

The Million Dollar Question

Informative Writing

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Grade Level	9th Grade	**Time Frame**	250 minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	5 periods
Course	Composition		

Essential Question

What makes informative writing different from other writing modes? How do writers effectively share information?

Summary

This informative writing lesson explores what informative writing is, how it differs from other modes of writing, and how to apply that new knowledge. This lesson is perfect for introducing informative writing, assessing what students have learned about informative writing during instruction, and evaluating what students have learned at the end of instruction.

Snapshot

Engage

Students engage in a card matching activity to analyze different writing modes and determine the characteristics of each.

Explore

Students watch a video interview about an expensive product and record the types of questions asked in an informational interview.

Explain

Students select a "million dollar" item from a choice board to research, outline, and write about.

Extend

Students interview one another in the same style as the video they watched in order to share their information with a partner.

Evaluate

Students engage in the "I Used to Think... but Now I Know" activity to reflect on what they have learned about informative writing.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - English (6-12)

ORG 401: Determine the need for transition words or phrases to establish straightforward logical relationships (e.g., first, afterward, in response)

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 9)

9.3.W.2: Compose informative essays, reports, or technical writing that:

- objectively introduce and develop topics
- include a defensible thesis
- incorporate evidence (e.g., specific facts, details, charts and graphs, data)
- maintain an organized structure
- use sentence variety and word choice to create clarity and concision
- establish and maintain a formal style
- emulate literary devices from mentor texts

Attachments

- Choice Board Handout—Million Dollar Question.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Million Dollar Question.pptx
- Q&A Rubric—Million Dollar Question .docx
- Q&A Rubric—Million Dollar Question .pdf
- Research Note Catcher—Million Dollar Question.docx
- Research Note Catcher—Million Dollar Question.pdf
- Writing Style Card Matching—Million Dollar Question.docx
- Writing Style Card Matching—Million Dollar Question.pdf

Materials

- Internet access
- Student devices
- Printer access (optional)
- Smart board/projector access
- Notebook paper
- Note cards or sticky notes (optional)
- Copy paper
- Pens/pencils
- Timer (optional)
- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Writing Style Card Matching Handout (attached; 1 set per group)
- Choice Board Handout (attached; passed out digitally)
- Research Note Catcher (attached; 1 per student)
- Q&A Rubric (attached; 1 per student)

8 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note

Prior to the lesson, determine how many groups you will have for the Card Matching (students will be in groups of 2–3). Each group will need their own set of cards. Copy, print, and cut out the Card Matching packet. Shuffle each set of cards before handing them out.

Using the Lesson Slides, display **slide 2** to introduce the lesson. Review the Essential Question on **slide 3** before transitioning to **slide 4** to review the Lesson Objectives.

Place students in small groups of 2–3. Transition to **slide 5** and explain the Card Matching directions. Give each group a packet of shuffled cards to match by writing mode. Set timer for 3 minutes and ask students to sort the cards correctly.

Teacher's Note

If students need help, remind them of the hint on **slide 5**: Each mode of writing will have 1 definition, 1 question, 1 thesis statement, and 3 examples. The question, thesis, and examples will not all be from the same work. If students need additional time, allow them one more minute for their sort.

After all groups have finished, review the correct answers with students. Ask students to justify their reasoning.

Card Matching Key

The Card Matching handout is organized by writing mode and can be used as a key. Keep a copy of the handout to check student work.

Transition to **slide 6**. Review the guiding questions by facilitating a class discussion.

Teacher's Note

If students are unable to answer some of these questions (e.g., 5Ws or organizational structures), spend more time discussing these answers with the class and clarifying misunderstandings.

Transition to **slide 7** to view the circle diagram. Highlight the clear differences among the three modes of writing listed. Reiterate the definition of informative writing.

15 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 8**. Students need notebook paper and something to write with. Explain that they will watch a clip from "Most Expensivest with 2 Chainz." The interview is a Q&A about expensive BBQ grills. Before starting the video, instruct students to write down all of the questions that 2 Chainz asks as they watch the interview. They will refer to these questions later when interviewing one another. The reason for showing this interview is to illustrate what kinds of questions that should be asked when the purpose is to inform.

Teacher's Note

Check the link to the video clip prior to the lesson to confirm that it is accessible from your district's Wi-Fi/internet. There are other clips of shows with interviews available online. If you choose to use a different interview, make sure to select clean/appropriate clips that focus on expensive items so that the video makes sense within the context of this lesson and matches the goal for informative writing.

Modeling Citations

The citation for the video clip can be shared before or after viewing so that students can see how citations differ between books, articles, and videos. Note the citation below needs to be formatted by indenting the second line.

GQ. (2020, June 30). 2 Chainz checks out the most expensivest grill: Most expensivest: GQ & VICE TV [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xooZHtfjmYY&t=1s

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=xooZHtfjmYY

Review the questions that they heard 2 Chainz asking. Which questions did they think were better? Which elicited the most information?

150 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note

Prior to using the Choice Board, check the links on **slide 9** to confirm that they are active and are accessible within your district. If students have school-appropriate ideas that are not listed on the Choice Board, you can allow them to make those choices as you see fit.

Transition to the Choice Board on **slide 9**. Ask the following question: If you had a million dollars and you could have any of the choices on this list, which would you pick? Each item on the Choice Board is linked to a website that shows some potential ideas for million-dollar items. You can explore these as a class or assign the Choice Board digitally for students to click on and explore.

Have students select an item, but before they start researching, review the writing assignment described on **slides 10** and **11**.

Teacher's Note

This writing assignment can be modified to take one class period for shorter essays or multiple class periods if assigning a 5-paragraph essay. The outline on **slide 11** can be modified to meet the needs of the class. If writing a 5-paragraph essay, provide students with a timeline of what they should have done by the end of class each day. Adjust timeline as needed:

Day 1: Introduction to assignment; Research and Thesis Statement completed.

Day 2: Introductory Paragraph and Body Paragraph 1 completed.

Day 3: Body Paragraph 2 and Body Paragraph 3 completed.

Day 4: Conclusion paragraph completed. Proof-reading and/or peer review begin.

Day 5: Last-minute edits and submit for grade. Make sure to review expectations for writing an introductory paragraph by sharing an example with a hook, background information, and a three-part thesis statement.

If students need review or more support in writing a thesis statement, see the LEARN lesson Let Us Start the Lettuce Club (or Not).

Move to **slide 10** to discuss what questions they will be answering in their 5-paragraph essay about their chosen item. Explain that students should be using credible sources; however, credible sources may look different in different modes of writing.

Finding Sources

If students need extra support in searching for quality sources, you can show the videos below to review expectations for research:

"Searching for Sources, Part 1" video:

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=E1hNgZGDFwc

"Searching for Sources, Part 2" video:

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=NKm8-TR0rQw

Transition to **slide 11** to show an outline for the 5-paragraph essay.

Pass out the **Research Note Catcher** or have students write their information and sources on a Google Doc or a sheet of notebook paper. Make sure that they record all sources on the back of their paper. Allow students 15–20 minutes to research their item in depth. Add additional time or limit it as needed.

Students should be given time to research until they can answer the questions listed on the Research Note Catcher. The questions are also listed on **slides 10** and **11**.

30 minutes

Extend

Once students have completed their research, display **slide 12**. Place students in groups of two. Individual students will be interviewed by their partner about their chosen item. Pass out copies of the **Q&A Rubric** to students. Use the guiding questions from the essay and 2 Chainz's interview questions as a guide.

Teacher's Note

This activity can be done multiple ways: as a class presentation, recorded during school/outside of school (if technology is available), shown to the teacher in private, etc. Decide what works best for the students. You can edit **slide 12** to match the format you prefer.

5 minutes

Evaluate

After students have finished writing, submitted their essays, and completed their interviews, display **slide 13**. Ask students to reflect on what they learned about informative writing using the I Used to Think... But Now I Know strategy. Ask students: What did you think informative writing was? Then ask: What do you know about informative writing now? Have them record their answers on a piece of paper. Use their responses as a formative assessment and to identify any misconceptions that may remain.

Resources

- GQ. (2020, June 30). *2 Chainz out the most expensivest grill: Most expensivest: GQ & VICE TV* [video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xooZHtfjmYY&t=1s
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). 3 minute timer [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iISP02KPau0
- K20 Center. (2022, Nov. 3). Let us start the lettuce club (or not). 5E Lessons. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/lesson/1737
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Card matching. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1837
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Choice boards. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/73
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I used to think... but now I know. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/137
- K20 Center. (2022, February 4). *Searching for Sources Part 1* [Video]. Youtube. https://youtu.be/E1hNgZGDFwc
- K20 Center. (2022, February 22). *Searching for Sources Part 2* (Selecting Sources). [Video]. Youtube. https://youtu.be/NKm8-TR0rQw