

Informative Writing

Summary

The lesson provides an opportunity for students to not only read and view the importance of choosing career choices now, but gives them an opportunity to write about their future career goals and think about the best way to achieve them starting now.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 7

[Writing Standard 2 a.](#)

Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 7

[Reading: Literature Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 7

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 7

[Language Standard 2 b.](#)

Time Frame

7 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Life Skills

Employability

Materials

Various worksheets, websites, and pptxs are attached.

Background for Teachers

Be prepared to help students navigate through websites. I found that there were some legitimate jobs that didn't have a lot of information, so I researched them a bit myself to help the student if they really wanted that job. Brush up on your MLA format or any format that you like. 7th grade, according to the Utah Common Core, is the grade where they learn to cite sources and add a bibliography.

Student Prior Knowledge

If you haven't already taught MLA format, then make sure that the students are well-versed in the workings of it. They should be taking a computer class in 7th grade, so Power Point presentations shouldn't be too big of a deal if this assignment is taught mid year or during third term.

Instructional Procedures

I. Address to American Schoolchildren

A. Start out by having students read/view the "Address to American Schoolchildren".

- [YouTube video of President Obama's Message for America's Students](#)

- [Transcription of the speech](#)

And then students should complete the Address to American Schoolchildren worksheet found in the Materials section of this lesson. Questions include:

Why do you think he told everyone about having grown up with no father? Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

Why do you think he explained how his mother woke him up at 4:30 am to study and that it helped give him a second chance? Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

Don't quit on school and don't quit on your country is an example of a connotative meaning. Explain what is meant by it. Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

The examples of the students with brain cancer and growing up in different foster homes are analogies to what exactly? What are we to learn from these students? Why is he bringing them up? Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

"You have to let your failures teach you," is an example of figurative language. What are we supposed to learn from that statement? Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

He gives the analogy of young adults that started a revolution, survived a depression, and created twitter. What are we supposed to learn from that? Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

What school related goals would you like to set? How do you plan to succeed in this world and make your country proud? Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

What would you say the tone of this speech is? Back up your reasoning with examples from the text.

B. Whole Group Discussion: Discuss the importance of preparing for your future now and the process to get there.

II. Informative Career Essay

A. Explain the writing project where students will be examining their dream job and researching it. You will need to reserve a computer lab or allow students access to internet sites. Have them brainstorm and fill out the Research Career Essay worksheet found in the Materials section of this lesson.

Writing Assignment explained: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Make a list of your top five dream jobs. Number one should be your first choice and so on.

The main writing project for Term 2 is writing an informative/explanatory piece. Some of you may think of it as a research paper. You are going to research the job of your dreams. You will start out trying to find enough evidence (at least three sources) to back up the qualifications of your job. If you're not able to find enough evidence from your first choice then, move on to your second choice and so on.

You will be researching these jobs for three areas: 1) Goals RIGHT NOW that you need to do in order to get this job; 2) Specific schooling or training in order to get this job. (If it says no schooling necessary, then look for and write down the schooling that you CAN but don't have to do); 3) Knowledge and skills. Every job in the entire world has something for all three of these areas.

While you're researching, you will be searching for those three specific categories and putting as much information there as is humanly possible. The more that you can put on your worksheet (below) the better off you'll be for your essay. You should also try to find pay scale, level of knowledge/skills, any visual aids, or a pie chart of time/experience needed for that job. You will be creating some sort of multimedia (PowerPoint, video, etc.) example that needs to be displayed for your presentation.

E. Relevant vs. Non-relevant sources

. (Teachers go over this information and what it means)

Here are some search engines that you probably know off the top of your head: Google, ask.com, Wikipedia, dictionary.com, etc.)

b. Relevant

means that the information you're looking for fits with your topic. Valid means appropriate to the task at hand. When you're researching your topics you need to look for both relevant and valid websites that will help you find your answers.

Ask yourself if the following websites would be considered relevant and valid to writing a school appropriate research essay: Google, ask.com, Wikipedia, dictionary.com. Most if not all of these websites will not be either relevant or valid.

The following websites are both relevant and valid websites for this assignment. You can also go to any university, college, or school that you know has the schooling for what you want to go into (like the Fran Brown website or Harvard University website)

- [Pioneer Online Library](#)
(Only available to Utah Educators and Students)
- [UtahFutures](#)
netTrekker (An online resource some districts have subscribed to.)
- [QandAs Careers](#)
- [Careers New Zealand](#)
- [Career Builder](#)
- [Monster.com Job Profiles](#)
- [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)
- [Weber State University](#)
- [University of Utah](#)
- [StateUniversity.com](#)

Now that you know what job you're searching for, the three areas that you need to research for that job (as well as any extras), and know why type of websites to get information from, start researching. MAKE SURE THAT YOU PUT THE COMPLETE WEBSITE THAT YOU GOT THE INFORMATION FROM WHERE IT SAYS WEBSITE. We will do more with this next week, but if you don't put down the website every time, you will be sorry. You should have at least three different websites that you're getting your information from. For now ignore where it says on the worksheet title, author, date published, page number, but don't ignore websites.

I picked this job: _____ (3 cites at least.)

Goals RIGHT NOW that you need to do in order to get this job.	Specific schooling or training in order to get this job. (If it says no schooling necessary, then look for and write down the schooling that you CAN but don't have to do)	Knowledge and skills
1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number	1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number	1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number

1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number	1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number	1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number
1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number	1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number	1. Author 2. Title 3. Web site 4. Date Published 5. Page number
Extras: pay scale or any visual aids	Extras: level of knowledge/skills	Extras: pie chart of time/experience needed for that job, etc.

III. MLA practice worksheet

A. It's up to you whether you want to go over the MLA format before they research or when they actually start writing their essays. It's put in the document that they need to fill out the MLA practice worksheet before they research, but that is a judgment call. Below is the information on the MLA practice worksheet. (You can find the MLA Practice Worksheet and the MLA Format PowerPoint on the Materials section of this lesson.)

MLA Practice Worksheet

Review the MLA Format PowerPoint presentation and practice. Check and revise your answers as needed. If you've been confused then this should help clarify. Follow what the questions ask for.

Read the example essay below and look at where sources were quoted and paraphrased. Look at the works cited.

Fill out the chart below on the essay below.

Did they do the following?	Yes	No
Quotes sources that include an author and page number Write out one quote with page number and author:		
Paraphrased sources that include an author, page number, and saying it in their own words. Write out one paraphrased section with author and page number:		
Quotes sources that include an author and page number Write out one quote with page number and author:		
Works Cited: Author first Write out one author:		
Works Cited: Title second Write out one title:		
Works Cited: Publishing month and year Write out one publish month and year:		
Works Cited: Page numbers used Write out one set of page numbers use:		
Works Cited: Website listed Write out one website:		
Works Cited: Separated with one space and a period Write out one complete book source:		
Works Cited: Articles quotation marks and books underlines Write one complete article source:		

Research Paper final draft example

Have you ever wanted to be an actress? An actress is someone that entertains a group of people through acting. I picked this topic because I have always wanted to be a movie star. I will be talking need in order about goals, schooling, and skills that I will to become an actress.

I will become an actress through my goals. Miller has explain that in order to become an actress I will need to have good grades in English, drama, history, social studies, and math. I will participate in extracurricular activities such as debate and other acting classes. I will audition at places, so that I will get an idea of how an audition works and hopefully get a part. The cause of getting good grades and taking acting classes will make the effect of hopefully becoming an actress someday. (57)

I will become an actress through my schooling. Vanderbille explains that a formal education is not required for this job, but it helps you get roles in plays and movies if you have one. I will attend acting workshops to make my acting skills better. I will complete an acting degree at a university, probably a bachelor's. I will also attend a school of performing arts and receive a degree from there. If I am able to get into an acting company early on then, it will be the same as being part of an acting company later in my life. The difference is that the acting company later on will probably pay more and be more time consuming. (13)

I will become an actress through my skills. Fordsworth explains that I will need to audition on stages for film, television, and local plays to increase my skills in auditioning. I will practice memorizing scripts and other memorization techniques. I will study characters and try to act like them, so that I can be able to be any role. I will attend improve clubs and practice my improvisation skills. I just talked about the goals, schooling, and skills I need to become an actress. (3)

Becoming an actress would be really cool. Actresses entertain people by acting out a role using body movement and speech. I picked this topic because movies are where I belong. I just talked about goals, schooling, and skills that I will need in order to become an actress.

Works Cited

Fordsworth, Dexter. *Status of our Children*. 16 Sept. 2004.

<http://www.usdepartmenteducation.edu>: 1-3.

Miller, Rochelle. "Meeting AYP." 18 Aug. 2002.

<http://www.davis.k12.ut.us>: 55-60.

Vanderville, Frank. "Uniforms are expensive." 28 Jan. 2001.

<http://www.urbaninstitute.com>: 12-13.

IV. News Article Review

Giving students an idea of the importance of career choice is important. Students have viewed President Obama's speech, but let's look at something a little more close to home as well as get an idea of the workings of a news article. Walk students through the first article and show them the filled out worksheet on the article. Next, allow them to look at the article about students that visited a high school and are working towards deciding career choices.

Newspaper article review

Newspapers are structured the same most of the time, as an inverted pyramid

An inverted pyramid structure means that the most important information is places first, the important information in the middle, and the least important information last. We're going to analyze the structure and learn some vocabulary words that are specific to newspapers.

Headline: Bold main printed title

Subhead: If there is one, it's the next bold printed title underneath the headline.

Byline: The author or reporter

Dateline: Both the date and location

Lead: The first sentence of the newspaper article

Tone: Mood of the piece, celebration, melancholy, nostalgic, etc. What is the feeling you get when you read the article?

I'll first show you an example and then it's your turn.

Example: Go to the following website. View and read the [KSL newspaper article](#)

Headline: *Layton Residents Look to Reserve a Piece of History*
Subhead: *None*
Byline (reporter): *Mike Anderson*
Dateline (date/location): *Oct. 6, 2011, Layton, UT*
Lead (1st sentence): *A piece of Davis County history is now easy for people to miss. But local residents are trying to save it.*
Tone (mood of piece): *Nostalgic, I feel like I should try and help preserve these special memories.*
Summary of the article: *The Layton city train depot is over a hundred years old. It has seen wars and brought home fallen soldiers. It was turned into a restaurant for a while, but is now boarded up. Residents are hoping that someone will purchase and restore the depot into a local business.*
Most important information summed up: *The city of Layton is looking to save the train depot. The train depot is a historical spot because it's been around for 100 years. It has even seen soldiers from both world wars.*
Important information summed up: *The depot is iconic and special to many Layton families. The Cowley's are especially fond of it because they had relatives that were the first agents to live upstairs in the depot.*
Least important information summed up: *Layton city architects are currently working to figure out the cost of a renovation. Their hope is that someone will purchase it and restore it into a business.*

Now it's your turn. Go to the following website: <http://www.ksl.com/?nid=960&sid=18823790> and fill out the information below.

Newspaper Article website:
Headline:
Subhead:
Byline (reporter):
Dateline (date/location):
Lead (1st sentence):
Tone (mood of piece):

Summary of the article:

Most important information summed up:

Important information summed up:

Least important information summed up:

How this article helped your ideas about your essay:

V. Outlining the essay

Students have had a chance to research and maybe even gained some more ideas from that news article that they reviewed. It's time to break down the outline and get into the meat of writing out the informative career essay. Walk them through the example essay while they are creating their own. If this is their first outline then, walk them through section by section.

Informative career essay outline

We will be creating an outline. Look at your evidence from your research. You will all have the same three general topics: goals, schooling/training, and skills/knowledge. Example outline below.

A. Introduction Section

: The intro section has four parts:

Catchy Phrase: You need to grab the reader's attention by sharing a story, asking a question, or giving a fact. Examples on the filled out outline.

Define job: You should have a better understanding of the job that you want, so you need to explain it.

Why picked?: You need to explain your desire to at some point acquire this job.

Transition sentence: You need to put together a sentence that explains your three reasons. The transition sentence will help you move into your body paragraphs and create cohesion and clarity.

B. Body

: The body sections are separated into three parts, so that you can list and elaborate on your relevant, credible information.

Goals: You should explain your goals that you need to do right now in order to get this job. You need to show what the effect would be for the cause of following through with these goals. Make sure that you put the author's name and page numbers used for this information. If you have more than one then, put as many as there are next to each piece of information.

Schooling / Training: You should explain the schooling and/or training needed to get your particular job of choice. You should compare and contrast any training that you have now with any training or schooling that you'll need to have later. Make sure that you put the author's name and page numbers used for this information. If you have more than one then, put as many as there are next to each piece of information.

Skills / Knowledge: You should explain any extra skills or knowledge needed to receive a job like the one you chose. Make sure that you put the author's name and page numbers used for this information. If you have more than one then, put as many as there are next to each piece of information.

Transition: You need a transition sentence to help you cohesively move into your concluding paragraph.

C. Conclusion

: The conclusion has four parts.

Restatement of your catchy phrase: A reiteration of why this is important to you.

Re-explain in different words the job that you want : You should use different words, but still help us understand the job.

Restate why you picked this topic: You should say in different words why you picked this job.

Restate three reasons: List your three reasons.

Make sure that you put author's names and page number next to your information.

Example Outline for Research Essay

Introduction

How will you capture your reader's attention? Catchy phrase or hook: question, observation, or a story.

Have you ever wanted to be an actress?

Explain the job that you want someday:

An actress is someone that entertains a group of people through acting.

One sentence about why picked this topic:

I picked this topic because I have always wanted to be a movie star.

Transition sentence (explain your three reasons):

I will be talking about goals, schooling, and skills that I will need in order to become an actress.

Body

What is your first reason? <i>Goals</i>	What is your second reason? <i>Schooling</i>	What is your third reason? <i>Skills</i>
What evidence supports this reason? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Good Grades, A good level of spoken English is important, and subjects such as drama, history, social studies, and math are useful. Miller pg. 55-60</i> - <i>Participating in extracurricular activities, such as theatre sports and debating, Miller pg. 55-60</i> - <i>Do well in my Acting classes Miller 55-60</i> - <i>Take outside acting classes Miller 55-60</i> - <i>Audition at places Miller 55-60</i> 	What evidence supports this reason? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>acting workshops Vanderville 12-13</i> - <i>completing a degree at university Vanderville 12-13</i> - <i>Completing a degree at a performing arts school. Vanderville 12-13</i> 	What evidence supports this reason? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>audition for parts in performances on stage, in film or on television</i> - <i>study scripts to understand the part they are playing</i> - <i>research their character</i> - <i>memorize and rehearse their character's lines, cues and physical movements</i> - <i>discuss their character with the director and the other actors they work with</i> - <i>act out the role for an audience or in front of a camera</i> - <i>Improvise parts of their character's personality or actions during rehearsal or in front of an audience. Fordsworth pg. 1-3 for all of the above information</i>
Cause / Effect <i>The cause of getting good grades and taking acting classes will make the effect of hopefully becoming an actress someday.</i>	Compare / Contrast <i>If I am able to get into an acting company early on then, it will be the same as being part of an acting company later in my life. (same) The difference is that the acting company later on will probably pay more and be more time consuming.</i>	Transition Sentence <i>I just talked about the goals, schooling, and skills I need to become an actress.</i>

Conclusion

Restate your hook:

Becoming an actress would be really cool.

Re-explain in different words the job that you want:

Actresses entertain people by acting out a role using body movement and speech.

Restate why you picked this topic:

I picked this topic because movies are where I belong.

Restate three reasons:

I just talked about goals, schooling, and skills that I will need in order to become an actress.

VI. Creating an informative career essay

Walk the students through the transition of taking their outline and writing a rough draft for their actual essay. Below you will find an example essay for the example outline above. Students need to make sure that they are spelling correctly and following MLA format.

Instructions for students:

With the outline go through each paragraph. Below I have the completed essay as well as the completed outline.

The Introduction on your outline should transfer straight over and should be your first paragraph in your essay.

The first paragraph in your body (second paragraph in the essay) should say I want to be (an actress) through my goals. The rest of the sentences should be your point explained. You should explain their cause and effect as well. You should also put in the author's name and page number where necessary.

The second paragraph in your body (third paragraph in the essay) should say I want to be (an actress) through schooling and training. The rest of the sentences should be your point explained. You should also talk about the comparison and contrast with your training now and the training that you will need. You should also put in the author's name and page number where necessary.

The third paragraph in your body (fourth paragraph in the essay) should say I want to be (an actress) through skills and knowledge. The rest of the sentences should be your point explained. You should also put in the author's name and page number where necessary. You need a transition sentence at the end of this paragraph.

The Conclusion on your outline should transfer straight over and should be their last paragraph in your essay. Your concluding statement should support the information presented.

You should use MLA formatting to cite your sources in the essay and have a Works Cited page at the end.

Example Research Paper

Have you ever wanted to be an actress? An actress is someone that entertains a group of people through acting. I picked this topic because I have always wanted to be a movie star. I will be talking need in order about goals, schooling, and skills that I will to become an actress.

I will become an actress through my goals. Miller has explain that in order to become an actress I will need to have good grades in English, drama, history, social studies, and math. I will participate in extracurricular activities such as debate and other acting classes. I will audition at places, so that I will get an idea of how an audition works and hopefully get a part. The cause of getting good grades and taking acting classes will make the effect of hopefully becoming an actress someday. (57)

I will become an actress through my schooling. Vanderville explains that a formal education is not required for this job, but it helps you get roles in plays and movies if you have one. I will attend acting workshops to make my acting skills better. I will complete an acting degree at a university, probably a bachelor's. I will also attend a school of performing arts and receive a degree from there. If I am able to get into an acting company early on then, it will be the same as being part of an acting company later in my life. The difference is that the acting company later on will probably pay more and be more time consuming. (13)

I will become an actress through my skills. Fordsworth explains that I will need to audition on stages for film, television, and local plays to increase my skills in auditioning. I will practice memorizing scripts and other memorization techniques. I will study characters and try to act like them, so that I can be able to be any role. I will attend improv clubs and practice my improvisation skills. I just talked about the goals, schooling, and skills I need to become an actress. (3)

Becoming an actress would be really cool. Actresses entertain people by acting out a role using body movement and speech. I picked this topic because movies are where I belong. I just talked about goals, schooling, and skills that I will need in order to become an actress.

Works Cited

Fordsworth, Dexter. *Status of our Children*. 16 Sept. 2004.

<http://www.usdepartmentofeducation.edu>: 1-3.

Miller, Rochelle. "Meeting AYP." 18 Aug. 2002.

<http://www.davis.k12.ut.us>: 55-60.

Vanderville, Frank. "Uniforms are expensive." 28 Jan. 2001.

<http://www.urbaninstitute.com>: 12-13.

VII. Peer Review Essay

Students should have their essay completed and now should meet with one or more partners.

Students should look over the peer review worksheet before trading with a partner to make sure that they have completed everything required. Students then need to get with a partner and peer review with the worksheet.

VIII. Edit and Revise with Multimedia

Based on the resources within your school, have students type up their final draft and begin work on their multimedia presentation. If that is not available then allow them to hand write the final draft in pen and create a project to present in front of the class.

Students instructions:

Refer back to the paper you filled out while you were researching. Search and make sure that you still have the following information: Pay scale, visual aids, level of knowledge/skills, pie chart of time/experience needed for that job, etc. If you didn't get a chance to create a pay scale, level of knowledge chart, or a pie chart of time/experience needed for that job then, now is the time.

If you don't have Microsoft PowerPoint then, find another type of multimedia to present your information i.e., a video, Quick time video, Photostory with narration, etc. If you search around on the Internet, there are few downloads for PowerPoint.

I will teach you how to create a PowerPoint presentation. I have attached an example PowerPoint presentation.

When you open up PowerPoint, you can start off with a title slide that includes how to become the job that you have been studying as well as your first and last name. You can click in the boxes.

If you click on the slides on the left and press enter, you get another slide. You will end up with 7 slides in total. If you click layout, you can choose from the various types of layouts available to you. I like to use bullet points for the Goals slide. This slide should be titled goals. It should just list your goals in order to get this job. Make sure to include your cause

and effect statement.

The third slide is where you will include the various levels of schooling that you can receive or years of experience that will help you receive a job. When you open a new slide there are various graphics that you can choose from. You must have some sort of graphic in this slide in order to relay the information.

The fourth slide should include a pay scale. Break it up however you want, but once again include a graphic of some sort.

The fifth slide should have your skills and knowledge title as well as the information bulleted below.

The sixth slide includes a pie chart that breaks up the percentage of the time in your life that it will take to complete your goals now, schooling/training, skills/knowledge, and if you want to experience. This should also be another graphic of your choice.

The seventh slide should have your works cited information.

Check and make sure that you have the following information in your presentation:

Checklist	Yes	No
7 slides		
Title slide and name		
Goals slide with name		
Schooling / training with compare and contrast		
Years of experience graphic		
Pay scale graphic		
Skills/knowledge slide		
Graphic showing the percentage of life for goals, schooling/training, skills/knowledge, experience (optional)		
Works Cited page		

IX. Student Presentation

Allow students the opportunity to present their multimedia and essays with the class. Students will enjoy learning about different careers. You can have them do some sort of a listening guide or just enjoy.

Attached is the complete instructions for the teacher and students.

Strategies for Diverse Learners

Examples and visuals really help students. I have provided examples along the way with various articles and videos that talk about the importance of career choice, but feel free to come up with more examples. Put everything on the overhead, document cam, or lcd projector to help diverse learning see what you're doing. Always follow IEP accommodation.

Extensions

The informative career project is a great way to get students to really learn about their dream job. Tell students that if they can find and interview or even bring in someone that has their dream job then, they can get extra credit if they write a reflection on it. Kids are not discouraged by this. I had a student that wanted to be a professional skater. He interviewed the guy on his blog and wrote a reflection.

Assessment Plan

I created rubrics for pretty much everything. Answer keys, where necessary, are already in place (MLA PowerPoint has the answers on the actual PowerPoint). The assessments are checklists in a way because we want to see that they getting it.

Bibliography

Anderson, Mike. "Layton residents look to preserve a piece of history." Layton: ksl.com, 2011.

<http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&sid=17562275>.

Farmer, Molly. "Middle school students given opportunity to visit high school, decide interests." Salt

Lake City: ksl.com, 2012. <http://www.ksl.com/?nid=960&sid=188237905>.

Hacker, Diana. A Pocket Style Manual Third Edition. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

Obama, Barack. "Address to American Schoolchildren." Arlington: WhiteHouse.gov, 2009.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-in-a-National-Address-to-Americas-Schoolchildren/.

Authors

[Megan Hennessy](#)