

Expository Composition

Semesters: 1

Grade(s): 9-12

Prerequisite(s): none

This course provides the essential skills needed for future English courses as well as for writing across the curriculum and in the workplace. Students write at least five essays over the course of the semester. Essay types and patterns of development include division/classification, compare/contrast, and persuasive, along with a selection of other types such as cause & effect, definition, and exemplification. Students learn the basics of expository composition, with a strong emphasis on using the writing process to create well-structured essays. Students write outlines and matching essays with clear thesis statements and topic sentence agreement, and they develop their ideas through relevant details. They also learn basic research and documentation skills, and the persuasive essay includes a bibliography and inline citations. Students also build vocabulary, including through word roots, and learn how word selection can impact writing (i.e. connotation, denotation, and figurative language). Grammar is integrated into the instruction and is based on individual needs as is evidenced in the student's writing.

Course Competencies

Course Title	
Competency 1	Engage in the writing process to produce a variety of writing.
Sub-Topics	1. Engage in prewriting activities including brainstorming techniques such as free-writing, mapping, and outlining. 2. Use an outline to carefully organize ideas for expository writing compositions. 3. Utilize resources, including peer review and instructor feedback, to evaluate initial drafts; also understand that setting writing aside for a period of time allows the writer to have "fresh eyes" for writing. 4. Revise and edit one's works for organization, grammar, clarity, style, and flow.
Competency 2	Produce original works of expository writing, including multiple-paragraph essays.
Sub-Topics	1. Write well-developed and organized paragraphs with clear topic sentences and two or three supporting topics with two or more detail sentences for each (total 7-10 sentences). 2. Create thesis statements that match two or more body paragraph topics. 3. Create effective introduction and conclusion paragraphs. 4. Use outlining to create organizational structure with thesis statement and topic sentence agreement. 5. Practice organizing writing and presentations using a variety of patterns of organization; include the creation of outlines, paragraphs, and/or full essays for compare and contrast, division-classification, and cause-and-effect. 6. Be able to back up claims with details and research, citing sources per MLA, APA, or other standard format.
Competency 3	Use transitions to increase clarity and flow of writing.
Sub-Topics	1. Use transition words such as <i>since, however, as a result, first, second, therefore</i>, etc. 2. Use transitional phrases and clauses to develop flow and show connections and comparisons between ideas. Example: <i>In addition to (what was previously noted), one can also see that...</i> Example: <i>Although this was true for (previous idea), another consideration would be...</i>
Competency 4	Engage in word analysis, and build fluency and vocabulary.
Sub-Topics	1. Distinguish between the denotative and connotative meanings of words and interpret the connotative power of words. 2. Evaluate the appropriateness of jargon for an intended audience. 3. Maintain an appropriate usage level for the tone and purpose of the writing.

Competency 5	Write a persuasive research composition of five or more paragraphs; 700-1500 words.
Sub-Topics	1. Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained and logical fashion. 2. Use specific rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., appeal to logic through reasoning; appeal to emotion/ ethical belief; relate personal anecdote, case study, or analogy). 3. Clarify and defend positions with precise and relevant evidence, including facts, expert opinions, quotations, and expressions of commonly accepted beliefs and logical reasoning. 4. Address readers' concerns, counterclaims, biases, and expectations. 5. Back up claims with research, citing sources using MLA, APA, or other standard format. Use inline citations as well as a bibliography (references/works cited).
Competency 6	Write a comparison (compare & contrast) essay of four or more paragraphs; 500-1500 words.
Sub-Topics	1. Be able to compare two or three items. 2. Avoid the "ping-pong" approach when comparing (switching back and forth between two items every one or two sentences); instead use a organizational structure to that allows for flow, clarity, and development of each idea.
Competency 7	Write a division-classification essay of five or more paragraphs; 500-1500 words.
Sub-Topics	1. Be able to utilize the division-classification pattern of development to present a topic and its subtopics.