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<td>Examples of sentences beginning with</td>
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<td><em>Because the rain</em></td>
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Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA8-Part 1) The Introduction - A Strong Lead

Writing Teaching Point(s):
- Students will study possible leads for an Information Article.
- Students will write an introduction that includes a lead, thesis statement and an overview of the article.

Standard(s):
W.5.2.a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Materials:
- Writing notebook
- Anchor chart, ‘An Introduction Has Three Parts’
- Student Resource: List ‘Strong Leads for Informative Writing’, student copies

Connection:
“Yesterday you completed drafting the body of your article. Today we are going to learn the parts of an introduction in an informative article. This structure will help you draft the introductory paragraph.”

Teach (modeling)
“The introduction must capture your reader’s attention and let the reader know what the writing will be about. I’m going to show you one formula for writing a strong introduction to an informative article.”

Anchor Chart:
“An Introduction has three parts:

1. **Lead**: The first sentence(s) is called the hook or lead. It should intrigue, invite and raise a reader’s curiosity.

2. **Thesis Statement**: The next sentence is a clear thesis or topic sentence. This sentence tells the subject or reason for writing and what will be explained to the reader.

3. **Overview**: This sentence tells the reader the supporting ideas that will clarify the topic.”

Teacher reviews lead strategies learned in the Narrative/Launching unit of study.
“Now that the structure of an introduction is clear, let’s review the lead or ‘hook’. Do you remember studying the narrative leads of mentor authors? Remember our study of foreshadowing, character description and a ‘snapshot’ as lead strategies? Today I will share three additional lead techniques. These lead strategies are often used in informative writing.”

Distribute copies of ‘Strong Leads for Informative Writing’. Read and discuss the power of each strategy and example.

1. **Startling Fact**: By using a startling fact to start a piece, the writer hopes to make the reader want to learn more about the fact.
2. **Action!**: This strategy describes an event in progress. Describing an action with precise verbs can pique the interest of our reader.
3. **Definition**: A definition describes or identifies a topic. A definition may be just the thing to hook your reader.

**Active Engagement: (guided practice)**

“In your notebook write the following words at the top of the next three pages.

Lead:
Thesis Statement:
Overview:

Referring to the resource list, Strong Leads for Informative Writing’, students identify the type of lead they would like to try first. “Now, draw a star next to the type of lead you would like to try today.”

Teacher models writing a ‘startling fact’ as a lead.

“I’ve decided to write a lead that is a startling fact. Cooking and eating at home is something that we can all relate to—just how much might surprise people. So I’ll write: ‘Nearly 83% of Americans spend an hour a day eating home-cooked food. This number increases in November and December when many celebrate holidays. Delicious food connects us, and this connection often starts with a recipe, fine ingredients and excellent presentation.’

Teacher models writing an ‘action lead’.

“A startling fact is one way to ‘hook’ for the reader. But it would be good idea to try the second strategy as well. Then I can choose the best lead for the introduction.

The second strategy is to describe an action in progress. I remember watching my mother cook meals and I wanted to join her. I’ll write: ‘Standing at the counter, with one arm wrapped around a bowl and the other stirring vigorously, my mother cooked. I carefully held the recipe and dreamed of the tasty food we would have later. Perhaps many of our first memories of cooking are the kitchen with our family. Cooking is a nearly universal activity’
“Finally, I could create a lead that would define or describe the topic. Help me with some of your ideas for a definition of cooking. Teacher elicits ideas from students and together compose a definition:

**Link to Independent Practice:**
“Now you are going to have the opportunity to write three different leads for your article. Think about how you can hook the reader into wanting to read your entire article.”

**Closure:**
“Once you are happy with the leads, star your favorite.”
- Pair share reading the favorite lead.
- Teacher invites volunteers to read aloud.
“Tomorrow we will continue drafting the introduction paragraph.”

**Notes:**

**Resources and References:**
Portland Public Schools
An Introduction Has Three Parts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Class Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lead:</strong> The first sentence(s) is called the hook or lead. It should intrigue, invite and raise a reader’s curiosity.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis Statement:</strong> The next sentence is a clear thesis or topic sentence. This sentence tells the subject or reason for writing and what will be explained to the reader.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overview:</strong> This sentence tells the reader the supporting ideas that will clarify the topic.”</td>
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Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA8-Part 2)
The Introduction: Thesis Statement and Overview

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<th>Writing Teaching Point(s):</th>
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<td>• Students will write an introduction that includes a lead, thesis statement and an overview of the article.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standard(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>W.5.2.a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
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<th>Materials:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Writing notebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anchor chart, ‘An Introduction Has Three Parts’ (Lesson 8-Part 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chart, ‘A Thesis Statement Formula’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Completed graphic organizer- teacher and student copy (Lesson 4)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Connection:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Before we begin writing, let’s return to the Introduction anchor chart we studied yesterday. You learned the three parts of a strong introduction: a lead, thesis statement and overview. You have written very interesting leads that ‘hook’ the reader’.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Today, our work will focus on completing the introduction paragraph by writing the thesis statement and overview sentences.” |

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<tr>
<th>Teach (modeling):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Refer to chart, ‘A Thesis Statement Formula’ to teach a craft strategy for writing a thesis statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A clear thesis statement tells the reason for writing and what will be explained. Today I will show you one way to write the thesis statement by following this simple formula:</td>
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</table>

**Subordinating conjunction + subject or reason for writing + what will be explained.**

*Subordinating conjunctions are often used to introduce an idea. See the specific list of words/conjunctions listed. They are words like since, in order, so that, and although.”*

Teacher models writing

*First, I return to my graphic organizer. This tool helps me remember my thinking and planning for the article. In the introduction section I jotted down words/phrases that remind me of my purpose writing. I wanted to explain some interesting information about cooking, the process and results.*

So first I’ll choose one of the words from the anchor chart . . . and then I’ll open the sentence by using this word to tell the reason for writing. Let me show you my thinking. . . I’ll choose the word ‘since’. Hmmm. . . Since what?
**Subordinating Conjunction + subject+ what will be explained**

Since eating is nearly universal, cooking is an essential skill that requires recipes, good ingredients and people who will share our food.

“I think I’ll try another sentence beginning with ‘after’. After what?

**Subordinating Conjunction +subject+ what will be explained**

After reading this article about cooking, you will understand the key ingredients for a great meal are recipes, good ingredients and people who will share our food.

**Or if I choose the word, ‘although’. Hmmm... Although what? I'll write:**

**Subordinating Conjunction +subject+ what will be explained**

Although there are many restaurants to choose from, cooking is still a skill that many acquire through practice by executing recipes that require good ingredients. The end result is sharing a great meal with friends or family.

**Link to Independent Practice:**

“Now, you have the opportunity to strengthen your introduction by revising your thesis statement to include a subordinating conjunction. Please use this time to revise your thesis and identify other areas of your paper that might benefit from the variety of adding a subordinating conjunction and phrase.”

**Closure:**

“You now have all the components of an introduction. Pair read your introductions and make certain they flow smoothly. Offer constructive feedback to your peers for improving the flow.”

**Notes:**

**Resources:**

Portland Public Schools
Formula for Thesis Statement:

Conjunction + subject or reason for writing + what will be explained.

A subordinating conjunction is often used to introduce the dependent clause in a complex sentence.

after       unless
although     until
as long as   when
before       where
if           while
since        though
### Informative Writing: Informative Article (IA9)  
#### A Conclusion for Nonfiction Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Teaching Point(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Students will write an ending that leaves an effect on the reader.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standard(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.5.2.e Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Writing notebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Informative article draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Sample concluding paragraph(s): teacher model or sample</td>
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<tr>
<th>Connection:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“You are almost finished writing the draft of your article. You are ready to write the concluding paragraph.”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Teach (modeling):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher models/shares the conclusion of an informative article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“In a concluding paragraph, writers of nonfiction work to refocus the reader’s attention on the main idea. The goal is to keep the reader thinking.”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Active Engagement (guided practice)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students explain their strategy to a partner.</td>
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#### Think Pair-Share: “With your partner name the two parts of a strong conclusion.” |  
| Recall the main idea. |  
| Leave the reader with an idea or thought to remember. |  

If your students would benefit from additional practice, you may consider writing together a closing paragraph -- perhaps writing a conclusion for one of the informative articles Journeys.
**Link to Independent Practice:**

“You are ready to write your ending now. Try it out in your writing notebook. Remember to that one way to end a nonfiction piece is to recall the main idea and leave your reader thinking!”

**Closure:**
Students share their concluding paragraph with a partner. Volunteers read aloud for the class.

**Notes:**

**Resources and References**
Lesson adapted from *Strategic Writing Conferences*, by Carl Anderson.
Informative Article  Revision Checklist

Reread your informative article draft for revision. Find and label each item with a highlighter or colored pencil and check the box with that same color.

☐ **Introduction:**
  ● A strong lead that ‘hooks’ the reader
  ● A thesis statement tells the reason and what will be explained.
  ● An overview tells the supporting ideas.

☐ **Body Paragraphs** contain:
  ● A topic sentence that tells what the paragraph is about.
  ● Detail sentences that give support or examples.

☐ **Conclusion:**
  ● Recalls the main idea
  ● Keeps the reader thinking with something to remember.

☐ **Varied Sentence Length and Structure**
Informative Writing --- Editing Checklist

☐ Punctuation

- Capital letters at the beginning of sentences and ending punctuation.
- An apostrophe to show possession or ownership.
- A comma after an introductory phrase.

☐ Grammar:

- Subject-Verb Agreement

☐ Spelling:

- Read your story backwards and circle any words that look wrong.
- Check the spelling using classroom tools (word wall, dictionary, lists, etc.)
<table>
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<th>Marking Key:</th>
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<tr>
<td>X = Consistently Demonstrates</td>
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<td>/ = Occasionally Demonstrates</td>
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<tr>
<td>— = Does Not Yet Demonstrate</td>
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<tr>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th>Introduces topic clearly.</th>
<th>Creates effective body paragraphs.</th>
<th>Use linking words or phrases.</th>
<th>Details support topic.</th>
<th>Provides appropriate conclusion.</th>
<th>Uses complex sentences.</th>
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