



8th Grade Lesson Plan

I. Objective

The student will compose a well-written essay by drafting, editing, and revising the writing to produce a sample college essay as well as learn the importance of a college essay/personal statement.

II. TEKS Used In Lesson Plan

ELAR b. 14. Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to: (A) plan a first draft by selecting a genre appropriate for conveying the intended meaning to an audience, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea; (B) develop drafts by choosing an appropriate organizational strategy (C) revise drafts to ensure precise word choice and vivid images; consistent point of view; use of simple, compound, and complex sentences; internal and external coherence; and the use of effective transitions after rethinking how well questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed; (D) edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; and (E) revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher

III. Materials

College 101 for Middle School PowerPoint
Brainstorming Worksheet
Outline Worksheet
Revising Personal Essay Worksheet

IV. Procedure

Warm-up Activity:

Begin by talking about admissions to college. Identify the importance of writing well to express details about yourself via a prompt through a college essay.

Optional: Review College 101 for Middle School PowerPoint

Activity A

My First College Essay.

Identify the importance of a personal essay with students. Activity can be modified to time constraints, or spread out over several class periods.

- I. Brainstorm Worksheet
- II. Outline Worksheet
- III. Writing Draft of Personal essay
- IV. Revising Personal Essay
- V. Final Draft

V. Check for Comprehension

Again reiterate why the personal essay is important.

- Why would it be important to brainstorm?
- Why is it important to ask others to check your work? What insight did you gain by asking others to check your work?
- Why would you use your personal essay?



Name: _____

Date: _____

Destination College Part I: Essay Brainstorming Worksheet

One of the best methods of brainstorming is to begin with a list of potential topics. Use the worksheet to create a list of important people, events, accomplishments, and activities in your life. Then, you can separate the good ideas from the bad.

1. If you were writing your autobiography right now, what would be five to ten events or things that would have to be included?

1. _____

6. _____

2. _____

7. _____

3. _____

8. _____

4. _____

9. _____

5. _____

10. _____

2. If you asked a few friends or family members to pick three adjectives or personality traits that characterize you, what would they be?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. List five accomplishments you have made over the last five years.

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

4. List three to five things on which you consider yourself very knowledgeable.

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

5. What are your most important extracurricular or community activities?

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

6. List five people whom you respect and admire. They can be real or fictional, dead or alive.

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

7. What is your favorite movie or book? _____

Who is your favorite musician? _____

8. List two times in life when you failed miserably and two times when you were a fantastic success.

Miserable failures

Fantastic Successes

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

8. What are three events in your life that your parents ALWAYS talk about? Or stories they ALWAYS tell?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

10. List three of your favorite things and three of your least favorite things. These can include activities, places, objects, virtues, food, etc.

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

Destination College Part II: Essay Outline

I. Introduction _____

II. Body

A. Paragraph 1

1. Supporting Point #1

2. Evidence for Supporting Point #1

B. Paragraph 2

1. Supporting Point #2

2. Evidence for Supporting Point #2



Name: _____

Date: _____

C. Paragraph 3

1. Supporting Point #3

2. Evidence for Supporting Point #3

III. Conclusion



Name: _____

Date: _____

Destination College: College Essay Checklist

Directions: Use this checklist as a guide. Check off each item when you are sure the essay has satisfied the criteria. Use the space for notes.

Prompt:

- Does the essay fully and clearly address the prompt?
- Has the writer used the prompt to come up with ideas that are unique and interesting?
- As a whole, does the essay “work”? Does it keep the reader’s interest throughout?
- Does the essay take any creative risks?
- What is the overarching main idea, theme or thesis statement?
- Does each paragraph have a main idea that further develops the overall theme?
- Are all main ideas supported by details that are concrete, lively and interesting?
- Does the writer stay on task and avoid unnecessary tangents?
- Does the essay reveal something about the writer?
- Does the essay have a definite beginning, middle and conclusion?
- Are transitions in place between sentences and paragraphs, making for a smooth read?
- Do all sentences “pull their weight”?
- Is the essay free of grammatical, spelling and mechanical errors?
- Does the essay communicate that the writer is a strong candidate for admission?

Adapted from www.nytimes.com/learning



Name: _____

Date: _____

Destination College: College Essay Rubric

Directions: Rank each part of the college application essay on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 as the best. In the space below each number you assign, explain your reasoning. At the bottom, circle your admissions recommendation, based on the essay alone.

Organization and Focus (clear main ideas and supporting details, stays on topic)

1 2 3 4 5

Explanation:

Originality (vivid details, fresh word choice, creativity, risk-taking)

1 2 3 4 5

Explanation:

Writer's Voice (consistent throughout, engaging, conveys individual personality)

1 2 3 4 5

Explanation:

Freedom from Error (spelling, grammar, punctuation, usage)

1 2 3 4 5

Explanation:

Overall success (interesting topic clearly developed; "works")

1 2 3 4 5

Explanation:

Admission (circle one): **accept** **reject** **wait-list**

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