

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Hour \_\_\_\_\_

# "HELPFUL HINTS" PACKET

## Guidelines for Writing

*Narrative*

*Descriptive*



*Persuasive*

*Expository*

# Four Types of Writing

## 1. Narrative

- \* **purpose:** to tell a real or imaginary story with a clear beginning, middle, and ending
- \* **logical order:** chronological order (time)
- \* **examples:** a) to tell about a summer vacation trip  
b) to tell what happened when a bird got into the house



## 2. Descriptive

- \* **purpose:** to create a vivid picture of a person, object, or scene
- \* **logical order:** spatial order
- \* **examples:** a) to describe a clown's costume and makeup  
b) to paint a picture (in the reader's mind) of the view from a Ferris wheel



## 3. Persuasive

- \* **purpose:** to state an opinion while using facts, examples, and reasons to convince readers
- \* **logical order:** order of importance
- \* **examples:** a) to tell why only experts should handle fireworks  
b) to tell why basketball is a better sport than football



## 4. Expository

- \* **purpose:** to explain with facts and examples or to give directions
- \* **logical order:** compare & contrast, proper sequence
- \* **examples:** a) to explain the correct form for shooting a basketball  
b) to explain the steps used to make homemade pizza



# WRITING PROCESS



## 1. PREWRITING

- \* think of ideas to write about
- \* choose one idea
- \* determine audience & purpose  
(purposes: narrate, describe, persuade, or inform)
- \* brainstorm details  
(use a cluster diagram or a list)
- \* weed out what doesn't belong
- \* organize details in logical order  
(order: chronological, spatial, order of importance, or compare/contrast)



## 2. DRAFTING

- \* use prewriting notes
- \* write rough draft or “sloppy copy”
- \* use complete sentences & separate ideas into paragraphs  
(note: at least 3 sentences per paragraph)
- \* do not skip lines between paragraphs



## 3. REVISING

- \* look at your rough draft with a fresh eye
- \* make sure essay is not confusing
- \* include transition words
- \* writing conference with a peer
- \* may use peer's ideas & suggestions to improve your essay



## 4. EDITING

- \* check spelling, capitalization, and punctuation  
(note: have peer check this as well in writing conference)
- \* make a neat, final draft (usually typed)



## 5. PUBLISHING

- \* turn in final draft of essay to teacher
- \* present essay to the class
- \* enter essay into a contest
- \* publish essay in a newspaper
- \* display essay on a classroom bulletin

# ESSAY STRUCTURE

## Introductory Paragraph

- start essay with a creative beginning to catch reader's attention  
(Note: Suggestions are listed on "page 5" in this packet.)
- state the main idea of your paper using a topic sentence based on the prompt  
(Note: This probably won't be your *first* sentence.)
- tell how you're going to approach your topic  
(Note: These are the details you will write about and elaborate on throughout the body of the paper.)
- use a varied choice of words and sentence structure

## Body

- these paragraphs elaborate and support the statements mentioned in your introductory paragraph concerning your topic sentence
- support for these statements should be extensive  
(Note: Different types of support are listed on "page 4" of this packet.)
- higher level essays use multiple forms of support within the essay

## Conclusion Paragraph

- end essay with an effective conclusion  
(Note: Suggestions are listed on "page 6" of this packet.)
- sum up the ideas of your body and introduction
- restate the main idea of the introduction in *different* words  
(Note: Do not rewrite the *same sentence(s)* stated in the introductory paragraph.)

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## **\*\*\*Reminders:**

- at least 3 sentences in each paragraph (...more is better)
- use transition words throughout your essay to connect ideas and make your paper flow together smoothly  
(Note: Try to use better transition words than "first", "second", ... Use the list of transition words listed on "page 7" of this packet.)

# FORMS OF SUPPORT

1.) **FACTS**: Statements that have been proven to be true.

\*\*Abraham Lincoln was the sixteenth president of the United States.

2.) **STATISTICS**: A collection of facts stated with numbers.  
(These include percentages, rank order, and averages.)

\*\*Seventy-seven percent of the student body say that English is their favorite subject.

3.) **TESTIMONY**: Quoting or restating another person's opinion.  
(This person is often an expert on the topic.)

**Giving fact or observation.**

\*\*During his inaugural address, John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

4.) **NARRATIVE**: A real or imaginary story used to make a point.

\*\*Many years ago, there was a woman named Emma Brown who owned a neighborhood grocery store in Springfield. Much to the dismay of her husband, she allowed a number of her customers to buy on credit and pay when they were able. More than once, she lost money doing this.

One morning, she arrived at the store to find it leaping with flames. Half of the store burned to the ground before it was saved, and Emma was very upset because she had no insurance. Her customers came to her rescue. Many loaned her money, and many more without the ready cash, donated their talents to rebuilding the store.

5.) **EXAMPLE**: Specific instances of a situation or principle you are attempting to describe.

\*\*Americans don't eat enough vegetables to provide their bodies with needed vitamins and minerals. Carrots, tomatoes, potatoes, green beans, and peas are all healthy choices.

6.) **COMPARISONS**: Showing the similarities between two things.

\*\*The public is swarming like a mass of bees to buy the new candy bars.

7.) **EXPLANATION**: Information that tells how or why.

\*\*The way to Michael's house is really quite simple. First, you go east on Route 17 until you reach the telephone company. Then you turn left and drive one mile until you see a large, blue barn.



# Creative Beginnings



- ☺ **Begin with a question.**  
Have you ever seen a skinny-legged, rainbow-painted, smooth flying insect? If so, you have probably seen a butterfly.
- ☺ **Begin with a sound word. (Several are listed on “page 7” of this packet.)**  
Flash! Cameras were snapping pictures all around me. This would be a day I would never forget.
- ☺ **Set the scene. (Paint a picture in the reader’s mind.)**  
The room was quiet, except for the humming of the air conditioner in the corner. The walls were stark white and made the room feel cold. Everything looked and smelled so clean. It wasn’t the kind of clean that you smell outside on a spring day. It was the kind of clean that you find in a dentist office.
- ☺ **Make a list.**  
Balloons, presents, a birthday cake, lit candles... I remember my tenth birthday.
- ☺ **Give clues to hint at your topic.**  
I have eight legs, no more and no less. I’m not very big, yet people often scream when they see me. I’m sure if they knew more about me, they would like me. So, let me tell you about myself. I am a spider.
- ☺ **Begin with a small portion of another piece of literature.**  
“The itzy bitsy spider crawled up the waterspout. Down came the rain and washed the spider out...” Now, why do you suppose people are always trying to get rid of spiders?
- ☺ **Use alliterative phrases.**  
Blowing and swirling, lifting and throwing. Tornadoes are known to cause great destruction.
- ☺ **Use an exclamation.**  
STOP, DROP, and ROLL! Do you know what to do in case of a fire?

# Effective Endings

- ☺ **End with your feelings.**  
At that moment, I knew I would always love Rome.
- ☺ **Leave the reader with a gentle reminder.**  
Remember, it is important for each person to do his/her part in recycling.
- ☺ **End with a question.**  
Native Americans understood the importance of caring for our earth.  
Do you?
- ☺ **Make a prediction.**  
The next time someone asks you why they can't fly like a bluebird, you will know the answer.
- ☺ **End with a portion of another piece of literature.**  
"Twinkle, twinkle little star..." Now, we know exactly what you are.
- ☺ **Return to the beginning.** (Be careful not to overuse!)  
Beginning: Owls are amazing creatures!  
Ending: Perhaps, now, you can see that owls truly are incredible animals.

# Transition Words

<b>Chronological Order</b>	after, next, always, then, later, soon, before, finally, earlier, afterwards, during, eventually, tomorrow, meanwhile, thereafter, when, while, immediately
<b>Spatial Order</b>	outside, inside, beyond, near, under, over, overhead, beneath, in front, ahead, behind, in the distance, on the right, next to, lower, here, down, into, in
<b>Importance</b>	mainly, strongest, greater, better, least, greatest, best, most, worse, more important, to begin with, then, also, for one reason, significant, next, more, one (of)
<b>Comparison</b>	similarly, like, than, as, and, also, likewise, either...or, neither...nor, in addition, both, as well as, another, moreover, too, just as...
<b>Contrast</b>	however, unlike, opposed to, but, instead, yet, nevertheless, in contrast, although, still, where as in spite of, on the other hand, on the contrary
<b>Cause and Effect</b>	since, because, as a result, so, due to, thus, if... then, consequently, therefore



## Sound Words



<i>tick-tock</i>	<i>crash</i>	<i>fling</i>	<i>whine</i>
<i>ding-dong</i>	<i>smash</i>	<i>scamper</i>	<i>whimper</i>
<i>pitter-patter</i>	<i>splash</i>	<i>scoot</i>	<i>thump</i>
<i>smack</i>	<i>dash</i>	<i>slither</i>	<i>thud</i>
<i>crack</i>	<i>clatter</i>	<i>moan</i>	<i>grumble</i>
<i>snip</i>	<i>shatter</i>	<i>groan</i>	<i>mumble</i>
<i>tap</i>	<i>flop</i>	<i>growl</i>	<i>blast</i>
<i>snap</i>	<i>flip</i>	<i>snort</i>	<i>blubber</i>

# ISAT Writing Rubric

## **FOCUS: (1-6 points)**

- sticks to the main idea
- good introduction and conclusion paragraphs

## **ELABORATION: (1-6 points)**

- specific details throughout
- use many forms of support
- good vocabulary- specific words

## **ORGANIZATION: (1-6 points)**

- clear structure (introduction, body, conclusion)
- paragraphs (minimum of 3 sentences each)
- use transition words
- vary sentence structure

## **CONVENTIONS: (1-3 points)**

- grammar, spelling, and punctuation

## **INTEGRATION: (1-6 points)**

- overall score (average)

## **ISAT - Student Writing Checklist Persuasive, Grade 6-8**

### **Focus**

- ✓ I use my introduction to set the purpose of my composition.
- ✓ I clearly state my position on the topic.
- ✓ I stay on the issue throughout the composition.
- ✓ I write a closing that effectively summarizes my position.

### **Support**

- ✓ I use specific examples and details to explain each of the points that I use to explain my position.
- ✓ I balance my use of detail and description throughout my composition.
- ✓ I use the same *voice*\* throughout my composition.
- ✓ I use a variety of specific and descriptive words and phrases.
- ✓ I use words correctly and purposefully.

### **Organization**

- ✓ My composition is arranged logically and makes sense.
- ✓ I use paragraphing to help organize my points.
- ✓ I use transition words and phrases to connect my sentences and paragraphs so that my composition flows smoothly when I read it.
- ✓ My sentences begin in different ways.
- ✓ My sentences are different lengths to make my composition more interesting for the reader.
- ✓ I avoid using the same words over and over again.

### **Conventions**

- ✓ I use complete sentences.
- ✓ I spell familiar words correctly.
- ✓ I use capitalization and punctuation correctly.
- ✓ I make sure that the subject of my sentence agrees with the verb.
- ✓ I use the same verb tense throughout my composition.

***Voice*** – The individuality of the writer coming through on the page. Voice gives writing a distinctiveness. The reader of the composition has the feeling that the writer is talking directly to him or her.

## **ISAT - Student Writing Checklist Narrative, Grade 6-8**

### **Focus**

- ✓ I use my introduction to set the purpose of my composition.
- ✓ I have an interesting start to my story that catches the reader's attention.
- ✓ My composition is about the subject or topic.
- ✓ I write a closing that effectively unifies my writing.

### **Elaboration**

- ✓ I use specific examples and details to describe the event or experience and my reactions and/or the reactions of others.
- ✓ I balance my use of description throughout my composition.
- ✓ I use the same *voice*\* throughout my composition.
- ✓ I use a variety of specific and descriptive words and phrases to make my composition more interesting for the reader.
- ✓ I use words correctly and purposefully.

### **Organization**

- ✓ My composition moves logically through time and has a beginning, a middle, and an ending.
- ✓ I use paragraphing to help organize my story.
- ✓ I use transition words and phrases to connect my sentences and paragraphs so that my composition flows smoothly when I read it.
- ✓ My sentences begin in different ways.
- ✓ My sentences are different lengths to make my composition more interesting.
- ✓ I avoid using the same words over and over again.

### **Conventions**

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