

# Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators: Writing Part 1

## Course Overview

The development of the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators (Praxis CASE) Preparation Courses aligns Plato Courseware with the strands and topics assessed in the 2014 Praxis CASE Test. Each unit aligns to one or more strands within the 2014 Praxis CASE Test and the modules within each unit target the essential concepts of the Common Core State Standards as assessed in the Praxis CASE Test for Language Arts—Writing. This course focuses on the study of different writing strategies. In this course, you will find a variety of lessons and activities to improve your knowledge of these strategies.

## Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will:

- Learn to carefully plan, draft, and organize test essays.
- Explore methods that help you think through a writing assignment to be sure you understand it.
- Learn to figure out what a writing assignment is asking you to do.
- Learn to address all parts of a writing assignment.
- Explore how to include the right information for your audience in the papers.
- Understand how thinking about the purpose of the paper will help you identify your audience.
- Learn to analyze your audience to understand and determine their existing knowledge and ensure you provide the appropriate level of background knowledge about your topic.
- Learn how to plan and organize an essay
- Understand how to write effective transitions that link the end of each paragraph with the beginning of the next.
- Learn how to revise sentences at the beginnings of paragraphs to build even stronger transitions.
- Explore how to determine your thesis and add details to a thesis that is too general.
- Explore how to write thesis statements that completely cover the main idea.
- Explore how to identify and support arguments in need of additional evidence that readers may dispute or that rely on expert opinions.
- Explore strategies that use examples to clarify ideas.
- Learn to use parallel structures to foster emphasis and clarity in your writing.
- Understand how to identify and analyze potential counter arguments to the thesis.

- Understand how to correct vague descriptions and imprecise verbs.
- Explore how to meet the goals of a writing assignment and write an assignment that does not specify an audience.
- Learn how to monitor your thesis to make sure your essay stays on topic.
- Explore strategies for searching information on the internet.
- Learn how to avoid plagiarism by controlling how you use your research in a paper.
- Explore how to make notes from source material and use them to explain and write ideas in your own words.
- Explore writing as a process, and consider attitudes and feelings about writing.
- Learn how to revise and edit a rough draft.
- Review your own writing, identify problem areas, and rewrite to improve reader understanding and interest.

## General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Complete basic operations with presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Docs presentation.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email.

*For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.*

## Course Materials

- notebook
- pencils or ink pens
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

## Course Structure

### Unit 1— 3: Text Production: Writing Arguments

#### Summary

Unit 1 focuses on how to write for tests and the employment of different strategies to develop a well-structured essay or writing assignment. You will learn how to carefully read, understand,

and analyze the question in order to write a well-constructed essay or writing assignment. Additionally, you will learn how to identify your audience for the purpose of the paper. You will also learn how to analyze your audience and decide what information to put in and leave out of the writing assignment.

In Unit 2, you will first learn to plan and organize an essay. The unit then goes on to describe how you can distinguish the topic from the background information given in the essay question, to stay focused on the essay topic. You will learn the importance of planning an essay and the steps involved in planning before you begin the actual essay writing. Additionally, you will learn how to use effective transitions while writing a strong essay. The concluding part of this unit focuses on helping you to determine the thesis for a paper and write a thesis statement that will completely cover the paper's main idea.

Unit 3 begins with the focus on how to understand the audience, and identify and support arguments. You will learn to give effective examples, which will make your writing more lucid and interesting. You will also learn to use effective repetition, which will help keep focus on the main topic and create a strong sense of style. The concluding part of the unit includes generating counterarguments, which would help write a persuasive essay.

## Unit 4 and 5: Text Production: Writing Informative/Explanatory Texts

### **Summary**

Unit 4 begins with the focus on replacing vague descriptions and overused and imprecise verbs with more details or replacing the vague language altogether. You will learn how to read prompts and make notes based on the audience, topic, and content. Using notes, you will learn to make lists that would help you generate ideas. You will learn how to identify the main purpose of the assignment and write an essay that reflects this main purpose. This unit concludes with steps that will help you to monitor your thesis thereby making sure your essay does not stray from the topic.

Unit 5 begins with the focus on search strategies that will help you search information on the Internet and get better search results. You will learn the importance of giving credit to sources and the strategies that will help you avoid plagiarism, thus maintaining your writing credibility. You will also learn how to use source material and explain your ideas using your own words.

## Unit 6: Text Production: Revision

Unit 6 begins with an introduction of writing as a process, which depends on topic, purpose, and audience. In this unit, you will learn to fine-tune your essay by revising and editing the draft. The unit concludes with steps that will help you review and rewrite your own writing.