

# Writing Lesson Plan – Cubing

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## **STANDARD**

CC.3.6.11-12.H. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

## **OBJECTIVE**

Identify evidence that can support writing at different levels.

## **STRATEGY**

*Cubing* –Students examine a topic from six perspectives for pre-writing or after reading.

## **PHASE OF WRITING**

Before

## **SKILL REVIEW**

Ensure that students know the definitions for the six verbs.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Describe--give an account of

Compare--examine two or more objects, ideas, people to note similarities and differences

Analyze--determine the elements or essential characteristics of

Apply--make use of as relevant, suitable, or pertinent

Argue--present reasons for or against a thing

## **LESSON PREPARATION**

Prepare cubes with one verb on each side. You can have one per student or have students share. The template is included in this lesson. Cubes are also available to purchase from school supply stores.

Select a passage/topic for analysis. You can also use multiple passages related to the same topic.

## **LESSON**

### *Whole Group Instruction*

Introduce the concept of cubing. Divide the class into small groups or pairs. Identify one topic to use for the exercise. This may be a major earlier concept related to your program or something about which all students would have some knowledge (e.g., college, democracy, family, comedy). Assign each team one of the six sides of the cube. Walk through questions for each of the six verbs to help students get started.

- Describe it: How would you describe this topic/issue/event/person? What are the key characteristics/points/attributes including size, shape, and colors?
- Compare it: What is it similar to?
- Associate it: What does it make you think of? How does the topic connect to other topics/issues/subjects?

- Analyze it: How would you break the topic/problem/issue/event/decision into smaller parts?
- Apply it: What can you do with it? How is it used? How does it help you understand other topics/issues/decisions/events?
- Argue for or against it: What are your reasons to support or refute it?

Have groups discuss their answers. Use this discussion to clarify whether students are addressing the specific prompt as some could be confused or misunderstood.

## **GUIDED PRACTICE**

Provide a reading passage to student teams and have them complete the cube for the passage.

Have each group report their answers. Discuss any discrepancies.

Discuss how analyzing different aspects of a topic can help with writing. Have students defend their answers as some might be useful for either pro or con.

- Which aspects would be most helpful for writing an argument? (most likely answers: compare, analyze, apply, argue)
- Which perspectives would be most helpful for writing an informative or explanatory piece? (most likely answers: describe, compare, associate, analyze, apply)

## **APPLICATION**

Provide students with a writing prompt or scenario. Have them analyze the type of information they will need to support the writing. They can then use information they have already collected or research additional information to support the points they want to make.

### *Extensions/Notes*

- Teachers can select different verbs depending on the purpose of the lesson. Possibilities include create, illustrate, demonstrate, change, question and solve.
- While part of the reason for using the cube is to help tactile learning, students can complete the cube on the paper template.
- Templates can be differentiated for students by changing the verbs or concepts.
- Cubing can be used as a formative assessment to determine whether students are thinking deeply about the concepts or processes.
- Cubing can also be used as a reading strategy by having students respond to the prompts for passages they have read.
- The cube can be used as a topic review. Roll the cube and answer the prompt that shows on top. This can be especially challenging when different answers are required for each roll even when the same verb comes up.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION ON STRATEGY**

[Marco Island Middle School](#). (n.d.) Retrieved May 8, 2017.

Vaughan, J. & Estes, T. (1986). Reading and reasoning beyond the primary grades. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

# CUBE TEMPLATE

