

Tips & Tricks for Teaching through the Nine Units

of the *Teaching Writing: Structure and Style* Syllabus

Units 1 and 2

DON'T GET STUCK IN UNITS 1 and 2!

1. Remember goals:
 - a. Learning to work with key words
 - b. Improving comprehension
 - c. Provide content to build confidence and enjoyment.

2. Use source texts with strong appeal!
 - a. Fiction or nonfiction (fables!)
 - b. Short is good (1–3¶ = 6 to 30 sentences).
 - c. Humor is very helpful (“Eggplant,” etc.).

3. Use the outline.
 - a. Keep to the 3 (or 4) word limit; establish skills.
 - b. Telling it back is not a test of the student; read several times if needed.
 - c. Continue this exercise of orally presenting the outline throughout the units.
 - d. Not all outlines must be written out into paragraphs.

4. Rewriting
 - a. Establish habits. (Double-space; no erasing; always copy or type final.)
 - b. Minimize correction; maximize encouragement.
 - c. Make as few changes as possible to make it legal

5. DON'T GET STUCK!
 - a. Unit 1/2 is a starting point. No more than
 - 6 weeks for gr. 2–3
 - 4 weeks for gr. 5–6
 - 3 weeks for gr. 7–8
 - 2 week for gr. 9+less if students have experience from previous year
 - b. Move on, even if you're not 100% confident.

Humor


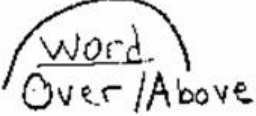


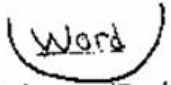
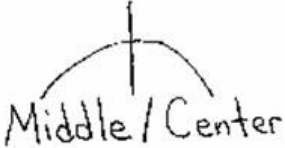



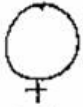








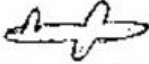



Eggplant









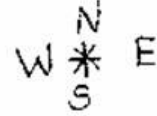




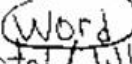

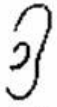

The eggplant is the most disgusting of unpopular vegetables. It is dark purple in color and tastes like sawdust. It has virtually no vitamins or nutrients. The eggplant grows only in the worst parts of the world. It takes 120 days of unbearably hot weather to ripen an eggplant. Ignorant people here grow them in greenhouses. Foolish cooks use them in salads and other foul dishes. Its appalling texture and revolting taste make it a rarely used vegetable. Children should never eat eggplant.

Violence

Hagfish

The hagfish, also known as the slime eel, is one of the strangest of all sea creatures. Its body is covered with special glands that emit a sticky slime. One hagfish can produce half a gallon of slime at one time. This thick, mucous-like substance clogs the gills of attackers. To escape its own slime, it will tie its body in a knot and push the slime off its tail, leaving the enemy to suffocate to death. To feed, the hagfish attaches itself to a wounded or sick fish and bores a hole into its flesh. With a special rasp-like tongue, it scrapes and swallows the flesh of its prey. This monster literally eats its victim alive—from the inside out.

 Love	 Over / Above	 Navy / Ship
 Happy	 Under Below	 Middle / Center
 Unhappy / Sad	VS Conflict / Against	 Male / Boy / Man
 Equal / Even	W/O Without	 Female / Girl / Woman
 Less / Minus Before	 Christ / Christian	 Stop / End / Finish
 More, Plus After	 Church	 Go / Start / Begin
 Peace	 Home / Building	 Fly / Flight / Airforce
 Time	 School / Education	 Dead / Death

 No / Not	 King	 Therefore
$\frac{\%}{\%}$ Percent / Part / Portion	 Queen	 Because
$\frac{\cdot}{\cdot}$ Divide / Divided / Split	 Prince / Princess	 At
W/ With	 Royalty	 Direction
$\&$ And / Add	 Idea / Thought	 Infinity / Forever
X Times / Multiplied	 Look / See / Watch Search	 Either / Or
 All / Total / Whole Around	 World / Globe	H ₂ O Water
(Word) With / Including	 Sound / Hear	 Mountains

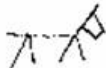
↑
Up/Higher/


Forest/Woods/Trees


Promise / Pledge

↓
Down/Below/Lower


Judaism/Jewish
Jew


Any Animal


\$
Rich/Money/Wealth


A.M.
Day

~~WORD~~
Opposite of circled
word


Justice/Balance


P.M.
Night



Music/Worship


People


↔
War


Fire/Flame


Almost/Nearly


Patriotism


Unity/Union
Marriage


River/Water/Sea

Unit 3

1. Make a poster of the Story Sequence Chart! Get it on the wall.
 - a. Get the litany of questions memorized. (Give a test!)
 - b. Use it together; model process.

2. Use stories of various lengths.
 - a. Anything works, as long as it has the Story Sequence Chart elements.
 - b. Don't be afraid; trust the system.

3. Seven ways to use the Story Sequence Chart
 - a. Straight summary: No changes, just key elements. Be honest to the original.
 - b. Elaboration: Add or change details. Fables, myths, fairy tales OK to change.
 - c. Variation: Change characters/setting; keep basic problem.
 - d. Sequel: Keep characters/setting; find new basic problem.
 - e. Expansion: Go beyond 3¶; expand with detailed descriptions, added problems.
 - f. Consider purchasing *How to Write a Story* by Lee Roddy.
 - g. Transform genre: poem to story, story to poem, story to script, etc.
 - h. Original story: "Make up" characters, setting, problem, resolution, message.

Because of Jacob
By Julia Pudewa

[1]Brillig and stormy nights frightfully whirled around the little cabin on the edge of the tugley woods. [4]Sitting by the fire, Jacob, a brave and daring shepherd, was chatting with his old, mysterious, and widowed father. [2]“In life, my son,” said the old widower, “You must be brave and strong. You must also be careful, for there is a monster called the Jabberwock, whom you must shun. For he has jaws stronger than stone, teeth sharper than swords, and claws that can catch instantly.” [5]Because his father had told him that, Jacob was more careful while shepherding his sheep. [3]Unfortunately he was always in fear of the Jabberwock.

[4]Carrying on with his tiring tasks, Jacob tried to keep a happy attitude about life. Jacob, who was usually an optimistic person, was feeling more and more pessimistic. [2]In fact Jacob was questioning the reason for his own living. [dec]Alone. Scared. [6]How much worse could it get? [3]Unfortunately they lived miles away from any civilization. The only neighbor Jacob had was the horrid Jabberwock, the Wub Wub bird, and lastly the Bandersnatch. [5]As he began to fade into doubt, Jacob decided to pray. [4]Praying always helped Jacob when he was upset. [2]After praying, Jacob felt hope, courage, and purpose to help him move on with his life, instead of falling into despair. [1]God’s grace was just the resolution to one of Jacob’s many problems. [1]The Jabberwock made Jacob’s life all the worse.

[4]Strolling through the dark woods one day, Jacob decided to sit for a rest by the Tumtum tree. [5]While he was resting, Jacob pondered on his problems. [3]Longingly he wished that if he killed the Jabberwock, his problems would be gone. [dec]But how would he ever be able to kill such a monster? [1]“Never,” he said quietly. [1]Jacob sat deep in thought. [2]“Maybe if I had the opportunity to kill the Jabberwock I would. [1]Then my problems would be solved.” [2]After his confusion Jacob concluded with the answer that if he had the chance, he would kill the Jabberwock. [5]As he was getting up, the Jabberwock, whose features were uglier than Jacob’s father had explained, came burbling through the woods. If the

Jabberwock saw anybody, he always had to defeat him. [1]So the Jabberwock faced his competitor. [1]There was Jacob's chance to kill the Jabberwock and solve his problems. [2]With bravery gathering up inside, Jacob drew his vorpal sword and instantly plunged it into the gruesome beast. But what is this—the Jabberwock was more vulnerable than Jacob had expected. [1]Jacob galumphed home and joyfully declared that he had slain the Jabberwock. [2]From then on Jacob's problems were nothing more than a hole in his shirt or a scratch on his finger. [5]Because of Jacob's bravery and trust in God, he was able to slay the Jabberwock and solve his numerous problems.

Cinderella

Cinderella was an orphaned maid.
She always worked hard and never played.
One day she heard there was to be a ball;
Her mice friends made a dress that was wonderful.
When her step-sisters saw it, they tore it apart;
And that broke Cinderella's heart.
She cried for a time that was very long
'Til her godmother came and sang this song:
 "Bibbity, bobbity, boo!
 Now look at you!"
And a pumpkin turned in to a carriage.
When the prince saw her, he would ask for marriage,
For her dress had turned to a beautiful white,
But it would only last until midnight.
Then she set out for the ball,
Beautiful glass slippers and all.
She danced w/ the prince till the clock struck midnight,
Then Cinderella was filled w/ fright.
When running down the stairs, she lost her shoe.
The prince called out, "I want to talk to you!"
And he still had her glass shoe,
So he set out to find the love that is true.
He tried it on every girl in town,
To find the one who would one day wear the crown.
When Cinderella tried it on,
The prince cried out, "She's the one!!!"
And it's like the latest 'fairy love trend.'
They lived happily every after,
The end.

Unit 4

1. Remember goals:
 - a. Learning to choose *interesting/important/relevant* facts
 - b. Transferring ideas with key words (limit 3(4) per *fact*, **not sentence**)
 - c. Improve understanding of content. (Read, talk, write.)

2. Use source texts with strong appeal.
 - a. Textbook versus encyclopedia versus real books (ex. Menendez de Aviles Pedro)

See [“Encyclopedia Dad”](#) article on IEW’s website.
 - b. Opportunity to focus on topics of interest
 - c. Process *not* product
 - d. Paragraph = topic

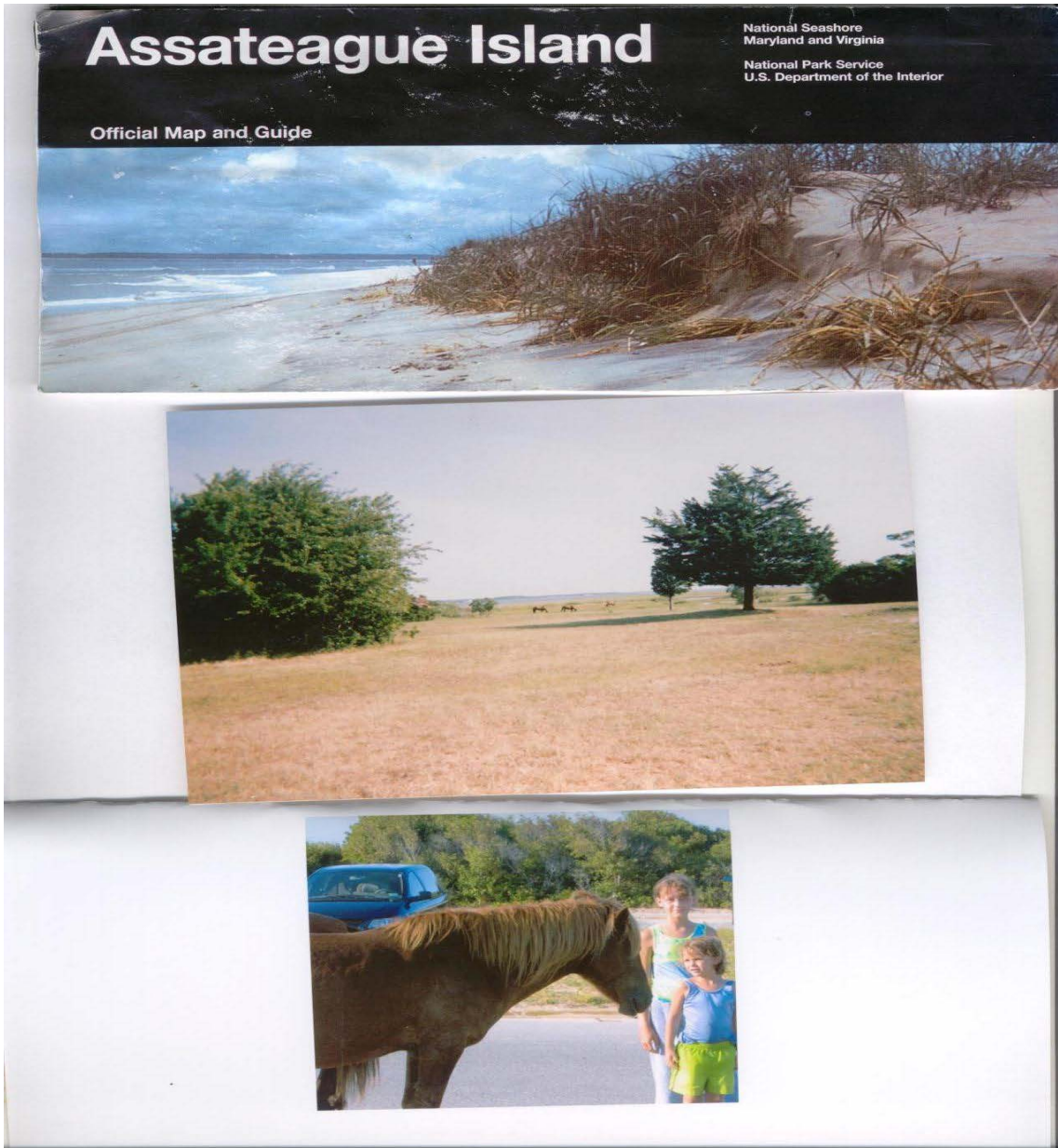
3. Stress model, topic-clincher rule.
 - a. Highlight matching key words.
 - b. If necessary, demonstrate how to create clinchers using a thesaurus.
 - c. Memorize the topic-clincher rule.

4. How to do a “transitional” clincher.

Don’t teach this until the topic-clincher rule is solid.

Unit 5

1. Have fun!
 - a. Don't be anxious. The model is flexible.
 - b. Use a variety of pictures (comics, illustrations, photos, drawn, stick).
2. Connect with history, literature, science, current events when possible.
3. Remember, this is “event description”—it doesn't have to be a “story.”



Assateague, Land of the Wild Horses

By

Alyssa Christine Johnson

Imagine seeing the beauty and magnificence of a real wild horse. In hopes of seeing one, we decided to spend a few days at Assateague Island. We hoped wholeheartedly to see a few wild horses. Excited at the thought of seeing these horses, we scanned the shore on the other side of the bridge. We spotted none at first. We, who were feeling very discouraged, desperately wished that we would spy just one, at least. As we crossed the bridge, and landed on the other side, our hearts were lifted because we could see that Assateague was huge! The horses must just be on the other side of the island, we guessed. Determinedly we drove off, hoping and wishing feverishly to see them. During that time, we discovered none-no, not one real, wild horse, at all.

Our main goal the next day was to see some horses. We stopped at the first beach we came to. Since it was completely empty, we quickly decided to move on. At our third stop at the beach that day, we spotted, on a sand dune which was some distance away, two horses, standing opposite of each other while making strange little noises. Another pony was discovered on a path about twenty feet away. It was extremely beautiful! Excitedly looking closely, I could observe that it had a wild look in its eyes. Driving back to our hotel, we were thrilled about going back the next day, because we felt sure we would see more horses.

Our second, and sadly last, day was spent at only one beach since that was where all the horses seemed to be. Guess what!! On each side of the parking lot, there were two magnificent horses! Our car was right beside two horses that were lying down. Gleefully, we were able to stand right up next to them, and we could have touched them, but since they were wild, we weren't 'supposed to. While we had them so close, we grabbed several close-up shots with our camera. On our way out of Assateague, in our car, we became stuck in horse traffic! At least five horses were covering the road in front of us and several others were behind us. Forming a line behind us were several cars that were trapped because of the horses. The traffic jam cleared up after a little while, and most of the horses moved off the road, except 3 or 4, who seemed really excited to see us. IN FACT, I think a few pulled out their cameras to take pictures of 'the wild humans from the other side of the bridge'!!!

Unit 6

1. Begin with contrived, “guaranteed-to-work” materials.
 - a. Class set
 - b. At or below reading level
 - c. Everyone does same topic, walk through together one, two, or more times.
 - d. Assist students in finding appropriate materials.
2. Paper management: 11x17 tri-fold
3. Save related topic-based paragraphs from Unit 4 or 6 to introduce Unit 8 intro and conclusion paragraphs.
4. Documentation pathway

Teach in Unit 6 or Unit 8, not at all once. Teach until that part becomes easy.

Step 1: Bibliography

Step 2: Integrated quotation (no footnote)

Step 3: Inset quotation (no footnote)

Step 4: Paraphrase (needs footnote or endnote)

Step 5: Foot- or endnotes and works-cited list (Choose a style; get a style sheet.)

- books
- periodicals
- websites, etc.

Step 6: Informational footnote

5. Documentation resources
 - a. Most college and university websites
 - b. *Cite it Right*, *Little Brown Handbook*, *Chicago Manual of Style*, www.mla.org

Unit 7

1. Descriptive/expository (as in TWSS seminar)
 - a. “Notes from Brain” – habit of asking questions
 - b. Five senses

2. Narrative
 - a. Expansion of Unit 3
 - b. Author imitation (see students’ sample compositions)
 - c. Scripts, poetry
 - d. Intermediary steps of breaking free from the checklist

3. Additional models
 - a. *Guide to Powerful Paragraphs*
 - b. Webster’s Advanced Creative Writing
 - c. *Advanced Communication Series: Power Tips for Planning and Writing a College Level Paper*

4. Response to literature and literary analysis

5. Maintain discipline of outlining!
 - a. Key words until solid and consistent
 - b. Alternative note-taking methods (refer to *Advanced Communication Series*)
 - webbing
 - stick and branch

The Hare and the Tortoise: Rewritten in the Style of Dickens

by Christine

It has often been said that laziness will reap no rewards. And this was well demonstrated on the day that the hare agreed to race the tortoise. The bragging, strutting, egotistical hare had been teasing the tortoise about his slow pace until no animal even wanted to be around him, hear his words or tolerate his being. And the tortoise out of exasperation offered to race the hare. The first thoughts that went through the mind of the hare were ones of ridiculousness and absurdity but after a moment of pondering, which I must say was highly difficult for him, he comprehended the full meaning of the tortoise's suggestion and agreed with the utmost confidence.

Did this reckless animal realize what he was in for? I think not. But the preparations for the race continued with both of the contestants feeling quite satisfied. When everything was ready, all the animals swarmed around the tortoise wishing him the best of speed. No one came over to the hare to say "Good luck!" or any such words. The hare was obviously excluded and he, though he noticed it, turned up his nose and treated the whole occasion as a silly frivolous thing. The owl was chosen to be the judge. What a kind just animal that creature was and so honest that nothing dishonest could be performed before him without him at least speaking out against it.

"Ready, set, go!" was called out by the owl. Dashing forward, the hare soon out-distanced the tortoise. But none of that mattered to the faithful plodder. Soon the hare was overcome by the warm summer heat and as he was certain of the great span between himself and the tortoise, reclined on a mossy bank just under a wide maple tree and soon was fast asleep. Oh, if he only knew what that sleep would cost him! But the hare did sleep on. As the tired tortoise approached the slumbering gloater, he caused his walk to quicken up; in spite of his weariness.

The tortoise was nearing the finish line. The crowd of animal spectators began cheering. The hare awoke with a start and realize the horror of his lazy mistake. Jumping up quickly, the hare made a desperate attempt to recover the lost ground. But to no avail. The tortoise finished first. And the owl pronounced tortoise the winner.

Oh, what a pitiable fate the hare suffered—the humility he endured. And from then on, he always remembered, as should we all, the consequences of laziness.

De Fastest Creetur in Dis Whole Earf

In the style of Joel Chandler Harris, *The Uncle Remus Stories*

By

Anna Gerhardt

One night, all de creeturs dat lived in de forest got tergedder. ‘Twuz a moonshiny night when all de stars waz twinklin’ and everybody was feelin’ fine. Well, they were a sittin’ ‘round tellin’ tales, and de was a braggin’!

Brer Hare, he start it up. “Folks,” he brag, “I wanter say right here and now, dat of all de creeturs in dis world, I am de fastest.”

Well, Brer Tortoise, he stick his head way outer his shell, an he say, “Who waz a sayin’ dat he was de fastest?”

“Dat waz me,” says Brer Hare, struttin’ and puffin out his chest, “Does anybody say I *ain’t* de fastest?”

“Yes,” said Brer Tortois, “I do. You ain’t de fastest, I is.”

Dis make all de creeturs chuckle and giggle cause of course Brer Hare, he go lickity split! But Brer Tortoise, he go real slow like. Brer Hare, he roll on de ground and he laff and laff! After a while he pick hisself up, an he say, sorter snickerin’, “Come, Brer Tortoise, you say you is de fastest. How yer goin’ ter prove it?”

After all de creeturs ague a while, de decided to have a race to see who was de fastest. ‘Twuz decided dat de course would be three miles, an’ dat dey’d ask Brer Fox ter be de judge. Well, Brer Fox, he jus’ laff when de told him about ter race ‘cause he sure Brer Hare would win. Howsomever, he agreed to be de judge.

Furst, Brer Fox, he measur off de track and den he tell Brer Hare and Brer Tortoise de rules.

“You have to start at de startin’ line and go all de way on de track to de finish line.” and den he set de race fer de next Chuseday an’ he invited all de creeturs ter come.

Brer Hare, he couldn’t skacely wait. Every day he jus’ sit and look at de clock and laff and laff to hisself.

Finally, dat Chusday came and Brer Hare, Brer Tortoise, and Brer Fox all meant out at de track. Purty soon all de other creeturs began ter arrive. Brer Wolf, Brer Bear

Brer Coon, Brer Buzzard, Sis Possum, and Sis Cow, de all arrive, chucklin' an gigglin' mongst demselves, cause dey think de race is sorter silly, bein' ez how Brer Hare is goin' ter win anyhow.

Den Brer Hare and Brer Tortoise, de both step up to de startin' line and Brer Fox shout, "On your mark! Get set! Go!"

Brer Hare, he race off down de road, and Brer Tortoise, he scramble off after him. Now Brer Hare ran as fast as he could for de first mile, but den he see a nice shady tree an he say to hisself, "My oh my! Dat looks like a mighty nice place ter take a leetle rest and seeing as I's is so fast and Brer Tortoise is so slow, I think I'll just rest a minute."

Well, he lay down, and de Sun, it was so warm and de grass was so soft dat he fell fast asleep. Not long after, Brer Tortoise, he come ploddin' along. He was getting' powerful tired, but when he see Brer Hare fast asleep he chuckle to hisself as he tiptoe by, cause he know if Brer Hare stays asleep he be de winner! Finally, Brer Tortoise crossed de finish line.

"Brer Tortoise is de winner!" yell all de creeturs. Now dis wake up Brer Hare, and he jump up and come a runnin as fast as his legs could carry him, but it didn't do him no good.

"Brer Tortoise is de winner." Shout Brer Fox. And all de creeturs wave der paws: dey stomp and thump de ground wid der tails. Den de look at Brer Hare, huffin' and puffin' an kivvered wid dust, an dey laff cause now Brer Hare won't be braggin' dat he's de fastest creetur in dis earf.

The Race

By Robert

Once upon a day quite cheerful, there was no soul one bit tearful,
Save a weak but not quite weary little terrapin of yore.
For he had received an earful, from a rabbit who was fearful,
That his record of great running had become forgotten lore,
A memory, and nothing more.
Hence, the tortoise challenged Rabbit for a chance to show his habit,
Of great running and to save it in the books forevermore.
The rabbit instantly agreed, to this chance to show his speed,
To the terribly naive, turtle of quite famous lore,
Remembered now forevermore.
As they lined up side by side, Rabbit filled himself with pride,
By mocking Turtle, famous Turtle who rabbit knew would soon implore,
To forgive him, evermore.
The starter's gun rang out quite loudly, and the rabbit leapt, quite proudly,
And gained a lead of miles, num'bring almost twenty-four.
Because he had this lead, Rabbit then relaxed his speed,
And took a load off of his feet by sleeping for an hour or more.
When the cheers for Turtle reached him, Rabbit's thoughts then quickly bleached him,
Then these all-too-shocking thoughts bleached him white into the core
He was remembered nevermore.

Unit 8

1. Difference between an “essay” and a “report”
 - a. Report = facts
 - b. Essay = opinion
2. Forcing an opinion in the conclusion.
 - a. The power of the word “most”
 - b. The need for “why”
 - c. Start young; opinions can’t really be “incorrect.”
3. Progression by subject type:

REPORT = FACTS

Stage I

Animals
States
Countries

Topics

Related

Stage II

Things
People
Events

Selected

Stage III

Literary Analysis
Personal Response
Critique

To
Support
Thesis

Stage IV

Issues (Persuasive)

Strategic

ESSAY = OPINION

Unit 9 - Critique

1. Start with very short story (easier to summarize).
2. Try it with a “bad” book; let students rip it to shreds.
3. Movies are easier than books—they are already plot summaries.
4. Nonfiction critique model is a hybrid of Units 8 and 9:
 - I. Intro – background on book and author, + state 3 (4–5) topics (concepts in book)
 - II. – IV. (3 topics) – Summarize selected concepts using topic-clincher ¶ model.
 - V. (3 topics) – Restate topics; give opinion of book (not using “I”).
5. Large books toughest. Model together with class.

Alternative Models for Specific Purposes

1. Shorter essays
 - 4-¶ format for SAT/ACT
 - 1-2¶ format for essay questions
2. Longer essays
 - Between the expanded (6–7¶) to super (12+¶)
 - Expanding topics
3. Letters to the editor
4. Description paragraphs

Other:

Stylistic Techniques

1. Dress-ups

- a. Our heritage is Blended Sound-Sight. Get words up on the wall!

Portable Walls

- b. Follow basic principles.

- new technique as checklist so far becomes “easy”
- Never stop requiring. (Don’t say “three out of six.”)
- Goal is mastery; then graduate from checklist.

- c. Practice with “silly sentences.”

- d. Teach strong verb (I _____).

- defining “verb”
- banned verbs and dual verbs

- e. Teach quality adjective (the _____ pen).

- f. Drop the “because” dress-up; include it with the www.asia dress-up.

2. Sentence openers

- a. Follow basic principles.

- Minimum rule is different! (Note page 171 in TWSS Syllabus: “Each in every paragraph as possible.”)

- b. Handle unknown openers.

- c. Create new openers:

- question
- fragment
- transitional

3. “Left Behind” list