**Informative Writing**

In explanatory essays, writers tell about topics in which they are interested in. The writer's **purpose is to inform** the reader **by relating ideas and information about the topic**. An explanatory essay has these features:

* It introduces a topic and develops ideas related to the topic in paragraphs or sections.
* It includes facts, definitions, quotations, and details to support and develop ideas.
* It includes formatting (e.g. headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension
* It maintains a formal style.
* It uses precise language and content related vocabulary in inform about or explain the topic.
* It uses transitions to connect ideas (e.g. another, for example, also, because).
* It provides a conclusion that relates to the topic.

**Narrative Writing**

Write narratives to **develop real or imagined experiences or events** using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. A narrative has these features:

* It tells a story
* It orients the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters.
* Its event sequence is organized to unfold naturally - beginning, middle, and end.
* It uses dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
* It uses a variety of transition words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
* It conveys experiences and events precisely with concrete words and phrases and sensory details.
* It provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

**Writing Process**

During both writing assignments, you will complete the following steps:

* Identify the key features of explanatory/narrative writing.
* Plan and organize ideas by using notes and graphic organizers.
* Draft, revise, and edit narrative writing.
* Publish and present a piece of narrative writing.
* Use a rubric for self-evaluation of narrative writing.

**Fossils Expository + Narrative Writing Assignments**

Breaking news! A trilobite fossil has recently been discovered in Sugarhouse Park! CNN Sugarhouse (CNNS) wants to be the first on the scene, and as one of CNNS’s top reporters, you’ve been selected to report this incredible fossil discovery to CNNS’s millions of viewers worldwide. To cover the story, CNNS is sending you on two assignments. You will type up a written report for both assignments, which will be published in the next edition of *Paleontology Times*. You will also discuss both assignments during next week’s live television segment, “Earth Uncovered.” **The focus of both writing assignments is: fossils provide clues to Earth’s history.**

* **Fossils provide information about extinct organisms by being compared to one another, to living organisms, and to organisms that lived long ago**
* **Fossils provide information about Earth’s past life, climate, geology, and environment.**

**Informative Writing Assignment:** It is up to you to explain to America the significance and magnificence of this recent trilobite discovery. You will first need to become a fossil expert by gathering information from a variety of sources to learn about: different types of fossils; where and how fossils are formed; and, what evidence fossils provide that can be used to make inferences about past environments. Then, apply your acquired fossil knowledge to explain 1. How scientist know about trilobites even though they are extinct, 2. The clues about past life, climate, geology, and environment that the trilobite provides. Refer to the features of an explanatory essay and the writing process. Use your fossil notes from the readings and research, the graphic organizer provided, and the informative writing and fossil writing checklist to help you write a strong, clear and well organized report. **Include the answers to the questions below in your final report.**

1. What do we know about this trilobite?
2. How do we know about these things?
3. What is the significance of finding this trilobite?
4. How do we know this?

**Narrative Writing:** Lucky for you, CNN has access to innovative technology that temporarily brings any fossil back to life. This means you can have a conversation with the trilobite and get a first-hand account of its life story. You need to interview the trilobite and ask the questions listed below. Write the trilobite’s answer below each interview question. You can add 1-2 of your own questions at the end of the interview if you like. Then, use your interview to compose your story for the live news segment. Refer to the features of a narrative essay and the writing process. Use your fossil notes from the readings and research, the graphic organizer provided, and the narrative writing and fossils writing checklist to help you write a creative and descriptive story that will capture America’s attention.

**Interview Questions:**

1. What were you like when you were alive?
   1. What species were you?
   2. How old are you?
   3. What did you look like when you were alive? Describe yourself.
   4. How did you get around?
   5. What did you eat?
2. What was the environment, climate and geology like where you lived?
3. How is the environment that you see here today different?
4. How did you die?
5. How did you become a fossil?
6. What did a typical day in your life look like? What did you see? What did you do?
7. How did you get to Sugarhouse Park?
8. Sorry to say, but you are now extinct. How do scientists know about you?
9. Do you have any secrets about your past that you’d like to share with the world?
10. What advice can you give our readers and viewers about the future of this planet?

**Fossils Writing Checklist for Informative and Narrative Writing Assignments**

* Describes the trilobite, and explains how it was formed and where it was found.
* Explains how scientists know about the trilobite even though it’s now extinct.
* Explains how scientists can use the trilobite to make inferences about past life, climate, geology, and environments.

**Informative Writing Checklist**

* I started with a clear topic statement.
* I grouped related information in paragraphs.
* I developed my topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples from the text.
* I linked ideas and information effectively.
* I used precise language and content related vocabulary to explain the topic.
* I wrote a conclusion related to the information my presented.
* I reviewed writing for good grammar.
* I reviewed writing for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

**Narrative Writing Checklist**

* I established a setting or situation for my narrative.
* I introduced a narrator and/or characters.
* I organized my narrative into a sequence of unfolding events.
* I used dialogue and description to develop events and show how characters respond to them.
* I used transition words to show the sequence of events.
* I described events precisely using concrete words and sensory details.
* I wrote a conclusion to the events in my narrative.
* I reviewed my writing for good grammar.
* I reviewed my writing for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.