

A Typical Teaching Week

Veteran teachers know that rarely is there anything typical about a teaching week. These guidelines are intended to help bring some predictability to lesson planning. Although the parts of speech and other elements of grammar are important aspects of this course, its primary focus is writing and rhetoric—as the name implies. It is recommended that teachers alternate between a course in grammar one week and *Writing & Rhetoric: Narrative II* the next week. The schedule includes four days so that you can have flexibility to spend more time on some sections or to catch up.

All teachers have time constraints. Please note that you may not want to tackle summary, amplification, and other writing exercises all in one lesson. These options are provided so that you have ample choice to decide what your class should practice. There will be other opportunities to summarize, amplify, and write creatively in lessons to come. Each of these skills is important in developing a solid foundation for rhetoric.

Day One

1. The teacher models fluency by reading the text aloud while students follow along silently.
2. Students break off into pairs and reread the text to each other. In the case of longer stories, students can read in sections. Encouragement should be given to students to read with drama and flair where appropriate.
3. “Tell It Back” (Narration) and “Talk About It” should immediately follow the reading of the text while the story is still fresh in the students’ minds. “Talk About It” is designed to help students analyze the meaning of texts and to see analogous situations, both in the world and in their own lives. Narration, the process of “telling back,” can be done in pairs or by selecting individuals to narrate to the entire class. Playacting the story from memory is another possible form of narration. (Note: Solo students can tell back the story into a recording device or to an instructor.) The process of narration is intended to improve comprehension and long-term memory.
4. “Go Deeper” comprehension exercises follow each text. They can help students better understand the selection as they work with vocabulary, main ideas, and character traits.

Day Two

1. Optional: The teacher can appoint a student or the entire class to read the text again.
2. Students then work with the text through the “Writing Time” exercises. In ancient times, at this level, the primary exercise was to summarize or amplify the narrative. Other exercises include emulating a particular sentence, changing part of a story, or writing an entirely new story. Student work need not be completely original, but it should show some effort of thought. You may want more than one day for this step.

Day Three or Four*

1. A time of sharing work can wrap up each lesson. In order to build confidence and ability in public speaking, students should be encouraged to read their work aloud—either in pairs or to the entire class (or cohort).
2. The “Speak It” section creates opportunities for students to recite, to playact, and to share their work aloud. Please consider using a recording device whenever it would suit the situation. In this case, have the student listen back to her recording to get an idea of what sounded right and what could be improved. Have students read the elocution instructions at the end of the book to help them work on skill in presentation.
3. At this level, teachers should be giving feedback to students and requesting rewrites whenever feasible. The art of writing is rewriting. Most students do not self-edit well at this age or provide useful feedback to each other. As the child gets older, self-editing checklists will be provided within the Writing & Rhetoric course.

*The number of days per week assigned to the lessons is four so that you have some flexibility according to the pace and level of depth that you can take advantage of with your students.