**Sequencing Rationale**

**Lesson:**

Reading and writing about informational text.

**Sequence:**

The sequence of this unit is followed very similarly to how the Common Core standards have outlined the requirements for informational text for 9th and 10th graders. Also, in my Learner Outcomes document, I briefly discussed the process the students will follow.

First, the students will become familiar with informational text. At this point in their educational career they have read many different forms of informational text. They have read informational text in their Social Studies and Science classes for years. However, I have found that they have not necessarily been taught the skills to do a close reading of a short informational text article. I will first teach the students how to do a close reading of the text. The students will learn how to identify the subject and how to highlight, underline or circle the big ideas that support the subject. This first step is critical for the students’ ability to move on. It is only after this step is completed that the student can apply and analyze what they have learned.

After the students have read and annotated the article, they will complete a reading comprehension strategy called SOAPSTone. The acronym stands for: Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Speaker and Tone.

The Subject is self-explanatory but actually more challenging that I had thought for the students. Sometimes the title explicitly states the subject and sometimes it is less apparent. The students will have to figure out what the article is about by reading the whole thing.

The Occasion is confusing for the student because it is similar to the Purpose. The occasion is the specific reason the article was written. The students need to understand that most authors write with a purpose in mind and that purpose came from an event or something that sparked their interest to get the subject across to the public. I like to give the example of an article we read in class about earthquake preparedness in California. Right after the earthquake in the Napa valley last year, an article was published warning Californians about “The Big One”. The article talked about preparations that needed to be made before it happens. This smaller earthquake is the occasion. If that did not happen, the article might not have been written. I tell the students to sometimes find the purpose before the occasion.

The Audience is to whom the article is written. Using the previous example, Californians would be the explicit audience. Often the students like to answer “everyone” because they think everyone would like to read the article. Although that may be true, they need to figure out who the intended audience is.

The Purpose goes back to the generic answer of: Inform, Entertain, Persuade. If the student chooses inform, I have them tell me for what purpose. Was the author trying to show us information that will help us live our lives better? How do you know? These are the types of questions the students answer in the purpose section.

The Speaker is another portion the students struggle with. The speaker is easy to answer if the students correctly identified the audience. The reason this helps the students is because if the speaker is talking to a particular audience then he/she is likely similar to the audience. For instance, using the earthquake example again, the audience would more than likely be Californians therefore our speaker is more than likely someone who is or has lived in California. Although someone from the east coast could write an article like this, it is less likely. In this section, I also have the students focus on looking for jargon that they should have highlighted while they read. This jargon gives the reader a glimpse as to what type of speaker the article could have because they will show us the field in which they possibly studied through the use of this jargon.

The Tone is a term the students should be familiar with but is not always the easiest for them to identify in an informational article. Many of my students like to answer ‘informational’, which I try to keep them away from. The author does not feel informational towards the topic they wrote. In the earthquake article, they should be using words like: concerned, worried.

This process can take 4-6 weeks depending on the students. I start out not requiring textual evidence at the beginning to help them figure out how to answer the questions. I then slowly add textual evidence for each of the six until they must use it for all answers. During this process, I also have the students write a personal response.

In the personal response, the students must choose a particular aspect of the article and respond to it personally. They must quote actual text that either surprised them, interested them, made them research further, or just generally was different. This response helps them begin the analyzing, applying and evaluation stages of Bloom’s Taxonomy.

After the students are almost intrinsically identifying this information, they will begin writing about it more explicitly. This happens close to halfway through the year, depending on where the students are when they start the year. Students will write narrative text, expository text which they will research in order to write, and argumentative text which they will also research to write. During this writing, they will be aware of their own purpose for writing.

While they write these pieces, I remind them of the work that we did while they were reading informational text. They need to be aware that people will be reading and ‘judging’ what they have written. They need to evaluate their own purpose and tone to make sure they are writing in the way in which they would like to write.

One of the final lessons and units my 10th graders will complete is a Rogerian Argumentative paper. This paper will show most of what they have learned throughout the year. They will have to be aware of not just their argument, but the counterargument. They must also present that counterargument in a way that is unbiased but shows that their argument is stronger than that of the opposition. This process can take anywhere from 4-8 weeks depending on how much time is left in the year and how hard the students have worked through the previous process. If they did not work hard and learn what was previously taught, there is some re-teaching that will be necessary.