



**Essentials in Writing®**  
Where Students Learn to Write

**Essentials in Writing – Virtual Classroom**  
**Course Syllabus – Mr. Matthew Stephens**

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, Missouri State University  
Master of Science in Educational Administration, William Woods University  
Master of Music in Choral Conducting, Texas State University  
Certified grades 1-6, 7-12 English  
Author, Owner, and CEO of Essentials in Writing and Essentials in Literature

Welcome to our very first Virtual Classroom for a systematic, methodical approach to writing for all students. I am Mr. Stephens, an educator with over 20 years of experience and your instructor for the 2020-2021 school year. Please read the course outline carefully and share it with your parents. This syllabus will provide you with important details that you will need to be successful in this course. My number one goal is to teach you to write well and with ease! This will involve following a step-by-step, systematic approach to writing with short, daily writing assignments. That is my goal, but you must do the work. For this to work, you need to follow the syllabus, participate in weekly and daily assignments, meet course deadlines, and work hard.

### **Contact information**

Email me at [teacher@essentialsinwriting.com](mailto:teacher@essentialsinwriting.com). I check my email frequently and enjoy interaction with my students. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

### **Course Policies**

1) The Virtual Writing Course will be conducted on Zoom. Each week you will join me at the designated time to participate in the virtual class. During the virtual class you will type responses to my questions in the chat bar. Don't worry. No one can see your responses except me.

2) All DAILY (mini) assignments will be submitted through email conversations. Once I or my teaching assistant receives your mini assignment, a subsequent response will follow. In the response we will provide you with affirmation, additional guidance (if needed), and the mini assignment for the next day. Repeat.

3) Final copies will be submitted as a Microsoft word document. Each submission should:

- be double-spaced
- be in 14 pt Times New Roman font
- indent the first line of each paragraph
- include the following information, in this order, at the top left-hand corner of the page:
  - your full name (eg. Daniel Hopper)
  - the lesson for which the composition is submitted (eg. Expository Paragraph, Personal Essay, or Research Paper)
  - the date of submission (eg. 3 October 2019)

PLEASE NOTE: You will not submit final copies unless instructed to do so.

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

Please do NOT plagiarize. Plagiarism means turning in papers that somebody else wrote, copying passages (sentences, paragraphs, or phrases) that somebody else wrote without citing the source (where you got it from), or turning in a paper that you wrote for another class.

## Course Description

Virtual Class for Struggling Writers focuses on teaching students to follow the writing process in order to produce interesting, well-written paragraphs and essays of the descriptive, expository, and persuasive genre.

## Course Outline

*\*Before the first week – Submit Writing Sample*

### SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND WORD CHOICE

Week 1 – Independent and Dependent Clauses  
Week 2 – Compound Sentences and Errors (comma splice and run on)  
Week 3 – Complex Sentences and Errors (fragments)  
Week 4 – Compound-Complex Sentences  
Week 5 – Word Choice  
Week 6 – Vivid Writing

### Week 7 – SENTENCE STRUCTURE – WORD CHOICE ASSESSEMENT

### PARAGRAPHS

Week 8 – Write a **Descriptive** Paragraph (organize and draft)  
Week 9 – Write an **Expository** Paragraph (organize and draft)  
Week 10 – Write a **Persuasive** Paragraph (organize and draft)  
Week 11 – Write an **Expository** Paragraph (page 24-25)  
Week 12 – Write a **Persuasive** Paragraph (page 30-31)  
Week 13 – Write an **Expository** Paragraph (page 24-25)

### Week 14 – PARAGRAPH ASSESSMENT

*Week 15 Thanksgiving Break*

### ESSAYS

Weeks 16-17 – Introduction to Essays - Write a **Personal Essay** (page 59-69)

*Weeks 18-20 Christmas Break*

Weeks 21-22 – Write a **Personal Essay** (page 59-69)  
Weeks 23-24 – Write an **Expository Essay**  
Weeks 25-26 – Write a **Persuasive Essay**  
Weeks 27-28 – Write an **Expository Essay**

*Weeks 29-30 – Spring Break (Resume March 17 – Week 31)*

Weeks 31-32 – Write an **Expository Essay** (INDEPENDENT) ask for help as you need it  
Weeks 33-34 – Write a **Persuasive Essay** (INDEPENDENT) ask for help as you need it  
Weeks 35-36 – Review **Sentence Structures**  
Weeks 37-38 – Write an **Expository Essay** (INDEPENDENT)

### Week 39-40 – ESSAY ASSESSMENT (No feedback)

Week 40 – Last Class – What have you learned?