

TASC Preparation - Language Arts Writing Part 2

Course Overview

The TASC Preparation Courses were developed by aligning Plato Courseware with the strands and topics that are assessed on the 2014 TASC Test. Each unit aligns to one or more strands within the 2014 TASC Test and the modules within each unit target the essential concepts of the Common Core State Standards as assessed on the TASC 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:

- Explore ways to write precisely and prove arguments using direct and indirect evidence to support claims in a persuasive essay.
- Analyze how to devise a research plan, evaluate information and determine a thesis for a paper.
- Understand how to support arguments with appropriate and sufficient evidence.
- Analyze how to anticipate counterarguments and how to address different perspectives with fairness.
- Understand ways to match writing with the audience by including the right information and predicting what the audience already knows.
- Analyze how to write assignments that don't specify audience.
- Explore outlining including how to plan and sequence ideas.
- Understand how to write strong introductions and conclusions and order sentences in paragraphs.
- Explore transitional devices in paragraphs and ways to tie sentences together.
- Analyze ways to organize, develop and improve structure in paragraphs.
- Explore the effects caused by varying sentence structure in writing.
- Explore how to write in a formal style including ways to write for tests.
- Explore the qualities of a good topic sentence and strategies to select a topic.
- Analyze how to write a rough draft.
- Understand how to separate ideas into paragraphs and narrow topics with interesting facts.
- Analyze strategies for effective writing including monitoring the thesis, clarifying ideas using examples, using appropriate figurative language, eliminating wordiness, avoiding passive voice, and maintaining a consistent style.

- Understand how to write formal and informal essays.
- Examine how to write assignments by understanding the goals.
- Analyze the writing process and explore free writing.
- Understand how to expand a knowledge inventory to explore outside perspectives on a topic.
- Understand how to follow up on leads to extend research, highlight individual voice, and avoid plagiarism.
- Analyze how to write compositions and revise a draft.
- Explore how to conduct a self-review by using checklists to proofread by using published writing as a model.

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: Writing: Arguments and Evidence

Summary

Unit 1 focuses on how to write precisely by replacing vague language with precise phrasing. The unit provides an understanding on how to prove arguments with evidence and how to identify indirect evidence to support claims in a persuasive essay. The unit explores a variety of strategies to devise a research plan and ways to determine a thesis. Students learn to evaluate information, how to support arguments with germane evidence and identify arguments that are supported with multiple reliable sources of evidence. Students learn how to anticipate

counterarguments and how to write keeping in mind the audience. Students learn how to identify biases and address different perspectives fairly in persuasive writing. The unit shows students ways to analyze the knowledge of the audience so that appropriate background knowledge of the topic is provided. The concluding part of the unit focuses on understanding the purpose of a writing assignment and how to develop a plan to fit that purpose.

Unit 2: Writing: Organizing and Working with a Topic

Summary

Unit 2 begins with a focus on outlining and how to sequence ideas into categories in order to develop a structure for a paper or an essay. Students learn how to write strong introductions and conclusions as well as how to identify illogical arrangement of sentences. Students learn to use effective sequences and transitions to achieve coherence and meaning in a sentence. The unit explores ways to eliminate wordiness, unclear meanings, and improper use of voice in paragraphs. The unit includes how to identify, organize and develop paragraphs through examples, sequence of events, comparison and contrast, and cause and effect. The unit provides knowledge on how to create emphasis and dramatic effects through varying conventional sentence structures. Students learn how to write in a formal style. The unit provides an understanding on the qualities of a good topic sentence and how to select an appropriate topic. Students learn how to organize thoughts into paragraphs and learn to write a rough draft. The unit also examines how to narrow a topic with interesting facts and monitor a thesis. The concluding part of the unit includes strategies for using examples to clarify ideas and the correct use of figurative language.

Unit 3: Writing: The Writing Process

Summary

Unit 3 shows students how to write effectively by eliminating wordiness, avoiding passive voice, and maintaining a consistent style. Students explore the characteristics of formal and informal essays. Students learn to write assignments and understand the goals of the assignment. The unit explores ways to write well organized essays and understand writing as a process by considering attitudes and feelings in writing. The unit explores free writing and ways to come up with new ideas by exploring the perspectives of other people. The unit provides an understanding of how to plan and organize an essay while avoiding plagiarism. Students learn how to write thesis statements and how to extend research by using one source to find other sources. The unit shows students ways to choose a point of view and to highlight the elements of individual voice in writing. Students also learn to write informational compositions and revise compositions to improve voice, content, organization, word choice and sentence fluency. The unit includes how to conduct a self-review and the effects of reading aloud. The concluding part of the unit includes using a checklist to proofread work and how to use published writing as a model.