

Inspiration®

Essay Planning and Writing

Subject Areas: English/Language Arts and Social Studies

Grade Level: 6 – 12 (ages 11-18)

Time: At least three 45-minute class periods; time outside of class as necessary

Lesson Objective:

Students will be better able to plan, organize and compose effective essays.

Common Core State Standards¹:

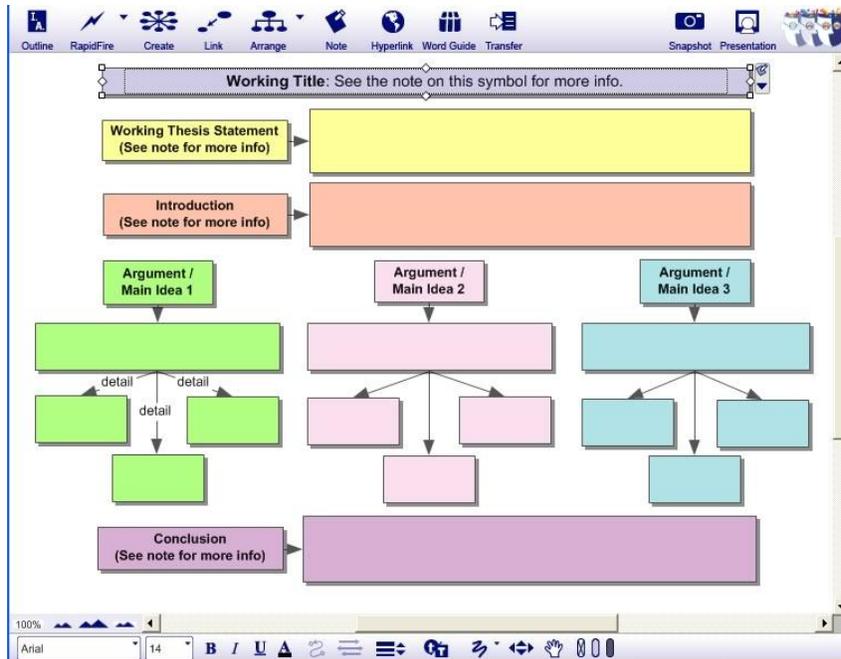
Writing Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Standard 5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Standard 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Overview:

Writing essays is much easier with the right tools. Use the *Essay Planner* template included in this folder with your students to help them organize their ideas and break the writing process down into manageable steps.

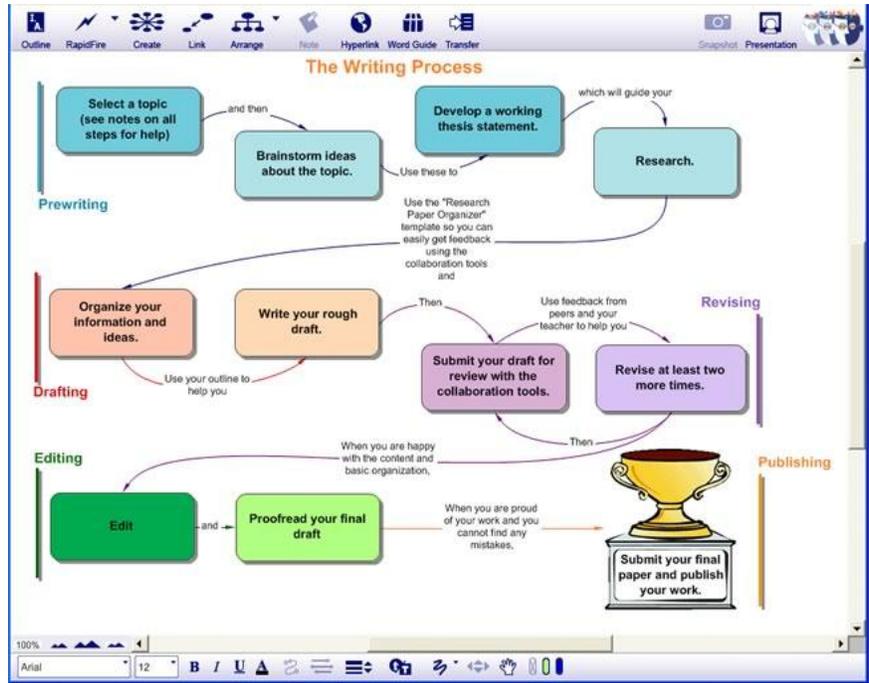


Preparation:

- This lesson requires the Inspiration® software application published by Inspiration Software, Inc. 30-day trials can be downloaded at <http://www.inspiration.com/Inspiration>.
- Access to library resources and/or the Internet would also be helpful for student research.

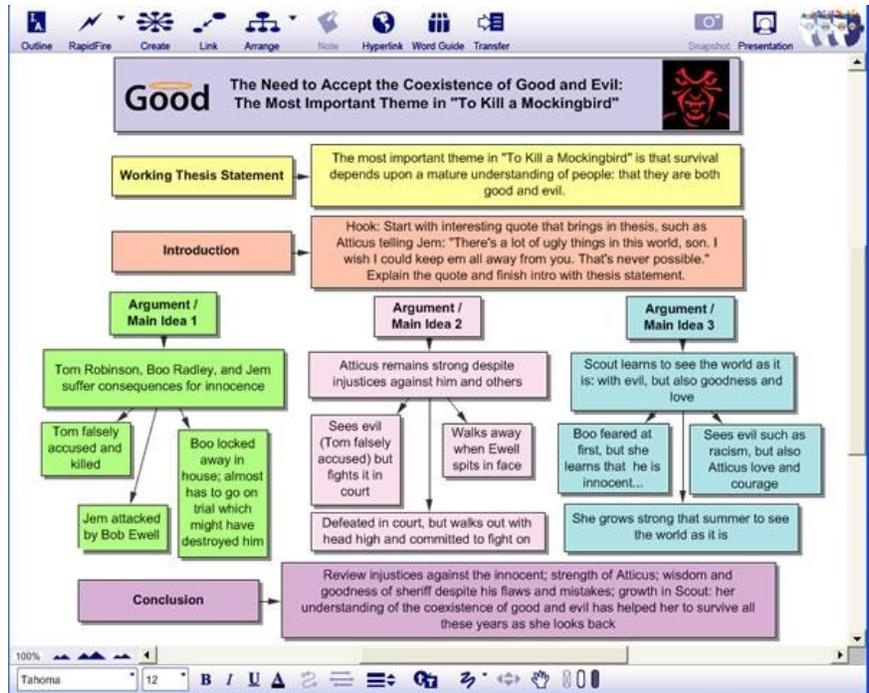
Lesson:

1. Explain that writing is a process involving many steps. Open the *Writing Process* template in this folder and discuss the steps with students in detail: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.



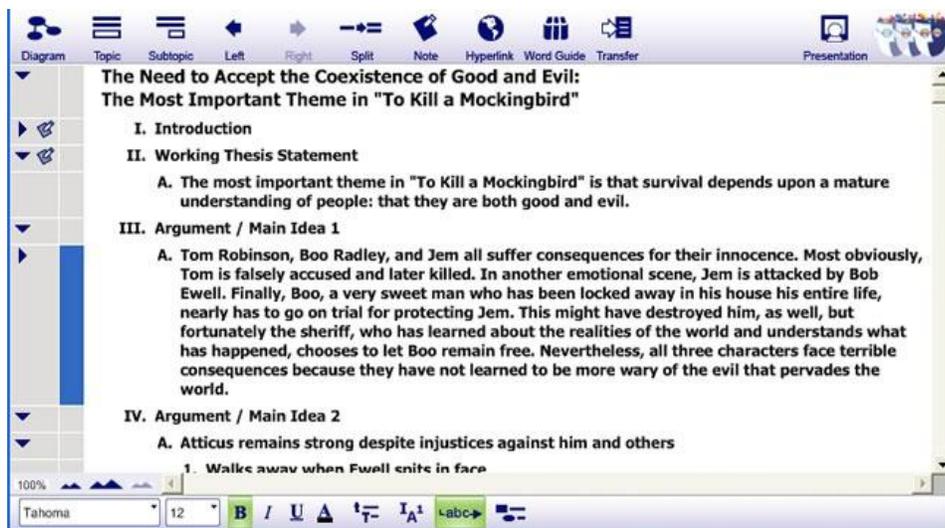
2. Explain that Inspiration offers many other tools and templates to help with the writing process, including the integrated **Word Guide** and the *Essay Planner* template which they will use today. Open it, as shown on the previous page, and explain the areas of the template to the students.

3. Open the *Essay Planner Example* in this folder so students have an idea of a finished diagram. Be sure students understand that they will develop this plan for their essay before they begin to write it in paragraph form.



4. Prewriting: Have students choose a general topic to begin writing about and record it in the space provided. Then they can brainstorm ideas about it in a blank area to the side of the diagram using the **RapidFire**® tool.

5. When students have a topic they like, they should continue the prewriting process by developing a working thesis statement. Explain to them that a thesis statement is normally one sentence that states what one will attempt to argue in the paper. Explain that it is called a “working” thesis statement because it may change as students conduct their research.
6. Students can complete the diagrams and go to **Outline View** to start their essay draft and finish reorganizing their essay.



7. After students have organized their work in outline form, they can transfer their projects to a word processor using the **Transfer** tool. This will allow them to complete the remaining steps in the essay writing process (revising, editing and publishing).

Adaptations / Extensions:

- See *The Writing Process Made Easier* lesson plan for more details on how to use Inspiration to help students master the writing process.
- In addition to writing formal essays, students can “publish” their work by making an oral presentation to the class about their topic. They can use Inspiration’s **Presentation Manager** to add key talking points and visuals to their content. Teaching the class will help them to clarify and better remember the content. See the *Creating Oral Presentations I and II* lesson plans for more information about this process.
- After presenting, students can answer questions and facilitate a discussion about the topic.
- Rather than complete a formal essay in paragraph form, students can submit a completed diagram or a completed outline.
- This lesson can be used in any content area that requires students to write essays.

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