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Subject Areas: English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies

Grade Level: 6 – 12 (ages 11-18)

Time: At least three 45-minute class periods; time outside of class as necessary

Lesson Objective:
Students will develop a better understanding of the writing process and work with a diagram which will help them to complete a writing assignment.

Common Core State Standards[1]:
Writing Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects
> **Standard 5.** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
> **Standard 6.** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Overview:
Students need to understand that writing is a process which becomes much easier when it is broken down into steps. Use the *Writing Process* template (**Webspiration Classroom™ Starter>Starter Docs>English Language Arts>Writing Process**) to help your students to visualize these steps and aid them in the process of completing a writing assignment.


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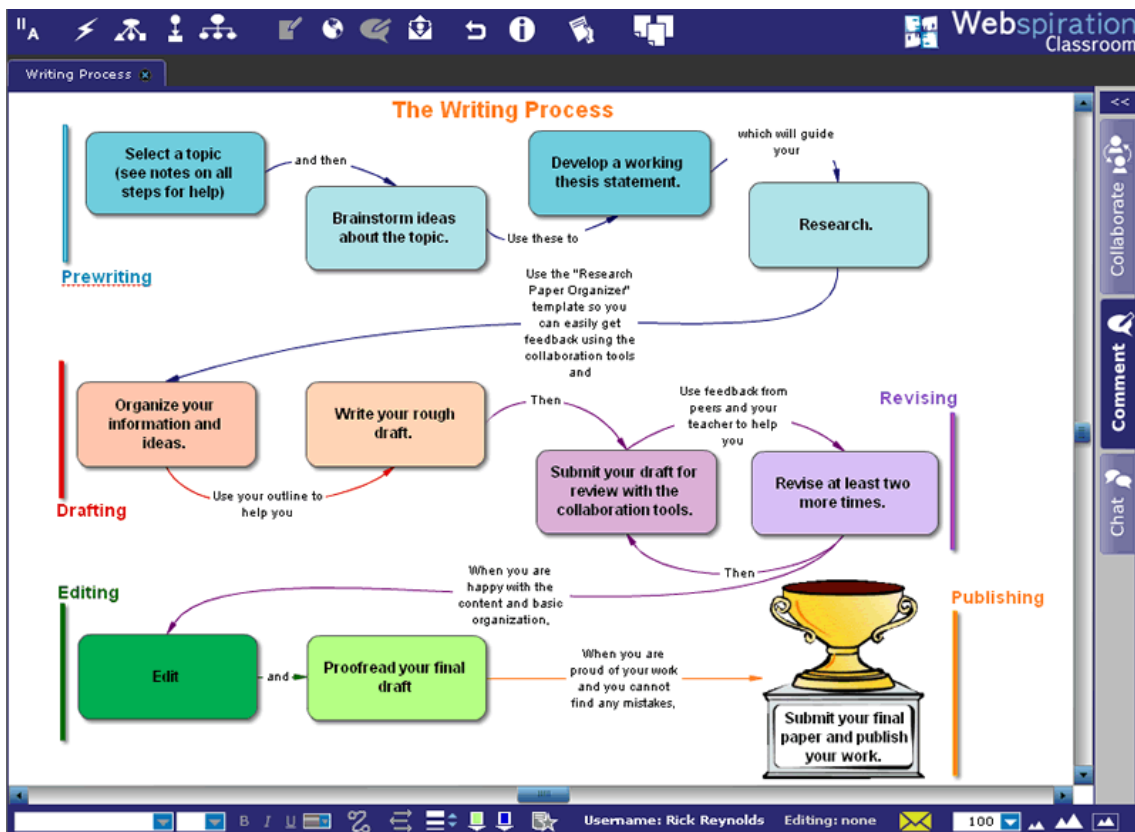
Preparation:
- This lesson requires Internet access and the Webspiration Classroom™ software application published by Inspiration® Software, Inc. It can be accessed by visiting <http://www.webspirationclassroom.com>.
- Access to library resources would also be helpful for student research.

Lesson:
1. Explain that writing is a process involving many steps and that following these will enable students to produce any piece of writing. Open the *Writing Process* template and discuss the steps with students in detail: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Seeing the diagram will help the students to understand and remember the steps.

2. Point out that the process moves from the upper-left corner of the diagram down to the lower-right, but that it sometimes also involves circling back; for example, during the revision process or if the student realizes that there is not enough information available about their topic. In that case the student may have to go back to the beginning of the process and choose a new topic, which is one reason why it is important to take the time to select a good topic during that stage of the process.

3. Explain that Webspiration™ offers many other tools and templates which can help with the writing process. For example, if the students were expected to write an essay about a work of fiction, they could first complete the *Fiction Notes and Analysis* template. If that is the case, open the example (**Webspiration Classroom™ Starter>Examples>English Language Arts>Fiction Notes and Analysis Example**) and explain the areas of it to the students so they see how the template could help them in the process of thinking about the work.

4. Students could use a variety of other templates to help them with the specific writing assignment, for example, the *Research Paper* template (**Webspiration Classroom™ Starter>Starter Docs>English Language Arts>Research Paper).**

5. Open the *Writing Process Example* (**Webspiration Classroom™ Starter>Examples>English Language Arts>Writing Process Example**) so students have an idea of what is expected of them in this lesson. They will be modifying the diagram so that it reflects the steps they will be taking for whatever specific writing assignment they will be doing for your class. For example, they could start by recording due dates on the diagram.
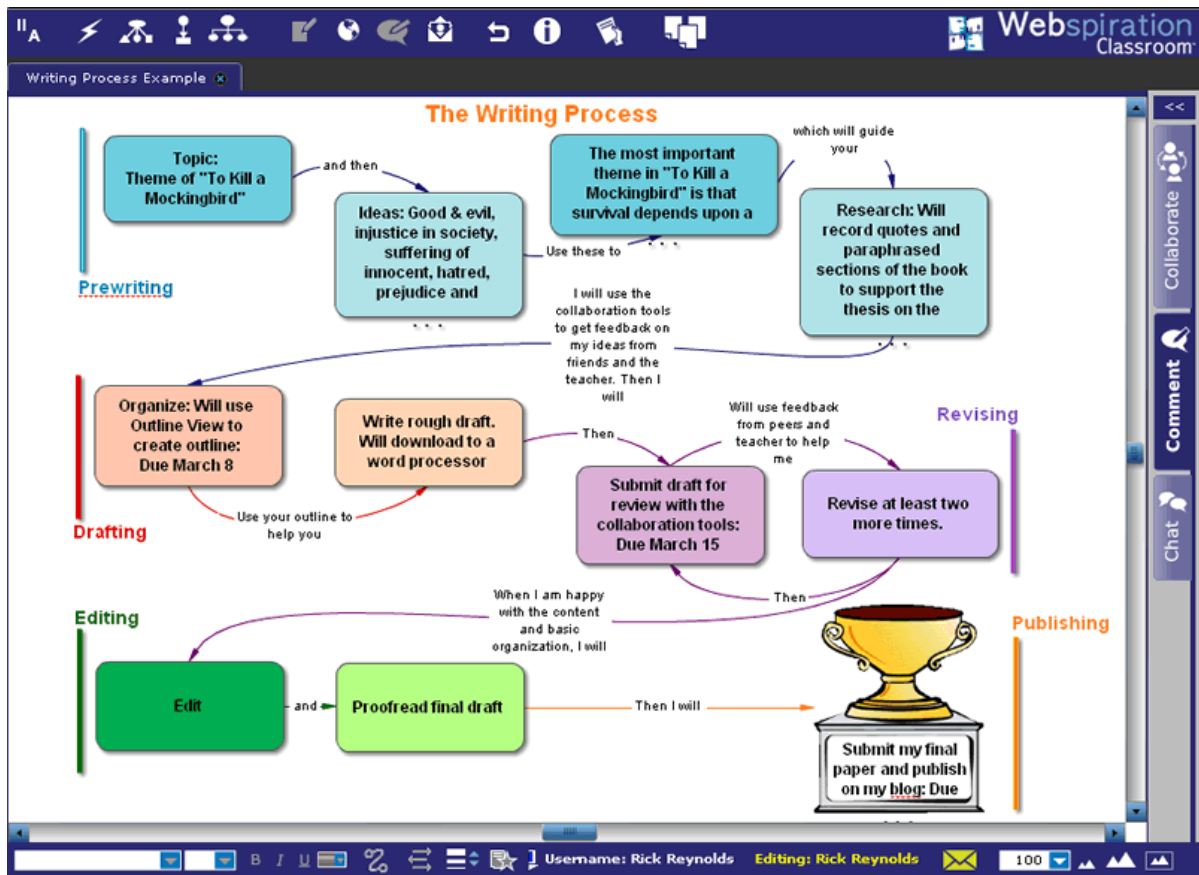
6. Prewriting: Have students choose a general topic to begin writing about and record it in the space provided. Then they can brainstorm ideas about it in a blank area to the side of the diagram using the **RapidFire** tool.

7. When they have identified a topic they like, they should continue the prewriting process by developing a working thesis statement. Explain to them that a thesis statement is normally one sentence that states what one will attempt to argue in the paper. Explain that it is called a "working" thesis statement because it may change as students conduct their research.

8. Explain that throughout the prewriting and writing process students should obtain feedback from the teacher and their peers using the collaboration tools. Documents can be shared with others using the **Collaborate Tab**. The **Comment Tab** can be used to comment on the document, or the **Chat Tab** can be used, if it is turned on at your school, to discuss ideas in real time.

9. Drafting: Students can complete the diagrams and go to **Outline View** to finish organizing their ideas about the writing assignment.
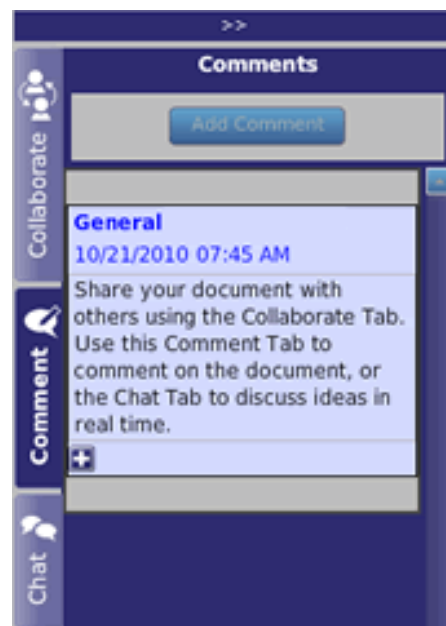
10. It is very important to check student progress as they undertake the multi-step process of writing. For example, students should obtain feedback on their completed diagrams using the collaboration tools explained above.

11. After students have organized their work in outline form, they can download their project to Inspiration® or a word processor, or transfer it to a Google Doc to complete their papers. There they can continue the drafting process as they complete their rough draft.

12. Revising: Rough drafts can be shared with the teacher and peers, with changes made after each review. Students can review their notes and research in Webspiration™ and collaborate on these with the teacher and their peers as necessary. If any details are not supported by the thesis statement, they should revise the thesis statement or remove the details if they are outside the scope of the thesis.

13. Editing: After students are satisfied with the content and basic organization of their writing, they can carefully improve its readability. For example, students should enhance the flow of the work with improved transitions. Arguments can be strengthened with persuasive topic and clincher sentences at the beginning and end of their paragraphs that all support the thesis statement. All spelling and grammatical mistakes must be corrected.

14. Publishing: Students can have their edited work reviewed by the teacher, peers, and others including parents or community members. Final edits can be made before submitting the work for a grade and/or publishing it. For example, students could submit the work to the local newspaper, include it in a book of student work that is shared with the community, post it on a reading wall in the school, or publish it to a blog. Student motivation and fulfillment will improve dramatically if their writing is shared with the world outside the classroom.

Adaptations / Extensions:
- Have students modify a portion of the diagram, rather than the whole thing. For example, focus on the prewriting stages.

- This lesson can be used in any content area that requires writing assignments.

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