A Parent’s Look at the 8TH Grade Gateway that awaits your child
I used to hate writing assignments, but now I enjoy them.

I realized that the purpose of writing is to inflate weak ideas, obscure poor reasoning, and inhibit clarity.

With a little practice, writing can be an intimidating and impenetrable fog. Want to see my book report?

"The dynamics of interbeing and monological imperatives in Dick and Jane: A study in psychic transrelational gender modes."

Academia, here I come!
What is the Gateway Writing Test
What is the difference between Expository and Persuasive writing?
How have the students been prepared?
What can parents do over the next two weeks?
What are your parent concerns after tonight?
What is the Writing Gateway?
What is the Writing Gateway?

- Two types of writing
  - Expository
  - Persuasive
- For 8th grade students ONLY
- NO CHOICE in the style of writing
- 90 minutes – start to finish
- Follows the writing process
- Must pass the test for promotion
- Spring and/or Summer opportunity for retake if needed
- Remediation classes will be offered in the spring if needed
What is **Expository Writing**?
Expository – INFORM – Writing

I deas developed with explanations
N eeds specific details and examples
F ully develops the topic
O rganizational strategy
R eader’s interest through strong voice
M ulti-paragraph writing
What is Expository Writing?

- Writing to explain
- Factual writing
- True writing – non-fiction
- TELLING or INFORMING the reader
- An overall picture of the topic
- (DOES NOT try to persuade the reader)
Expository writing ...

**IS –**
- Multi-paragraph
- Fully develops idea with specific details and examples
- Blends personal experience and knowledge to inform the reader about the topic

**IS NOT –**
- Single paragraph
- Repetitive, formulaic writing
- Encyclopedic coverage of facts or an abundance of facts unrelated to the topic
Expository writing ...

**IS –**

- Lively – catches the reader’s interest
- Engaging language and varied sentences
- Structured – introduction, development, and closure
- Correct sentences, grammar, and spelling

**IS NOT –**

- Flat and uninteresting – not repetitive
- Imprecise language with no variety
- Not structured – no or weak introduction and/or conclusion, weak development of topic
- Incorrect sentences, grammar, and spelling (distracts reader)
Informational Writing = Writing to Inform or Explain

Your goal: To give clear information that GETS SOMEBODY EXCITED about your subject!
Expository Graphic Organizer

AKA – “HOW” Line

**TOPIC** –

- **LEAD**
- **SHOW**–
- **MEET** –
- **HIGHLIGHT 1**
- **HIGHLIGHT 2**
- **HIGHLIGHT 3**
- **Or more ??**
- **HOW MOMENT — MOST IMPORTANT**
- **CONCLUSION**

“HOW” LINE
What is **Persuasive Writing**?
Persuasive – PERSUADE – Writing

Position
Emotional and/or logical appeal
Reader engagement
Specific facts or personal experience
Use precise language
Anticipate audience concerns
Defend your position
Effective arguments
What is Persuasive Writing?

- Writing to convince the reader
- True writing – non-fiction with OPINIONS
  - PERSUADING or CONVINCING the reader
  - Trying to win over the reader to do or believe
  - Trying to persuade by urging or arguing
**IS –**
- Clear position on the issue
- Fully developed argument with details and examples
- Defending the position with relevant information
- Anticipating and countering audience position
- Specific facts/experiences/stats
- Appealing to logic and/or emotion

**IS NOT –**
- Copying the prompt into the paper
- Repetitive, simple 5 paragraph format
- Irrelevant ideas that are inappropriate
- Unaware of audience position
- Facts/stories/anecdotes that are unrelated
- Just venting about a topic
Persuasive writing ...

**IS –**
- Organizational structure
- Multi-paragraph
- Engaging to the reader
- Precise language and varied sentences
- An introduction the issue, with fully developed position and closure
- Correct grammar/usage/spelling

**IS NOT –**
- Ideas in illogical / confusing order
- Single paragraph
- Flat and uninteresting
- Imprecise language and little sentence variety
- Presenting idea with no development, support, or closure
- Lack of grammar, usage, or spelling (interferring with meaning)
Persuasive Writing = Verbal Boxing

Your goal: TO GET SOMEBODY TO DO WHAT YOU WANT!
Persuasive Writing = Verbal Boxing

Your goal:

TO GET SOMEBODY TO DO WHAT YOU WANT!
GRAPHIC ORGANIZER – The POW Line

BEGINNING

SHAKE
SHOW
TELL
ROUND 1
ROUND 2

MIDDLE

POW! MOMENT
KNOCK BACK
DO THIS, PLEASE

END

SHAKE
Persuasive Graphic Organizer

**AKA – “POW” Line**

- SHAKE (Greeting)
- SHOW
- TELL
- ROUND 1
- ROUND 2
- POW! MOMENT
- KNOCK BACK
- DO THIS, PLEASE
- SHAKE (Closing)

--Persuasive Writing = Verbal Boxing--
GRAPHIC ORGANIZER – The Web

Reason 1:
List 3 details that will become complete sentences when you write. One detail should be elaborated.

Reason 2:
List 3 details that will become complete sentences when you write. One detail should be elaborated.

Reason 3:
List 3 details that will become complete sentences when you write. One detail should be elaborated.

Take a stand & summarize your reasons:

Summary:
State your stand and summarize the reasons.
How are the students graded?
IDEAS domain - 40%

- Controlling idea
- Supporting idea
- Major details
- Specific examples and elaboration
- Supporting ideas (relevant)
- Relevance of detail
- Depth of development
- Awareness of Genre
ORGANIZATION domain
- 20%

• Overall Plan
• Introduction/Body/Conclusion
• Sequence of Ideas
• Grouping of Ideas
• Expository or Persuasive Strategies
• Transitions
STYLE domain
-20%

• Word Choice
• Audience Awareness
• Voice
• Sentence Variety
• Strategies Appropriate to Expository or Persuasive Writing
CONVENTIONS domain

-20%

• SENTENCE FORMATION: correctness, clarity, simple, compound, complex, end punctuation
• USAGE: sub-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, standard words
• MECHANICS: internal punctuation, spelling, paragraphs, capitalization
# Expository / Informational Rubric

## Ideas (40%)
- Controlling Idea
- Supporting Ideas
- Relevance of Details
- Development Depth
- Completeness
- Awareness of Genre

*Fully engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a speaker's voice, and otherwise developing reader interest.
*Fully develops a controlling idea that conveys a perspective on a subject.
*Fully includes appropriate facts and details.
*Fully excludes extraneous details and inappropriate information.

### Ideas
- Fully developed ideas: 40
- Consistent ideas: 35
- Sufficient ideas: 30
- Minimal ideas: 25
- Lacks ideas: 20

## Organization (20%)
- Overall Plan
- Intro/Body/Conclusion
- Sequence of Ideas
- Grouping of Ideas
- Expository Strategies
- Transitions

*Organizing strategy is fully appropriate to the writer's topic and the assigned genre of writing.
*Logical and appropriate sequencing and/or grouping of ideas within and across the paper.
*Introduction engages and sets the stage and conclusion provides a sense of closure.
*Uses effective and varied transitions to link all elements of the response (i.e. ideas, paragraphs, sentences, etc.)

### Organization
- Fully organized: 20
- Consistent organization: 17
- Sufficient organization: 15
- Minimal organization: 12
- Lacks organization: 10

## Style (20%)
- Word Choice
- Audience Awareness
- Voice
- Sentence Variety
- Strategies Appropriate to Expository Writing

*Carefully crafted sentences create sustained tone.
*Varied, precise, and engaging language that is fully appropriate to the assigned genre.
*Figurative, vivid, and/or technical language present.
*Varied sentence lengths, structures, and beginnings.
*Sustained attention to the audience.
*Consistent voice that is sustained throughout response.
*Variety of genre appropriate strategies engages reader

### Style
- Fully developed style: 20
- Consistent style: 17
- Sufficient style: 15
- Minimal style: 12
- Lacks style: 10

## Conventions (20%)
- Sentence Formation: correctness, clarity, simple, compound, complex, end punctuation
- Usage: sub-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, standard words
- Mechanics: internal punctuation, spelling, paragraphs, capitalization

*Clear and correct simple, complex, and compound sentences with correct end punctuation.
*Correct usage in a variety of contexts.
*Correct mechanics in a variety of contexts.
(See components listed in conventions domain.)
*Infrequent, if any, errors
*Errors do not interfere w/ meaning.

### Conventions
- Full command: 20
- Consistent command: 17
- Sufficient command: 15
- Minimal command: 12
- Lacks command: 10
**PERSUASIVE RUBRIC**

**DEAS (40%)**
- Controlling Idea
- Supporting Ideas
- Relevance of Details
- Development Depth
- Completeness
- Awareness of Genre

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**ORGANIZATION (20%)**
- Overall Plan
- Intro/BODY/Conclusion
- Sequence of Ideas
- Grouping of Ideas
- Persuasive Strategies
- Transitions

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**STYLE (20%)**
- Word Choice
- Audience Awareness
- Voice
- Sentence Variety
- Strategies Appropriate to Persuasive Writing

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**CONVENTIONS (20%)**
- **SENTENCE FORMATION**: correctness, clarity, simple, compound, complex, end punctuation
- **USAGE**: sub-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, standard words
- **MECHANICS**: internal punctuation, spelling, paragraphs, capitalization

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Things to Remember?

Don’t FORGET!
DOs to REMEMBER:

DOs – that we DO stress that students DO …

• **DO** write 2 PAGES – front and back – NO SKIPPING LINES – especially between paragraphs
• **DO** know the style of writing and be sure to do it – Expository or Persuasive
• **DO** remember the format for writing a letter
• **DO** read the prompt more than once to understand the writing topic.
• **DO** brainstorm
• **DO** indent all paragraphs
• **DO** make sure all paragraphs are at least 5 sentences
• **DO** make sure writing is 5 or MORE paragraphs
• **DO** write the final copy in BLUE or BLACK ink
• **DO** proofread the final copy – use INSERT or SINGLE STRIKE THROUGH
• **DO** write legibly. - print or cursive – your choice
• **DO** include lots of detail
• **DO** use transition words.
• **DO** check the CRITERIA –
  - **IDEAS** - **DETAILS**
  - **ORGANIZATION** – **PARAGRAPHS** – minimum of 5 paragraphs – intro., 3+ body, conclusion
  - **STYLE** – **VOICE** – aka CREATIVITY (adjectives / description)
  - **CONVENTIONS** – **MECHANICS** – spelling, punctuation, paragraphs
• **DO** have a GOOD, STRONG Introduction
• **DO** MAKE YOUR THESIS statement (main idea) – is your opinion of the topic – without saying “I…."
• **DO** have a GOOD Conclusion
• **DO** make sure the conclusion is DIFFERENT than the intro with a restatement of your opinion /thesis
DON’Ts to REMEMBER:
DON’Ts – that we DO stress that students NOT DO …

• DON’T start a sentence with AND or BUT
• DON’T repeat the same word over and over
• DON’T use “I think…” “I hope you enjoyed…” “I am going to tell you…”
• DON’T abbreviate
• DON’T use etc.
• DON’T use contractions
• DON’T write numbers – INSTEAD spell out all numbers 1–100
• DON’T forget to indent all paragraphs – USE a paragraph sign at the beginning of paragraphs if you forget to indent
• DON’T skip lines between paragraphs
• DON’T write less than 5 paragraphs
• DON’T write off topic
• DON’T forget to READ the prompt more than once to understand the topic
• DON’T use slang
• DON’T introduce yourself … DON’T say “My name is…”
• DON’T use the transitions – FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, LAST
• DON’T say good bye in the conclusion
• DON’T use “THE END”
• DON’T use symbols (like 2 for the word “to”)
• DON’T draw flowers, circles, or hearts to dot your “i.”
What should you look for?
Student Writing Checklist for Gateway Writing

Prepare Yourself to Write
• Read the Writing Situation and Directions for Writing carefully.
• Brainstorm for ideas.
• Decide what ideas to include and how to organize them.
• Write only in English.

Make Your Paper Meaningful
• Use your knowledge and/or personal experiences that are related to the topic.
• Explain, clarify, and define your ideas.
• Establish a clear controlling idea.
• Fully develop your controlling idea with specific, supporting details.
• Organize your ideas in a clear and logical order.
• Write an expository essay and stay on topic.

Make Your Paper Interesting to Read
• Think about what would be interesting to the reader.
• Use a lively writing voice that shows your interest in the topic.
• Use precise, descriptive, vivid words.
• Vary the type, structure, and length of your sentences.

Make Your Paper Easy to Read
• Indent to start a new paragraph.
• Use effective transitions.
• Write in complete and correct sentences.
• Capitalize, spell, and punctuate correctly.
• Make sure your subjects and verbs agree.
What is a weak, formulaic paper?

Characteristics of a Formulaic Paper - The writer announces his or her thesis and three supporting ideas in the opening paragraph. The writer restates one supporting idea to begin each of the three body paragraphs. The writer repeats or restates his or her controlling idea and three supporting points in the final paragraph. Entire sentences may be copied verbatim from the introduction, used as topic sentences in each of the body paragraphs, and repeated in the conclusion.

Using the following paper, highlight the different parts of the paper that you think need editing based on the DOs and DON’Ts to remember.

Next try making suggestions that will make the paper better. Ask questions to help add details to the paper.
Hi, my name is Brittany. How are you? I have a plan for improving transportation at my school. The first part of the plan is to reduce the number of buses. The second part of the plan is to start a car pool list. The third part of my plan is to ask more kids to walk.

The first part of my plan is to reduce the number of buses. There are so many buses right now. All of the buses create a big traffic jam in the school parking lot each morning. It is awful to smell all of the exhaust too. So, I think we should reduce the number of buses.

The second part of my plan is to start a car pool list. There are many car-riders who live close to one another. I bet they could start riding together. We could put a sign-up sheet outside of the office. A car pool list is a great part of my plan.

The third part of my plan is to ask more kids to walk. There are many kids who live close to school. Right now, they take cars or the bus. They could walk, though. So, I think we should ask them to.

So in conclusion, I have told you three parts to my plan. They were, we should reduce the number of buses, we should start a car pool list, and we should ask more kids to walk. Thanks for listening to my plan. Have a great day.
A Step in the Right Direction-

Read the following paper and notice the additions that could be added to help make a stronger paper.
A Step Beyond the Formulaic Paper

I have a plan for improving transportation at my school. We could reduce the number of buses, start a car pool list, and ask more kids to walk. The plan would work.

We need to reduce the number of buses. There are so many buses right now. All of the buses create a big traffic jam in the school parking lot each morning. It is awful to smell all of the exhaust too. By the time kids get into the school, they are grumpy and can’t breath.

We should also start a car pool list. There are many car-riders who live close to one another. I bet they could start riding together. We could put a sign-up sheet outside of the office. We could reward kids who car pool by giving them a special award at the next school assembly.

One last thing is we could ask more kids to walk. There are many kids who live close to school. Right now, they take cars or the bus. They could walk, though. It would be healthier for them, and we could give these students a special award at the next assembly too.

In conclusion, I hope you like my plan. Thanks for listening, and have a great day.

NOTE: There is more evidence or grouping in this example because the writer added some ideas to each body paragraph (so there is more evidence).
Now . . .

*It is your turn to try it*

with this prompt . . .
**Writing Situation**
Eighth grade is a transition between middle school and getting ready for high school. Students have many concerns about the expectations and goals the school has for them.

**Directions for Writing**
Choose one concern that you have about eighth grade. Write an essay using specific details and reasons why this is a concern for you and how you might deal with it.
What can **YOU** do to help?

- Review the writing process using the strategies and ideas
- Choose a prompt to discuss, analyze, brainstorm, and even write with your child
- Help your child to prepare for the testing day—
  - #2 pencils and blue/black pen
  - Good night sleep
  - Eat breakfast (at least on this day)
  - Be present AND on time
Where can YOU go for more information?

**GCPS Writing Resources**
http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/LanguageartsMS.nsf

**State Writing Resources**
What are your –
Concerns?
Questions?
Thoughts?
The Introduction: Your First Impression

- Should invite the reader to keep reading
  - You can do this by
    - Asking thought-provoking questions
    - Giving a description that makes the reader wonder what’s coming next
    - Directly addressing the reader
    - Moving from the broad topic to the writer’s subject
    - Giving a brief personal narrative or anecdote Offering a compelling statement
    - Asking a rhetorical question
    - Giving background information the reader needs to know
    - Foreshadowing
    - Flashback
    - Using dialogue
    - Using mystery

What to Avoid in Your Introduction

- Repeating or barely paraphrasing the writing topic
- Lengthy narrative that prevents both writer and reader from getting to the point
- Formulaic thesis and three supporting points that give away all the writer’s ideas
- Common statements that tell instead of show:
  - My thesis statement is…
  - In this paper, I’m going to tell you…
  - In this paper you will find out…
  - This paper is about…
  - I’m going to tell you the reasons…
The Conclusion: The Last Thought Before You Leave

- Should leave the reader with a final thought
  - You can do this by
    - Offering a compelling statement
    - Summarizing the key points without repeating
    - Giving a reminder of personal connections the reader has to the topic
    - Asking a question for the reader to think about
    - Offering new but related issues for the reader to think about
    - A call to action

What to Avoid in Your Conclusion

- Repeating your introduction
- Repeating your thesis statement
- Leaving the reader wondering where the rest of your piece is
- Common statements:
  - In this paper, you have learned...
  - In this paper, you have found out...
  - I have told you about...
  - As you can see...
  - That is all I have to say...
Transitions
To Add Information: and, again, and then, besides, equally important, finally, further, furthermore, nor, too, next, lastly, what's more, moreover, in addition, otherwise, or, first (second, etc.), as if that were not enough, now that, or else, likewise, also, even more importantly, additionally, together with, along with, for instance, another
To Compare: whereas, but, yet, on the other hand, however, nevertheless, similarly, on the contrary, by comparison, where, compared to, up against, but, although, meanwhile, after all, in contrast, although this may be true, just as, the same as, equally important, in the same way, in as much as, like, also, at the same time, in like manner, likewise, once again, once more
To Connect Ideas: yet, however, so, though, moreover, nevertheless, in addition, besides, next, again, also, too, finally, hence, further, not only, but also
To Contrast: although, even though, though, whereas, despite, different from, in spite of, unlike, alternately, conversely, even so, for all that, however, in contrast, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, still, but, yet, or, still, at the same time, nonetheless, instead, this may be true
To Emphasize: definitely, extremely, obviously, in fact, as a matter of fact, as has been noted, indeed, in any case, absolutely, positively, naturally, surprisingly, never, emphatically, unquestionably, without a doubt, certainly, undeniably, for that matter, of course, surely, to be sure, in any event, to begin with, as proof, undoubtedly, certainly, perhaps, without fail, with this in mind, again
To Give an Example or Illustrate: for example, for instance, in this case, in other words, on this occasion, in this situation, take the case of, to demonstrate, to illustrate, as an illustration, concerning, considering, in regard to, regarding, with respect, as a matter of fact, generally, in fact, in general, indeed, in particular, occasionally, on the whole, similarly, specifically, that is, usually, namely, to clarify, suppose, thus, to cite an example
To Prove: because, for, since, for the same reason, obviously, evidently, furthermore, moreover, besides, indeed, in fact, in addition, in any case, that is
To Restate or Intensify: as noted earlier, as we have seen, besides, in any case, indeed, in fact, in other words, to put it another way, to reiterate, to repeat, that is to say, that is
Transitions
To Show Cause: as long as, because, because of, due to, due to the fact, in as much as, since, so long as, for this reason, for, therefore, accordingly, consequently, thus, as a result
To Show Degree: mainly, stronger, strongest, greater, greatest, better, best, worse, worst, least, most
To Show Exception: yet, still, however, nevertheless, in spite of, despite, of course, once in a while, sometimes
To Show Result: accordingly, all in all, as a consequence, as a result, consequently, finally, for this reason, hence, then, therefore, thus, so
To Show Sequence: first, second, third, and so forth, next, then, following this, at this time, now, at this point, after, afterward, subsequently, finally, consequently, previously, before this, simultaneously, concurrently, thus, therefore, soon
To Show Space or Location: where, wherever, a little father on, closer, about a foot to the right (left), across the way, at that altitude, underneath, at the center of the circle, at the edge of the clearing, in the middle, outside, between those cities (towns, barns, etc.), in the next room, just to the right (left), here, beyond, nearby, opposite to, adjacent to, on the opposite side, next to, down, on the other side, there, here, in, under, above, over, in the background, upward, up, in the front, behind, near, lower, below
To Show Time: immediately, thereafter, soon, after, afterward(s), finally, then, later, previously, formerly, first (second, etc.), next, as soon as, at the moment, at the same time, before, by the time, now, now that, once, since, the next day, until, when, whenever, while, after that, at last, at length, before, beforehand, during, at the same time, earlier, following this, from then on, in the first place, meanwhile, presently, shortly, subsequently, in the meantime, during, eventually, in the past, at this point, to begin with, not long after, as time passed, not long ago, earlier, last year, tomorrow, prior to
To Summarize or Conclude: on the whole, all in all, therefore, accordingly, thus, as a result, consequently, on the whole, it is clear, in short, in summary, summing up, to put it briefly, for this reason, then, in other words, finally, as stated, that is, due to