

The Academy: A “laser” approach to boosting skills

WRITING

WHY AM I HERE?

The writing classes in the Academy are designed to provide support for English language learners and struggling writers to reach the basic requirements of writing needed to be successful in high school classes. English language learners will be supported to pass the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and all students in the program will be supported to be successful on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

During module 5, three levels of Academy writing classes are offered. Classes are designed so students can move at their own pace through the three classes and accelerated learning is expected.

Key ESLRs:

- Effective Communicator--to learn basic writing skills to prepare students to access the learning regarding effective writing that will happen in high school classes.
- Self-directed Learner--to set goals and make choices to learn writing skills as quickly as possible. Be focused, on task, learn from mistakes.

WHEN WILL I KNOW I AM DONE? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT’S MY GOAL?

I can interact in meaningful ways about ideas in English. This includes basic skills with

- collaborating with others
- analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating the strategies authors use to convey ideas
- writing and speaking to inform and persuade using precise vocabulary to effectively convey ideas

I have a basic understanding about how English works.

- structuring cohesive texts (sentence level, paragraph level, and essay level)
- expanding and enriching ideas
- connecting and condensing ideas
- using academic and domain-specific vocabulary to convey ideas

Major goals:

Goal #1: Write sentences with syntactical complexity, precise vocabulary, and control of grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling. (CELDT)

Goal #2: Write short compositions in paragraph form with well-organized ideas, effective details, appropriate transitional devices, and control of grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling. (CELDT)

Goal #3: Score 8.0 or above on quarterly Scantron Performance Series Language Arts computer tests to demonstrate skill with writing conventions and strategies. (CAHSEE)

Goal #4: Consistently score in the high 2 range or above when writing biographical narratives, responses to literature, expository compositions, persuasive compositions. (CAHSEE)

Goal #5: Write business letters using proper format and register and score in the high 2 range or above. (CAHSEE)

WHAT WILL I BE DOING IN THIS PROGRAM?

Longman Academic Writing Series

Leveled programs designed for English language learners and struggling writers to help them reach academic success.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

- Scantron Performance Series computer interactive language arts test. The goal: at least eighth grade level. Tests are given quarterly. Student must have a current quarter passing score in order to exit the program
- Perfect sentence quizzes. Goal: to score 3 on a scale of 1 to 3
- Weekly timed writings. Goal: to score high 2 or above on a scale of 1 to 4.
- At least one essay per quarter taken through the entire writing process. Goal: to score high 2 or above on a scale of 1 to 4.

HOW WILL I BE GRADED?

40% formative: that means participation in daily work in class, small quizzes, and homework
60% summative: that means 40% for tests throughout the semester and 20% for the final.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME IN THE CLASSROOM?

Come on time in uniform with several pencils and pens, at least two clean sheets of paper, a folder for handouts, and be ready to learn. You may be required to bring an independent reading book.

Respect:

1. the teacher who has the right to teach in a respectful environment
2. any other school employed adult who enters the room--substitute teacher, administrator, office worker, security personnel, facilities personnel, an aid, or any other adult guest in the room--who have the right to carry out their duties and be responded to with respect
3. other students who have the right to learn in a respectful environment
4. the room, the furniture, and all books or materials provided that future students have the right to continue to enjoy
5. yourself who has the right to learn quickly and efficiently. Don't disrespect yourself by getting in the way of your own learning.

Responsibility:

Be a responsible community leader within the classroom. Your job is to grow your reading skills as quickly as possible within a community of fellow learners. Use self-control and make good choices. Take responsibility for your choices.

1. First of all, that means look carefully at your mistakes or wrong answers on schoolwork, figure out what's wrong, and correct your thinking. Make sure the "failure leads to success".
2. Secondly, that means that you are quick to admit when your behavior is out of line and you take responsibility to make it right. "The buck stops here."

Integrity:

All work must represent original work done by the student alone. Any work on an assignment that comes from someone else must include acknowledgment of that person's contributions. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. At the first offense, the student will receive a zero or be required to make up the work on his or her own time and the office and parents will be notified. Subsequent consequences include suspension.

Technology Use

Use all technology with respect and integrity as it is intended for the use of classroom learning only.

During independent work, ipod music is at the teacher's discretion. Misuse of technology means no more technology. If the teacher asks for an electronic device from you, you are expected to hand it over immediately. It will then be given to Mr. Robinson. You may need a parent to retrieve it from him.

Attendance in all classes for which a student is registered is an essential part of meeting the requirements to pass each course. Students will not receive credit for this course if they have more than 7 excused or unexcused absences within any one semester. Course absences can be made up by completing the missed course work through an independent contract provided the missed course work is completed within 2 weeks of the due date or by completing the missed course work during Saturday school.

Food

No food in the classroom, except on special occasions at the teacher's discretion. Water bottles only are encouraged.

Rewards and consequences

Rewards involved classroom privileges and lots of learning. Consequences include warning, teacher-student conference, timeout, parent contact, administration contact.