

Writing: Lesson 31

Today the students will be learning how to write more advanced middle paragraphs using a variety of elaborative techniques.

The following passages will be used in this lesson:

<p>Alligators at Risk Alligator Habitats</p>
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1. Up until now we have been working on basic middle paragraphs. We learned that all 3 middle paragraphs should have T, 3A, 3B, and W. We are still going to keep this structure.
2. We are going to work on our 3-4 sentences about A and our 3-4 sentences about B.
3. Instead of just taking information from the text and making our own 3A and 3B sentences, we are now going to write quotes, paraphrase information and write some of our own thoughts and ideas. These are called elaborative techniques. In 4th grade, you have to use these throughout your essay to get a passing score.
4. Today's lesson is just going to be an overview. I want you to see what a full middle paragraph looks like using quotes, paraphrasing and own ideas. Then over the next few days I will teach you how to do each of these.
5. Let's take a look at the essay about alligators using the two passages we read on alligators.
6. If you look at the middle paragraphs, we have a topic sentence (red), 3-4 sentences about A (green) and 3-4 sentences about B (blue).
7. Just like in Section 1 of the curriculum, our middle paragraphs should have a topic sentence, then 3-4 sentences about your A (from planning sheet) and 3-4 sentences about B (from your planning).
8. Now let's look at the essay titled "Advanced essay about Alligators"
9. Without reading any of the words, just look at the colors. The sentences highlighted in blue are quotes, green is paraphrasing and pink is our own thoughts and ideas. This is only done in our middle paragraphs. We still have 3-4 about A and 3-4 about B, but we wrote them as quotes, paraphrasing or our own ideas.

Blue – QUOTES

Green – PARAPHRASING

Pink – OWN THOUGHTS and IDEAS

10. Let's study this for a few minutes (point out the following things to students)
 - There is a balance between quotes, paraphrasing and own ideas. You don't want to see too many quotes or too much paraphrasing...a balance is needed!
 - Every time there is a quote or paraphrasing, we cite our source using EBT and article title.
 - When writing our own thoughts and ideas, we do not use EBT!
 - Quotes have quotation marks around the part of the text that was quoted.
 - Own thoughts and ideas come after quotes or after paraphrasing. They are not random thoughts or ideas. They are thoughts and ideas ABOUT the quote or paraphrasing that is in front of it.
 - Look at the first couple of sentences in green where I paraphrased information about American Alligators being listed as endangered. Read that information that was paraphrased. Now right after that is my own thought/idea (in pink) about that paraphrased information. It is not from the text. It is just MY thought/idea about what the paraphrased information stated.

- Look in the R1 paragraph at the second blue quote about the appearance of the American Alligator. Again, right after the quote is my own thought/idea. The quote talked about them being similar to the Chinese Alligator, but a little smaller. Then, I put my own thought/ideas/view about this based on what I know.
 - Let's look at another example. Look at R2 at the first blue sentence. I quoted some information from the text about alligators being cold blooded. After I quoted, I have my own thought/idea about the information I just quoted. Since I quoted information about alligators being cold blooded and staying warm by laying in the sun, I put some of my own thoughts and ideas about when I have seen alligators laying in the sun before and what I thought about that.
 - You don't always have to put a thought/idea after quotes and paraphrasing...but you should try to most of the time if it makes sense and flows with the essay.
 - In R2 you can see that after my green sentences, I did not put a thought/idea. That is okay, you do not always have to.
 - You will also notice some sentences don't have a color. Those sentences are not quotes, paraphrasing or own thoughts/ideas. Those are just sentences that introduce the topic. Also in the 1st sentence about "A"...you just want to introduce what your "A" is. Same with the 1st sentence about "B."
 - The rule to follow is to add one (sometimes two) quotes(s) per middle paragraph. The rest is a balance of paraphrasing and own thoughts and ideas. Try to paraphrase at least two times in each middle paragraph.
11. Over the next few days, we will be talking about quotes, paraphrasing and own ideas. Then we will start practicing writing our middle paragraphs using these elaborative techniques.
12. Review
- A and B sentences should be quotes, paraphrasing and own thoughts and ideas
 - Should be a balance of quotes, paraphrasing and own thoughts and ideas
 - Only 1 quote per middle paragraph (sometimes 2)
 - Own thought/idea should come after using quote and paraphrasing
 - You must use EBT when writing a quote or paraphrasing
13. Hand out homework assignment.

Basic Essay about Alligators

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.

First, there are actually two different species of alligators in the world. According to the text Alligators at Risk, the most well-known type of alligator is the American Alligator. The American Alligator lives in the wetlands of the Southern United States. It was listed under the Endangered Species Act and it was illegal to hunt them. Another type of alligator species is the Chinese Alligator. The author states in Alligators at Risk, that the Chinese Alligator looks very similar to the American Alligator. However, these reptiles are much smaller. There are also far fewer Chinese Alligators than American Alligators because they are listed as critically endangered. Alligators are fascinating animals, and it is important to know the similarities and differences between the two species.

Second, alligators are animals classified as reptiles. Based on the information in Alligators at Risk, alligators fall into the category of reptiles because they are cold blooded. Cold blooded means their environment controls their body temperature and they have scales for protection. When their body temperature is too low they warm up by laying in the sun. Similarly, alligators are classified as reptiles because they lay eggs in nests. Baby alligators are either male or female based on the temperature of the nest that the eggs are in. In the article Alligators at Risk, it states that if the nest is above 93 degrees the eggs will be male, and if it is cooler than that the eggs will end up being female. After learning about the characteristics of reptiles, I can understand why alligators are classified this way.

Third, alligators are adapted to live in various habitats. In paragraph one of Habitats it says that you can find alligators in fresh water habitats like rivers, as well as brackish habitats such as swamps. Brackish means the water is saltier than fresh water, but not as salty as seawater. Fresh water and brackish water habitats are the perfect place for alligators to live and lay eggs. Another habitat alligators live in are holes that they create in swamp habitats. According to the text Habitats, the author says they dig these holes by using their body parts such as their feet and tail. Alligator holes are very useful because they help alligators keep cool in the hot weather and also camouflage them from their prey so that they can capture meals easily. It is important to know where alligators like to live so that we can make sure we protect those areas from destruction.

In conclusion, alligators are remarkable because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. I think everyone should learn more about alligators so they can understand this mysterious creature. Alligators are an important part of their ecosystem.

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Advanced Essay about Alligators

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.

First and foremost, there are actually two different species of alligators in the world. The most well-known type of alligator is the American Alligator and that is because there are many that live right in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana. According to the article Alligators at Risk, "The American Alligator can be found in the wetlands of the Southern United States, in North America." It is hard to believe that these animals were once close to extinction because I have seen so many around where I live. In the first passage, I learned that the American Alligator was listed under the Endangered Species Act and it was illegal to hunt them. As a result of the Act, the alligators have a high enough population to be taken off of the endangered species list in 1987. Another type of alligator species is the Chinese Alligator. "The Chinese Alligator is very similar to the American Alligator in appearance. However, these reptiles are much smaller," says the author of the article Alligators at Risk. This species is not as familiar to me as the American Alligator because it is only located in China and I have never seen one in real life. There are also far fewer Chinese Alligators than American Alligators because they are listed as critically endangered, based on what I read in the article Alligators at Risk. Alligators are fascinating animals, and it is important to know the similarities and differences between the two species.

Additionally, alligators are animals classified as reptiles. Alligators fall into the category of reptiles because they are cold blooded unlike humans, birds, and bears. The author states in the passage What are Reptiles, that cold blooded "means their body temperature depends on their environment. They have to keep warm by laying in the sun." I have seen alligators spending most of the day sunning along the banks of the wetlands. I think the strong sun and warmer weather is why they prefer to live in the Southeast. Similarly, alligators are classified as reptiles because they lay eggs in nests. According to the passage What are Reptiles, baby alligators are either male or female based on the temperature of the nest that the eggs are in. If the nest is above 93 degrees, the eggs will be male, and if it is cooler than that, the eggs will end up being female. After learning about the characteristics of reptiles, I can understand why alligators are classified this way.

Last but not least, alligators are adapted to live in various habitats. You can find alligators in fresh water habitats like rivers, lakes, and marshes, as well as brackish habitats such as swamps. Brackish means "the water is slightly higher in salt content than fresh water, but not salty like seawater," states the author of the second source titled Habitats. Of all of the places alligators prefer to live, none of them are purely salt water. It would be extremely rare to find an alligator at the beach. Another habitat alligators live in are holes that they create in swamp habitats. I read in the article Habitats that "they construct these alligator holes by using their feet, tail, and snout." I can imagine alligators burrowing themselves down in the cool wet sand. Alligator holes are very useful because they help alligators keep cool in the hot weather and also camouflage them from their prey so that they can capture meals easily, states the text titled Habitats. It is important to know where alligators like to live so that we can make sure we protect those areas from destruction.

In conclusion, alligators are remarkable because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. I think everyone should learn more about alligators so they can understand this mysterious creature. Alligators are an important part of their ecosystem.

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Homework

Directions: Look over the three middle paragraphs. Highlight or underline the quotes in one color, the paraphrasing in another color and the own thoughts and ideas in a third color. Then draw a circle around the EBT in every paragraph.

Advanced Essay about Alligators

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Source 1

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.

American Alligator	Chinese Alligator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An average adult American alligator's weight and length is 790 lbs. and 13.1 ft.• The largest ever recorded, found in Louisiana, measured 19.2 ft.• Adult alligators are black or dark olive-brown with white undersides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rarely exceeds 6.9 ft in length and usually weighs less than 100lbs.• Body is fully armored, even under its belly.