

Fairfax Collegiate
2026 Summer Program
Writing for Middle School Course Syllabus
Rising Grades 5-6



Course Description

Plan, draft, revise, and edit five-paragraph essays.

Expand sentences, take notes, create paragraph outlines, write drafts, revise drafts, and copyedit final drafts.

Students become clearer, more confident writers through better organizing ideas and explaining their point of view. With steady guidance, thoughtful discussions, and plenty of practice, students strengthen their writing process from brainstorming to final edits.

Students write daily as they explore persuasive and expository essays. They experiment with outlining, crafting strong thesis statements, choosing effective evidence, and shaping clear paragraphs. Peer review, hands-on activities, and focused revision sessions keep the class engaging and help students see real growth in their writing.

By the end of the course, students take home a binder filled with polished essays and helpful writing tools they created themselves. They leave ready to tackle more complex writing tasks with greater clarity, confidence, and control.

Learning Objectives

Course Goals	<p>Growing a Writing Process: Students write essays daily, with expository and persuasive prompts, using the writing process.</p> <p>Improving Essay Organization: Students study effective paragraph and essay structure, then practice it in their essays.</p> <p>Effective Evidence: Students practice choosing and using effective evidence to support their arguments.</p> <p>Persuasive Writing Techniques: Students study effective persuasive arguments.</p> <p>Revising and Editing: Students employ effective word choice, revision, and editing to improve clarity and flow.</p>
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Course Topics	<p>Reading and Responding to Essay Prompts: Students learn how to analyze and respond appropriately to prompts.</p> <p>Essay and Paragraph Structure: Students outline and revise the structure of their essays.</p> <p>Thesis Statements: Students evaluate thesis statements and practice writing their own.</p> <p>Persuasive Arguments: Students practice writing their own persuasive arguments.</p> <p>Diction: Students study how effective word choice strengthens an argument.</p> <p>Grammar: Students practice avoiding common grammar mistakes.</p> <p>Mechanics: Students create an individualized guide to address mechanical error patterns that emerge in their own writing.</p> <p>Clean Style: Students practice revision techniques to improve clarity and flow.</p> <p>Idioms: Students define and illustrate idioms.</p>
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Course Schedule

Class Meeting 1	<p>Icebreaker: Students introduce themselves and get to know their classmates.</p> <p>Intro to Course: Students preview course content and discuss the elements of writing.</p> <p>Pretest: Students respond to an expository text as a measure of their writing skills.</p> <p>Workshop and Goal-Setting: Students discuss and analyze their pre-test essay and make a writing goal for the next two weeks.</p>
Class Meeting 2	<p>Reading and Responding to Prompts: Students learn to analyze and respond to prompts.</p> <p>Brainstorming: Students practice different types of brainstorming and choose one they tried that works best for them.</p> <p>Persuasive Essay 1: Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on brainstorming techniques they chose earlier.</p> <p>Peer Review: Students observe a model of peer reviewing and practice giving peers writing feedback.</p> <p>Idioms: Students review the definition of idioms by illustrating them.</p>
Class Meeting 3	<p>Peer Review: Students observe a model of peer reviewing and practice giving peers writing feedback.</p> <p>Reflection 1: Students reflect on Persuasive Essay 1 and its Peer Review.</p> <p>Evidence-Based Claims: Students identify claims and evidence in nonfiction reading and practice creating evidence for claims and vice-versa.</p> <p>Reading and Responding Review: Students review how to read and respond to a prompt.</p>

	Persuasive Essay 2: Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on evidence-based claims they studied earlier.
Class Meeting 4	<p>Five Paragraph Essay Structure: Students practice using the five-paragraph essay structure.</p> <p>Revising vs. Editing: Students review the meaning of revising and editing.</p> <p>Persuasive Essay 3: Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on the five paragraph essay structure they studied earlier.</p> <p>Peer Review and Teacher Conferences: Students practice reading each other's writing and providing feedback while the instructor conferences with individual students.</p>
Class Meeting 5	<p>Reflection 2: Students reflect on Persuasive Essay 3 and its Peer Review</p> <p>Review Five Paragraph Essay Structure: Students review the five-paragraph essay structure.</p> <p>Persuasive Arguments: Students evaluate persuasive arguments and essays.</p> <p>Thesis Statements: Students review the definition of thesis statements, practice identifying them, and practice writing them.</p> <p>Persuasive Essay 4: Students respond to a persuasive writing prompt, focusing on thesis statements they studied earlier.</p>
Class Meeting 6	<p>Revisit Goals and Preview Portfolio: Students revise their goals and preview the portfolio assignment.</p> <p>Expository vs. Persuasive Writing: Students compare and contrast expository writing and persuasive writing.</p> <p>Thesis Statement Competition: Students review thesis statements.</p> <p>Revising and Editing: Students practice editing and revising after watching a model of each.</p> <p>Expository Essay 1: Students respond to an expository writing prompt, focusing on thesis statements they reviewed earlier.</p>
Class Meeting 7	<p>Peer Review and Teacher Conferences: Students practice reading each other's writing and providing feedback while the instructor conferences with individual students.</p> <p>Revising With Legos: Students practice revising their essays after practicing revising with Legos.</p> <p>Expository Essay 2: Students respond to an expository writing prompt, focusing on thesis statements they reviewed earlier.</p> <p>Expository Writing Discussion: Students read an expository writing example as a mentor text and discuss.</p>
Class Meeting 8	<p>Reflection 3: Students reflect on Expository Essay 2.</p> <p>Grammar and Mechanics: Students practice editing their papers after practicing grammar exercises with the class.</p> <p>Intro to Visual Literacy: Students practice visual literacy with primary sources.</p>

	<p>Visual Literacy Continued: Students practice visual literacy with primary sources.</p> <p>Expository Essay 3: Students respond to a expository writing prompt, which is a response to the Visual Literacy lesson.</p>
<p>Class Meeting 9</p>	<p>Portfolio Intro: Students choose writing pieces for their writing portfolio.</p> <p>Peer Review and Teacher Conferences: Students practice reading each other's writing and providing feedback while the instructor conferences with individual students.</p> <p>Expository Essay Self-Edits: Students edit their Expository Essays 1-3 independently.</p> <p>Expository Writing Discussion: Students read an expository writing example as a mentor text and discuss.</p> <p>Expository Essay 4: Students respond to a expository writing prompt, using describing words and phrases like those they read in the earlier discussion.</p>
<p>Class Meeting 10</p>	<p>Portfolio Preparations: Students prepare their writing for their portfolios via conferences and individual work.</p> <p>Finalize Portfolios and Art Walk: Students finalize their writing portfolios, then share with the class and give one another feedback.</p> <p>Reflection: Students reflect on their final essay.</p>