

College-Ready Writing—Grades 9-12

Course Syllabus

Welcome to Storybird Prep!

In this online course, your students will have the chance to review important concepts and skills that will help them succeed this year in English Language Arts, no matter their level or ability.

Experienced English teachers have developed and written this course to align with **Writing, Reading, Speaking, and Listening standards** that are universally accepted as basic building blocks in a strong English foundation. Lessons can be differentiated for students, fit well within existing units of study, and, while scaffolded, can be broken up and taught in different ways, either as mini-lessons, whole class activities, individual work, or group work. Lessons are easily modified to be completed in a single class period or as a part of a larger unit.

Content

This course contains 11 lessons, 8 videos, 3 quizzes, and 2 writing challenges. Through engaging language, original, fun stories, graphics, quick activities, downloadable handouts, simple multiple choice quizzes, and writing challenges, the lessons teach and assess the following concepts and skills:

- **Figurative language:** A discussion of similes, metaphors, extended metaphors, hyperbole, idioms, personification, imagery, tone, diction, mood, point of view, direct and indirect and dynamic/ static characterization, protagonist and antagonist, and a reminder of important basic literary terms
- **Reading a text closely:** An activity featuring an original story that allows students to color mark or annotate the figurative language they see in text
- **Argument writing:** How to create a claim, gather evidence, formulate a counterclaim, and develop a rebuttal; also, the importance of audience
 - Plus, an activity that asks students to develop an argument for a high-interest topic
- **Transitions:** How to use transitions to link ideas, sentences, and paragraphs together; how to use them when composing an argument
- **Conclusions:** A dedicated lesson on how to move away from the typical summary, with tips and tricks on how to craft a powerful ending to any piece of writing
- **Literary analysis:** An introduction to writing about literature and a discussion of how to examine the author's craft, particularly through writing about theme
- **Narrative writing:** The important skill of showing versus telling, a graphic of the Story Arc that includes the introduction/ exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax,

falling action, and resolution, as well as a discussion of all of these terms and how they relate to figurative language;

- Plus, how to create an engaging narrative using the literary terms, figurative language, and narrative writing techniques
- **Nuts and Bolts of Good Writing:** Passive vs. active voice, adding sensory details, and developing description

Goals

By working through this course, your students will be able to:

- Review or learn important terms and concepts that will be used throughout their school years in their own writing, reading, analysis, and discussions
- Read original stories, identify literary terms, and explain how terms are used within the text to create different effects
- Play with different types of language to create different effects
- Assess and evaluate their own work on key concepts
- Prewrite, brainstorm, draft, and revise short and longer writing in response to activities and challenges
- Practice using technology and learn to be part of a safe online community
- Become acquainted with annotating or color marking passages when they read
- Assess their knowledge of the material with three 10-question multiple choice quizzes, easily taken over if student does not obtain a 10/10
- Write a finished argument that requires students to utilize all of the important skills and concepts learned about argument
- Map out and write a finished piece that incorporates their knowledge of narrative writing

Rubric

We have developed a [simple rubric](#) that can be used to evaluate student work on Storybird easily and quickly. These rubrics can be adapted to fit your department's, district's, or state's requirements for English Language Arts assignments.

Finally

It is our hope here at Storybird that you will find these lessons thoughtful, fun, and appropriate for your students. They are general enough that they can fit with many different state / district requirements as well as specific enough that they teach universally useful ELA concepts and skills. They are easily adapted and can be done as stand-alone lessons, out of order, or as an entire unit. We hope they enhance your classroom and your curriculum and welcome any feedback you have for us as we continue to develop new content for educators.

[Contact us here](#)