Writing Opinion Pieces

Subject: Language Arts

Grade Level: 3rd

Common Core State Standard: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1 - Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
  - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1.a
    Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
  - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2.b
    Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

Goal: The students will develop an understanding and be able to write an opinion piece on a particular topic with supporting facts and details.

Objective: Given a prompt on healthy living, the student will write an opinion piece including at least two facts and three details. (Bloom’s Taxonomy Applying Level/DOK Level 2)

A. Introduction/Motivation

1. Welcome the students to class.
2. Inform the students that they will be learning about how to write an opinion piece today.
3. Review fact and opinion with the students.
   - Remind the students that a fact is something that can be proven true and an opinion is someone’s feelings about a particular topic.
   - Provide the students with an example of a fact: The blue whale is the largest mammal on earth. Ask the students if this can be proven. If it can be proven, then it is a fact.
   - Provide the students with an example of an opinion: Chocolate ice cream is the best flavor of ice cream. Ask the students if they can agree or disagree with this statement. If they can, then it is an opinion.
4. Place a fact label on one side of the classroom and an opinion label on the other side of the classroom. (bodily/kinesthetic)
   - Read aloud several statements that are either a fact or an opinion.
   - Instruct the students to determine whether the statement read is either a fact or an opinion and to move to that side of the room. Instruct the students to discuss with each other why they choose that answer. If their answer was fact – How can they prove it? If their answer was opinion, do they agree or disagree with it and why?
   - Go over correct answers and students reasons.
• The following are examples of statements that could be used:
  ➢ Spiders have eight legs, and they use their webs to catch insects to eat.
  ➢ The fiercest animal is the shark; All sharks are scary.
  ➢ Kids should be able to choose their own bedtimes, because they know when they are tired and need to go to bed.
  ➢ The second grade class is going on a field trip to the art museum to see paintings and sculptures by famous artists.

5. Tell the students that by the end of the lesson today they will be able to write an opinion piece about a healthy living topic including at least two facts and three details.
6. Inform the students that it is important to be able to write an opinion piece so they can express their feelings or point of view about a particular topic.

B. Study Learning
1. Show the students a poster containing the term opinion, the definition of it, and examples of it. (The following is the information that should be written on the poster or PowerPoint presentation.)
2. Remind the students that an opinion is someone’s feelings about a particular topic. It is also something that you can agree or disagree with.
3. Provide the students with examples of clue words that can possibly indicate if a statement is an opinion: think, believe, good, better, best, suppose, wonder, perhaps, bad, worse, worst, should, ought, right, wrong. Explain that these words should be used when writing an opinion piece.
4. Provide the students with the following examples of opinions:
   ➢ The President’s speech was the best speech I have ever heard.
   ➢ Cats are the best pets to have because they are cute, cuddly, and easy to take care of.
   ➢ Golf is the hardest sport to play.
   ➢ Six Flags is the worst amusement park in the world!
   ➢ Every class should go on a field trip once a month to make learning a lot more interesting.
5. Discuss the clue words in the examples and allow students to take turns coming to the board and circling or highlighting the clue words.
6. Inform the students that sometimes we write opinion pieces which are about our opinion about something—what we like or dislike, or agree or disagree with. When we write opinion pieces, we should use the clue words that help to indicate how we feel.
7. Inform the students that when we write opinion pieces we must also include facts and details to support our opinion.
• Explain that facts are sometimes called details.
8. Remind students that facts are statements that can be proven and details are statements and/or reasons that support the opinion or topic.

9. Provide the students with the following example about school uniforms (This should be written on the board or on a PowerPoint presentation):

   Topic (opinion): Students should be required to wear uniforms to school.
   Fact: Uniforms cost a set price.
   Detail: Everyone will pay the same amount of money for their clothes they wear to school.

10. Provide several more examples of an opinion that includes a fact about the topic and a supporting detail – use the previous examples of opinions.

11. Review the writing process with the students and remind them that every time they write something, they should always go through these steps: (Attachment #1- http://www.busyteacherscafe.com/worksheets/writing_workshop/Writing%20Process%20Bulletin%20Board.pdf)

   ➤ Prewriting
   ➤ Drafting
   ➤ Revising and Editing
   ➤ Rewriting
   ➤ Publishing


   • Ask appropriate before, during, and after reading questions.
   • Stop periodically and use "think alouds" to model opinions and point out facts and details.
   • Point out clue words.
   • Health - Have a class discussion about exercise and good nutrition using the information from the book.

13. Provide the students with the following example using information from the book and guide the students in adding as many facts and details as they can. (This should be written on the board or on a Smart Board):

   Topic (opinion): People should eat good food and exercise every day.
   Fact: There is healthy food available to eat, such as vegetables, fruit, milk, and fish.
   Fact:
   Fact:
   Detail: The amount of junk food you eat needs to be limited and replaced with healthy food, such as fruit.
   Detail:
14. Demonstrate how to combine the opinion, facts, and details together to make an opinion piece of writing. Write it on the board or Smart Board so all students can see it. Highlight the opinion statements in one color, the facts in another color, and the details in another color.

Guided Practice

15. Divide the students into small groups of 3 or 4 and give them the following topic: the zoo (or any other topic, such as any type of animal or place)
   - Give each group the “Writing Opinion Pieces” handout (Attachment #2).
   - Allow the students to use the internet, informational books, encyclopedia, etc... to research information about the zoo.
   - Instruct the students to write an opinion statement about the zoo and write two facts and two details about it.
   - Instruct the students to combine their opinion statements, facts, and details into a cohesive paragraph.
   - Allow time for students to complete their work and share their paragraphs.
   - (Monitor students as they work and provide feedback as needed.)

Independent Practice

16. Inform the students they are going to make a flip flap book (foldable) about a place they have visited or want to visit. Give the students the following examples: Disney World, The Grand Canyon, etc... (or a healthy living related topic)
   - Give each student a piece of construction paper, scissors, and a marker.
   - Instruct the students to divide their paper in half hotdog style.
   - Instruct the students to open their paper back up and cut two slits in their paper but to stop at the crease they made when they folded it the first time. They should have three flaps. (Demonstrate this for the students.)
   - Tell the students to write the word opinion of the outside of the first flap, fact on the outside of the middle flap, and detail on the outside of the last flap.
   - Tell the students to write an opinion statement on the inside of the first flap about a place they have visited or would like to visit, write a fact about the place on the inside of the middle flap, and a detail about the place on the inside of the last flap.
   - Allow time for students to work and share their flip flap books.

C. Culmination

1. Review how to write an opinion piece which begins with an opinion statement and includes facts and details.
2. Go back over the example we developed in class together on nutrition and exercise from the book, *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food.*
3. Tell the students that we are going to do one more activity together as a class. (bodily/kinesthetic – P.E. Integration)
• Inform the students that they are going to be given an action word. When they hear the word, they must perform the word in place for 1 minute.
• The following are examples of action words to be performed:
  ➤ Hop
  ➤ Jump
  ➤ Skip
  ➤ Wiggle
  ➤ Run
  ➤ March
• After the word is performed, they are going to write an opinion statement about the word.
• One opinion statement that was written will be chosen and written on the board. The class will work together to write one fact as well as two supporting details.
• Develop a paragraph based on the opinion statement, facts, and details.
• Allow a volunteer to read the paragraph orally and underline the opinion statement.

4. Clarify any questions or misconceptions at this time.

D. Follow-Up

1. Tell the students to clear their desks except for a pencil.
2. Provide the students with two topics: nutrition and exercise. (Health)
  • Explain these two topics. Nutrition deals with eating healthy foods, taking vitamins, etc. Exercise deals with physical activity, such as walking daily, working out, etc…
3. Give each student a “Healthy Living” handout. (Attachment #3)
  • Instruct the students to write an opinion statement about either nutrition or exercise, write two facts about it as well as three supporting details.
  • Instruct the students to combine their opinion statements, facts, and details into a cohesive paragraph.
  • Allow the students to use the internet, informational books, encyclopedia, etc… to research information about nutrition or exercise if needed.
4. Tell the students to turn their papers in when they finish.

Materials and Resources:

1. Fact and opinion labels
2. Opinion poster
3. Writing process handout/PowerPoint presentation (Attachment #1)
4. Computer, projector and/or Smart Board
5. Book, The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food
6. “Writing Opinion Pieces” handout (Attachment #2)
7. Construction paper, scissors, markers
8. “Healthy Living” handout (Attachment #3)
9. Dry erase board and markers

**Adaptations for Lower Grades:**
- Provide examples and statements of opinions, facts, and details written on a lower grade level.
- Choose a book on a lower reading level than *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food*
- Have students provide just one fact and one detail rather than two or three.
- Select easier topics for the writing activities.

**Adaptations for Upper Grades:**
- Provide examples and statements of opinions, facts, and details written on a higher grade level.
- Choose a book on a higher reading level than *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food*
- Have students provide more facts and more details rather than two or three.
- Select more in depth topics for the writing activities.