

# A Typical Teaching Week

These guidelines are intended to help bring some predictability to lesson planning.

Although the elements of grammar are important aspects of this course, its primary focus is writing and rhetoric. We recommend that you teach a simple, but rich, grammar curriculum in parallel with the lessons in *Writing & Rhetoric: Comparison*. By simple, we mean to suggest that you avoid a grammar program with a writing component. Two different writing methods would most likely work against each other and cause an imbalance in the school day. Instead, look for a grammar program that focuses on grammatical concepts, provides plenty of practice sentences, and encourages diagramming.

You may want to provide same-day grammar instruction several days a week, preferably separating Writing & Rhetoric from grammar study by an hour or two. Or, you may want to alternate weeks between a grammar program and Writing & Rhetoric. This requires some negotiation in your language arts program for the year. If you aim to do two Writing & Rhetoric books per school year, that would equal approximately twenty-four lessons. If you spend one week on each lesson, that leaves you with about eleven weeks to focus on grammar. However, as the reading selections grow longer and the writing tasks more extensive, you may need to spend more time on each Writing & Rhetoric lesson according to the needs of your students. You will have to choose a grammar program with these considerations in mind.

Please note that multiple opportunities for practice are built into the Writing & Rhetoric series. If you find that your students have mastered a particular form of writing, you should feel free to skip some lessons. In this case, some teachers choose to present the historical material from skipped lessons as part of their history lessons. Some teachers may also provide their students with practice in sentence manipulation by doing only the Sentence Play and Copiousness sections from skipped lessons.

## Day One

1. The teacher models fluency by reading the text aloud while students follow along silently.
2. Tell It Back (Narration) and Talk About It should immediately follow the reading of the text, while the text is still fresh in the students' minds.

Narration, the process of “telling back,” can be done in a variety of ways. Pairs of students can retell the story to each other, or selected individuals can narrate orally to the entire class. Solo students can tell back the story into a recording device or to an instructor. At this age, written narrative summaries, outlines, and dramatic reenactments can be done with skill. The process of narration is intended to improve comprehension and long-term memory.

Annotation is included under Tell It Back as a standard part of the reading process. Most lessons in this book contain two readings, and annotations can help a student easily locate vocabulary words, proper nouns, and important concepts for drafting essays.

Talk About It is designed to help students analyze the meaning of their reading and to see analogous situations, both in the world and in their own lives. This book also includes several opportunities for picture analysis.

## **Days Two and Three**

1. As time allows, the teacher can ask students to reread the text silently. If annotations were not completed on the first day, students can continue to mark the text for main ideas, vocabulary words, and important concepts.
2. Students work with the text through the Go Deeper and Writing Time exercises. Go Deeper is a feature in the first half of the book and is all about practicing important skills essential to each lesson. Writing Time, which appears in the second half of the book, includes sentence play, copiousness, and the comparison exercises themselves. You will probably want to take more than one day for this step.

## **Day Four**

1. The lessons in the first half of the book are designed to move quickly. You may choose to wrap up these lessons after the third day, or you may complete any unfinished exercises during days four or five.
2. The second half of the book is more intensely focused on writing and takes more time. If students complete the first draft of their essays on day three, we recommend that they take a breather from writing while they work on their speaking skills. Keeping a day between essay completion and revision helps students to look at their work with fresh eyes. However, teachers may find it valuable to pair students together to read their essays out loud and give each other ideas for revision. A rubric is included in the Speak It section of lesson 6 and at the back of the book as an aid to partner feedback.
3. The Speak It section in the second half of the book creates opportunities for students to memorize, recite, discuss and debate, read dramatically, and playact. Please consider using a recording device whenever it suits the situation. When using electronics, the student should listen to his recording to get an idea of what sounds right and what needs to be improved. Have students read the elocution instructions at the back of the book to help them work on skill in delivery.

## **Day Five**

At this level, students will continue to work toward a foundation in revision. In the second half of the book, the Revise It section provides basic exercises that introduce students to revision and proofreading. Revise It also provides a list that covers some of the most important steps toward improving an essay. Most students can do rudimentary self-editing at this age and provide some useful feedback to each other. However, teachers are still the best source for giving editorial feedback and requesting rewrites.