

Writing in the Common Core by Linda Hoyt

Argument/Persuasion: to influence the reader to take action or to subscribe to a belief.

Characterized by statements of opinion or position, a call to action, overview of the topic, supporting facts/evidence, direct appeal, repetition, and a concluding restatement of the position.

EXAMPLES: letter, email, advertisement, poster, brochure, book or movie review, debate, poem, pro/con argument, editorial, persuasive essay, review (movie, book), speech

Informational: to give the reader facts about a topic; to describe, to explain something (tell how or why), or summarize.

Characterized by expository or other topic-centered structure, title, opening statement, information organized in logical clusters, nonfiction text features such as headings, bold words, labeled diagrams, visual supports, conclusion or summary to close. Text structures may include sequential, cause/effect, descriptive, compare/contrast.

EXAMPLES: informational report, descriptive report, lab report (*Effect of Prisms on Light Rays*), observation log, photo essay (topical), presentation, sign, comparison, summary of content, email message, news article, question/answer book, informative poem.

Narration: to tell the reader a true “story” about an event or sequence of events.

Characterized by sequential (usually time-ordered) structure, but may include flashbacks and flash forward. Well-developed setting and situation, sensory imaging, related details, time and place are well developed, significance or importance of situation is established, distinct ending. There is an emphasis on action and feelings. Informational narratives include factually accurate writing that is infused with craft elements and imagery, or a focus on a single subject (animal). A limited amount of imaginative narrative based on a problem/solution structure is allowed.

EXAMPLES: personal account or retell/recount; storyboard, comic strip; eye-witness account, feature article article; diary, autobiography, biography; historical narrative; photo essay (sequential); storyboard; observation log (over time), narrative poetry, story retell.

Instructional/Technical Text: to tell the reader how to do something; outline a process

Characterized by step-by-step procedures in a specific order, title or goal is listed, materials or equipment list, steps are numbered with verb-first structure or presented in order using temporal words (first, second, third: Now, next, then, finally).

EXAMPLES: recipe, how-to book/article, appliance manual, safety procedures, directions, rules, curriculum teaching (e.g. math operations, writing process), poster, letter

Response to Learning: Critical/Evaluative Analysis to analyze and expression of ideas about a given text or topic; parameters are defined by the stimulus such as a prompt.

Characterized by clear reference to a text or prompt created by an outside agent

EXAMPLES: (to literature) reading journals, letters to authors, literary essays; (to academic prompts) essay answers, structured summaries, genre assignments, a response to a test prompt; (to personal communications) letters, notes, RSVPs, emails.

Important Notes:

There is direct and grade-specific reference to the use of transition or connecting words and phrases across all of these text types. The transition or connecting words and phrases must be in evidence in instruction and in the writing products of students.

Appendix C of the Common Core documents includes analyses of writing samples that are very helpful in understanding the goals of each writing form.