

# Medieval History-Based Writing Lessons

in  
Structure, Style,  
Grammar, and Vocabulary

by  
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*Student Book*

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## INTRODUCTION

As the lessons in this book move through medieval history themes, they incrementally introduce and review the models of structure and elements of style in Institute for Excellence in Writing's *Teaching Writing: Structure and Style*. Vocabulary and some grammar instruction are also included. It is assumed that teachers have attended IEW's seminar, *Teaching Writing: Structure and Style*, either live or via DVD, and understand the IEW method of teaching writing.

Lessons are written so that a wide range of grade levels can be taught simultaneously. Both **Level A** (3<sup>rd</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> grade) and **Level B** (6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade) students should do the core of each lesson; however, extra, more challenging pages are included for Level B use only. These pages are clearly marked *Level B*.

### STUDENT BOOK

This book has two sections:

1. **The Lesson Pages:** This is the majority of the text. It contains the instructions, source texts, worksheets, and checklists needed for each lesson.
2. **Vocabulary Cards:** This section begins on page 201. Students will be instructed to cut out one set of cards each lesson. They will be expected to include some vocabulary words in each composition they write. They will also be quizzed over the words periodically. (Quizzes are in the Teacher's Manual.) The goal is that these words will become part of each student's natural writing vocabulary.

### THE STUDENT RESOURCE NOTEBOOK (SRN)

A complimentary download of the SRN is available at [excellenceinwriting.com/MHW-E](http://excellenceinwriting.com/MHW-E). It contains lists of quality words to help with elements of style, worksheets to help with using the IEW decorations, grammar rules, transition words and phrases, handy symbols and abbreviations for note taking, and proofreading marks. It is a helpful reference tool for students and teachers. While it is not mandatory for teaching the lessons in this book, some of the lessons do suggest its use, particularly for the word lists and grammar rules. If you do not wish to print out the entire SRN, here are the pages that this book recommends using:

Pages 5–6 (copied front/back)  
Pages 19–40  
Pages 92–93

Stylistic Techniques Chart  
Word Lists  
Proofreading Marks/ Symbols

For Level B only:

Pages 55, 56, 60, 62, 63, 65, 67, 69, 75, 79, 81, 84

Grammar Rules

## NOTES TO TEACHERS

### TEACHER'S MANUAL

These *Medieval History-Based Writing Lessons* have an accompanying Teacher's Manual. It is a helpful resource that includes instructions for teaching each of the lessons with sample outlines and brainstorming whiteboards, reviews, grammar helps, vocabulary quizzes with answer keys, and review game ideas.

### GRADING AND CHECKLISTS

Lessons in this book include two types of checklists: rough and final. Rough checklists accompany each paragraph (or section) of most compositions. The purpose of these is to list for students the required elements of that section. Rough checklists are not intended to be used for grading purposes, so no point values are indicated.

Final checklists list all the required elements for an entire composition, and each element is assigned a point value. While these checklists are specifically for the teacher to use for grading, students will find them helpful in double-checking that they have met all requirements. To grade a composition, use the blank or box next to each requirement to note either that the requirement was met (with a check mark) or that it was not met (by writing the points to be deducted). Then total the points to be deducted and subtract them from the total points possible. This will give you the points earned. If you prefer to convert the score to a percentage, simply divide the points earned by the points possible.

### A PERSONAL BOOK OF MEDIEVAL HISTORY

It is highly recommended that you encourage your students to polish each of their final drafts and add illustrations. At the end of the year, they will have a collection of a variety of types of compositions that move through major themes in medieval history. These can be bound into a book that they can be proud of.

**LESSON 12**  
**INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION**

**Review**

What is wrong with the following sentence?

*A knight kept the Code of Chivalry to honor their king and kingdom.*

**Level A** students may skip this lesson and, instead, work on the third body paragraph of the knights report. They should use pages 79–80.

**Level B** students will turn the three-paragraph report into a basic five-paragraph report. A five-paragraph report has three topics and, therefore, three main paragraphs. These topic paragraphs are called the body of the report. But in addition to these, a five-paragraph report has an entire paragraph of introduction and of conclusion.

You have already written three paragraphs about knights. All you must do now is write a paragraph to introduce them and a paragraph to end the report. Page 82 lists the specific elements required in each. Note each requirement in the sample on page 83.

**THE ASSIGNMENT**

1. Cut out and learn vocabulary words for Lesson 12. Add similar words to the backs.
2. Use page 82 and the blank outlines on page 85 to note the information you will need to include in an introduction and conclusion for your report about knights.
3. Use the outline to write an introduction and conclusion for your report. When you mention your three topics, be sure to mention them in the same order that you will put them in your report.
4. Label the topics in the introduction and conclusion by writing *A*, *B*, and *C* in the left margin. Remember to add all four dress-ups and the three sentence openers and label them as well. Follow the checklist on page 86.

## INTRODUCTION

**Grab your reader’s attention:** Begin your report with something interesting that will make your reader want to read on. Try one of the types of dramatic openers on page 84. (For more ideas, see the *Student Resource Notebook*, page 46.)

**Introduce the subject and give background information:** Tell your reader the subject of the report, but do not say anything similar to “*This report is about ...*” Simply make a general statement about the subject (knights). Then, give any background information you think would be helpful. For ideas, look at how each of the source texts began.

**Mention the three topics:** The simplest way to meet this requirement is to list the three topics, but a list is not very interesting reading. Try to write one complete sentence for each of your topics; tell the main idea of each body paragraph. You may need to add phrases or sentences to connect these ideas smoothly.

**Main idea:** End your introduction with one sentence that tells the main idea of the report. (This will prepare you for writing thesis statements later.)

## CONCLUSION

**Restate the main idea:** Begin the conclusion with the main idea of the report, but state it in different words than in the introduction.

**Restate the three topics:** As in the introduction, the best way to do this is to write a sentence about each topic.

**The most significant and why:** What is the most important thing to remember about knights and *why*? To help determine this, think about why knights are still remembered and studied today. What can we learn from their legacy?

**Final Clincher:** End the report with a sentence that repeats or reflects some of the key words in the first sentence of your *introduction (the dramatic opener)*.

## SAMPLE INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

Notice each of the required elements. The subject of the report is the “Black Death.” The bold words are the words in the opening that are reflected in the final clincher.

### INTRODUCTION

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Grab interest: | The most feared enemy of the Middle Ages was not a mighty, fierce                                   |
| Subject        | <b>army</b> —it was a <b>sickness</b> . It was called the “Black Death” because those               |
| Backgrnd       | who caught it became covered with black lumps and were sure to die.                                 |
| TOPIC A        | Today, we know it was the bubonic plague, a highly contagious disease.                              |
| TOPIC B        | From 1347–1350 it spread through Europe, carried by rats brought from                               |
| TOPIC C        | Asia by Italian merchants. This horrible plague killed at least 1/3 of the                          |
| Main Idea      | entire population of Europe. The Black Death was one of the most<br>devastating plagues in history. |

**THE BODY** The topics of the body paragraphs are as follows:

- A. What the Black Death Was
- B. When and How the Black Death Spread
- C. The Effect of the Black Death

### CONCLUSION

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Main Idea/  |  |
| Topic A     | “The Black Death,” (the bubonic plague) was the most catastrophic  |
| Topic B     | event of the Middle Ages. Because it was so contagious and people did not  |
| Topic C     | know what caused it, it spread like wildfire through Europe. With  |
| Most Signif | more than a third of the people of Europe dead by 1348, the plague had   |
| Why?        | long-lasting effects. With so few people left, peasants could charge more  |
| Clincher    | for working nobles’ lands, and they had opportunities to become craftsmen.<br>The feudal system that kept the rich rich and the poor poor began to erode.<br>Although some of the long-term effects may have been positive, while<br>the <b>plague</b> was present, it struck fear into every heart because it killed<br>more people than all the <b>armies</b> of the Middle Ages put together. |

## OUTLINE FOR INTRODUCTION

Dramatic Opener: I. \_\_\_\_\_

Subject / Backgrd: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic A: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic B: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic C: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Main Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

## OUTLINE FOR CONCLUSION

\*Main Idea: V. \_\_\_\_\_

Topic A: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic B: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic C: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Most Significant: \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Final Clincher: \_\_\_\_\_

\***The main idea** should be the basic idea communicated throughout the report.

\***The most significant thing** should communicate something about the importance or the legacy of the knights of the Middle Ages.

As you write your introduction and conclusion, be sure they include everything on the checklist on page 86, labeled as instructed. Also, work on smooth transitions between your sentences. Your teacher will help you with this.

## ROUGH CHECKLIST, *Level B*

### **Introduction**

- Dramatic opener
- Tell the subject (knights).
- Background info
- Three topics (*Label A,B,C in left margin.*)
  - Dress-ups (*Underline and label in right margin.*)
    - str verb
    - quality adj
    - ly word
    - w/w clause
    - voc
  - Sentence openers (*Number in left margin.*)
    - #3 (-ly word)
    - #6 (2–5 words)
- Main idea (last sentence)

### **Conclusion**

- Restate main idea.
- Restate three topics. (*Label A,B,C in left margin.*)
- Most significant thing and why
- Dress-ups (*Underline and label in right margin.*)
  - str verb
  - quality adj
  - ly word
  - w/w clause
  - vocab word
- Sentence openers (*Number in left margin.*)
  - #3 (-ly word)
  - #6 (2–5 words)
- Final clincher (Highlight words that reflect the dramatic opener.)

**agile**



**impeccable**



**smug**



**indolent**



**Adj** perfect

*The Code of Chivalry expected knights  
to have \_\_\_\_\_ behavior.*

Similar Words

**Adj** able to move quickly and easily

*Armor prevented knights from being  
\_\_\_\_\_ when they fell from their horses.*

Similar Words

**Adj** lazy

*The Code of Chivalry forbade  
knights to be \_\_\_\_\_.*

Similar Words

**Adj** highly pleased with oneself; complacent

*Knights were supposed to be humble, not  
\_\_\_\_\_.*

Similar Words