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Chapter One

Program Overview

Teaching elementary students to write has always been a challenge. Over the last forty years the education pendulum has swung from teaching basic grammar and sentence structure on one side to not giving them any instruction at all on the other side. Of course, there has also been every method of instruction or non-instruction in between. This pendulum has been back and forth several times, with no one being able to agree on the best approach for writing instruction in not only elementary school, but also middle and high school.

If you have experienced frustration with this daunting task, you are not alone. Many teachers give a writing assignment, ask the student to complete the task and turn in the paper, grade the paper, and then give it back to the student. Mission accomplished. But actually what has been accomplished? Did the student learn how to write? Will the student remember not to make the same mistakes on the next assignment? Did the student even know what was good or bad about the paper? The answer to all these questions is probably *No*.

English teacher Dawn Burnette was searching for the “perfect” way to teach writing to her high school students. She researched, experimented, talked with her students, and completely changed the way she thought about writing instruction. As Ms. Burnette states in Chapter One of *Burnette Writing Process*, she developed “a systematic, user-friendly program that removed the ceilings for the top students and removed the barriers for the lower ones thanks to two key components: focus and reflection.”

Burnette Writing Process is designed for use in grades six through twelve. Middle and high school teachers and students using the process have had unbelievable success. Elementary teachers have been asking what they can do to reach this level of success with their students. *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process* is up to the challenge.

The program is divided into three levels: A, B, and C. The “A” writers are basically beginners to the process of writing. The “B” writers have some skills but have mastered very few and need a lot of practice. The “C” writers have mastered more skills but need to broaden their abilities. Each assignment in the program has been presented at the three levels with increasing difficulty and substance from A to B to C. Each writing assignment consists of the overview, the target author and audience, the form of the writing, the procedure, and the suggested focus skills. You and the student can pick from the suggested focus skills and/or add others. The final step in the process is the self-assessment rubric. You select appropriate focus skills from the list, the student reflects on his or her writing, and then you and the student each score the assignment. The reflection component requires the student to think about what he or she wrote and gives you a chance to understand his or her thought process. The process can be as individualized as necessary.

Thirty-six different writing assignments are included in *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process*. Each assignment contains an A, B, and C level. The assignments cover a wide range of writing genres and are organized with the simpler assignments appearing first and the more complex towards the end. The first two assignments are for evaluation purposes and should be used first. These assignments will help you decide at which level you should place each student at the beginning of the year. Assignment one is a timed writing to give you a quick picture of the

student's abilities. Assignment two is also meant to help you get an overall picture of the student's abilities plus introduce the students to the focus skills. No student reflection is necessary in either assignment one or two. The remaining writing assignments do not necessarily have to be used in the order in which they are presented in the book. As students progress in their writing through the year, they may be moved into a more advanced level at your discretion. The following chapters will describe the assignments, identify the focus skills, explain the skills, and provide mini-lessons to teach and review each of the focus skills.

Chapter Two

The Writing Assignments

Good writing instruction begins with good writing assignments. Students need to write often; they need to write for a variety of audiences and purposes; and they need to write different types of pieces. The writing assignments for *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process* can be found in Appendix A beginning on page 29. You can give each of the students a copy of the particular writing assignment to keep in a writing folder along with the writing in progress. Each of the writing assignments is reproducible for the students in your classroom.

Each assignment in this program consists of five parts:

- **Assignment Overview:** This part is a basic explanation of the assignment and its purpose.
- **Author and Audience:** This section explains the role that the writer will take and who will be reading the writing.
- **Form:** This section provides the student with information about how the writing will be set up.
- **Procedure:** The six steps of writing--prewriting, writing the first draft, revising, editing/proofreading, assessing, and publishing--are contained in this section. These steps give the student a map to follow when working on the assignment.
- **Suggested Focus Skills:** This box at the bottom of each assignment page lists suggested skills for the student to work on in the assignment. You and the student can choose one, two, or all of the skills by placing a check next to the chosen ones. There is also a blank line provided on which to add a skill needed by this particular student.

The writing assignments vary in the length of time needed for completion. Some of the assignments in the curriculum may take several days to complete while some require weeks. Allow the students ample time to work on and finish each assignment. Good writing should not be rushed. The first writing assignment is set up so that you can evaluate the writing ability of your students. Assignment two is designed so that you can introduce your students to the focus skills and do some further evaluation. Beginning with assignment three, the students will use the six-step writing process and the focus skills. It is up to you to decide if your students should work in level A, B, or C. Do not begin too high. You can always move up to a higher level if their progress warrants it or move back as needed. Do not feel locked in to one level.

Students should follow all the steps in the procedure to ensure that they understand the writing process and can complete the assignment successfully.

- **Prewriting:** This is the thinking and planning step. There are many approaches to this step. This program gives students the opportunity to experience different approaches such as drawing a picture, making a web, creating a list, doing freewriting, or doing various other things. (Appendix B contains examples of the graphic organizers used in the prewriting step.)
- **Writing the first draft:** Early on you need to get your students into the habit of double spacing their first drafts. This gives them space in between each line to make any changes without wearing out an eraser to do the job. This empty line allows the student to cross out, add a caret ^, or make any other needed changes, and still be able to read the words.

Chapter Three

The Focus Skills

Elementary teachers are often frustrated by the amount of material that they and their students have to cover in a year's time. And then students do not seem to remember a skill when asked to use it. In writing, teachers generally do not ask students to focus on and master specific skills. We expect them to deal with all the skills in every assignment. Research shows that "the approach that produces the best learning is focused practice....The teacher structures writing tasks to emphasize specific aspects of writing" (Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock 142). That is not to say that students should work on individual skills in isolation though. As Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane Pollock explain, in focused practice "the learner still engages in the overall skill or process, but targets one particular aspect to attend to" (70).

To illustrate this point, allow us to compare learning to write to learning to play golf.

Insufficient preparation: If an instructor just explains all the rules and tells you how to drive, chip, and putt and then sends you out to play, you will give up after four holes. Likewise, some students are insufficiently prepared for writing and experience such frustration that they want to wrap their pens around a tree. **Practice without focus:** If you go out there and play 18 holes every day without the right kind of guidance, you will continue to make the same mistakes over and over. Likewise, some students write often but do not really know what they are doing or how to improve, so they never make much progress. **Focused practice:** If you really focus on chipping during every round, and you do not worry about the other aspects of your game, you will eventually master the art of chipping *during actual play*. Over time, you will also master the other aspects of your game and ultimately master the game of golf. Likewise, students who focus on a few skills at a time will ultimately master the art of writing.

Focus skills are one of the most important components of *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process*. By focusing on certain skills in each assignment, students improve their writing one skill at a time and are not overwhelmed by the process. Without focus skills, students will look over their papers once or twice, but they will never improve in any specific area. Once a student has mastered a skill, he or she will more likely continue to use it correctly. The students take small steps that take them down the path of good writing. They realize that this is how a person learns to write.

Starting on Page 137, you will see a Focus Skills Progress Chart listing 45 skills in the following categories: content, organization, style, conventions, format, and challenge. This chart can be copied for each student so that you can keep track of each student's progress. Following this chart is a list of descriptors for each of the skills. These can be copied and given to the students to use as reference notes. A teacher can also use writingprocess.net to track the progress of each student.

Burnette Writing Process is set up with six focus skills for each writing assignment. This number might be overwhelming for most elementary writers. Choosing two to three skills for beginners and three to four skills for intermediate and advanced writers would probably be the best strategy. Once again, you can individualize this program however is best for your students. Remember that every student need not have the same focus skills in a given assignment.

Descriptors for *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process*

The following descriptors explain the skills taught in *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process*. The Focus Skills Progress Chart on page 137 lists the skills introduced in the program. Skills are revisited regularly over the course of the writing program. See pages 17-26 for mini-lessons to teach and reinforce the various focus skills.

A. Completes the given assignment

Every piece of writing that you complete should meet the requirements of that given assignment.

B. Content Skills

B1: Uses content appropriate for type of writing

There are many different types of writing, and each one requires a different kind of content. You will be introduced to many of the writing forms in this program. The following is a list of writing genres that will be used within *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process*.

Narrative: telling a story (creative writing, autobiography, biography, travel journal, personal experience, profile, poem)

Expository: explaining or informing (how-to writing, factual report, literary analysis, summary, informative speech, news release)

Descriptive: describing (poem, descriptive paragraph, paragraph about an event or experience, historical description)

Persuasive: persuading (letter to the editor, editorial, review, opinion)

B2: Writes clear and focused sentences

Clear sentences are ones that are easy to follow and to understand. The sentences should fit the topic, and each one should serve a purpose.

B3: Writes clear and focused paragraphs

A paragraph is a unit of writing that must contain enough information so that the reader can understand the topic. A clear paragraph is one that is easy to follow and to understand. It helps to read the paragraph aloud to a friend or adult and ask if any parts sound confusing. A focused paragraph should stay on the topic and should include sentences that serve a purpose in the paragraph.

B4: Stays on topic

Each sentence in a paragraph or essay should support the main idea or relate to the topic.

B5: Uses fresh and original ideas

You should make an effort to think of ideas that no one has ever thought of before. These ideas might include a unique and interesting character, a creative plot, a different persuasive argument, a new way to tackle a problem, or an out of the ordinary example to explain an idea.

B6: Writes for a variety of audiences

You need to think about who will be reading or listening to your writing. You should write as if you are speaking directly to that person. This also gives your writing a personal voice. The

finished product might need to be more formal for an adult or more casual for a peer or younger child.

C: Organization Skills

C1: Uses organization appropriate for type of writing

Organization of a paper should depend on the type of writing it is. You should organize your writing so that your reader can easily follow the ideas in the sentences or paragraphs.

C2: Uses logical organization of ideas

Ideas in a paragraph, story, or essay should be organized in a logical manner. The following are some examples of ways to organize writing:

Spatial order: This type of organization works well in descriptive or expository paragraphs. Details should be ordered from left to right or top to bottom. You can use words such as *above, up, around, beside, into, or throughout* to guide your reader through the writing.

Chronological order: You could use time order to explain to your reader what happened and when. This organization works well with narrative or expository paragraphs. You can use words such as *before, during, first, finally, later, or as soon as* to guide your reader through the writing.

Order of importance: This type of writing helps you explain details in new stories, persuasive writing, or expository paragraphs. You might list ideas in the order of their importance. Order may also be reversed, and the most important idea could be listed last. You can use words such as *at least, most, important, or however* to guide your reader through this type of organization.

C3: Uses effective topic sentences

The topic sentence of each paragraph must present what it is that you are trying to say. A good test for a topic sentence is to say (but not actually write), “In this paragraph, I am going to prove/show/explain that _____.” Fill in the blank with the topic sentence. If the writing contains more than one paragraph, each topic sentence should relate to your main topic.

C4: Uses paragraphs effectively

You should use a separate paragraph for each main idea of a multi-paragraph essay. The introduction and conclusion should be in separate paragraphs. If you are using dialogue, a new paragraph should be used each time a different person speaks.

C5: Uses effective transitions

You should use transition words to move smoothly from one idea to the next and to help your reader understand the relationships between ideas. A transition could be a simple word (such as *first, next, or finally*), or it could be a phrase (such as *for example, in other words, or for instance*). Too many transitions can make your writing sound awkward, so you need to make them sound natural.

C6: Uses concluding sentences for closure

A single-paragraph piece requires a sentence (or two) to provide a sense of closure. This sentence should reinforce the topic sentence without repeating it. You should avoid beginning the conclusion sentence with the words “In conclusion.” A multi-paragraph essay requires a conclusion paragraph.

Chapter Four

The Rubric

The rubric is an important component of a writing assignment because it provides students with expectations and feedback. Plenty of educational research has supported the use of rubrics in the classroom, and many teachers are indeed using rubrics. Some teachers, however, use rubrics only at the end of the grading process. A rubric should not be a secret. Your students should have a copy of the rubric up front to use as guidance throughout the process. Ann Davies argues that “[w]hen students begin with the end in mind, the learning destination is clear, and they are better able to make decisions that support their learning” (1).

The *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process* rubric is probably different from others you have seen before because it includes space for student self-assessment and reflection as well as for teacher assessment. On the rubric, students can earn between zero and four points for each focus skill based on the following criteria:

- 0 = no evidence of skill
- 1 = beginning to use the skill correctly
- 2 = uses skill correctly most of the time
- 3 = uses skill correctly all of the time
- 4 = uses skill correctly and can explain how to use it

The total score on the rubric will vary according to how many skills are chosen. If you do not grade on a point system, you may choose to generate a percentage grade instead.

Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process is not based on assessment by deduction. When we grade by deduction, students make minimal progress because we merely deduct points for errors, reducing writing to what Robert Probst calls “a pointless exercise in error-avoidance, or in guessing the expectations of the teacher” (75). In assessment by deduction, a student can do almost everything right but still fail because of a few things he or she did wrong. In a joint statement, the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English determined that “[a]ssessment should emphasize what students can do rather than what they cannot do” (13). Grading by deduction emphasizes what students cannot do. On the *Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process* rubric, however, a student earns a score of three for using the skill correctly all of the time. He must be able to use the skill correctly and be able to explain how to use it to earn a top score of four. Therefore, students are forced to improve.

Be sure to talk with your students ahead of time about the criteria for the skill levels. Students will probably be frustrated at first. They will probably want to give themselves all fours when they really have not earned them. But give them time. They will soon become proficient and will learn what makes good writing in the process.

The reflection part of the rubric is very important. Self-reflection means looking at yourself as a writer. At first students will be uncomfortable or even hesitant about commenting on their own writing. They might say things like “I did my best on this” or “This is good.” But as they practice this self-evaluation, there will be a shift away from their dependence on the teacher to tell them what is good to independence as evaluators. They become more comfortable evaluating their work, notice and appreciate changes in their writing, and grow in their ability to assess their own

achievement and progress. They will increase their number of comments and be more thoughtful and insightful with their comments.

Here is an example of a rubric from a confident third grade writer:

Focused Writing: An Elementary Writing Process Scoring Rubric

Name	Assignment	A	B	C
Ansley	Narrative		X	

Skill Levels:

- 0 = no evidence of skill
- 1 = beginning to use the skill correctly
- 2 = uses skill correctly most of the time
- 3 = uses skill correctly all of the time
- 4 = uses skill correctly and can explain how to use it

1. Skill: Meets the guidelines for the assignment

Self-assessment: 0 1 2 3 ④ Teacher's assessment: 0 1 2 3 ④ Yes 😊

Reflection: I wrote two paragraphs about a special day.

2. Skill: Uses correct end punctuation

Self-assessment: 0 1 2 3 ④ Teacher's assessment: 0 1 2 3 ④ You remembered

Reflection: I ended the declarative sentences with periods.

3. Skill: Uses appropriate title

Self-assessment: 0 1 2 3 ④ Teacher's assessment: 0 1 2 3 ④

Reflection: My title tells about my story. Good title!

4. Skill: Uses dialogue correctly

Self-assessment: 0 1 ② 3 4 Teacher's assessment: 0 1 ② 3 4

Reflection: The characters speak to each other. I used quotation marks. Keep working on this. 😊

5. Skill: _____

Self-assessment: 0 1 2 3 4 Teacher's assessment: 0 1 2 3 4

Reflection: _____

Total for Self-assessment: 14

Total for Teacher's Assessment: 14

Comments:

Nice job staying focused. I am looking forward to your next story.

Chapter Five

Skill Lessons

Each of your students should have a pocket folder for their writing in progress. This way they can keep up with their drafts, assignment page, rubric, and any reference pages that you give them. When you begin a new writing assignment, give them a copy of the assignment page and go over the expectations with your students. Answer any questions they might have about the assignment. Give them a copy of the rubric they will be using. Decide on the focus skills they will be working on for this particular assignment. *Remember that you need not select the same skills for each student.* Have them complete the box at the bottom of the assignment page and then fill in the skills on the rubric. (You might want to do this step yourself for the very young writers.) Use one or more of the following skill lessons to teach or review the focus skills.

Lesson B1

Content: Uses content appropriate for type of writing

*Review with the students the four types of paragraphs: expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive. Give each student four index cards. Have them write the name of one kind of paragraph on each card. Using Descriptor B1, call out the names of examples of each type of paragraph or read sample paragraphs aloud to the students. Ex: *travel journal, autobiography, editorial, factual report.* Have students hold up the card that tells the type of writing that that example names. Note: Some examples might be more than one type of writing.

Lesson B2

Content: Writes clear and focused sentences

*Put a sentence about a specific topic on the board. Add one word or phrase that does not belong in the sentence. Have students cross out the words or phrases that do not belong. Ex: *Some flying fish can glide as far as three football fields and swim. I like to watch dolphins swim and sharks. Matt he rode his bike to the ball field.*

Lesson B3

Content: Writes clear and focused paragraphs

*Give one student a paragraph to read aloud to the group. Have the others listen and be able to tell the following about the paragraph: the topic, the topic sentence, any details about the topic, and the concluding sentence.

*On sentence strips, write sentences that could fit together in a paragraph. Let students organize these strips into a paragraph. Read the paragraph aloud to see if it flows and makes sense.

Lesson B4

Content: Stays on topic

*Put a list of words on the board. Each list should contain words that fit in a particular category plus one that does not fit. Students should first figure out the category to which the words belong and then cross out the word that does not belong with the others. Let them explain why the one word does not belong.

Ex: *bird, giraffe, pig, dog, tree, cat* (tree)
glass, cup, bottle, bowl, napkin, jug (napkin)

Chapter Six

Grading the Writing Assignments

Once you have collected the writing assignments, it is time to complete the teacher assessment. Limit your assessment to each student's focus skills to provide more meaningful feedback (Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock 99). **Do not focus on unrelated skills.** If you see that the student is having trouble with a skill other than the focus skills for this assignment, you might make a note of it on the bottom of the page. Then this could be a focus skill for the next assignment.

As you assess, you will also respond to the student's reflections. Peggy O'Neill tells us it is necessary "to read the self-assessment and respond...if we want to develop the students' skill in self evaluation" (62). She adds that teacher comments should be in direct response to the concerns of the student writer (63). That is not to say that you cannot make any other comments; however, the goal of your feedback is to help each student improve on his focus skills, so be selective regarding comments that are not skill-related. Be supportive and affirming while giving positive feedback.

Researchers and teachers alike have questioned to what extent teachers should consider students' self-assessments when assigning grades. Here is a way to handle the question. Self-assessment and reflection are part of the criteria for the assignment. If the student does not complete this part of the assignment in a thoughtful way, then you can mark down the skill on the rubric that states "Paper completes given assignment." Give a mark of 1 or 2 on this skill. You do not need to count the student assessment as part of the overall grade, but might want to meet with the student to discuss any concerns that you have about his or her assessment and reflection.

Beginning writers will not become advanced writers in just weeks or even a year. Writers are constantly evolving. Elementary writers need great amounts of support and feedback while becoming independent writers. Being clear about what is expected, giving positive comments, and focusing on specific skills that need improvement can help the writers develop, grow, and change. We want to help students get started on the path to writing success and see that writing can be fun.

Appendix A

Writing Assignments

<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Timed	30
2	Narrative	31
3	Descriptive	32-34
4	Narrative	35-37
5	Friendly Letter	38-40
6	Drawing Conclusions	41-43
7	Descriptive	44-46
8	Autobiography	47-49
9	Summary	50-52
10	Narrative	53-55
11	Expository	56-58
12	Thank-you Note	59-61
13	Interview/Introduction	62-64
14	Fact/Opinion	65-67
15	Narrative	68-70
16	Observation Report	71-73
17	Fiction	74-76
18	Summary	77-79
19	Conversation	80-82
20	Expository	83-85
21	Descriptive	86-88
22	Poem	89-91
23	Narrative	92-94
24	News Story	95-97
25	Business Letter	98-100
26	Biography	101-103
27	Narrative	104-106
28	Realistic Story	107-109
29	Book Review	110-112
30	Humorous Poem	113-115
31	Comparison and Contrast Essay	116-118
32	Persuasive Essay	119-121
33	Narrative	122-124
34	Humor	125-127
35	Play	128-130
36	Fantasy Story	131-133

Writing Assignment #3A

Descriptive

Assignment Overview: Think about an object that is important to you. It could be a toy, a book, a gadget, a keepsake, a piece of clothing, or even a nightlight.

Author and Audience: You are writing as yourself. Your audience includes your friends and family.

Form: You are to write three sentences about the object that is important to you. Do not forget to tell about its size, shape, and color. Double space your writing.

Procedure:

- Prewriting:** Choose a favorite object. *List* details about the object. Use information such as the size, shape, and color of the object.
- Writing the first draft:** Use your list to help you write three sentences about the object.
- Revising:** Look at your focus skills and make any needed changes in your writing. Did you tell about the size, shape, and color of the object?
- Editing/Proofreading:** Check over your first draft. Did you use correct punctuation and capitalization? Fix any mistakes. Use your best handwriting to copy over your sentences. Check them again to see if you copied everything correctly.
- Assessing:** Complete the rubric. Think and write about how you completed your writing.
- Publishing:** Draw a picture of the object that you wrote about. Staple or glue it to your sentences. Hang it up in the classroom.

Suggested Focus Skills:

D7 Style: Uses descriptive words

E1 Conventions: Uses capital letters correctly

E2 Conventions: Uses end punctuation correctly

F4 Format: Uses correct heading

F2 Format: Double spaces writing

√ your skills

Writing Assignment #3B

Descriptive

Assignment Overview: Think about an object that is important to you. It could be a toy, a book, a gadget, a keepsake, a piece of clothing, or even a nightlight. You should use descriptive words to make the object seem real.

Author and Audience: You are writing as yourself. Your audience includes your friends and family.

Form: You are to write a descriptive paragraph about your object. Include details about size, shape, and color. Indent the first word of your paragraph and double space between the lines.

Procedure:

- Prewriting:** Choose a favorite object. *List* details about the object. Tell why it is important to you.
- Writing the first draft:** Write your descriptive paragraph. Use your list to describe this object and tell why it is important to you.
- Revising:** Look at your focus skills and make any needed changes in your writing. Have you described the size, shape, and color of the object? Have you explained why it is important to you?
- Editing/Proofreading:** Check over your first draft. Did you use correct punctuation and capitalization? Fix any mistakes. Use your best handwriting to copy over your sentences. Check them again to see if you copied everything correctly.
- Assessing:** Complete the rubric. Reflect and write about how you completed this assignment.
- Publishing:** Draw a picture of the object that you wrote about. Staple or glue it to the back of your writing so that your readers can turn the paper over and see the picture. Display it in the classroom.

Suggested Focus Skills:

B4 Content: Stays on topic

D7 Style: Uses descriptive words

E1 Conventions: Uses capital letters correctly

E2 Conventions: Uses end punctuation correctly

F4 Format: Uses correct heading

√ your skills

Writing Assignment #3C

Descriptive

Assignment Overview: For this assignment, you will write a descriptive paragraph about an object that is important to you. It could be a toy, a book, a gadget, a keepsake, a piece of clothing, or even a nightlight. The purpose of this assignment is to show your understanding of using descriptive words to present a picture of something in words instead of using a graphic.

Author and Audience: You are writing as yourself. Your audience includes your friends and family. Your tone should be informal.

Form: You will write a descriptive paragraph about the important object. Include details about size, shape, and color. Indent the first word of your paragraph and double space between the lines.

Procedure:

- Prewriting:** Choose a favorite object. *List* details about the object and think about why this object is important to you. You might even tell a story about your connection with this object.
- Writing the first draft:** Use your list to explain this object and tell why it is important to you.
- Revising:** Look at your focus skills and make any needed changes in your writing. Have you described the size, shape, and color of the object? Have you explained why it is important to you?
- Editing/Proofreading:** Check over your first draft. Did you use correct punctuation and capitalization? Fix any mistakes. Use your best handwriting to copy over your sentences. Check them again to see if you copied everything correctly.
- Assessing:** Complete the rubric. Reflect and write about how you completed this assignment.
- Publishing:** Draw a picture of the object that you wrote about. Staple or glue this to the back of your writing so that your readers can turn the paper over and see the picture. Display it in the classroom.

Suggested Focus Skills:

B4 Content: Stays on topic

D7 Style: Uses descriptive words

E1 Conventions: Uses capital letters correctly

E2 Conventions: Uses end punctuation correctly

F2 Format: Double spaces writing

√ your skills

Writing Assignment #25A

Business Letter

Assignment Overview: Sometimes people write business letters to ask for information or to order things. You are going to write a business letter to your city police department to ask for information about bike safety.

Author and Audience: You will write as yourself. Your audience is an adult at your local police department.

Form: You will write a business letter to the police department using the correct business letter format. The business letter should include a heading, inside address, salutation, body, closing, and signature.

Procedure:

- Prewriting:** Think about what you want to know. Make a list of questions that you want to ask.
- Writing the first draft:** Use the business letter format paper that your teacher gives you. Put the letter parts in the correct places. In the body of the letter be sure to introduce yourself and tell why you are writing. After you ask your questions, be sure to thank the adult for helping you.
- Revising:** Check over your business letter. Look at your focus skills and make any needed changes in your writing.
- Editing/Proofreading:** Check your business letter again. Fix any mistakes. Use your best handwriting to copy over your letter.
- Assessing:** Complete the rubric. Think and write about how you completed this assignment.
- Publishing:** Fold and put your business letter into an envelope. Mail or take it to your local police station after your teacher sees it.

Suggested Focus Skills:

B6 Content: Writes for a variety of audiences

C1 Organization: Uses organization appropriate for writing

D10 Style: Uses more specific words

E7 Conventions: Avoids abbreviations

F7 Format: Uses correct business letter format

√ your skills

Writing Assignment #25B

Business Letter

Assignment Overview: Business letters are a common form of writing when you need information, have a problem with a product or service, or need to respond to some situation in your school or community. You will write a business letter to your principal stating that you would like to start a clean-up campaign in your school. You would like the clean-up to begin during Earth Week.

Author and Audience: You are writing as a concerned student. The principal will be your audience. Hopefully, the principal will take your request seriously and present your letter to the school council and parent-teacher group.

Form: You will write a business letter using the correct business letter format. The business letter should include a heading, inside address, salutation, body, closing, and signature.

Procedure:

- Prewriting:** Think about what you want to say. Make a list of important details that you want to include in the body of your letter.
- Writing the first draft:** Use the business letter format paper that your teacher gives you. Put the letter parts in the correct places. In the body of the letter state your concern about cleaning up the school. Explain the details in a well-written paragraph. Positive, polite requests work the best.
- Revising:** Check over your business letter. Does your letter read smoothly and answer any questions your principal may have? Did you explain Earth Week's importance for beginning your clean-up campaign? Look at your focus skills and make any needed changes in your writing.
- Editing/Proofreading:** Check your business letter again. Fix any mistakes. Use your best handwriting to copy over your letter.
- Assessing:** Complete the rubric. Reflect and write about how you completed this assignment.
- Publishing:** Hand-deliver your letter to the principal's office after your teacher sees it.

Suggested Focus Skills:	√ your skills
B6 Content: Writes for a variety of audiences	_____
C1 Organization: Uses organization appropriate for writing	_____
B2 Content: Writes clear and focused sentences	_____
E7 Conventions: Avoids abbreviations	_____
F7 Format: Uses correct business letter format	_____
_____	_____

Writing Assignment #25C

Business Letter

Assignment Overview: Business letters are a common form of writing when you need information, have a problem with a product or some kind of service, or need to react or respond to some situation in your school or community. Your class is writing a book about the United States. Each student will choose a different state. You will write a business letter to the Secretary of State in your chosen state asking for information.

Author and Audience: You are writing as a student. Your audience is a Secretary of State.

Form: You will write a business letter using the correct business letter format. The business letter should include a heading, inside address, salutation, body, closing, and signature.

Procedure:

- Prewriting:** Think about what you want to know about the state: size, population, places to visit, things to do, or other interesting facts.
- Writing the first draft:** Use the business letter format paper that your teacher gives you. Put the letter parts in the correct places. In the body of the letter state your interest in their state and make your request in a well-written paragraph.
- Revising:** Check over your business letter. Does your letter read smoothly? Did you explain your project and make your request in a polite manner? Look at your focus skills and make any needed changes in your writing.
- Editing/Proofreading:** Check your business letter again. Fix any mistakes. Use your best handwriting to copy over your letter.
- Assessing:** Complete the rubric. Reflect and write about how you completed this assignment.
- Publishing:** Let your teacher see your letter before you mail it.

Suggested Focus Skills:

√ your skills

B2 Content: Writes clear and focused sentences

B6 Content: Writes for a variety of audiences

C1 Organization: Uses organization appropriate for writing

E7 Conventions: Avoids abbreviations

F7 Format: Uses correct business letter format

Appendix B

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