

Multi-Paragraph Practice: Writing Step-By-Step is a program designed to prepare students to respond to essay questions and writing prompts on standardized tests. Writing can be especially challenging for students with learning differences. Many students become anxious when faced with a multi-paragraph writing task because they have difficulty deciding what to write, how much to write, and in what order to write. *Multi-Paragraph Practice* addresses each of these issues by dividing the components of an essay into smaller, more manageable parts.

Through a series of lessons, students learn the separate components of an essay. First, the essay is introduced as a collection of three kinds of paragraphs. Then, students discover that each kind of paragraph is a group of three to five sentences that are all related to the same topic. As students learn the purpose of each sentence within a paragraph, they gain confidence in their ability to construct sentences. Paragraph construction then grows out of the ability to transition one sentence into the next.

Students are supported throughout the process with a uniquely designed graphic organizer. Using a graphic organizer to plan an essay gives students a visual sense of the content needed and how the separate sentences and paragraphs all fit together to form an essay. On the graphic organizer, large geometrical shapes are used to represent each paragraph of an essay. The shapes are further divided into sections that represent the individual sentences that make up a paragraph. These sections are labeled with key words to help students recall the specific function of the sentence within the larger paragraph.

By applying the knowledge acquired, students begin to create essays by assembling the separate components. Students first construct three-, then four-, and finally five-paragraph essays.

The ultimate goal of this program is for the students to become so familiar and comfortable with the writing of essays that they are able to plan for and execute thoughtful essays confidently.

Program Components

Research and Standards

Multi-Paragraph Practice: Writing Step-By-Step uses methodology that is both research-based and standards-based. Applicable quotes from the research and a list of standards addressed in this book can be found on page vi.

Teaching Instructions

Instructions for the teacher are located at the beginning of each unit. Each teaching instruction page begins with a summary of the unit content. A lesson presentation is included in Units 2–5 to assist the teacher in introducing three-, four-, and five-paragraph essays. Additional activities for pre- and post-program evaluation are suggested in Units 1 and 4.



INTRODUCTION (continued)

Student Lesson Pages

The student lesson pages are in Unit 1. Teachers should become familiar with the student lesson pages before introducing the program to students. The lessons in Unit 1 are ordered sequentially. The students should begin the program with Lesson 1 on page 2 and complete each remaining lesson in order. After completing the lessons in Unit 1, students will be prepared to move on to the construction of three-paragraph essays using the student prompts in Unit 2.

Student Prompt Pages

Units 2–4 contain writing prompts and graphic organizers for three-, four-, and five-paragraph essays, respectively. Each unit offers 30 prompts for a total of 90 student prompt pages in the book. A student should become proficient in writing a three-paragraph essay before attempting to write a four-paragraph essay, but a student may not need to complete all 30 three-paragraph prompts to demonstrate mastery. The teacher should use professional judgment to determine how much practice each individual student requires.

Writing Checklists

Checklists for writing three-, four-, and five-paragraph essays are provided in Units 2–4, on pages 17, 50, and 84. Each checklist presents an inventory of skills necessary for the development of an essay. As the students progress through the program, the inventory list increases to reflect a forward progression of learning. The checklists are reproducible and can be used by the teacher for evaluation purposes or by the students for self- or peer-evaluations.

The writing checklists can easily be made into scoring rubrics by assigning each skill a numerical value or by associating each set of skills with a range of values.