Lesson 1: Pre-assessment

Essential Question

What skills do you need to develop to be the best writer you can be?

Materials

loose-leaf paper
rubrics
word bank (optional)

Mini Lesson

Explain to students that they will be doing an opinion writing sample today that will help you to get to know them and to learn about their writing abilities. The sample will be used to help you know how to help them become the very best opinion writers that they can be. Explain that they should do their best.

Let students know that they will have the next hour to plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing piece. You will give them regular updates on the time remaining, but they should be ready to turn in a completed final draft at the end of the hour. The piece can be as long as they need it to be, but they probably won't have the time to write a chapter book. Students can have as many sheets of paper as necessary.

Write the following prompt on the board:
Should students be given a spring break OR have a longer summer break? Use reasons and examples to support your opinion.

As students finish their writing, attach a rubric to the top for easier grading.

Work Time

Give students paper and set a timer. Give them updates every 10-15 minutes. Otherwise, see to it that writers have quiet time to write. Students who finish before the hour is complete should read, write or do another silent activity at their desk.

Closing

Share with your partner what you hope to improve on during this writing unit.

Intervention

If possible, set a visual timer on your white board to help students manage their time. Give students a word bank to help with spelling.

Extension

Allow students to come up with their own opinion topic, rather than using the prompt.

Lesson 2: Writing Notebooks

Essential Question	Materials
How can being organized help to improve your writing skills?	1 composition book for each student copies of cover sheet and dividers your writing notebook glue crayons

Mini Lesson

"Today we will be putting together writing notebooks that will be used for our entire unit. The notebook will help us to keep our writing and resources organized."

Show students your writing notebook. Point out the three different sections and give a brief explanation of what each section is for. Show them how they will keep resources such as anchor charts in the first section. The second section will be for the two big writing pieces that they will be taking through the entire writing process. The final section will be a place for them to write additional pieces when they finish something early.

Show students how to insert the dividers in their notebooks. The first divider can go on the first page. The second divider should go about 1/3 of the way through the notebook, and the 3rd divider should go about 2/3 of the way through the notebook.

Work Time

Students will put their notebook together and then color the cover sheet and dividers.

Closing

Show your partner how you decorated your writing notebook. Show students where they will keep their notebooks and practice the procedures you want them to follow when it is time to put notebooks away.

Intervention	Extension

Lesson 3: Opinion Essays

Essential Question

How is an opinion essay different than other kinds of writing?

Materials

mentor text
opinion anchor chart
task cards & recording sheet

Mini Lesson

"For the next couple of months, we are going to be writing opinion essays. What is an opinion?" (a belief or way of thinking that cannot be proven as a fact)

Read the lesson 3 mentor text to students or have them read it with partners.

"What is the author's opinion in this piece?" (Her opinion is that she should receive an allowance for completing chores.)

"In an opinion essay the author tells us how they feel about a topic, and then they give reasons to explain why they feel that way."

Complete the opinion writing anchor chart.

Work Time

Set task cards on desks around the classroom. Have students work with a partner to rotate around the room and determine if the piece on the task card would be an opinion essay or not.

Closing

Discuss the answers from as many of the task cards as time permits.
Students will teach their partner what an opinion essay is and give an example.

Intervention

Scoot through the task cards with a small group of students that need assistance with reading the cards and help talk them through the answers. Assign only half of the cards.

Extension

These students can write what type of writing each task card is an example of.

Lesson 4: generating a topic

Essential Question

How do opinion writers come up with topics to write about?

Materials

anchor chart
student printable

Mini Lesson

"Have you ever had a hard time deciding what to write about? Today we are going to learn a good strategy for coming up with ideas for opinion essays. If we have good strategies for generating topics, we won't waste our time and will have more time to write!"

"What is your favorite restaurant to eat at?"

"Did you know that you are all sharing your opinions about different restaurants? Thinking about your favorites can be a good place to start when coming up with an opinion topic."

Do the first section of the topic ideas anchor chart. Add favorites that you have strong opinions about. An example is shown below.

Other favorites ideas: school, principal, field trip, friend, television show, app, board game

Work time

Students will make graphic organizers, or use the included printable, to brainstorm favorites. They should try to have at least four favorites, but can add more. This work should be kept in the resources section of their notebook.

Closing

Students will share with a partner one topic on their graphic organizer they are most excited to write about. You can have a few students share with the whole class if time permits.

Intervention

Ask students guiding questions to help them come up with favorites.

Extension

Lesson 5: generating a topic

Essential Question

How do opinion writers come up with topics to write about?

Materials

anchor chart
student printable

Mini Lesson

"Tell your partner one way that opinion authors can come up with topics to write about."

"Today, we are going to learn another way to come up with good topics to write about. Yesterday we focused on our favorites. Today we are going to talk about things that you desperately want. When you really want something you might try to convince your teacher or parents that you need that thing. You are sharing your opinion about why you need something!"

Do the second section of the topic ideas anchor chart. Add wants that you have strong opinions about. An example is shown below.

Other want ideas: a later bedtime, a baby sister, a cell phone, my own bedroom, an allowance, more recess

Work time

Students will make graphic organizers, or use the included printable, to brainstorm wants. They should try to have at least four, but can add more. This work should be kept in the resources section of their notebook.

Closing

Students will look at both graphic organizers and choose the one topic that they want to write their first piece about. Students will share their topic with their partner.

Intervention

Ask students guiding questions to help them come up with wants.

Extension

What is an **Opinion Essay**?

tell how you _____ about a topic and give _____.

Examples

What is an **Opinion Essay**?

tell how you **FEEL** about a topic and give **REASONS**.

Examples

a letter to the librarian asking for for magazines in the library

an essay about the reasons people should carpool to work

a book review that encourages people to read a specific book

Coming up with good Opinion essay ideas

Favorites

I want...

Taking a Stand

Coming up with good Opinion essay ideas

Favorites

- Book: The One and Only Ivan
- Movie: Beauty and the Beast
- Teacher: Mrs. Sears
- Place to Vacation: California

I want...

- to take my students on a fieldtrip
- a puppy
- a house cleaner
- to go to the beach

Taking a Stand

- People shouldn't use disposable water bottles.
- High school students should be required to volunteer.
- Our school library should have a larger selection of books.
- Adopt a pet from a kennel instead of breeding.

What is an **Opinion Essay**?

tell how you _____ about a topic and give _____.

Examples

Coming up with good ESSAY IDEAS

Favorites

Wants

Taking a Stand

Kids Should be Paid to Do Chores

Day 3: What is an opinion essay?

So you're at the store with your parents and you see that toy that you just have to have. You beg your mom and dad for it, but they shoot you down. You begin wishing in that moment that you had a job, like your parents. A job where you earned your own money, so you could buy toys or items that you wanted. This is why I feel strongly that kids should be paid to do chores around the house.

To start, if kids were paid to do chores around the house it would help them understand that money doesn't just grow on trees. Kids would see that they would have to *earn* money to buy things. In fact, parents could use it as a lesson for their kids, if they don't do their chores well or correctly, then they won't be paid for them. Also, parents wouldn't have to listen to their kids beg for money anymore, because the kids would have their own money from completing their chores.

Another reason kids should be compensated for working around the house is, it teaches the child responsibility. Not only will they see that hard work pays off, but they will also quickly realize you need to be responsible with the money you earn. For example, if the child wants something that is expensive, then they will need to save their money. This is a great lesson that can be used later in life when they are thinking about college, buying a car, or even a house. It can also show children that if they spend their money too fast, they won't have any money left.

Finally, adults get paid weekly when they do their job, so why shouldn't kids be paid for doing their chores? Paying children for doing chores can get them ready for their career one day. In the work force, they will need to do a job and do it to the best of their ability, in order to collect a paycheck. Having chores they are paid to do will get them used to having a job one day. Adults have jobs so they can pay bills and buy things they want. Kids should have that same opportunity.

As you can see, it truly is a positive choice to pay your child to do chores. It not only teaches them responsibility, but allows them to have their own money to spend on the things they want and can train them to have their own job one day. Start paying today!

OPINION Writing Task Cards

NOT SO wimpy Teacher

Is it opinion writing?

a story about the time I scored the winning soccer goal

1

Is it opinion writing?

all about the life of Susan B. Anthony

2

Is it opinion writing?

a friendly letter to your aunt

3

Is it opinion writing?

a piece about why your school needs more computers

4

Not So Wimpy Teacher

Is it opinion writing?

an essay about why schools need more healthy food choices

5

Is it opinion writing?

a report about Gila Monsters

6

Is it opinion writing?

a piece about why a certain book is not worth reading

7

Is it opinion writing?

your mom's recipe for apple pie

8

Not So Wimpy Teacher

Is it opinion writing?

a speech about why students should vote for you for class president

9

Is it opinion writing?

a story about the time you got lost at the mall

10

Is it opinion writing?

a letter to the principal to convince her that your class needs more recess

11

Is it opinion writing?

an essay about why you don't think college athletes should get paid

12

Not So Wimpy Teacher

Is it opinion writing?

a grocery list

13

Is it opinion writing?

a postcard to your best friend to tell her about your vacation

14

Is it opinion writing?

a letter to your parents about why the family should go to Disneyland

15

Is it opinion writing?

a story about the time you made pottery in art class

16

Not So Wimpy Teacher

Is it opinion writing?

a piece about why you think all students should learn cursive

17

Is it opinion writing?

a report about the Civil War

18

Is it opinion writing?

a piece to convince your mom to buy you a new coat

19

Is it opinion writing?

a piece about the time that you picked fresh strawberries

20

Not So Wimpy Teacher

Is it opinion writing?

a piece about why students shouldn't have to wear school uniforms

21

Is it opinion writing?

an essay about why you think schools should teach more art and music

22

Is it opinion writing?

a poem about rain and clouds

23

Is it opinion writing?

a compare and contrast paragraph about snakes and lizards

24

Not So Wimpy Teacher

Opinion Writing Task Cards

Read the card and write yes or no in the boxes below.

Name:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.
19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.

Opinion Writing Task Cards

Read the card and write yes or no in the boxes below.

Name:

1. no	2. no	3. no	4. yes	5. yes	6. no
7. yes	8. no	9. yes	10. no	11. yes	12. yes
13. no	14. no	15. yes	16. no	17. yes	18. no
19. yes	20. no	21. yes	22. yes	23. no	24. no