

# Minnesota Writing Project

## --- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

**Title of lesson: A city in the world: a descriptive essay with a persuasive twist**

**Suggested grade/age: grades 4- 7, adaptable for other grade levels**

**Approximate time needed to complete lesson: a few sessions of 40 minutes**

### **Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson:**

(Why is this lesson important in the development of your students' skills or knowledge? What do you want students to learn or be able to do? What "best practice" does this lesson incorporate?)

This unit is implemented during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester in grade 5. Students are asked to use the five senses to describe their favorite city in the world and later on, they will turn the descriptive essay into a persuasive one, as well, and focus on specific reasons for which their city is worth visiting. The lesson below is the introductory lesson and can be taught in two days. Students will be able to:

- ~Explore descriptive and persuasive writing in connection to one's favorite city in the world
- ~Identify the five senses when reading somebody else's piece of writing and apply those skills in your own essay
- ~Implement successfully the writing process, the writing traits, and the revision process

### **Brief summary/outline of lesson:**

(What steps do you take to implement this lesson in your classroom? Where is this lesson located in the school year or unit—beginning, middle, end? Does this lesson scaffold or build to a culminating assessment or demonstration of learning?)

#### FIRST DAY:

1. **Magic ball** (*brainstorming game that allows students to move around, play, and generate words connected to the topic they will write/talk about later on. Teacher gives students a topic and they throw a ball from one person to the other and mention one word/short sentence that has to do with the topic given*). On that day, the topics may be: *school, strong adjectives, and/or cities you have visited, etc.*
2. **Read-aloud**: teacher models being a writer and shares parts of an essay s/he wrote on a city in the world
3. Students **discuss** the teacher's essay. Later on, they **reread the essay** on their own and **list** in their notebooks **words/short sentences that match the five senses**: sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell.
4. Students compare lists with a partner and write some of those words on each of the 5 posters in the classroom that represent the 5 senses
5. At the end of the first day, students write teacher a short letter and share their feedback on my essay (*include compliments, questions, and suggestions*)

#### SECOND DAY:

1. Students list 5 cities they visited on an index card. From there, the teacher guides them through a process that eventually leads them to THE ONE city they will write about.
2. **Quick write**: students create a bubble map to identify the city of their choice and the five senses. After 5-6 minutes of writing, they share the bubble map with two different partners during a "talkathon" (students walk and talk at the same time and switch partners when teacher asks them to)
3. Students start writing their first draft, and they focus on IDEAS *only*.

Throughout the week, students will be taught mini lessons on:

- ~ new vocabulary from teacher's own essay
- ~weak words vs. strong words
- ~choosing a title for their essay
- ~writing strong introductions
- ~polishing the first draft
- ~doing research
- ~sharing during morning meetings
- ~peer conferences

**Related Resources:**

(What technology, articles, books, or supplies do you recommend?)

- ~posters, a ball, mentor texts about descriptive essays

**Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:**

This lesson allows for lots of differentiation: struggling writers can focus on writing about their favorite city using the posters around the classroom if they get stuck, while the more advanced can do research on their city of choice. Students are invested in the project because they write about something relevant to them and become experts in that particular subject; it is also an opportunity for all students to write about their cultural background; *students see that the teacher is a writer*; it allows students to know one another better as writers and kids; multi-genre writing; the “final product” is a book or a digital story (multiple intelligences).

For additional information, contact: [biasuglia@edina.k12.mn.us](mailto:biasuglia@edina.k12.mn.us)