

Diagnostic Guide for Book 1: *Topics*

The Diagnostic Guide is designed to help you locate a conference that addresses a student's particular area of need. The guide lists areas of need that a student may have when he's finding, exploring, selecting, and developing topics.

Part One: Finding Topics

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student...		
... is having trouble generating ideas for notebook entries or drafts.	1. Making a List * 2. Reading the World 3. Free Writing 4. Brainstorming Writing Territories *	7 12 17 22
... abandons a writing territory after writing about it only once or twice.	5. Mining a Writing Territory *	26
... has several favorite topics, but he's tired of writing about them.	6. Updating Writing Territories	35
... doesn't know much about a new topic he's eager to write about.	7. Turning an Unfamiliar Topic into a Writing Territory	39

Part Two: Exploring Topics

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student...		
... has uninspired entries in his writer's notebook.	8. "Unpacking" One Moment * 9. Visualizing and Talking	47 51
... is writing entries that are focused on the object or hobby rather than on the writer's experiences with it.	10. Adding Yourself *	54
... isn't sure how to write entries that support nonfiction writing.	11. Writing about Facts and Questions	58
... isn't sure how to write entries that support fiction writing.	12. Writing about a Character	68
... writes about topics in the same way all the time.	13. Writing in a Variety of Ways	72

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Part Three: Developing Topics

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student... ... is having trouble choosing an appropriate topic to write about or a genre in which to write about it.	14. Considering Interest, Audience, or Occasion *	83
	15. Considering Interest, Content, or Purpose	85
... is having trouble explaining the meaning or significance of his topic.	16. Reflecting on Its Significance *	88
	17. Finding a Focusing Line	92
... is writing without concrete details.	18. Sketching	97
... is writing a story that lacks an important element of fiction.	19. Thinking Deeply about the Story's Conflict	103
	20. Envisioning and Writing about a Character	108
	21. Adding Sensory Details to the Setting	113
... does not have a focus to his nonfiction writing.	22. Finding a Focus in Nonfiction	117
	24. Finding a Focus in Unfamiliar Nonfiction	129
... is having trouble identifying and organizing his main ideas.	23. Brainstorming Sections	121
... does not have a repertoire of strategies for researching a topic.	25. Researching Sections	133
	26. Making a Resource List	137
	27. Gathering Notes	141
	28. Preparing to Interview	146
... does not have a plan for completing his draft.	29. Making a Plan	151
	30. Making a Schedule	157

Diagnostic Guide for Book 2: *Drafts*

The Diagnostic Guide is designed to help you locate a conference that addresses a student’s particular area of need. The guide lists areas of need that a student may have when she’s thinking about audience; getting started with a draft; and crafting leads, narrative scenes, nonfiction sections, and endings.

Part One: Thinking about Audience

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student... ... doesn’t have a clear idea of the audience for his piece.	1. Writing with Classmates as an Audience *	9
... has written a piece that would appeal to an audience beyond his circle of friends, relatives, and acquaintances inside and outside of school.	2. Writing with Community Members as an Audience	12
	3. Writing with Print or Online Readers as an Audience	15

Part Two: Getting Started

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student... ... is drafting a story without making a plan, but the draft is undeveloped and the parts may be in an order that doesn’t make sense.	4. Talking Out a Story 5. Making a Basic Plan *	19 23
... has written a “bed-to-bed” or “all-about” entry (an entry in which a student tells <i>every</i> detail that she can remember about an experience).	6. Focusing a Bed-to-Bed Story *	27
	7. Using a Timeline	30
... has made a story plan that includes several scenes but that lacks details.	8. Writing a Detailed Plan	34
... is confused about how to proceed from a seed entry about a fictional character to a draft of a fictional story.	9. Thinking about a Story’s Problem and Solution	38
... has written a plan for a story but has included unnecessary scenes and/or may need to include additional scenes. He hasn’t indicated which scenes are especially important to the story.	10. Revising a Plan	42

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... has written all of her previous stories in first person because she can't imagine doing otherwise, not because she has weighed the pros and cons of this choice.	11. Telling a Story in First or Third Person	46
... has developed her topic for a nonfiction piece in her notebook but is confused about how to begin writing her draft.	12. Planning Nonfiction Across Several Pages 13. Writing a Flowchart for Nonfiction	51 54

Part Three: Crafting Leads

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student...		
... is writing a story that starts with a scene that is not essential to the story.	14. Starting with an Important Scene *	63
... has started with a scene that's essential to the story, but this first scene lacks tension or interest because it doesn't establish the problem or conflict, include information about the characters, or describe the setting.	15. Creating Tension 16. Writing Character Background 17. Describing the Setting	67 71 77
... introduces the reader to his nonfiction topic in his lead, but not the point he is going to make about it.	18. Basic Nonfiction Lead	83
... can write basic nonfiction leads but doesn't yet have other kinds of nonfiction leads in his repertoire.	19. Writing a Scene for Nonfiction 20. Writing a Comparison for Nonfiction	87 93

Part Four: Crafting Narrative Scenes

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student...		
... is beginning to write focused narratives but has written mostly general details.	21. Precise Details: Actions, Dialogue, and Thoughts * 22. Writing Dialogue 23. Showing—and Telling—Character Feelings and Thoughts 24. Describing Character Actions	99 103 107 111
... uses the basic repertoire of narrative details in his writing—character actions, dialogue, character thoughts and feelings—and can grow by adding other kinds of details to his repertoire.	25. Using Defining Details to Create a Vivid Character 26. Weaving in Setting Details	115 120
... writes using general words in his stories that make it hard to “see” a detailed picture of the characters, setting, and events.	27. Using Exact Words * 28. Using Simile	126 131
... relies heavily on the transition “then” to signal changes between and within scenes.	29. Using Time Transitions *	138
... develops every scene in his story, even ones that don't play a crucial role.	30. Summarizing—Not Stretching—a Scene	143

Part Five: Crafting Nonfiction Sections

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student...		
... is writing a section that is a series of details but lacks a topic sentence that gives an overview of the section.	31. Topic and Detail Sentences	149
... writes about a topic that will be unfamiliar to the intended audience.	32. Defining Unfamiliar Terms 37. Writing a Background Section	154 177
... is unsure of how to use the material she gathered in an interview effectively in her draft.	33. Quoting Experts	158
... writes with an impersonal tone, similar to an encyclopedia entry.	34. Giving Voice to Nonfiction by Addressing the Reader 35. Giving Voice to Nonfiction by Commenting on Facts	162 166
... writes without using transitions from section to section, and consequently his draft is confusing to readers.	36. Using Paragraphs and Headings	171
... is writing a draft that would benefit from a narrative procedure ("how-to") section.	38. Writing a How-To Section	182
... has developed a point in a nonfiction piece with a narrative section, but the section is too long and overwhelms the piece.	39. Writing a Mini-Narrative Section	185

Part Six: Crafting Endings

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student...		
... has ended with a scene that doesn't seem connected to the meaning of the story or has ended without communicating meaning explicitly.	40. Writing a Scene That's Integral to the Story ✱ 41. Writing a Reflection	193 197
... doesn't know how to end nonfiction pieces, and has ended his piece superficially or awkwardly.	42. Leaving the Reader Thinking 43. Connecting to the Reader's Life	202 206

Diagnostic Guide for Book 3: *Finished Projects*

The Diagnostic Guide is designed to help you locate a conference that addresses a student’s particular area of need. The guide lists areas of need that a student may have when he’s revising, editing, and planning his writing after the school year is over.

Part One: Revising

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student...		
... has made few or no revisions to his draft.	1. Adding Text *	5
	2. Using Blank Pages, Sticky Notes, “Spider Legs,” and “Add Ons” *	13
... has written a story in which she retells everything that happened during an event or a nonfiction piece in which she tells every single fact she knows about her topic.	3. Focusing an “All About” Story*	18
... has revised his draft by adding text, but the parts that he’s added onto are not the most important parts in the piece.	4. Focusing on Important Scenes *	21
... has written a draft that is confusing due to the order of its scenes or the inclusion of scenes that have little to do with the central message.	5. Reordering the Scenes or Sections 6. Cutting Scenes or Sections	26 29
... has used general, inexact words in his draft or title.	7. Using a Thesaurus and Dictionary 10. Writing an Effective Title	31 46
... has plunged into revising her draft without taking time to consider which parts are revision priorities or if a new meaning can be developed.	8. Making a Comprehensive Revision Plan 9. Developing a New Meaning	36 41
... has been working with a partner to revise a draft, but they are confused about how to give and receive feedback.	11. Using Feedback from a Partner *	51

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Part Two: Editing for Voice and Tone

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student... ... emphasizes certain words, phrases, or sentences when he reads a draft aloud but hasn't signaled to readers to do this when they read.	12. Adding Italics or Full Caps 13. Using Exclamations and Ellipses 14. Using the Dash to Create Emphasis	57 61 65
... has overused punctuation marks in her draft such as the exclamation mark, ellipsis, or dash.	15. Using Punctuation Judiciously	69
... has created a tone in his draft through choice of words that does not match the intended audience or purpose of the draft.	16. Choosing Words	71

Part Three: Editing for Clarity

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student... ... has made little attempt to edit her draft or has edited her draft by reading it to himself and numerous errors remain in it.	17. Reading Aloud * 18. Using Feedback from a Partner * 19. Using a Checklist *	77 80 82
... has written a draft in which he has used ending punctuation inconsistently, or not at all.	20. Listening for Pauses *	85
... has written a draft that primarily uses simple sentences, rarely compound sentences.	21. Creating and Punctuating Compound Sentences	90
... has written a draft that overuses the word <i>and</i> .	22. Deleting "and"	94
... has incorrectly punctuated dialogue or complex sentences.	23. Punctuating Dialogue 24. Checking for Sentence Fragments	98 102
... has not used paragraphs consistently in his draft.	25. Creating Paragraphs *	106
... has sentences that lack clarifying details or short sentences that could be combined.	26. Adding Details Inside a Sentence	112

Part Four: Planning Writing Beyond the School Year

WHAT YOU FIND	CONFERENCES THAT CAN HELP	Page
The student... ... is unsure of how to continue learning about craft and writing after the school year is over.	27. Making a Writing Plan for the Future 28. Reading Like a Writer with a Self-Chosen Author	119 123