

T E X A S   A D U L T   E D U C A T I O N   S T A N D A R D S  
L E S S O N   P L A N

**Before you begin**

**Title:** Organizing Your Essay

**Setting:** ABE/ASE

**NRS Level(s):** Level 3: Low Intermediate Basic Education

**Open entry/exit:** Yes

**Context:** Academic

**Standard(s):** ABE/ASE Convey Ideas in Writing

**Benchmark(s):** 2.3, 4.3

**Objective:** To prepare learners to successfully pass the written portion of the GED examination.

**Materials:**

- Organizing with Columns handout (see attached)
- Organizing with Numbering handout (see attached)
- Organizing with a Diagram handout (see attached)
- *What I Have Learned* worksheet (see attached)

**Estimated time needed to prepare for this lesson plan:** 15 minutes

**Estimated time needed to complete this lesson plan:** 2.5 hours

**The Lesson Plan**

**Introduce the lesson:**

Begin by asking learners to recall what they have heard about the GED written test. Write these responses on the board as they are verbalized. Use this opportunity to correct any misconceptions learners may have concerning the evaluating of the written exam (i.e. the essay must be a certain number of words; one point is deducted for each misspelled word, etc.).

Ask learners if anyone has every thought about writing a book or an article. Have learners discuss their thoughts about this, (i.e. what was the subject or the occasion).

**Teach the lesson:**

Invite a local author to lead a discussion with the class on how a book is organized and written. The author should explain that an outline format very similar to the one they are using to prepare

their essay is utilized in planning and developing a book. Allow the learner to ask questions of the author in order to gain better insight regarding this concept.

Explain that while there are certainly different ways to organize your thoughts and ideas in preparing to write an essay the one used should be comfortable to the learner and provide confidence. This is most important. Let learners know you will be introducing three different ways of organizing the results of brainstorming for a writing assignment. Remind the learners that organizing can be as simple as grouping ideas according to similarity. After examining the three options the learners will be in a position to choose the one method they are most comfortable with.

**Practice the lesson:**

Ask the class to divide into 3 groups and then to listen to the following scenario:

*A student has been given the following essay writing assignment:*

If you could choose one day of the year to live over and over, what day would you choose?

In your essay, identify that day and explain your choice. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

Ask the groups to brainstorm together what this student's ideas may have been for this assignment if the student chose Christmas as the one day he/she would like to relive.

After 10 minutes, have each group report back to the class what they brainstormed. Write these ideas on the board as they are presented.

Now explain that three ways of organizing will be reviewed to provide at least one way that is comfortable and useful for each learner.

**Option #1 Organizing with Columns**

Provide a copy of the organizing with columns handout to each learner. In each group, have the learners organize the ideas on the board into the suggested categories indicate on the handout. Discuss with learner any difficulties that may have been encountered using this approach.

**Option #2: Organizing with Numbering**

Provide a copy of the organizing with numbering handout to each learner. In each group have the learners organize the ideas listed on the handout using the suggested numbering guide at the top of the handout. Discuss with learner any difficulties that may have been encountered using this approach.

**Option #3: Organizing with a Diagram**

Provide a copy of the organizing with a diagram handout to each learner. In each group have learners organize the ideas listed on the board into the suggested categories listed on the handout. Discuss with learners any difficulties that may have been encountered using this approach.

Suggest that learners may want to experiment with the different methods of organizing their ideas until they find one they are particularly comfortable with.

**Assess the lesson:**

After completion of the learning activities in step #3 learners will be asked to share their organizational lists, giving the instructor an opportunity to determine the evidence of performance of the standard.

Peer feedback will occur in the groups as learners work together in utilizing different organizational methods for essay development.

**Apply the lesson to the real world:**

Using a “What I Have Learned” worksheet (see below), learners will be led to brainstorm what they learned about the goal they worked on during the learning cycle. From this group learners will list on their own worksheets the particular things that they personally learned. Learners will be asked to discuss how this learning might transfer to other contexts. Learners will be asked to fill out the right-hand column of the chart. Learners will work in pairs to share their work.

Volunteers may share with the group. Learners will be asked to add ideas to their worksheets after this discussion.

**Submitted by:** Mike Fulton

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**What I Have Learned**

<b>What I learned about preparing an accident/injury report</b>	<b>How I will use this in other situations/places:</b>

## ORGANIZING BY THE NUMBERS

### EXAMPLE

GED Writing Assignment: If you live one day of the year every day, what day would you choose?

In your essay, identify that day and explain your choice. Use your personal observation, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

Suppose you chose the day - Thanksgiving

Steps:

1. Brainstorm all the possible reasons you would choose Thanksgiving as the day you would live everyday.
2. Determine some general categories that your reasons may fall into, such as (1) food, (2) family fellowship and (3) relaxation.
3. Next to each reason on your brainstorming list jot the number of the category it would fall into. (see below)

Reasons I would choose Thanksgiving:

Turkey & dressing (1)	fruit salad (1)	pumpkin pie (1)
No school (3)	cool weather(3)	fireplace (3)
Visit with Relatives (2)	football games (3)	in the country (3)
Walks outside (3)	simpler lifestyle (3)	sweet potato casserole (1)
Good mood (3)	long nap after dinner (3)	no responsibilities (3)
Refreshed (3)	childhood memories (2)	in-laws (2)
Listen to stories (2)	cranberry surprise (1)	hot bread & biscuits (1)

The reasons that have the same number can go together to form a paragraph in the body of your essay.

## ORGANIZING BY THE COLUMNS

### EXAMPLE

GED Writing Assignment: If you live one day of the year every day, what day would you choose?

In your essay, identify that day and explain your choice. Use your personal observation, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

Suppose you chose the day - Thanksgiving

Steps:

1. Brainstorm all the possible reasons you would choose Thanksgiving as the day you would live everyday.
2. Determine some general categories or headings that your reasons may fall into, such as (1) food, (2) family fellowship and (3) relaxation.
3. Next, create three columns using the headings above. Then list each reason you would choose Thanksgiving in the appropriate column (see below)

Reasons I would choose Thanksgiving:

#### FOOD

Turkey & dressing  
Fruit salad  
Hot bread & biscuits  
Pumpkin pie  
Cranberry surprise

#### FAMILY

visit with relatives  
in-laws  
listen to stories  
childhood memories

#### RELAXATION

no school  
cool weather  
good mood  
fireplace  
refreshed  
no responsibilities  
football games  
simpler lifestyle

The reasons that in the same column can go together to form a paragraph in the body of your essay.

ORGANIZE WITH A DIAGRAM

