

## Mini-lessons for Use with the Research Form:

### Preparation:

- Make a transparency of the 2-page handout for your use in modeling on your overhead projector.
- Copy the 2-page handout on one sheet of paper, using back and front, for each student. (It's important that you use one sheet of paper only!)

**These suggested lessons allow a generous amount of time for modeling daily. If necessary, the lessons can be accelerated and/or can end after the Day 5 lesson with the information gathering only. Within this series of mini-lessons, the students will learn the whole process of research and research writing through a simple process.**

### Day 1:

**Teacher's Model:** Model choosing a topic suitable for your research. Then, in the top left quadrant of the first page transparency, brainstorm as many interesting questions as you can that show your curiosity about the topic.

**Students' Activity:** Have students fold the handout that you give them in half and then in half again so that when they unfold the sheet there will be four equally defined quadrants. Students should decide upon their topic for research and record it in the appropriate place in the top left quadrant of the front page. Then, they should brainstorm questions that they have some natural curiosity about. You might also allow 5 minutes for students to meet with partners to share their questions and to see if their partners can add any additional interesting questions.

### Day 2:

**Teacher's Model:** Model narrowing down your list of questions to the 3 questions that will guide your research. Think aloud about questions that are too broad, too narrow, and just right. Strike through all questions with the exception of the 3. Now, write the questions in the spaces provided on the front page of the form.

**Students' Activity:** Have students go through the same process you've just modeled. Again, they might meet with partners to share their thinking process of eliminating the questions. Next have the students cut their forms apart on the folded lines into the four equal pieces. Pass around a stapler and have them staple the 4 pages together in the upper left corner.

### **Days 3-5:**

**Teacher's Model:** Model how to locate the information pertinent to the questions you've decided upon. You might walk through one question per day. Take the table of contents and/or the index from a book and show students how to use these features to pin-point information on the questions. Read pertinent sections aloud and think aloud about how to paraphrase the information you need. Write words and phrases (not complete sentences) alongside the bullets under your question in the correct quadrant on the form. (You won't likely want to cut your transparency apart like the students have.) Once you've jotted down your notes on Question 1, review the information. Then, find the corresponding quadrant on your second transparency (which for the students will be the backside of their page). This is where you'll free-write on what you've learned. Use complete sentences for this page.

**Students' Activity:** Have students begin to gather their information following the modeling you've done, recording words and phrases and then doing their free-writing. Follow this format for all three questions.

### **Day 6:**

**Teacher's Model:** Starting with the "topic" quadrant of your first page, model how to take the topic and the three guide questions to make a good introductory paragraph for your research composition. You might experiment with different approaches, using questions and statement either as hooks for the reader. The first paragraph should basically "tell the reader what you're going to tell them" in the body of your paper.

**Students' Activity:** Today they will follow your model and attempt a strong introductory paragraph for their papers. Some sharing time might follow either with partners or as a whole group.

### **Day 7 - 9:**

**Teacher's Model:** Return to your free-write model for Question 1. Revise it as necessary on the original free-write page. Then, transfer it to become the second paragraph of your composition. This paragraph and the next two, Questions 2 and 3 basically are the "telling" part of your research composition. On subsequent days, follow this same model for Questions 2 and 3.

**Students' Activity:** Each day students will follow your model: revising their free-writes and transferring them to separate paragraphs of their compositions.

### **Day 10:**

**Teacher's Model:** Return to your "topic" quadrant again (the first quadrant you dealt with). Use this segment again to summarize what this research attempted to do, bringing closure to your composition with a well-formed paragraph. Experiment with different ways of bringing closure. This is the "tell the reader what you've just told them" section of your writing.

**Students' Activity:** Students will follow your model to write the final paragraph of their research papers.