

## Academic Standards for Writing in Social Studies Courses

Any oral or written assignment dealing with the following standards must meet the requirements for a grade of “C” or better using a specified assessment or rubric. Any assignment that does not meet this requirement will be remediated by department staff in the setting proposed later in this document.

### 100 Level Courses –

Students will develop the skills associated with expository writing specifically, presenting a “main idea”, supporting it with appropriate evidence including transitions and summarizing in a conclusion. These skills will be developed in the following progression.

1. The first quarter will be spent on topic sentence construction with the following points

of emphasis:

- a. Sentences will be based on the question asked or subject to be covered.
- b. Sentences will be fully developed and complex enough to fully present the subject of the paragraph.

2. The second quarter will be spent on paragraph development with the following points of

emphasis:

- a. A topic sentence that presents the topic or position.
- b. Supporting sentences that present evidence.
- c. Application sentences that present a deduction or generalization.
- d. A concluding or transition sentence.
- e. Students will also be introduced to pre-write activities that will help them in writing preparation.

3. The third quarter will be spent on the construction of thesis statements and developing outlines. Students will learn to write both three-point thesis statements and blanket thesis statements. They will be taught to recognize which of these is appropriate. Students will also be shown how to create a framework for an essay with an outline.
  
4. During the fourth quarter students will write a five paragraph expository essay using the skills that have been developed throughout the year.

### **200 & 300 Level Courses –**

1. The first semester will be spent reviewing or introducing students to the skills which were developed in 100 level courses.
  - a. The first quarter will focus on review or introduction of concepts.
  - b. During the second quarter students will write one multi-paragraph essay.
  
2. During the second semester students will complete four writing assignments.
  - a. Three of the four will be multi-paragraph expository essays. The goal with these assignments will be to progress from the simple reporting of facts to taking and supporting a position to examining both sides of an issue.
  - b. The fourth assignment will be teacher's choice. Possibilities include but are not limited to a presentation of research (family history, traditional, etc.), another five paragraph essay or an essay component for the final exam (practically speaking this would probably be written in class during the final full week of school).
  - c. At least one of the four assignments will be research-based in order to connect with the department's standards in research.
  
3. Short answer questions will also be made a regular part of the testing process throughout the year.

#### 400 Level Courses –

1. Students will write four, multi-page papers in the course of the year. The purpose of these papers is to incorporate all of the skills developed by students while participating in social studies courses since these are the culminating courses in our curriculum. This provides teachers with a great deal of flexibility when creating these assignments. These assignments should conform to the following guidelines:

- a. One or more of these assignments will be research-based.
- b. One of the assignments should be related to a supplemental reading assignment.
- c. With a revision of the questions and guidelines, one of these assignments could be the analytical paper connected to the LCAP project.