Writing: Lesson 25

Today students will be learning how to write the “I” paragraph for an informative/explanatory essay. The introduction paragraph is three simple sentences and it is set up exactly the same way they were taught in Section 1.

1. Remind students that the I paragraph should be kept short and simple. Today we will review the 3 sentences that make up the I paragraph. Write the following on the board:

   **I Paragraph**
   1. Hook
   2. 3 Reasons/Topics
   3. Closing Statement

2. (Review) – Go over this with students to remind them of what they learned in Section 1 of the curriculum.

   Let’s start with the 1st sentence. This is called your Hook. This is where you want to “hook” your reader and catch their attention. If you start with a boring sentence, your reader is not going to be interested. There are many different types of Hooks you can use when writing an informative/explanatory essay.

3. Write on board:
   Different Types of Hooks for Explanatory/Informative Writing–

   1. Question
   2. Restate the prompt
   3. Statement about the topic

4. Let’s take a look at the passages about alligators that we read the other day.

   The following passages will be used in this lesson:

   - Alligators at Risk
   - Alligator Habitats
PROMPT - Write an informative essay to present to your class about alligators.
Use information from the passages in your essay.

5. Look at the prompt and review the different ways to write a hook. Remind them that you can ask a question in many different ways.
- Did you know that alligators are very interesting creatures?
- How much do you really know about alligators?
- Did you know that alligators are at risk?
- Did you know that the largest ever recorded alligator measured 19.2 feet? (interesting fact from passage)

6. We could also restate the prompt in a different way
- Alligators are a fascinating sight to see and explore!
- Alligators are interesting reptiles that can grow very large!

7. Or you could just make a simple statement about the topic you are about to write about
- Most people do not realize there are different types of alligators in the world.
- Alligators are very interesting creatures.

Take a look at our planning for the prompt:

I Alligators
T1 Species a. American b. Chinese
T2 Type of Reptile a. Cold blooded b. Eggs
T3 Habitats a. Freshwater b. Holes

C Alligators

***When writing the I paragraph, make sure you are color coding each sentence. For example, write the hook in red, the 3 topics in blue, and the closing sentence in green. This way they can visually see the 3 parts of the I paragraph***

8. Which hook do you want to use? (pick one as a class and write on the board or document camera).

9. Now the next sentence for I is your “3 Topics” sentence. For explanatory/informative prompts they do not have to be reasons, they can just be topics. So this is where you state your 3 topics. What are our 3 topics? (they should answer – species, type of reptile, and habitats)

10. So our 2nd sentence will look something like this – Alligators are interesting because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats.

11. Let’s look at our last sentence. This is called our closing statement. This is just a general statement about your topic. For this sentence, you can also take words/sentences from the passages… just make sure you put it in your own words (do not copy word for word). Let me give you some examples:

- Alligators aren’t as scary once you learn more about them.
- Alligators are amazing creatures!
12. So as a class, let’s decide what our closing statement is going to be.
13. Now let’s put it all together and check it.
   - Do we have a hook?
   - Did we state our 3 reasons/topics?
   - Do we have a closing statement?

Here is an example of what your final I paragraph should look like:

*Did you know that the largest ever recorded alligator measured 19.2 feet? Alligators are interesting because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. Alligators aren’t as scary once you learn more about them.*

14. Let’s do one more together and then you try one on your own.

15. Hand out “I” Paragraph worksheet titled “Model/Work Together” in the left hand corner

16. As a class, work together to plan and come up with an I paragraph. Make sure you color code the 3 parts.

   Example:  
   *How much do you know about climates around the world? There are many factors that make the climate vary from place to place and different kinds of climate including tropical and dry. Learning about climates can teach us a lot about a place!*

17. Then have students work on the next “I” paragraph worksheet titled “Guided Practice.”

   Example:  
   *Magnets come in so many shapes and sizes! They are described as a force, there are different types, and they are everywhere. They are a part of our everyday life!*

18. Assist students through planning and writing the “I” paragraph (as needed) for this prompt.
"I" Paragraph

The following passages will be used in this lesson:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Climates, an Introduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climate Zones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your teacher has asked that you write a paper about climates. Write an explanatory essay about climates. Your essay must be based on ideas and information from the passages.

I

T1

B

T2

B

T3

B

C

Now write the I paragraph:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Write an informative essay to present to your class about magnetism.
Use information from the passages in your essay.

I

T1

B

T2

B

T3

B

C

Now write the I paragraph:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Habitats

1 American Alligators can be found in fresh water environments like rivers, lakes, ponds, swamps and marshes. They also like to live in areas that are brackish, which means the water is slightly higher in salt content than fresh water, but not salty like sea water. Alligators tend to stay in marshy areas during breeding season. The wetlands make nest building much easier for the alligators and keeps the temperatures of the nests ideal for incubating their eggs.

2 Adult American Alligators create holes in their swamp habitats. They construct these alligator holes by using their feet, tail, and snout. These holes create areas that help the alligator stay cool during hot weather and it attracts prey. Alligator holes also provide a habitat for other animals during droughts.

3 Other animals found in these types of habitats are amphibians, shellfish, bears and panthers. The types of animals found in these habitats depend on whether the swamp is a freshwater swamp or a saltwater swamp. These animals make this their home since they are able to live in low-oxygenated slow moving waters.
4 Many species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish live and do well in swamp ecosystems. These swamp areas are important because many fish and amphibians lay their eggs in the nearby dry areas. When the eggs hatch, the young crawl into the water.

5 The Everglades National Park, in Florida, is a freshwater swamp, and is home to hundreds of types of birds, many species of reptiles, the Florida black bear, and the Florida panther. Both the American Crocodile and the American Alligator coexist in the Everglades swamp. Florida weather makes this an ideal habitat for the alligator, as well as many other animals.

**Types of Reptiles Found in the Everglades:**

6 **Turtles:** The most common turtles found in a swamp like habitat are the striped mud turtle, commonly found along trails, the Peninsula Cooter, often found in shark valley, and the Florida red-belly, found in fresh water marshes.

7 **Snakes:** Most of the snakes found in the Everglades National Park are adapted to living in water. The striped crayfish snake is the best swimming snake in Florida, but they are not easy to spot since they spend their time in marsh plants. The brown water snake is seen often
in plain view and sometimes mistaken for the poisonous Florida cottonmouth.

8 **Amphibians:** Amphibians are animals that spend the early part of their life in water using gills to breathe and grow into adults that may live in water, but use lungs to breathe. These include frogs, toads, and salamanders. Most commonly seen in the Florida Everglades are the grass frog, which is the tiniest frog in North American, the pig frog, whose grunt like call can be heard day or night, and the dwarf siren salamander.

9 All of these reptiles have an important role to play in the habitat they live in.
Alligators at Risk

10 There are two species of known alligators in the world, the American Alligator and the Chinese Alligator. The American Alligator can be found in the wetlands of the Southern United States, in North America. These reptiles have been hunted for many years and at one point, were close to extinction. In order to protect this species, they were listed under the Endangered Species Act, making hunting alligators illegal. Due to the efforts of the Endangered Species Act, the species has made a huge recovery and was taken off the endangered species list in 1987. Since the American Alligator population has repopulated so well, hunting and egg collecting is once again allowed.

11 On the other hand, the Chinese Alligator is a class one endangered species. The Chinese Alligator can be found in the Sub Tropical regions of China, in low lying areas such as rivers, streams, and marshes. This species of Alligator is classified as critically endangered because it has a decline in population greater than 80% in specific areas of population. The destruction of their habitats comes largely from the conversion of the lands they inhabit being used for agricultural purposes. The Chinese Alligator is very similar to the American Alligator in appearance. However, these reptiles are much smaller.

What are reptiles?

12 Snakes, turtles, and lizards are reptiles. These animals are cold-blooded; this means their body temperature depends on their environment and their skin is covered with hard scales that serve as protection for the animal. They have to
keep warm by laying in the sun. Since they do not burn too much energy to keep warm they do not have to eat as much food as mammals or other warm blooded animals.

13 Most reptiles lay eggs. Alligators tend to create nests from nearby vegetation to keep their eggs safe. The decomposing vegetation creates the heat needed to keep the eggs incubated. The sex of the baby alligators is determined by the temperature of the nest. If the nest is cooler it will produce a clutch of female hatchlings, if the temperature is above 93 degrees Fahrenheit the eggs will produce male hatchlings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American Alligator</th>
<th>Chinese Alligator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• An average adult American alligator's weight and length is 790 lbs. and 13.1 ft.</td>
<td>• Rarely exceeds 6.9 ft in length and usually weighs less than 100lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The largest ever recorded, found in Louisiana, measured 19.2 ft.</td>
<td>• Body is fully armored, even under its belly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adult alligators are black or dark olive-brown with white undersides.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 The word climate is used to describe the pattern of weather a specific place has over a long period of time. People who study climate are called climatologists. What do these scientists look for when they study a region's climate? Some of the things they measure include average rainfall, sunshine, winds, and temperature for the region.

2 Climatologists also look at how each weather condition changes from month to month and year to year in a given region. For example, they look for patterns in the weather to determine if there are cold and hot seasons in the region, or if the temperatures stay pretty much the same all year long.

3 Keeping track of climates is a very important task and there are five big factors that can make climates vary from place to place.

- **Latitude:** This is the distance of a place north or south from the equator. The closer a region is to the equator, the hotter it is throughout the year. The farther away it is, the colder it is. In regions closer to the equator the summers are shorter and cooler. As you approach the poles, the colder winters become.

- **Altitude:** This is the height of a place above sea level. Higher elevations are usually colder than lower elevations.

- **Distance from Oceans and Large Lakes:** Large bodies of water such as oceans and lakes rise and drop in temperature more slowly than land. Water also warms or cools the air above these bodies of water. Due to this, areas near large bodies of water have milder winters and cooler summers.

- **Mountain Ranges:** Air cannot pass through mountains. Instead, it rises and cools as it travels up the side of a mountain. The cool air causes water in the air to become cold. Then the water

1 region: any large part of the Earth’s surface
2 equator: an imaginary line around the middle of the Earth, halfway between the North and South Poles.
falls as rain. All of the rain stays on the same side of the mountain causing the other side of the mountain to be dry and even become a desert.

- **Wind**: Several major belts of wind blow around the earth, six to be exact. They blow from different directions. As they do, they distribute cool air, heat, and moisture to different parts of the world.

The world is divided into different climate zones based on similar weather patterns. The weather patterns in a climate zone affect the types of *vegetation*\(^3\) and animals found there. For example, roses could never survive at the South Pole, which is covered in ice. It is too cold there and penguins could never survive in a region with *arid*\(^4\) climate. These climate zones tend to have similar animals and vegetation.

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\(^3\) *vegetation*: plant life  
\(^4\) *arid*: having little or no rain; too dry or barren to support vegetation
The Earth’s surface is made up of many different climates. Climatologists (scientists who study climates) have organized the climates by grouping the similar ones. Each region is grouped by similar kinds of vegetation, temperature, and precipitation. Here’s a look at some of the major groups.

**Tropical Climates**

Near the equator is the tropical climate zone. Tropical climates get a lot of sunlight and are very warm. Some places often experience heavy rainfall, making this zone very wet and humid. This climate zone makes it perfect for Rainforests. Hot and muggy conditions provide an ideal habitat for several types of plants and animal species such as insects like butterflies and beetles, reptiles, amphibians, birds and mammals.

**Dry or Desert Climates**

Zones with dry climates receive very little rain. Usually the average rainfall for an entire year is less than 10 inches. Sometimes it is so hot in a hot desert that when rain does fall, it can evaporate even before it reaches the ground. Hot deserts often receive a lot of sunlight.

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5 precipitation: moisture in the form of rain, snow, sleet, ice or hail.
6 habitat: the place where an animal of plant naturally grows.
because there are very few clouds or trees to filter the sun’s rays, however, at night deserts can be extremely cold. Very little life survives in the desert. Cacti are one exception. The cactus plant has evolved\(^7\) so that it stores water during periods of drought\(^8\). The stem of the cactus stores water and allows very little to leave the plant. Some famous deserts include the Sahara in northern Africa and the Mojave in the United States.

**Moderate Climates**

Areas with moderate or temperate climates have winters that are cool and dry and summers that are warm and wet. Neither season in this zone has very hot or very cold temperatures. There are many plants and animal species do very well in these climates. Most of the United States falls into this climate zone.

**Polar Climates**

Have you ever heard of the polar ice caps? The ice caps are found at the North and South poles of the world and are always covered in ice or snow. They are the places with the coldest climates on Earth. These places get less of the sun’s direct warmth because of the tilt of Earth’s axis causing it to be dark for six months out of the year. Temperatures are extremely low during winter and precipitation is rare and almost always in the form of snow.

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\(^7\) **evolved**: to gradually develop characteristics that will help a species survive in an environment.

\(^8\) **drought**: prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall; a shortage of water resulting from this
Magnetism

1. Magnets come in many sizes and are very diverse\(^1\). The most commonly seen magnets are in the shapes of bars or disks. Because they stick to certain metals, they are used to fasten and latch things, like a cabinet door. Horseshoe magnets have a U shape. They are used to move iron and steel scraps.

2. Magnets are everywhere. They help to make life more convenient\(^2\). For example, you may have seen your teacher using magnets to help keep important papers up on his/her whiteboard. You may also have magnets on your refrigerator door at home keeping doctor appointments visible. You may also have seen them attached to the back of cars in the shapes of ribbons.

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\(^1\) Diverse: very different.

\(^2\) Convenient: proceeding with little effort or difficulty.
3 Many electrical motors also use magnets. They require the help of electromagnets to run. The force that runs the motor is created by a magnet sending an electrical current through a coil of wire. Motors with electromagnets help run household appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers. The same electromagnetic force is also used in the motors of cars, trains, and airplanes.

4 Magnets are so useful they’re even being used in the health care field. Huge magnets in a special machine can give doctors a detailed view of what is inside your body. The doctors use these pictures to find and treat whatever is wrong without having to make an incision in the person. The use of the machine is also more cost effective for the patient.

5 The use of magnets only continues to grow as new inventions are made. In Japan, magnets are being used in some remarkable new ways. For example, Japan now has a train that runs on magnets. It just hovers over the tracks. The magnetic force created between the train and the tracks allow the train to ride smoother and faster.

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3 Detailed: having many details or facts, showing attention to detail.
4 Incision: a surgical cut made in the skin or flesh.
What are Magnets?

Have you ever wondered how a magnet works? What makes metal objects drawn to a magnet and why do magnets repel each other? The answer is magnetism.

The official definition of magnetism is “the force that electric currents exert on other electric currents. This force can be created by the motion of electrons in the atoms of certain materials, which are called magnets.” In other words, magnetism is a force that can pull together or push away objects. All magnets have a north pole and a south pole. If different poles of two magnets are placed close to each other, they will attract but same poles will repel.

When it comes to magnets, opposites attract. Each magnet has a north pole and south pole and only the opposite ends of magnets will attract other magnets. Placing the ends north to north or south to south will result in repulsion.

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5 Currents: flow of electricity caused by magnetic particles.
6 Exert: make physical or mental effort
7 repulsion: to move away from each other
Types of Magnets

9  **Permanent Magnets** are the most commonly seen magnets. These are the ones we find hanging onto our refrigerator doors. They are said to be permanent because once they are magnetized, they maintain their magnetism.

10  **Temporary Magnets** are those objects that act like a permanent magnet when they are in close proximity to a magnetic field. During this time they are charged and will be attracted to another magnet. An example of a temporary magnet would be paper clips, nails, and other soft metal objects. These objects are considered to be magnetized for a short time making them a temporary magnet.

11  **Electromagnets** a temporary magnet made by coiling wire around an iron core; when current flows in the coil the iron becomes a magnet. The main advantage of an electromagnet is that the magnetic field can be changed by controlling the amount of electric current flowing through it. However, unlike a permanent magnet that needs no power, an electromagnet requires a continuous supply of current to maintain the magnetic field. Examples of electromagnets are generators, blenders, washing machine and other household appliances.