

# **Baby Literary Essay, Literary Essay, and Comparative Literary Essay**

Kim Pham and Melissa Fisher

## **GENERAL NOTES**

- Choose RICH and MEANINGFUL fictional texts that are below or close to students' reading levels.
- Read aloud and discuss texts as a class, PRIOR to beginning this unit.
- Consider typing up or photocopying texts so students can highlight/jot in the margins.
- To lighten the load of this writing unit, consider previewing skills during reading workshop.
- 3rd Graders will craft a claim about a character from a familiar fictional text. (picture book)
- 4th Graders will craft a thesis about a big idea from a familiar fictional picture book or short story.
- 5th Graders will craft a thesis about a big idea related to the greater theme of a text, comparing or contrasting within a topic, using 1-2 familiar fictional picture books or short stories.

## **COLLECTING**

- 3rd** -Read stories, taking notes and marking up the text.  
-List claims about characters: consider traits, relationships, and character change  
-Elaborate on claims in Writer's Notebooks. Consider using thinking stems to grow ideas  
-Find evidence/examples in book on 3 different claims using different colored highlighters or stickies to mark evidence for each claim. Find evidence from the beginning, middle, and end of text.
- 4th** -List claims about big ideas within a few texts- focus on characters, themes, and message  
-Elaborate on claims, supporting reasons with evidence from the text. Use complex thinking stems to push complexity and deep thinking. (See curriculum)  
-Craft and test more than one thesis. (See curriculum for thesis options) Possible flash drafts!
- 5th** -List claims and collect entries elaborating about texts students LOVE. Tell what made this text "stick" or to be "so unforgettable"? You are NOT comparing or contrasting yet!  
-List claims, comparing or contrasting within a text or across 2 texts.  
-Collect entries, supporting claims with multiple reasons and then evidence from 1-2 fictional texts, using thinking stems to elaborate.  
-Collect possible thesis statements that are strong claims, comparing or contrasting within a text or across texts. (See curriculum for thesis development tips)

## **CHOOSING**

- 3rd** -Choose the trait/claim that has the strongest evidence to support it.
- 4th** -Choose a structured thesis about a big idea within a text, consider a thesis statement checklist.
- 5th** -Choose a structured thesis that compares or contrasts, may be crafted around 1 or 2 texts.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

- 3rd** -Support claim with clear reasons and textual evidence/examples  
-Teach students to how and when paraphrase and lift exact quotes.  
-Sort and gather information previously collected, choosing the strongest options and eliminating irrelevant information.
- 4th** -Utilize an organizational system for collecting reasons and evidence to support the thesis.  
-Develop reasons supported by textual evidence.  
-Include a variety of forms of textual evidence: micro stories, quotes, lists, examples, literary devices  
-Unpack (explain) the evidence, consider using thinking stems.
- 5th** -When organizing, consider the "block" essay structure or the "point by point" essay structure. (See If Then book and Curriculum)  
-Develop reasons supported by textual evidence and unpack it to compare or contrast effectively.

### **DRAFTING**

- 3rd** -Draft with an emphasis on organization  
-Draft an introduction, summary of story, reasons and evidence using thinking stems, conclusion.
- 4th** -Draft an introduction that funnels reader toward the topic. Put the text into real world context. Include a LIGHT summary that leads to the thesis.  
-Draft body paragraphs that state a reason, provide textual evidence, unpack the evidence using thinking stems, and conclude by linking back to the thesis.  
-Draft a conclusion that connects to the thesis and leaves the reader thinking.
- 5th** -Draft an introduction that funnels reader toward the topic (general topic to specific thesis). Begin with generalizations about literature, or stories, or life, or the world. Put the text into real world context. Include a LIGHT summary that leads toward the specific thesis.  
-Draft the body using the chosen structure (block or point by point) to unpack reasons and evidence to support the thesis.  
-Draft a conclusion that connects to the thesis as well as linking the story to the bigger picture, perhaps the writer's own life, another story, or a social issue in the world

### **REVISING**

- 3rd** -Revise for precise vocabulary to describe character  
-Consider using a color code to identify and revise different aspects of the essay
- 4th** -Utilize a revision checklist and color coding to identify and revise for specific qualities.  
-Revise to add or remove textual evidence, emphasis on clarity.  
-Revise ways to incorporate quotes in an essay
- 5th** -Revise language such as transitions and thinking stems to link evidence to the reason and/or thesis.  
-Revise to appropriately balance reasons, evidence, and thinking within the essay.

### **EDITING**

- 3rd** -Edit to punctuate quotes and paraphrased sections  
-Edit fo format titles and names.
- 4th** -Edit for use of commas, emphasis on complex sentences  
-Edit for punctuation of citations and quotations
- 5th** -Edit for verb tense.

### **PUBLISHING**

- 3-5** -Write or type a final copy, best effort!  
-Consider sharing essays with partners, class, buddies, compiling a class anthology, walk around and leave notes for classmates, etc. Celebrate!

### **PARCC PREP**

- 3rd** -Provide students with a relatively short on level text and ask students to come up with a big idea about a character and support it with reasons/evidence and analysis, in essay form, in one sitting. Teacher may consider using a prompt to guide topic of the writing.
- 4th** -Provide students with a relatively short on level text and ask students to come up with a big idea about a character and support it with reasons, evidence, and analysis, in essay form, in one sitting. Teacher may consider using a prompt to guide the topic of the writing.
- 5th** -Provide students with TWO on level articles that present information on the same topic. Have students compare and contrast the articles, crafting a thesis and including reasons, evidence, and analysis, in essay form, in one sitting. You could also do this with two fictional texts or one non fiction and one fictional text on a similar topic. Teacher may consider using a prompt to guide the writing.