

“Meeting the Literacy Needs of All Learners”
Vigo County School Corporation
and
Partners Advancing Literacy Skills

November 5, 2011

VCSC Presenters

- Dr. Karen Goeller, Deputy Superintendent
- Joanna Cundiff, Writing Co-Teacher
- Sarah Freeze, Writing Co-Teacher
- Susan Moulton – Writing Co-Teacher

Partners Advancing Literacy Skills (PALS) is a school-community partnership that works together to promote reading and writing in the Wabash Valley Community.





INDIANA STATE
UNIVERSITY



PALS is a partnership of the Vigo County School Corporation, Vigo County Public Library, Indiana State University, Hamilton Center, and the Wabash Valley Community Foundation.



A primary goal of this program is to lower the relationship/cultural barriers that impact students, parents, teachers and the community as they relate to literacy and writing enhancement.

Other goals include increasing student achievement of writing skills, developing effective teaching strategies for the Indiana Academic Standards, and modeling all stages of the writing process.

Important Targets

1. English End-of-Course Assessment
2. SAT/ACT
3. Advanced Placement Exams

Common Core State Standards

- Are aligned with college and work expectations;
- Are clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content
- Are informed by other top performing countries
- Are evidence-based

PALS Strengthens Parent Involvement

Parent Luncheons that Feature Book Talks and Author Visits



Parent Coffee Chats to Promote College and Career Awareness

PALS Engages Community Members

ISU students share games and activities with community members at Family Learning Day



In an effort to increase writing skills and enrich and extend the VCSC Language Arts curriculum, three writing co-teachers develop weekly lessons based on Indiana Academic Writing Standards and present lessons alongside all grade five teachers.

The writing co-teachers are instrumental in clarifying how to utilize, implement, and integrate the ISTEP+ writing rubrics into classroom lessons.

The writing co-teacher introduces the lesson by modeling the targeted skill. Students are then actively engaged in the components of the writing process. The lesson concludes with sharing of student writing and with discussions of strengths and weaknesses.

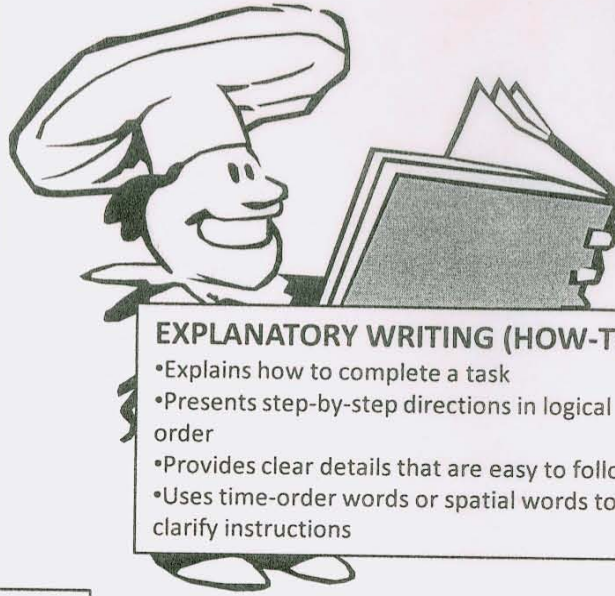
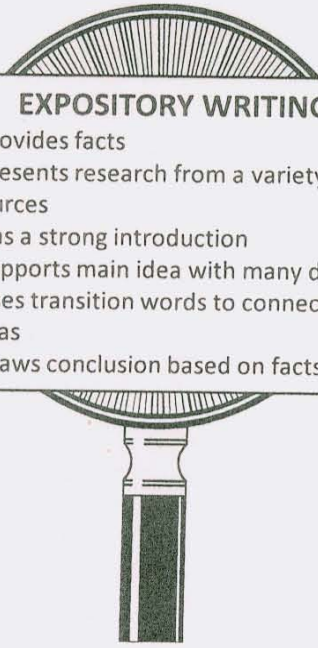
The writing co-teachers model the thought processes involved in developing written pieces from a variety of genres.

- Personal narrative**
- Persuasive**
- Expository**
- Compare/contrast**
- Explanatory**

Writing Genres

EXPOSITORY WRITING

- Provides facts
- Presents research from a variety of sources
- Has a strong introduction
- Supports main idea with many details
- Uses transition words to connect ideas
- Draws conclusion based on facts

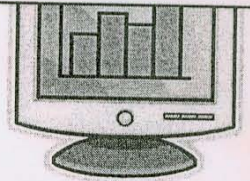


EXPLANATORY WRITING (HOW-TO)

- Explains how to complete a task
- Presents step-by-step directions in logical order
- Provides clear details that are easy to follow
- Uses time-order words or spatial words to clarify instructions

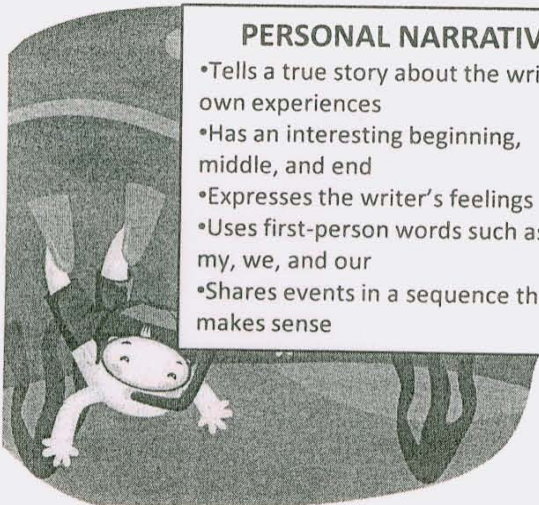
COMPARE AND CONTRAST WRITING

- Explains how items or topics are like and unlike each other
- Orders information in paragraphs, using point-by-point method or item-by-item method
- Logically arranges facts and details
- Uses words of comparison and contrast
- Conclusion summarizes information



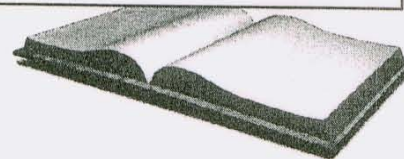
PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- Tells a true story about the writer's own experiences
- Has an interesting beginning, middle, and end
- Expresses the writer's feelings
- Uses first-person words such as I, my, we, and our
- Shares events in a sequence that makes sense



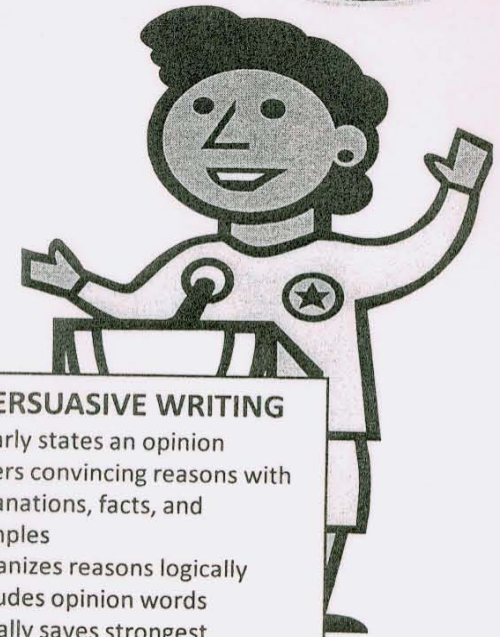
FICTIONAL NARRATIVE

- Is a story from a writer's imagination
- Has an interesting beginning, middle, and end
- Includes characters, setting, and dialogue
- Contains actions or series of events that form the plot
- Has problems and solutions



PERSUASIVE WRITING

- Clearly states an opinion
- Offers convincing reasons with explanations, facts, and examples
- Organizes reasons logically
- Includes opinion words
- Usually saves strongest argument for last



Students receive mini lessons focusing on the steps of the writing process based on the Indiana Academic Standards (soon to become the Common Core Standards), and skills are reinforced through guided practice.



Selected literature provides the reinforcement of the skill lesson to be presented. This literature is utilized to foster oral language and to stimulate the students' thought processes, thus improving writing development.

Young Hoosier Books Program

The purpose of the Young Hoosier Books Program is to stimulate recreational reading among elementary and middle school students and to encourage cooperation among media specialists, teachers, public libraries, and the community in providing reading experiences for Indiana school children.



PALS provides leadership for a districtwide Battle of the Books Contest in the spring. Teams of students compete in answering questions from Young Hoosier Books.

Fiction and nonfiction selections from the Young Hoosier Books are used to show samples of descriptive language in introductions, conclusions, settings, character development, and plot formation.

The writing co-teachers model best practices in effective strategies.

- **Dynamic Beginnings**
- **Wrap-up Endings**
- **Sentence Variety**
- **Descriptive Language**
- **Transitions**
- **Thesauruses**
- **Writer's Notebook**

During the fall and spring, every fifth grade student in Vigo County is assessed according to the ISTEP+ rubrics with a pretest and a posttest. Quarterly assessments are also given to evaluate skills and abilities highlighted during that grading period.



The results are used initially to determine focus areas of instruction for the state standards and ultimately to compile statistics reflecting student improvement.

2010-2011 Student Growth

