

## **Writing vocabulary used in Camdenon Middle School:**

### **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade communication arts**

The following terms are vocabulary words used in the middle school classrooms to help explain the writing process to students. It's helpful for students to hear similar vocabulary from grade to grade. We have some synonyms that are used for the same concept. We feel it is also important for students to be exposed to a few ways of saying the same thing, so that when they reach the HS level, they will not be confused if their teacher does not say exactly what was said to them in 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **Steps to answering constructed response questions:**

- topic sentence/restate question without giving any details. \*must indent!
- If you didn't state an answer in the TS, answer the prompt.
- Use 2-3 details (number depends on prompt) to support your answer/thinking/prove/explain/give examples (The emphasis would depend on the prompt)
- conclusion (students struggle with conclusions, but the more they attempt closure, the better they will get at writing conclusions)

#### **Writing process for essay writing:**

Step 1: prewrite/list/brainstorming

Step 2: try its /quick writes/drafts (several before picking one to work with throughout the process)

Step 3: revise (it is stressed that revising and editing are very different) To have success at revising, you must use anchor papers and mentor texts to get students to make changes to their piece.

Step 4: edit

Step 5: final copy

Step 6: publish/share

The writing process is stressed as being a "process" that cannot be rushed. To have quality writing, students must go back to these steps, not necessarily in this order, but changes are continually made from exposure to anchor papers and mentor texts. This process takes weeks. We attempt to do one published piece per quarter, with many smaller writings in between.

\*Note: introductions and conclusions must have at least three sentences to be considered a paragraph.

### **Narratives:**

The first paragraph is called an introduction/lead/beginning.

The “hook” is within this first paragraph. It hooks the reader and makes them want to read more. It may be the entire paragraph or one sentence. It’s also referred to as “grabbing the attention of your reader”.

The middle or body uses transitions from one paragraph to another. Although 6+1 says “beginning, middle, and end” on the scoring guide, students get confused thinking the middle means one paragraph. The middle can be several paragraphs.

The entire paper should have moments of “show not tell”. This is where you provide sensory details to make the narrative more effective. Some teachers refer to this as “zooming in” or “going smaller” in writing. This technique helps the writer to bring the reader back into the memory and makes him/her feel like they are there seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or touching the same things by the details provided.

Conclusions will contain a theme or “so what”. Calling the theme the “so what” helps the reader to understand that they need to have purpose in their writer. Why does the reader care about reading this paper? Usually the theme revolves around life because it’s common ground for all readers. Writers should “trust the reader and don’t state the obvious”. They can determine the “so what” without it being said word for word.

### **Expository Writing:**

Academic vocabulary places “thesis statement” at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. If you do not think your students are ready for this term, it will be introduced at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level.

The thesis statement is typically the last sentence of the first paragraph. It controls and guides the writing. It’s what the writer is going to prove in persuasive/argumentative/research papers.

**Persuasive writing:** persuades the reader to see the writer’s point of view

**Argumentative writing:** not only persuades, but also counter the opponent’s point within the paper at least once.

**Research:** at this point, other than smaller research assignments, the research process does not happen until 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

